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*Reformation*  
& **REVIVAL**  
**JOURNAL**

**SPIRITUAL  
FORMATION**

*A Quarterly for Church Renewal*

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VOLUME 13 · NUMBER 3 · SUMMER 2004

*Companions with the Spirit:  
The Ministry of Spiritual Direction*



*Tom Schwanda*

There have been attempts to maintain that "spirituality" is more Catholic than Protestant, and that the latter has kept pure a biblical and Pauline understanding in contrast to the former's syncretism. But sharp dichotomies are out of place. Not only do evangelical Christians not use the term "spirituality"; modern research has shown that, although there are distinctions to be drawn, there is often a striking unanimity in the understanding of the soul's relation to God. St. John of the Cross is not only a Christian who sometimes writes like a Buddhist. He is a Spanish Catholic who may sound remarkably like Luther or Kierkegaard.

GORDON S. WAKEFIELD

Julie has become frustrated. In recent months her prayer life has grown flat and predictable. The former conversations of prayer which often brought delight and intimacy with God have been exchanged for the lonely echo of her own voice. The joy of discovering new truths and of being reminded of God's faithfulness through reading Scripture has become an empty exercise full of distractions. Worship which was once a vibrant experience of God's presence has also grown stale and tedious. While she is faithful in her longing, God seems to be distant and very silent. Finally she summons her courage and speaks to her pastor about this growing discontentment with her spiritual life. Her pastor wisely suggests that she visit a spiritual director to help her explore more fully the spiritual dynamics and reasons for this expanding and disturbing change.

Rueben is facing a very different challenge. He has served his present church for twelve years. Over this period the congregation has grown steadily in both size and depth. Mission giving has doubled, the attendance in the adult classes has increased by thirty-five percent, the congregation has developed a relationship with a nearby middle school to provide tutoring, and ten new small groups have been started and are thriving. However, Rueben is beginning to wonder if it is time

for a new pastoral challenge. Recently a number of churches have expressed interest in him. One church in particular has met with him twice and their pulpit search committee is prepared to extend to him a call. But he questions whether he should leave or stay. One Thursday morning after a clergy gathering he mentions his struggle to a fellow pastor who suggests he visit a spiritual director to assist him in discerning which direction the Holy Spirit might be leading him.

Both of these scenarios capture the reality of life. They freeze in time just two of the many reasons why a person might visit a spiritual director.<sup>1</sup> Spiritual directors can also assist us in working through distorted and unbiblical images of God, seeing God in all areas of life, wrestling through periods of doubt, learning how to lament and cry out to God in times of crisis, and navigating the challenges of major transitions in life to name just a few of the reasons for seeking spiritual counsel. The biblical practice of guiding souls to God imprinted throughout the pages of the Old and New Testaments did not stop with the early church. Historically this ministry of soul care has always played a significant role within the Protestant and evangelical church.<sup>2</sup> However, until the past two or three decades the ministry of spiritual direction was largely exercised within the Roman Catholic Church. Additionally while many spiritual directors have received some training there have always been wise Christians who have offered guidance and encouragement without either the saint or seeker conscious that they were engaged in this ministry of spiritual direction. This introduces the issue of terminology. Christians have traditionally referred to this practice of companionship another Christian as spiritual direction. However, some feel uncomfortable today with the authoritarian ring of the word direction. Partially this is traced to its more extensive usage within the Roman Catholic tradition and their more structured ecclesiology. Others fear it removes the focus from the Holy Spirit and places too much emphasis and dependence upon the human person. While acknowledging those concerns the language of spiritual direction has had a long and honored history and it captures a practice that is

readily understood. Therefore, in this article I will use the term spiritual direction to describe this process. Further, as the contemporary church has recovered this ministry various other terms have been coined to describe this unique spiritual relationship such as spiritual guidance, spiritual friend or mentor. While all of the phrases share a common foundation and desire they do differ according to the intensity of the relationship and the training of the person offering the spiritual companionship.<sup>3</sup>

