



## **Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices**

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# Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices

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In recent years, many Christian clergy, laity and mental health professionals have rediscovered the ancient practices of spiritual direction. Seen as a refreshing alternative to the techniques and limitations of modern psychology, such practices offer new insights for pastoral care. But many remain unclear on what spiritual direction is and whether its methods are applicable to their own clients and parishioners.

Spiritual direction is a practice of Christian soul care that is found most notably in the Catholic, Orthodox and Episcopal traditions but is also present in Wesleyan/Holiness, Pentecostal/charismatic, social justice and Reformed communities. Predating modern counseling and psychotherapy movements but sharing key principles and insights for spiritual formation, spiritual direction offers significant resources for today's pastors, counselors, therapists, chaplains and other caregivers attuned to the work of God in people's lives.

In this landmark volume, editors Gary W. Moon and David G. Benner, along with a team of expert contributors, provide a comprehensive survey of spiritual direction in its myriad Christian forms. Specific chapters offer careful historical perspective and contemporary analysis of how Christians from various backgrounds have practiced spiritual direction, with particular attention to each tradition's definition of spiritual direction, the process of authentic transformation, the role of the spiritual director, indicators of mature spirituality and other aspects of the spiritual direction process. Chapters also provide psychological and clinical insight into how spiritual direction is similar to, different from and can be integrated with psychotherapy and pastoral counseling to help others experience spiritual transformation and union with God.

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