

MENTORING

SPIRITUAL MENTORING

Help given by one Christian to another which enables the person to pay attention to God's personal communication to him or her, to respond to this personally communicating God,

to grow in intimacy with God,
and, to live out the consequences.

William A. Barry & William J. Connolly.

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The whole purpose of spiritual direction is to penetrate beneath the surface of a person's life, to get behind the façade of conventional gestures and attitudes which he or she presents to the world, and to bring his inner spiritual freedom, his or her inmost truth, which is what we call the likeness of Christ in his or her soul.

Thomas Merton

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- The heart of spiritual mentoring is relational.
- Spiritual mentoring is to assist the mentoree to pay attention to the inner working of the Holy Spirit in his or her life.
- The primary task of spiritual mentoring is to awaken the mentoree to his or her uniqueness as a loved child of God, created in His image for intimacy of relationships that empowers the individual for authentic acts of ministry.
- Responsibility for spiritual growth is in the hands of the Holy Spirit and not in the hands of the human mentor.

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The purpose of spiritual mentoring:

- **Encouragement** – Deuteronomy 31:7-8. Moses tells young Joshua, his successor in leadership, to be strong and not fear what lies ahead. This powerfully illustrates the encouraging role of a mentor.
- **Discernment** – 1 Samuel 3:8. The old priest, Eli tells the young Samuel to listen after he perceives that the Lord was calling Samuel.
- **Accountability** – 2 Samuel 12. The prophet Nathan confronts King David for his moral failure in carrying out an adulterous affair with Bathsheba and in murdering her husband.

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- **A reminder of spiritual identity** – 1 Samuel 25. The fascinating story of Abigail who intercepts David when he has lost his godly focus and is about to take revenge on her husband, a wealthy landowner named Nabal. She intervenes in a wonderfully creative way to remind David of God's purpose in his life.
- **Wisdom-giving for decision-making** – Book of Ruth. The story of a biblical friendship of Naomi and Ruth and the advice given to help Ruth in her decisions about her young life.
- **Identity** – Esther 4. Mordecai challenges his young niece, queen Esther, to remember her identity as one of God's chosen people.

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- **Empowerment** – 2 Kings 2. One of the most interesting mentoring relationships of Elijah, the elder prophet and teacher of his school of young prophets, empowering Elisha to become his successor.
- **Explanation and correction** – Acts 18. Aquila and Priscilla who have no apparent theological training other than their own heart experience, teaching Apollos, a tutor and great teacher.
- **Appeal for growth** – Philemon. Paul writes to his friend Philemon, appealing for a fundamental shift in his worldview that will result in a dramatic change in Philemon's relationship with his runaway slave, Onesimus.