### DEFINITIONS AND DISTINCTIONS

Spiritual direction may be described as the dynamic process in which one person assists another person or group of people to notice the presence of God's Spirit at work within their lives and to nurture their ongoing spiritual journey. Spiritual direction is in reality a relationship involving three people; the director, directee, and the Holy Spirit. Visualizing this as a triangle with each participant occupying one of the vertices enables us to see the dynamic quality of this ministry. In addition to the normal horizontal interaction between the director and directee is the formative and unfolding presence of the Holy Spirit. Herein lies the most vital principle of spiritual direction, paying attention to the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit. One of the essential tasks of the director is never to lose sight that the Holy Spirit is the ultimate Director and to guide the directee in learning how to listen and discern the work of the Holy Spirit in that person's life.

Eugene Peterson reminds us that historically the pastor was seen as a "physician of the soul" and that spiritual direction was always one of the primary dimensions of pastoral ministry.<sup>4</sup> He rightly maintains that the "pastor's responsibility is to keep the community attentive to God. It is this responsibility that is being abandoned in spades."<sup>5</sup> Spiritual direction was a means of integrating a person's life around their relationship with God and their life of prayer assisting them in uniting their head with their heart to live a holy and balanced life of faith. Our contemporary historical amnesia of this previously foundational pastoral ministry was replaced at

the turn of the twentieth century with an expanding emphasis upon counseling. However our contemporary culture with its tendency to emphasize explanation and overstimulation of the senses rather than experience and silence and pragmatism rather than God's presence has created a growing barrenness and spiritual hunger. The cries of shriveled and starving souls need more than a therapeutic fix to restore them. This is not meant to diminish the positive value that psychology and counseling can and does provide for the church. We should be ready to embrace all of the gifts that God enables us to discover and use for growing in wholeness and spiritual maturity.<sup>6</sup> However, we must at the same time hear the warning articulated by Susanne Johnson; "Psychology has subtly taken over the role of moral and spiritual guidance."<sup>7</sup> We must vigorously and consistently resist any efforts to remove or marginalize God from our spiritual conversations.

Further the approach taken by these two forms of caring for the soul have different styles or approaches that are revealed in the comparison below.

#### COUNSELING

1. Master image of Counselor
2. Presupposes brokenness or need
3. Focus on problem solving, to fix
4. Counselor's role is directive
5. Key person is counselor

#### SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

1. Master image of Companion
2. Presupposes a level of health
3. Focus on God's presence, to savor
4. Director's role is contemplative
5. Key person is Holy Spirit

While these distinctions often become blurred they are helpful to differentiate the respective goals and approaches to walking with another person.<sup>8</sup> Probably the most significant difference centers on the purpose and process. A person who visits their pastor or counselor usually does so because of a problem or need that requires correction or healing. On the other hand spiritual direction presupposes a certain degree of healthiness that creates a desire for deepening one's relationship with God or others. However, it is not uncommon during spiritual direction for other issues that have been suppressed or ignored to reappear in one's conscious awareness.

Circumstances such as this demonstrate the need for sensitivity to the whole person and also the importance of referral. Pastors, counselors, and spiritual directors must always recognize their own limitations and be willing to refer to another person when they feel they are in situations beyond their ability. The basic premise of all of these helping ministries is that our first concern is always the person or group seeking guidance, not our own ego or reputation.

