

Chapter 1 : What is Christian spiritual formation?

*FOUNDATIONS OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION: A Community Approach to Becoming like Christ* edited by Paul Pettit is about "spiritual formation," which is defined in the book as "the ongoing process of the triune God transforming the believer's life and character toward the life and character of Jesus Christ - accomplished by the ministry of the Spirit in the context of biblical community."

It is truly a gift from God, but not one dropped from the skies fully formed. It is a gift cultivated by a prayerful life and the search for self-knowledge. Discernment workshop Way to the heart of God Frank Laubach "Somebody was telling me this week that nobody can make a violin speak the last depths of human longing until that soul has been made tender by some great anguish. I do not say it is the only way to the heart of God, but I must witness that it has opened an inner shrine for me which I never entered before. Letters from a Modern Mystic Parable of a sunset Frank Laubach "Open your soul and entertain the glory of God, and after a while that glory will be reflected in the world about you and in the very clouds above your head. Afflictions, from His sovereign hand, Are blessings in disguise. Practicing the Presence of God Half-hearted C. Lewis "We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased. Lewis Weight of Glory Faith and moods C. Lewis "Faith is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted in spite of your changing moods. Lewis "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: Lived experience Elizabeth Liebert When lived spiritual experience comes into the room, it makes the study of Christian spirituality immediate, transformative, compelling, self-implicating, and life-changing. I have thanked thee a thousand times for my roses, but not once for my thorn. I have been looking forward to a world where I shall get compensation for my cross, but I have never thought of my cross as itself a present glory. Thou divine Love, whose human path has been perfected through sufferings, teach me the glory of my cross, teach me the value of my thorn. Inspired by 2 Corinthians I am convinced it is the fundamental energy of the human spirit, the fuel on which we run, the wellspring of our vitality. And grace, which is the flowing, creative activity of love itself, is what makes all goodness possible. Love should come first. It should be the beginning of, and the reason for everything. Living in Love Necessary intentionality Thomas Merton If you attempt to act and do for others or for the world without deepening your own self-understanding, freedom, integrity and capacity to love, you will not have anything to give others. Ask me what I am living for and what I think is keeping me from living fully for that. Thoughts in Solitude Prayer of unknowing Thomas Merton Therefore I will trust You always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for You are ever with me, and You will never leave me to face my perils alone. Read the complete prayer Compliments Calvin Miller b. The glory of this truth is that he is not only with us in our times of jubilee, but he is with us in our times of despair. Jesus quoted David when the nails were in his hands: A Hunger for the Holy Emptiness Wayne Muller All life has emptiness at its core; it is the quiet hollow reed through which the wind of God blows and makes the music that is our life. Without emptiness, we are clogged and unable to give birth to music, love or kindness. Sabbath Embrace Henri Nouwen "The great challenge is living your wounds through instead of thinking them through. It is better to cry than to worry, better to feel your wounds deeply than to understand them, better to let them enter into your silence than to talk about them. Understanding your wounds can only be healing when that understanding is put at the service of your heart. Only when your roots are deep can your fruits be abundant. Right now you feel nothing except emptiness and the lack of strength to choose. You have to choose the solid place over and over again and return to it after every failure. Discipline means to prevent everything in your life from being filled up. Diagnostic for the soul John Ortberg I asked a wise man, "How do you assess the well-being of your soul? Am I growing more easily discouraged these days? Am I growing more easily irritated these days? At the core of a flourishing soul are the love of God and the peace of God. If peace is growing in me, I am less easily discouraged. If love is growing, I am less easily irritated. It was a brilliantly helpful diagnostic to assess the health of my soul. How

would you answer those two questions? The Me I Want to Be Border spaces Christine Valters Paintner Living on the edge means recognizing those places and experiences that do not offer me easy answers, those fierce edges of life where things are not as clear-cut as I hope for them to be. There is beauty in the border spaces, those places of ambiguity and mystery. Border Spaces poem Wholeness Parker Palmer b. Knowing this gives me hope that human wholeness--mine, yours, ours--need not be a utopian dream, if we can use devastation as a seedbed for new life.

**Chapter 2 : Table of contents for Foundations of spiritual formation**

*A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ Foundations of Spiritual Formation takes a unique approach to its subject, arguing that we become like Christ in the context of authentic, Christian community.*

Subscribe to the CompellingTruth. What is Christian spiritual formation? Spiritual formation is the process of forming or growing the spiritual self. The "spiritual formation movement" refers to the heightened interest in spiritual formation. Because all people have spirits, spiritual formation happens in all people. However, Christian spiritual formation is something a little more specific; it is about becoming more like Christ. The spiritual formation movement has become somewhat controversial in Christian circles. Some say that Christian spiritual formation borders on New Age-ism or works-based salvation. They argue that our relationship with God is not about experience or effort, but about truth. Others believe that the Church has been negligent in obeying the word of Christ. Salvation is by grace, and we use that as an excuse not to engage in any traditional religious practices. Because we cannot earn salvation, we have abdicated completely our responsibility to grow spiritually. We think we are saved through belief alone, and we fail to translate that belief into action. Of course, there is also a balanced perspective – one that affirms salvation by grace through faith, the importance of truth, and the importance of obedience. Many term this type of spiritual formation, "spiritual transformation. Paul told Timothy to train himself to be godly 1 Timothy 4: Biblical spiritual formation is a training program, an intentional effort to be godly, not in our own strength but through the power of Christ John And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. We tend to focus on justification more than sanctification. We seem to miss the fact that we are to be disciples. This lack is what Christian spiritual formation attempts to address. The acts of Christian spiritual formation are meant to draw us closer to God. They are methods we use to "put off [the] old" and prepare our hearts for God to "put on the new" Ephesians 4: As we make efforts to obey the directives God has given us, we begin to know Him more. Thus, when we follow them, we know God more fully and we find more satisfaction in life. Specific practices of Christian spiritual formation include disciplines such as prayer, meditating on Scripture, worship, study, silence, and service. Some also engage in spiritual direction, or receiving spiritual counsel or mentorship. The methods used are modeled after the practices and behaviors of Christ and those of the early church. Spiritual formation has become a topic of interest for many in our society – Christian and secular alike. It seems that many are unsatisfied and seek a deeper spirituality. Some address this lack through manufactured spiritual experiences or working to become good in themselves. This is not biblical. We know that satisfaction only comes from Christ. He has called us to Himself, and apart from Him we can do nothing John However, when we trust in Him, we are made alive Ephesians 2: And we are given instructions about how to obey Him. We do not simply accept Jesus in order to gain heaven. We accept Him in order to experience fullness of life and to shine for His glory. Spiritual formation happens after salvation; it is not a path to salvation. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. God does the work, but we must also be disciplined to obey Him. He does the transformation, and we exert our effort to become more like Him. As the Holy Spirit renews us 2 Corinthians 4: He creates the new life, and we intentionally live it Colossians 3:

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*Miller explores love's role as the motivation for spiritual formation. Andrew Seidel examines servant leadership, and George Hillman extends the discussion to include the significance of calling.*

## Chapter 4 : William R. Miller

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*Bill Miller explores love's role as the motivation for spiritual formation. Andrew Seidel examines servant leadership, and George Hillman extends the discussion to include the significance of calling. Gail Seidel discusses personal narrative as a catalyst for spiritual formation, and in closing, Harry Shields advocates the public preaching of.*

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