

## **ORIENTATIONS FOR SPIRITUALITY**

By Dr. Eiko Takamizawa<sup>1</sup>

### **INTRODUCTION**

Scholars take various approaches in categorizing the dimensions of spirituality. Melvin E. Dieter and others analyze the spiritual dimensions according to theological traditions: Wesleyan, Reformed, the Pentecostal, Keswick and Augustinian-Dispensational. Donald Alexander basically takes the same approach to spirituality, analyzing it from denominational and theological orientations. Others, such as George A. Lane, Alister E. McGrath, Richard Wood, and Howard Snyder, explored Christian spirituality by focusing on its historical perspective. Others take the Biblical theological approach to the topic—e.g., Donald A. Carson and Lewis Sperry Chafer. Although these approaches offer comprehensive approaches to Christian spirituality, the dimensions are somewhat complex for grasping the total view of Christian spirituality. In this paper, a general view of Christian spirituality will be explored based on Young's theory of an integrated view of Christian spirituality.

### **MARK S. YOUNG'S "TRIANGLE" CATEGORIZATION**

Mark S. Young categorized the complexity of varied views on spirituality into three groups according to their characteristics: the escapist, the rationalist, and the activist. While Young himself realizes that his categorizations are without detailed precision, and thus run the risk of over simplification, he still values the task of categorization; for it aids comprehension of complex subjects. By categorizing spiritual orientation, Young aims to isolate common predominant orientations into several different views. However, he attempts to do this without denying the distinctive feature of any other view of spirituality.<sup>2</sup> The simplicity of his categorization, with its three factors, contributes to students that they may comprehend the subject, and to educators that they may have a

---

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Eiko Takamizawa is full-time Lecturer in Missions at Torch Trinity Graduate School of Theology.

<sup>2</sup>Mark S. Young, "Nurturing Spirituality in the Matrix of Human Development," *Christian Educational Journal* 10, no. 2 (1987): 87-98.

balanced focus in their practice. (See diagram below.)

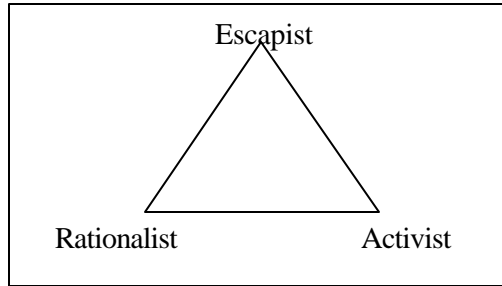


Diagram 1. Mark S. Young's Category of Spiritual Orientation

### **ESCAPISTS**

The first category of the three is what Young calls “the Escapists.” He defines the Escapist spirituality as “an attempt to retreat into individual experiences of reflective meditation or inner searching for true being or ecstatic utterance in order to meet God.”<sup>3</sup> Young includes Pentecostal spirituality in this group because of its tendency to escape from the world through ecstatic experience. Spirituality in this view is intensively private; it is an individual, subjective encounter in the inner person with the living God. Therefore, it often values solitude and silence of the participants. For this group, the locus of spirituality is outside of everyday experience. Only by escaping from the cares and concerns of life, they seek for spirituality. Young represents this category with monastic movements and with Thomas A’ Kempis, who advocated that by union with Jesus Christ the worshipper experiences a peace of heart that comes from the love and grace of God.<sup>4</sup>

### **Rationalists**

Rationalist spirituality, on the other hand, is based upon the

---

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 88.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

intellectual capability to understand and then apply biblical data and/or theological formulation to spiritual experience.<sup>5</sup> Young explains, “Such objective data are deemed the only appropriate source of guidance for spirituality.” Therefore, “the study of spirituality becomes a hermeneutical/theological exercise based upon the cognitive processes of reason and analysis.”<sup>6</sup> He identifies the Reformation tradition as a foundation for this orientation. He explains that John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion* is not primarily for the dogmatic formulation, but rather as a guide for spirituality. One recent example of this orientation is seen in Lewis Sperry Chafer, who wrote *He That is Spiritual*. He holds that the believer knows how to enter the state of spirituality only through a proper understanding of the biblical data. Scholars in the rationalists orientation, such as Chafer, commonly share a presuppositional (bibliological) bias that a proper understanding of the biblical data or theological formulations that are achieved through reason and analysis should form the basis and limits of spiritual experience.<sup>7</sup>

### Activist

Activists see spirituality in “the interactive experience of God and the worshipper in the context of injustice in the world.”<sup>8</sup> Spirituality, from this viewpoint, finds its source in the present human experience of struggling for liberation from injustice. While Escapists ignore the present reality of the human life, Activist spirituality grows out of social analysis and sociopolitical involvement.<sup>9</sup> Representatives of this orientation are Black theology and Liberation theology. The former inherits the African spiritual heritage and forges ahead for freedom from the oppression of slavery and poverty; and the latter theology filters the Christian message through a Marxist-influenced analysis of the class struggle. Spirituality in the Activist orientation grows through a meaningful and reflective struggle against injustice in society.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

## THE QUADRANT OF SPIRITUAL ORIENTATION

Although Young's categories depict three main orientations of spirituality clearly, the escapist orientation seems to have two streams today. The Pentecostal/Charismatic movement, an undeniable phenomenon of last century, emphasizes personal, mystical experience. Although it is similar to the Escapist in its emphasis on supernatural experience, it does not quite fall into the same category as the Escapists as Young asserts. While the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement emphasizes otherworldly elements just as the Escapists, it is often active in social participation and proclamation, things in which the Escapists are not always interested. The movement does not intend to escape from everyday matters, but to pursue the mystery or mysterious power of God in their lives. Therefore, two streams within the Escapist group should be distinguished from each other. Thus, a four-dimensional category is being suggested as an orientation for Christianity spirituality (See Diagram 2).