#### ASSUMPTIONS

Eugene Peterson suggests that there are three general assumptions that are present whenever we gather for spiritual direction; "(1) God is always doing something: an active grace is shaping this life into a mature salvation; (2) responding to God is not sheer guesswork: the Christian community has acquired wisdom through the centuries that provides guidance; (3) each soul is unique: no wisdom can simply be applied without discerning the particulars of this life, this situation."<sup>9</sup> There are two additional convictions which underlie the practice of spiritual direction. The first has already been mentioned regarding the importance of the Holy Spirit. Dom Columba Marmion attests that "the great Director of Souls is the Holy Spirit."<sup>10</sup> The apostle Paul clarifies this principle in his assertion that "the Spirit helps us in our weaknesses; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:26-27). Being attentive to the Holy Spirit requires an unhurried pace filled with receptive and open silence. The best response the director can offer is to seek a low profile. Peterson summarizes this task as "Show up, and shut up!"<sup>11</sup> Another basic assumption regarding spiritual direction is that we can meet God anyway. God is not restricted to Sunday worship or Wednesday Bible study or prayer meetings. One of the casualties of all too much of our western expression of Christianity is to put God in a box of our own creation. God is the Lord of life and wherever we go God is

always present. The Psalmist reminds us "Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence" (Psalm 139:7)? No doubt John Bunyan had this reality in mind when he stated, "Have you forgot . . . the milk house, the stable, the barn, and the like, where God did visit your soul?"<sup>12</sup> This alerts us to the most basic question of spiritual direction—where have you noticed God in your life?

### JESUS' PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

While Scripture never specifically uses the term spiritual direction nor is Jesus Christ ever called a spiritual director the gospels clearly reveal that this was an essential component of his ministry.<sup>13</sup> One of the most helpful biblical examples which illustrates this is the Walk to Emmaus recorded in Luke 24:13-35. This passage reveals a number of important principles of spiritual direction. It would be helpful for us to pause and read and ponder Luke's text before proceeding further with this article. First, Jesus comes alongside of the two heart-broken disciples. He walks with them for awhile noticing before he speaks. This allows him to gain an appreciation of their context. Next he asks some questions to invite them to explore more fully what is happening within their lives. Recognize that our Lord begins where they were. He doesn't scold them for their unbelief, rather he honors their grief and confusion and works from that perspective. He doesn't jump in and explain the full story. That would circumvent the desired process. To that end Jesus used open-ended questions which required more than a simple yes or no response. Jesus was a master of using questions. Even a casual reading of the gospels reveal how frequently Christ used questions to guide others into noticing and naming what they might otherwise have missed.<sup>14</sup> However, we must be careful not to be invasive or overwhelm another person by employing too many questions too quickly and create resistance to the movement of the Holy Spirit. Third, Jesus drew upon Scripture as a means toward closing the gaps in their distorted understanding. He began with Moses and the prophets and guided them into realizing for themselves that the story of salvation pointed to

and was fulfilled in him. Jesus sought to provide them with an experience that had an objective basis of truth. Too often today people seek spiritual experiences that are birthed from other experiences rather than an objective basis of God's presence or revelation. Fourth, Jesus is flexible in his agenda and is willing to change his intentions, at least from the perspective of these disciples, and stay with them for supper. Jesus had originally joined these disciples to guide them into seeking and knowing the truth of his life and teaching. All of his efforts were directed toward that focus. Likewise in spiritual direction it is the directee who sets the agenda, not the director. Our responsibility is to be at the service of the directee to guide them into noticing the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit in their life, not ours! Fifth, Jesus reverses the role from guest to host and breaks bread. At that moment their eyes are opened and they realize this was Jesus their beloved Master and friend. No sooner do they recognize Jesus than he is gone. Spiritual directors seek to help their directees depend upon God and not themselves. Jesus' mission was complete. The Emmaus Road disciples could now return to declare the good news to those disciples who were in Jerusalem. Additionally it is instructive to notice that Jesus used the breaking of bread as a means of connecting them with their previously undetected experience of burning hearts. As we move further into postmodernity it is wise for the church to recover and discover biblical images and rituals to guide us in helping others to recognize Jesus Christ. However, there is one word of caution—we are not Jesus. We do not possess the divine awareness or skill that characterized his life. Nonetheless this passage and others from the gospels can provide helpful examples and principles which can assist us as we seek to guide people toward growing into spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ.

