

An Introduction to Spirituality

Your Invitation to a More Abundant Life

John wrote these words in his rendition of the gospel's story, "Now Jesus did many other signs... which are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe... and that through believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:30-31)

Jesus is quoted also by John (10:10) as saying: "I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly."

That is what spirituality is all about – experiencing a more abundant life with God.

In something of the same order, the following things are written that you might have life in His name – a more abundant life. Many other things are written about spirituality, but these are written to bring you life through the Spirit of the living God.

Following are some of the many components of a growing spiritual life. All of them are desirable and attainable, although it is not an immediate and total experience. Rather, it is a growth process which never ends but just gets more joyful and fulfilling as it becomes more challenging.

Spirituality is not a matter of knowing something special or something new. Rather, it is a new way of experiencing and perceiving something you probably know already. More than anything, it is learning to let go of your life to be in the hands of God and learning to trust that God can direct your life better than you can. It is experiential rather than cognitive. It is of the Spirit rather than of the mind, although the mind is not ignored but transformed to function on a new track and in a new dimension.

Spiritual growth is learning to live closer to God enabling you to experience God's presence in your life by recognizing God's presence in places and people to which you have been oblivious before. It is similar in some ways to putting on glasses that allow you to recognize things that have always been there, but out of focus for you until now.

This journey is the only way to fill that universal emptiness and fulfill that yearning that lingers inside all of us. It leads us into the joy of sharing and caring in ways that may be new to us. This is the hallmark of that abundant life which Jesus promises. It also provides release from stress



and worry concerning ourselves and our lives. We learn to live with the awareness that we are safely in God's care.

On this journey we move from a life format of our trying to please God by what we do, to a format of our pleasing God by allowing God's Spirit who lives within us, to mold and direct our lives. The words of an old hymn catch the spirit of the journey.

Have thine own way, Lord, Have thine own way. Though are the potter, I am the clay.

The journey is about being transformed. It is about becoming a new person, inside and out.

Perhaps the greatest change that we experience on this journey is the transformation from a life of desire to a life of gratitude. We develop an attitude of gratitude. With this comes that peace which surpasses our understanding. That peace is strictly a gift, not an acquisition.

Spirituality is a Spirit-given awareness that God is always present and operative in our lives and in our world. Our responsibility in this is to nourish this awareness as a new entity in our life experience. As life itself is a pure gift, which we are responsible to protect, care for and nourish, so also is the gift of this spiritual awareness. This becomes a new life that is grafted onto the rootstock of our natural life, and it is on the newly grafted spiritual growth that good fruit develops and grows.

This is the source of the fruits of the Spirit. They do not come from our will or from any personal determination of our natural self, but from that spiritual part of our being that has been grafted onto our natural selves by the Spirit of God.

If these above-mentioned components of a spiritual life are appealing to you and are qualities you would like to develop, then you may wish to embark upon this inviting journey into a more abundant life.