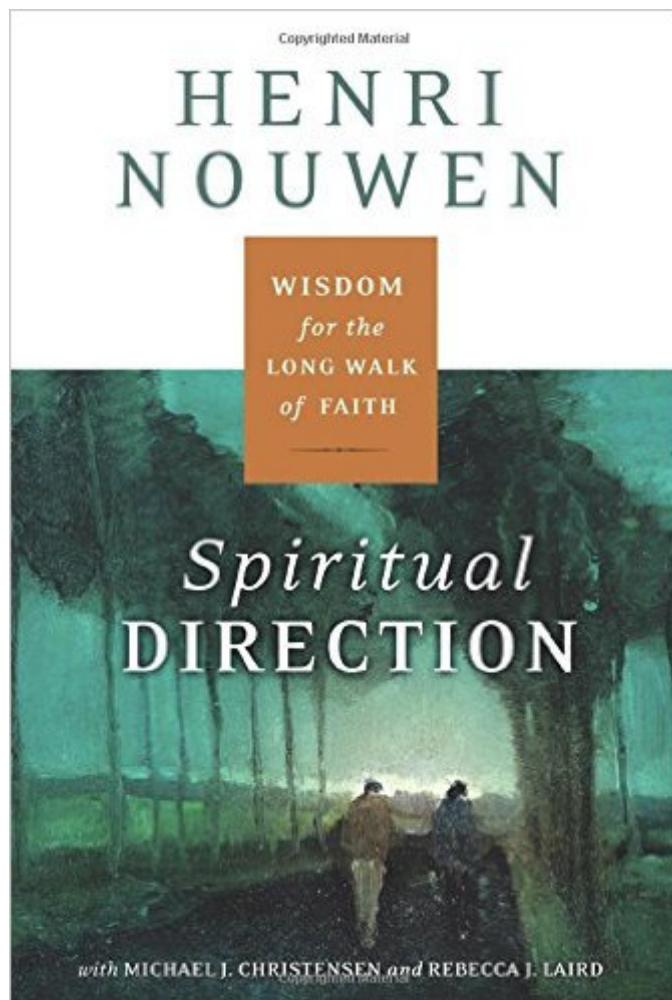


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Spiritual Direction: Wisdom For The Long Walk Of Faith



Synopsis

Henri Nouwenâ "beloved author, priest, and internationally recognized spiritual master, counselor, and guideâ "offers gentle wisdom for universal questions of the spiritual life:Who am I?Where have I been and where am I going?Who is God for me?Where do I belong?How can I be of service?As a priest, pastor, and professor of spirituality at Notre Dame, Yale, and Harvard, Nouwen offered spiritual direction to many students, but his famous course on spiritual direction was never recorded during his lifetime. Now, in Spiritual Direction, the first of a series, one of Nouwen's students (Michael Christensen) and one of his editors (Rebecca Laird) have developed his courses and practice of spiritual direction into a book of profound wisdom for living a deep spiritual life.

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Customer Reviews

Christensen is the director of the Doctor of Ministry program in Drew University and Laird is a spiritual director and associate pastor for Spiritual Development at Central Presbyterian Church in Summit, New Jersey. Christensen took a course with Henri Nouwen at Yale Divinity School. Henri J.M. Nouwen (1932-1996) is a well known spiritual writer. He never did consider himself a spiritual director though he did receive and gave spiritual direction. He considered himself more as a spiritual companion. Nouwen did not write much on spiritual direction and spiritual formation. The core of his spiritual writing were on the heart, Word and church and was more about his inner own conversations, even though it continues to offer spiritual guidance to many of his readers. In this book, the authors, drawing from both published and unpublished writings of Henri Nouwen set him up as a spiritual director. The chapters are designed in such a way that the reader is being engaged

with a one way spiritual direction with Henri Nouwen. The chapters deals with questions that generally asked in spiritual direction such as "who am I?" and "who is God to me?" The answers are drawn from Nouwen's writings. Sometimes reading a passage may be jarring because the personal pronoun "I" is used. One expect to look up to see Nouwen sitting across the table!The danger of such a book is that it will be inevitable that some of the authors' biasness and personal values be embedded in the choice and paraphrase of Nouwen's writings. Nevertheless it is a good book to read as it is the closest we can get to having Henri Nouwen as our spiritual director.

It has since become the prime source of inspiration for my meditation. Although written by two of Henri's disciples, the thoughts and words are his. Beautiful writing, deep thought-inspiring ideas make this book truly special. I have given it as a gift to friends who are dear to me.

This short book is definitely a book I would recommend to others to challenge them in the area of connecting with God and community. It is a book that is best read slowly and contemplatively with questions and reflections following each section to lead the reader toward application and not just information alone.Nouwen states, "The goal of spiritual direction is spiritual formation-the ever increasing capacity to live a spiritual life from the heart. A spiritual life cannot be formed without discipline, practice and accountability." The book focuses on three classic disciplines or spiritual practices that are useful in the spiritual direction relationship. They can help create space for God within us: 1. the discipline of the Heart, 2. the discipline of the Book, and 3. the discipline of the Church or community of faith. Together these spiritual practices help us overcome our resistances to contemplative listening and active obedience to God and free us to live an embodied and fulfilled spiritual life.Great book, read my full review here:[...]

Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith is a compilation of the writings and lectures of Henri Nouwen, the late professor, spiritual director, and member of Daybreak L'Arche community in Toronto. Nouwen is renowned in the literature of spiritual formation, and his writing career was prolific, but none of his works speak directly to spiritual direction. Michael Christensen and Rebecca Laird set out to remedy this hole in the Nouwen bibliography by pulling together articles, recording, notes, and unpublished writings that speak to this topic.The result is a most helpful resource to those who want to grow in the Christian faith and a deeper relationship with God. The work is divided into three primary sections that deal with spiritual formation as disciplines of the heart, the Word, and the community. All three were essential in Nouwen's approach to spiritual formation.

Each chapter begins with a parable, used by Nouwen, to provoke thought and discussion, but also to illuminate some of the mysterious steps in growing spiritually. What follows is a discussion of the discipline and then a practical guide to allowing this discipline to grow in our lives. The book has a conversational quality that draws the reader in to the mind and heart of Henri Nouwen. It is as if he is answering the questions that we have always wanted to ask of someone this wise and steeped in his pursuit of God, or as Nouwen himself puts it, in allowing God to find him.

Henri Nouwen's pull on God was a stunner, activating my Spirit as my walk of faith became a journey of discoveries unlocking me to places I had yet to discover in the heart of God. This book is a slow-drip read that if you are open will be a door to discovering God's wisdom for the long walk of faith.

I am interested in becoming a spiritual director and wanted to find some good books on the subject and this book has not failed in bringing me the insight I was looking for in this field. I am not even half way into the book and I can't rave enough of the inspiration of right to the point knowledge of Henri Nouwen on the topic of spiritual direction. So much wisdom in such a small 200 page book. I love it!

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