### THE FUNCTIONS OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

One of the basic questions a spiritual director asks a directee is where and how are we sensing God's presence in our life? Closely related to this are the promptings that invite

the person to consider his or her life of prayer. Spiritual direction is intensely contextual and therefore our own setting and environment takes on a critical position. Here is where our problems intensify. Western life is frequently characterized by busyness, noise, and speed. The cluttered and disjointed nature of large portions of our life complicates the ability to recognize God's presence amid all of the competing voices and clamor. Evelyn Underhill accurately captures the experience of all too many of us all too frequently when she writes:

We mostly spend those lives conjugating three verbs: To Want, To Have, and to Do. Craving, clutching, and fussing, on the material, political, social, emotional, intellectual—even on the religious—plane, we are kept in perpetual unrest: forgetting that none of these verbs have any ultimate significance, except so far as they are transcended by and included in, the fundamental verb, to Be: and that Being, not wanting, having, and doing, is the essence of a spiritual life.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, we often need help with the most basic aspect of life which is noticing. To notice is to pay attention and become alert to that which is going on both within and outside of us. Isaac Ambrose, a seventeenth-century English Puritan, emphasized that "watchfulness is the first and principal help to all exercises of Religion."<sup>16</sup> Jesus frequently reminded his listeners of this when he declared the necessity of listening and watching; "Let anyone with ears to hear listen" (Mark 4:9)! and "Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial" (Matthew 26:41). Our ears and eyes, the two main gateways of attentiveness need to be trained to become more sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Further, once we notice something or someone we need to name it or some how discover how it connects with our life.

Margaret Guenther uses the image of a spiritual midwife to capture these tasks.<sup>17</sup> Midwives are trained to bring new life into the world. Drawing upon Guenther's metaphor we can detect four tasks of a midwife that parallel the ministry of spiritual direction. First a midwife is someone who companions or

walks "with" another on their birthing journey. The focus is being *with* rather than doing *to* a woman and her husband. The spiritual director is there to be at the service of the other person. The director must be careful to "bracket," that is to put aside any thoughts that arise during the conversation that could intrude into that of the directee. Whenever we allow our agenda to take precedence over the person or group we are seeking to guide we are ultimately saying that our experience is superior or that we know what needs to be done. This approach minimizes the importance of listening to the person and also ignores the central role of the Holy Spirit. The temptation during labor is to do whatever is possible to speed up the process and lessen the pain. However, that is normally not the best procedure for the child. Spiritual directors will often say, "Let's just sit with this for awhile." It encourages the directee to wrestle with those experiences and not seek a hasty and incomplete answer or awareness to something deeper and richer.

Second, the spiritual midwife isn't afraid of silence and waiting. Both physical and spiritual birth requires patience. The danger is to assume that nothing is happening when there is silence. On the contrary, that is often when most is happening. Additionally this relates to the struggles of spiritual dryness and darkness when the regular experiences seem to disappear. Guenther continues with this important advice; "As a spiritual midwife, the director's task is to pay attention, to listen to what is not being said, or to what *is* being said but minimized."<sup>18</sup> Foundational to this art is cultivating a heart for listening. The listening that is required is a contemplative listening which follows Mary's posture of sitting at Jesus' feet seeking to be attentive to whatever the Lord may desire to say (Luke 10:39). Barry and Connolly remind us that "contemplation leads to an attitude of reverence and wonder."<sup>19</sup> Those who practice the ministry of spiritual direction recognize the great privilege of being involved with the holy things of God.

Third, a midwife coaches the couple through the birthing process. Midwives teach the woman how to breathe and pay attention to her body and the movement of the child. They

also assist the couple in recognizing the difference between contractions and knowing which ones are real. Spiritual directors often guide directees in learning and practicing spiritual disciplines such as how to read and pray Scripture and move through the spiritual stages of life. Additionally, spiritual guides are able to help us notice and discern between the authentic movement of God's Spirit and those counterfeit expressions that will lead us astray. This is particularly important during periods where the person's subjective experience of God's presence seems absent.

