

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES PRACTICE SHEET

Spiritual Direction

Read: Matthew 4v18-22; Luke 6v12-15; Acts 9v27; 1 Timothy 1v18, 4v12; Titus 2v3-5;

Spiritual Direction: *Intentionally entering into a relationship in which one person empowers another (or each empowers each other) by sharing life experience, wisdom, resources, and guidance. One can be a mentor (a Paul), a peer-mentor (a Barnabas), or an apprentice/receiver (a Timothy). The goal is to increase the personal development, faith, skill, love, vision, leadership, hope, or capacity of the receiver.*

Spiritual Direction is living in community with someone I know,
respect, and trust always has my best interests at heart.

If life was all about knowledge, as soon as we knew something that was good for us, we would do it! But, sadly, life does not work that way. We don't automatically change our way of life because we learn something new. Most of us need more help transforming the day to day details of our life than that. We need someone to show us *WHAT, WHY, WHEN, HOW* and with *WHOM!*

In other words... we need Spiritual Direction!

Most of the names we know from history are only half of a pairing... somewhere, behind the scenes, a mentor was providing direction in formative moments. This is not an accident... it is the way GOD designed us to live, to function... to grow! The myth of the self made man or woman is just that... a myth. We all need people to speak into our lives as mentors, as peers, and, eventually, to receive from us as we are able to guide and direct.

How can I find Spiritual Direction? What's a good next step?

- Be a life long learner... we have to admit we don't know all the answers before a suitable mentor can help us. Remember the old Chinese proverb: "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear". Ask lots of questions!
- Listen to our heart! When our heart sees something in someone else that we want to be, some quality we wish we had or know we need, approach that person. Ask, "Can we meet for coffee... I'd like to ask you some questions".
- Generally avoid people rushing to be mentors... question motives. Test and probe character.
- Do not be in a rush to mentor someone else. When we are ready to be a mentor, the receiver will be there! A twist on the old Chinese proverb: "When the teacher is ready, the students will appear!"
- Look for qualities of humility, consistency, and stability. Look for wisdom lived out, not just spoken about.
- Examine our entourage... are they helping us be who we want to become? Are we always carrying them? Are they draining or life-giving? Make adjustments of boundaries and commitments as necessary.

Ask me not where I live, nor what I like to eat. Instead, ask me what I am living for and what I think is keeping me from living fully for that!

- Thomas Merton

Resources:

A Resilient Life Gordon MacDonald

Finding a Spiritual Friend Timothy Jones

