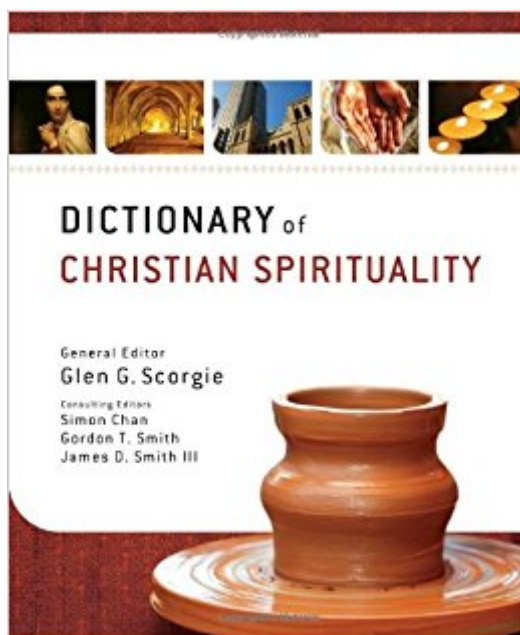


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# Dictionary Of Christian Spirituality



## Synopsis

In recent decades Christian spirituality, spiritual formation and spiritual theology have become important concepts in the global evangelical community. Consequently, an accessible and reliable academic resource is needed on these topics—one that will offer a discerning orientation to the wealth of ecumenical resources available while still highlighting the distinct heritage and affirming the core grace-centered values of classic evangelical spirituality. The Dictionary of Christian Spirituality reflects an overarching interpretive framework for evangelical spiritual formation: a holistic and grace-filled spirituality that encompasses relational (connecting), transformational (becoming), and vocational (doing) dynamics. At the same time, contributors respectfully acknowledge the differences between Reformed, Holiness, and Pentecostal paradigms of the spiritual life. And, by bringing together writers from around the world who share a common orthodoxy, this reference work is truly global and international in both its topical scope and contributors. Entries give appropriate attention to concepts, concerns, and formative figures in the evangelical tradition of spirituality that other reference work neglect. They offer a discerning orientation to the wealth of ecumenical resources available, exploring the similarities and differences between Christianity and alternate spiritualities without lapsing into relativism. The Dictionary of Christian Spirituality is a resource that covers a wide range of topics relating to Christian spirituality and is biblically engaged, accessible, and relevant for all contemporary Christians.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Engaging, comprehensive, informative, broad in perspective. Who thinks it is fun to read a dictionary? This one is! This is a dictionary to be read for enjoyment as well as information. The essays and articles are freshly written, thorough but concise. The Dictionary of Christian Spirituality reflects the deep respect and appreciation the writers have for their topics. Reading this dictionary is like taking a finely tuned course in the topics included. The essays and dictionary entries portray the complex and diverse history of the Christian church embodied in women and men and the contexts of their times and cultures. Many readers will delve into these volumes seeking information about particular topics. I was fascinated and drawn from article to article appreciating the fine scholarship, depth of research reflected, and careful writing that make the Dictionary of Christian Spirituality an excellent resource.” -- Jeannette A. Bakke, Author

“Scholarship with a soul! This is a book like no other---scholarly breadth with spiritual depth in a dictionary. So many have written so much about Christian spirituality that it is difficult to connect the parts. Here is a readable resource that brings everything together. I kept turning the pages not to read through, but to explore. Every article led me to another journey on a different page.” -- Leith Anderson, President

“The Dictionary of Christian Spirituality is a remarkable balance of broad, integrative essays and more than 700 succinct, informative dictionary entries. It combines a wide survey of the great movements in Christian spirituality while giving attention to the main contributors from all parts of the globe, past and present. The contributors include some of the great heavyweights of the movement while also incorporating significant voices from a variety of related disciplines and perspectives. The work is a must-have resource for every able scholar, pastor, and follower of Jesus.” -- Gayle D. Beebe, President

“The very publication of this work speaks to the contemporary interest in spirituality. So much spirituality, however, is uninformed, shallow, and vague. All the more reason to welcome this important dictionary. It is impressive in its scope, wide in what is included, and deep in the intent to strengthen life in the Spirit of Christ. Scan a few entries, and it will be evident what a valuable resource this can be. I cannot imagine a dictionary on spirituality that is all prose. So I was delighted to see the entries on poetry and Hopkins, for example. Don’t miss them.” -- Leighton Ford, President