Fourth, the midwife brings new life into the world. Spiritual direction is always seeking to notice new birth. While the midwife is an important guide the actual work is done by the wife and husband. Likewise, the midwife helps the couple to notice, but she doesn't name the child. That joy and privilege belongs to the parents. Neither do directors seek to create or name the spiritual experiences of their directees. They merely help them to notice them. Similar to Jesus in Luke 24, once the experience has been grasped or understood the director gets out of the way.

### BENEFITS

I have had a spiritual director for over twenty-one years and would never consider being in ministry without this valuable companionship. Eugene Peterson speaks from experience when he maintains that "it is not merely nice for pastors to have a spiritual director, it is indispensable."<sup>20</sup> The reality of human nature is that we so readily deceive ourselves that without the wise counsel of another trusted person we can soon quench the Holy Spirit in exchange for the loudest voices clamoring for our attention. Sadly, many will not be able to discern the difference due to our cultural distortions of success, but God will know, and slowly over time we and others will also begin to perceive the difference. Peterson continues: "The greatest errors in the spiritual life are not committed by novices but the adepts. The greatest capacity for self-deceit in prayer comes not in the early years but in the middle and late years."<sup>21</sup> Further, people should not offer spiritual direction to

others without first having a spiritual director themselves. This is a ministry which requires a high degree of accountability and should not be entered into lightly.

My spiritual directors have been both men and women who have provided me with an open and trusting space to reflect upon my spiritual life. They have taught me how to listen and become more attentive to cultivating my heart for our triune God. In an age which often exalts speed and efficiency, they have reminded me that God works at a different pace and measures faithfulness according to different standards. They have encouraged me to pay attention to my restlessness recognizing that it may often be God's attempt to get my attention. Further, they remind me not to be afraid of silence and to realize that being quiet before God is both valuable and necessary to nurturing a life of prayer and service. Jeanette Bakke uses the metaphor that "spiritual direction is a little like bird-watching—waiting quietly and noticing what appears."<sup>22</sup>

My spiritual directors have also taught me the necessity of an objective perspective when I get entangled and too close to any situation. Amid my intensity for ministry they remind me that I am not the only person who has experienced or struggled with the issues of life. Many pastors and church leaders seem prone to the "Elijah Complex" (1 Kings 19:10, 14) and forget that we are not the Messiah nor are we the only servant God has left to fulfill this mission. This objectivity also reminds me that I never face a situation that has not been previously encountered by Christians since the time of Christ. This is a huge benefit of reading history and being familiar with the devotional writings of previous generations.

They have taught me wisdom and guidance when I am stuck spiritually or am facing times of spiritual dryness or desolation. The illustration of Julie at the beginning of this article gives a brief taste of this reality. God calls us to be a pilgrim people who journey toward heaven. Fortunately, God is gracious and the stories of biblical saints mirror the same sort of challenges, detours, joys, and delights that we face today. It is imperative that spiritual directors have an awareness of the



spiritual dynamics and contours of pilgrimage to help us to notice the different phases that we will experience over our lifetime. Further, directors can assist us in discerning the difference between emotions or depression-related periods of frustration and the often misunderstood and trivialized concept of the "dark night of the soul."

My spiritual directors have given me the tools and skills for discernment and decision making. The experience of Rueben and his need for sorting through the options regarding his call and place of ministry is replayed repeatedly in the church. At various points in my life and ministry the wisdom and guiding questions of my spiritual directors has been beneficial in helping me to sort through the opportunities that have been placed before me. This is another ancient biblical discipline that has been recovered in recent years. Increasingly church boards and governing bodies are using these principles of discernment to sense God's direction and make their decisions.<sup>23</sup>

