

What Is Spiritual Direction and How May It May Be Used?

Spiritual Direction is a fairly new ministry among mainline denominations, but it has been a long-established ministry with Eastern Orthodox Churches and Catholic Churches. In the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, the history and theological perspectives are respected, but Spiritual Direction deals with a more intimate relationship with God and the individual Christian believer. Here is what the Presbyterian Church USA has to say in part about Spiritual Direction as quoted from the Spiritual Directors International Website:

“Spiritual direction, an ancient ministry of the church, is a relationship in which one person assists another, or others, in attending to God’s presence and call. Spiritual direction has been, and remains, particularly strong within Roman Catholic and Orthodox religious orders, and over the past twenty years Anglican and Protestant traditions have begun to recover it more fully.

So, what can a believer do to have such an intimate connection with God? A Spiritual Director mainly listens and senses what God’s Hand is in a person’s life. It is a discovery of a much deeper love of God.

I have been in a regular study of Christian Spirituality over the last 19 years. This includes a Spiritual Formation Certificate from Columbia Theological Seminary (2004) and now with “Seeking the Spirit Within,” an ELCA program that certifies people to be Spiritual Directors. As part of that certification, I have been granted a chance to participate in a practicum of limited supervised Spiritual Direction with no more than three people beginning this summer. There is no fee for this ministry since it is a practicum. It entails a one hour session each month through Spring of 2018. These are supervised only in terms of how I am functioning as a Spiritual Director with a directee. That person’s journey and story are confidential and will not be shared with the faculty or with my colleagues in the program. As part of this arrangement, I will also continue in a relationship with a Spiritual Director of my own. So, what is gained from this is a mutual connection with God and with another companion in faith. It is a holy, precious moment of faith that is beyond expression which is both a celebration and a challenge of a deeper relationship with God. At the conclusion of the practicum, I would hope to be certified next Spring and available for more Spiritual Direction opportunities. I invite any who wish to have that intimacy with God to share in an hour each month with me. One can call me on my cell at (402) 981-6073 or email me at pastorjjd@gmail.com

A Companion in Christ,

Pastor John J. Duling