



The End of Suffering: Finding Purpose in Pain

By SCOTT CAIRNS

Paraclete Press November 2009, 2009. Paper Back. Book Condition: New. There is much more to this little coat-pocket sized book than meets the eye. To borrow from C.S. Lewis 'the further in you go, the larger it gets.' What begins as an apparently modest, almost shy attempt to sketch an outline of the 'end' (purpose, not cessation) of suffering, proves eventually a convincing portrayal of what it means to be human-sinful and being saved. Our refusal of God's unceasing invitation to communion inevitably impairs and distorts our connection with one another, and with all creation. We become agents of an insidious infection, complicit in a large and ancient epidemic. The healing of this wounded cosmos begins with the 'repair of the person,' and here Cairns avails himself of the rich vocabulary of the ancient Christian ascetical tradition to describe how this can occur. We already see a glimpse of the 'end' of suffering, from which much else is indicated: denial of self, the transformation of pain through thanksgiving, the ascetical disciplines of fasting, almsgiving, and the reunion of mind (nous) and heart (kardia) in prayer. This primary 'repair' within ourselves brings with it the healing of our connections with one...



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