They have offered me accountability and prayer support. Most spiritual directors pray for their directees daily or at least frequently between their visits. Many today have prayer partners who serve a similar benefit. This ministry of intercession has been particularly significant within the Orthodox practice of direction. Bishop Kallistos Ware tells of a visit of an American to the well-known monastery at Mount Athos. At the conclusion of the conversation he asked if he might write for advice. The monk quickly replied no but added that he would gladly pray for him. Rejected, the American walked away in despair but another monk who had overheard the conversation added, "You ought to be very happy that the *geronta* (spiritual father) promised to pray for you. . . . His advice is good, but his prayers are far, far better."<sup>24</sup>

Indeed one of the healthy signs of the Western church today is the recovery of this biblical and historical pattern of companioning souls in Christ. While most of this article has been written from the perspective of the individual, spiritual direction can also be practiced in group settings.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps this article has awakened a desire within you to explore this

topic more fully. Possibly you are wondering about how to find a spiritual director for yourself.<sup>26</sup> If you are a lay person, check with your pastor or at a local retreat center or monastery. If you are a pastor, check with one of your fellow pastors or also inquire at a retreat center or monastery. Spiritual direction is not a prime time or center stage ministry that attracts a lot of public attention. Rather, it works behind the scenes and reflects the life and movement of the Holy Spirit. May we learn to be still and recognize that God is God.

#### Author

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#### Notes

1. The literature on spiritual direction is vast and expanding each year. Some of the more helpful sources for introducing this are Margaret Guenther, *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 1994); William A. Barry and William J. Connolly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982); Kenneth Leech, *Soul Friend* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1977); Gerald G. May, *Care of Mind Care of Spirit: Psychiatric Dimensions of Spiritual Direction* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982); Carolyn Gratton, *The Art of Spiritual Guidance* (New York: Crossroad, 1992); and Thomas Dubay, *Seeking Spiritual Direction: How to Grow the Divine Life Within* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publications, 1993). Additionally, the following works offer some of the best treatment on this subject from an evan-

- gical perspective: Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 101-131; Jeannette A. Bakke, *Holy Invitations: Exploring Spiritual Direction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000); David G. Benner, *Sacred Companions: The Gift of Spiritual Friendship & Direction* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2002); and Arthur D. Thomas, "James M. Houston: Pioneering Spiritual Director to Evangelicals" Part I *Crux* 29, number 3 (September 1993): 2-10 and Part II *Crux* 29, number 4 (December 1993): 17-27.
2. Limitations of space prevent exploring the historical witnesses of spiritual direction. See John T. McNeill, *A History of the Cure of Souls* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951) and Lavinia Byrne, editor, *Traditions of Spiritual Guidance* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1990) for a helpful survey of this from the perspective of various Christian and non-Christian traditions. For a classic model of how this was practiced in the local church see Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (Edinburgh and Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974). For a contemporary treatment of seven major denominational traditions (e.g. Lutheran, Reformed, Episcopal, etc.) of spiritual direction see Gary W. Moon and David G. Benner, editors, *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004).
  3. Bruce Demarest distinguishes these four approaches to spiritual soul care from least to most formal: spiritual friendship, spiritual guidance, spiritual mentoring, and spiritual direction. See Bruce Demarest, *Satisfy Your Soul* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: NavPress, 1999), 190-95. For a slightly different approach and summary of these various expressions of spiritual direction, see Jeannette A. Bakke, *Holy Invitations*, 27-33.
  4. *Working the Angles* and *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 55-65.
  5. *Working the Angles*, 2.
  6. Gerald May is both a psychiatrist and spiritual director and describes how these disciplines can and do need to work together. It is essential for anyone who practices spiritual direction to have a working knowledge of psychology. See May, *Care of Mind Care of Spirit*, especially pages 42-67, and Leech, *Soul Friend*, 90-136. See also the last three chapters of Moon and Benner, *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls*, for a psychological treatment and integration within spiritual direction.
  7. Susanne Johnson, *Christian Spiritual Formation in the Church and Classroom* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989), 31. Her third chapter (pages 30-42) provides a helpful overview to the growing prominence of our contemporary "psycho-culture."
  8. See Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 227-29, for a brief, but helpful, discussion of the distinctive approaches of spiritual direction and counseling.
  9. *Working the Angles*, 104.
  10. Quoted by Kenneth Leech, *Soul Friend*, 73.