“The combination of substantial reflective essays on major themes in Christian spirituality and sharply focused articles on major figures and topics provides a rich mixture of insight, information, and inspiration. Spirituality can be a subject that wafts into the ether, but in this broadly ecumenical and very well-balanced work, it is presented with real substance and genuine edification.” -- Mark A. Noll, Professor of History

“This is not the only dictionary about Christian spirituality in town. There are many around and some of them are very good. But this one,

with its global interests and spiritual zeal, has an energy and breadth that lifts it into a new league. Moreover, as well as making a very good job of expanding our knowledge of Christian spirituality and all the sources that have shaped it, this important volume steers the reader through the people, movements, and issues with a reliable, generous, and grace-focused wisdom. It is a source not just of information about Christian spirituality but of real formation, through the Spirit, in the life of Christ. — Christopher Cocksworth, Bishop of Coventry — “The more I read in the Dictionary of Christian Spirituality, the more I wanted to read more! The initial essays provide a thoroughly excellent foundation, and the alphabetized entries that follow leave us intrigued to read others. I highly recommend this dictionary for all Christians, especially those who want to grow in their active practices of various spiritual disciplines, their devoted love for God and neighbor, and their fervent thanksgiving for global saints and the myriad ways God works in the world. — Marva J. Dawn, Teaching Fellow in Spiritual Theology

Glen G. Scorgie (Ph.D., St. Andrews) is professor of theology at Bethel Seminary San Diego since 1996. Previously he was academic vice-president of North American Baptist College in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, and is a past president of the Canadian Evangelical Theological Association. For the past decade he has also been involved in the ministries of Chinese Bible Church of San Diego, and lectures regularly in Asia. His writings include *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality* (2007). For more information, visit his website at [www.glenscorgie.com](http://www.glenscorgie.com). Simon Chan (PhD, Cambridge) is Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Theological College in Singapore. He is the author of *Man and Sin*, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition*, *Spiritual Theology; A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* and *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community*. He is also the associate editor of the *Global Dictionary of Theology* and the *Dictionary of Mission Theology*. Gordon T. Smith (PhD, Loyola House, Ateneo de Manila) is the president of reSource Leadership International and formerly dean of Regent College, Vancouver. His publications include *A Holy Meal: the Lord’s Supper in the Life of the Church* and *The Voice of Jesus: Discernment, Prayer and the Witness of the Spirit*. James D. Smith III (ThD, Harvard) is associate professor of Church History at Bethel Seminary San Diego, as well an adjunct professor of religion at the University of San Diego. A member of the Baptist General Conference, he is a former teaching assistant to Henri Nouwen at Harvard, and lectures frequently on Nouwen’s spirituality and related topics.

Even if you are not evangelical, you are likely to find a great deal of material in this new book, both

valuable and well-written. The book is well-organized, in depth, with lots of bibliography, theologically very rich, a point-of-departure for further reflection even where you may disagree. This is a book you can fall into and read brief bio/historical pieces (very comprehensive in scope, surprisingly large number of entries) or read from the beginning all the way through since it opens with a number of longer overview essays on the history/theology of spirituality. If you are a beginning student seeking orientation or an intermediate specialist looking for a comprehensive reference, this is a rather scholarly introduction that can serve as an antidote to so much literature on Christian spirituality that is often sentimental or anti-intellectual. If you are mature in the spiritual life or looking to break new ground in this realm, this book is a very very valuable guide. Highly recommended.

This is a great tool for Christian spirituality. The articles are short and to the point.

This is a great resource for all Christians.

"Two concepts of Christian spirituality—one narrow, the other holistic—now circulate. The narrow version is concerned with experiencing the presence, voice, and consolations of God in a direct, right here-and-now way..... Holistic spirituality is about living all of life before God." (Glen Scorgie, excerpt from chapter 1) Much of the Christian world in the past century seem to have been more concerned with the first (narrow) view to the neglect of the second (holistic) view. If you study Christian history, you will find an overall more balanced view. In recent years, Christians have shown an increased interest in the holistic approach as they want a deeper more substantial faith than that of their predecessors. The Dictionary of Christian Spirituality will be a useful guide in understanding what shapes us as spiritual beings. This book has two main sections. The first section includes 34 articles written by various scholars discussing integrative perspectives. These include perspectives on spirituality in the scriptures, spirituality in history and how spirituality shapes how we function in the world around us. I have found these articles to be well written and instructive. The second section is a dictionary of ideas and people that have shaped Christian spirituality over the centuries. The entries are concise but thorough. I have not had much time to spend with this book but the time I have spent in it has been intriguing and informative. This promises to be a valuable reference tool for years to come. This book is cost efficient considering the scholarly research that went into its making. The format is pleasing to the eyes and the cover is durable enough to last for many years. It also looks good on the shelf. Thank you Zondervan for this valuable addition to the growing discussion of Christian spirituality.