11. I have been unable to locate the exact source of this quote, but I believe it was spoken in one of his lectures.
12. Quoted by Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 205. One of the resources used at San Francisco Theological Seminary for training spiritual directors is the Spiritual Movement Matrix. This chart is divided into four vertical categories suggestive of the general areas in which we can experience God; intrapersonal (our relationship with God), interpersonal (our relationship with others), environmental (creation and the larger outer world), structural (organizational or other institutional settings). Additionally, the chart is divided in the middle creating two halves to emphasize that we can and need to experience God in both the cognitive and affective dimensions of our life. Healthy spirituality will provide opportunities to notice and know God in all four arenas of life as well as both in our heads and hearts.
13. See Bruce Demarest, *Soul Guide: Following Jesus as Spiritual Director* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: NavPress, 2003) for a helpful exploration of how Jesus' ministry reflected and employed the principles of spiritual direction.
14. Some of the questions Jesus used to guide and provoke people to explore their relationship with him and others include: "Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3; cf. Luke 6:41), "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" (Matthew 9:28), "Who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15; cf. Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20), "What is your name?" (Mark 5:9; cf. Luke 8:30), "What do you want me to do for you?" (Mark 10:51; cf. Luke 18:41), "Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God?" (Mark 12:24), "Why were you searching for me?" (Luke 2:49), "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I tell you?" (Luke 6:46), "What is the kingdom of God like?" (Luke 13:18), "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?" (Luke 24:38), "What are you looking for?" (John 1:38), "Do you want to be made well?" (John 5:6), "If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?" (John 8:46), "Do you know what I have done to you?" (John 13:12), "Do you love me more than these?" (John 21:15), etc.
15. Evelyn Underhill, *The Spiritual Life* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Morehouse Publishing, 1955), 20.
16. Isaac Ambrose, *Media in The Compleat Works of Isaac Ambrose* (London: Rowland Reynolds, 1674), 96.
17. *Holy Listening*, 81-108.
18. *Holy Listening*, 91.
19. *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, 50.
20. *Working the Angles*, 115.
21. *Working the Angles*, 121.

22. *Holy Invitations*, 39.
23. See Charles M. Olsen, *Transforming Church Boards into Communities of Spiritual Leaders* (Bethesda, Maryland: Alban Institute Publications, 1995); Danny E. Morris and Charles M. Olsen, *Discerning God's Will Together: A Spiritual Practice* (Bethesda, Maryland: Alban Institute Publications, 1997); Suzanne G. Farnham, Stephanie A. Hull, and R. Taylor McLean, *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Morehouse Publishing, 1996); and Suzanne G. Farnham, Joseph P. Gill, R. Taylor McLean, and Susan M. Ward, *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community*, revised edition (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Morehouse Publishing, 1996). In recent years the literature on discernment has grown. Each of the four books listed offer helpful bibliographic references for exploring this topic more fully.
24. Bishop Kallistos Ware forward in Irene Hausherr, *Spiritual Direction in the Early Christian East* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1990), xiv.
25. See *Holy Invitations*, 139-48 and Rose Mary Dougherty, *Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1995). Benner has two helpful chapters exploring both the use of spiritual direction principles in small groups and suggestions on how a variation of this ministry of soul care can be integrated into marriages. In Benner, *Sacred Companions*, chapters 8-9.
26. Spiritual Directors International is largest organization representing spiritual directors and publishes a quarterly journal, *Presence*, and also a directory which lists spiritual directors throughout the United States, Canada, and the world. For more information you may consult their website: [www.sdiworld.org](http://www.sdiworld.org) or contact them through their e-mail: [office@sdiworld.org](mailto:office@sdiworld.org)