My roots are very conservative Southern Baptist and evangelical. It would be a serious understatement to say that all things having to do with 'spirituality' were frowned upon - or at least ignored and pushed to the margins - in the churches I grew up in. I remember coming back home from college (where I was a Bible major) one weekend and a deacon asked me what I was studying in my Bible classes. I naively told him that last week we had been discussing the 'in Christ' spirituality of the Apostle Paul. This deacon's reaction was less than positive. Spirituality it has been thought in many conservative evangelical circles is associated with all things 'weird'. And to bring up mysticism was to stop a conversation altogether, in fact, many I grew up around was sure there could be no such thing as 'Christian' mysticism. Some may find it strange then that Eugene Peterson is one of most favorite authors and one of my main teachers concerning spiritual theology. Through Peterson and others I have found that spirituality is not all manner of weirdness and that while they had their flaws like everyone else in the world, we evangelicals can learn a thing or two from the Christian mystics. Glen Scorgie underscores one of Peterson's basic ideas about spirituality when he says, "Christian spirituality is the domain of lived Christian experience. Its about living all of life - not just some esoteric portion of it - before God, through God, in the transforming and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit." (27) There it is, spirituality is not about the strange or esoteric. Indeed, ones spirituality is where does life 'in Christ' and through the Spirit (to pull themes from the Apostle Paul) in the everyday, ordinary, and mundane stuff of life. Scorgie also give us a valuable matrix of Christian spirituality to keep in mind. He discusses the relational, transformation, and vocational dynamics of Christian spirituality in which there is one key to being spiritually deep. These three dynamics exist in an interdependent matrix in which Christ is with us, Christ is in us, and Christ works through us through the Spirit. (29-30) With the emergence of authors of such as Richard Foster and Eugene Peterson, evangelical attitudes toward spirituality and Christian mysticism have greatly improved. The publication of Dictionary of Christian Spirituality is a testimony to this reality. But this is not JUST a dictionary. Before one gets to the approximately 600 pages of alphabetized dictionary entries there are 34 chapters comprising 240 pages of 'integrative essays' that are well worth the price of the book as a whole. Covered are such topics as Old and New Testament foundations for Christian Spirituality, Human Personhood, Eschatology and Hope, Spirituality in Community, Liturgical Spirituality, Prayer, Mysticism, Spirituality in Relation to Psychology and Therapy, and Mission and Ministry, and four chapters devoted to the history of Christian Spirituality (just to name a few). The dictionary entries contain smaller article as covering a wide swath of subjects ranging from Baptist Spirituality to Methodist Spirituality to Anabaptist spirituality as well as

people such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer to Karl Barth to an article each on the Cappadocian Fathers. I am well pleased with the Dictionary of Christian Spirituality. From what I have seen thus far it represents well the diversity of Christianity and covers not only Protestant and evangelical spirituality but also Catholic and Eastern Orthodox spirituality. I was especially pleased with the wide inclusion of Eastern Orthodox material (and discussions of theosis/deification even) not only because of the influence of Eastern Orthodox on me personally but because Protestants in general and evangelicals specifically (western as they are) have been guilty of ignoring or forgetting about our Eastern Orthodox brethren. As one who desires to learn from and incorporate a wide variety of Christian sources in my spiritual practice I appreciate the Dictionary of Christian Spirituality. This book is a great starting point and at the end of each chapter and article there are resources for further reading. With this book we have the opportunity to learn deepen our spirituality from the witness and testimony of the whole church (I just wish that it had an index). Just to be official, everyone should know (in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising") that I received this book free from Zondervan as part of a give away to read and talk about on my blog. I was not required to write a positive review, a bad review, or an in between review. I hereby swear that the opinions I have expressed are my own and that I am solely responsible for any typos that appear.

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