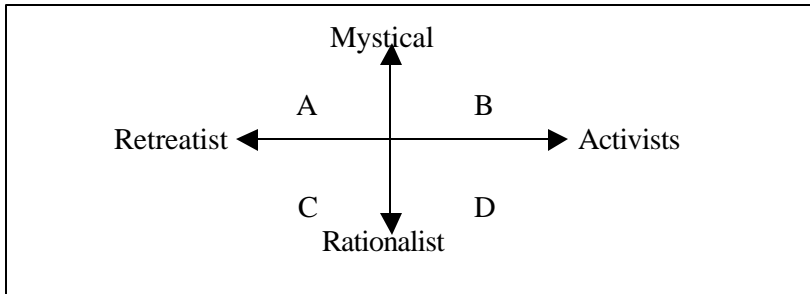


Diagram 2: Orientation of Nature of Spirituality

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH ORIENTATION

The characteristics, including general characteristics, and historical and theological perspectives, of each category will be described in this section.

## **Mystic/Retreatist**

### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The first dimension is the Mystic/Retreatist group. The ultimate goal for this spiritual orientation is the union of the believers with God. The goal of this category is to refocus on the invisible God both by intentional acknowledgement of God's presence and contemplation on His love. The group's primary methodology is separation from the world in solitude. However, some in this category do not pursue physical solitude. They create mental/spiritual solitude, and see an invisible God behind the visible and tangible world.<sup>11</sup> Due to the nature of its goal and its methodology, this category relies more on affective and experiential aspects of faith. Feeling and experience plays significant roles in this approach. In the aspects of faith, this category relates prayer as its most important action. Historically, the Desert Fathers and monastery movements represent this category.

### **HISTORICAL EXAMPLES**

James Houston, in his article about symbols of spirituality in Christian history, designates the second stage "Desert." He explains that the "Desert" movement started after the cessation of the Diocletian persecution (312 A.D.), and became a great movement in the fifth century. A group of people who fled from the cities and lived in deserts started new communities for the pursuit of spiritual lives. Some ascetics embraced wild solitary lives in the form of anchorites; but the majority formed extensive communities, schools, and activities, and sought alternative lives in the desert.

In these communities, the Fathers lived without any set programs or timetables for training. The apprenticeship between masters and disciples was the primary methodology; novices learned from experienced ascetics by receiving advice and wisdom. Along with this interaction between master and teacher, individual time for meditation was another important methodology for spiritual life. Philip Rousseau writes, "The word of the master gained full effect only when pondered

---

<sup>11</sup>Thomas Kelly explains two levels of life for the believers: one is the level of activity in life, and the other is interior life by which we communicate with God. (*A Testament of Devotion*. New York: Harper & Row, 1941.)

at home... Indeed, the cell itself, its silence and protection against distraction would be your teacher.”<sup>12</sup> He summarizes the life in the desert as “meditative self-reliance” in the loosely structured company of fellow devotees.<sup>13</sup> Monastery movements in later centuries were the successors of the spirituality of the Desert Fathers.

As Brother Lawrence (17<sup>th</sup> century) advocates in his book *The Practice of the Presence of God*, the primary concern of the desert category is the importance of acknowledging God’s presence in any situation of life.<sup>14</sup> For Lawrence, it is not necessary to retreat by separating from the world geographically, but by separating the mind from occupation with the worldly. He admonishes believers to be conscious of God’s presence in their everyday life.<sup>15</sup>

### THE THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Mystic/Retreatist group’s focus on the separation from the secular world is related to God’s attribute of mystery. God, as the Creator, is beyond human reasoning and comprehension, even more so than the immensity of the universe and time. Humans, with the limitation of the dimension of space and flow of time, cannot comprehend God who is transcendent and eternal; for being beyond universe is not merely the extension of space nor is eternity merely the extension of history. Human beings can interact with Him only through His revelation. Therefore, knowing God should be beyond rational conceptualization. God’s absoluteness, transcendence, omniscience, self-sufficiency, and non-contingency are some of the theological bases for this spiritual orientation.

### Retreatist /Rationalist

#### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The second dimension represents the Retreatist/Rationalist group. The primary concern of this group is to understand the biblical data and

---

<sup>12</sup>Philip Rousseau, “The Desert Fathers, Antony and Pachomius”, *The Study of Spirituality*, ed. Cheslyn Jones et al. (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 119-30.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God: By Bother Lawrence of the Resurrection*, trans. John J. Delaney (London: Image Books, 1977).

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

## 112-ORIENTATIONS FOR SPIRITUALITY

theological formulations for guidelines of spirituality. Therefore, the emotional aspect of faith is not their primary focus, and social involvement remains at a minimum in this orientation. Lewis Sperry Chafer takes this approach to spirituality. According to Chafer, believers' spirituality deepens only through a proper understanding of the biblical data and faith that is based on reasoned theological understanding. He writes, "The divine wisdom is hidden in the very words of God's Book; but the spiritual content of these words is understood only as one is able to compare spiritual things with spiritual" I Corinthians 2:13).

### **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Young discovers the historical origin of this orientation in the Reformation tradition. Although there is a variety of spiritualities within the Retreat/Cognitivist orientation, according to theological traditions, a common and distinct feature of them is their evaluation of spirituality by one's theological understanding of revelation of the biblical data or of a creed. Calvin, for example, elevates the Scripture as the most adequate source of the highest knowledge of humans: knowledge about God and that of humans. The witness of the Spirit in the heart of the believing reader attests to the Scripture being the very voice of God. Due to the Protestant's emphasis on the Scripture, social involvement was placed outside of the hub of doctrine. Additionally, advocating the supremacy of the Scripture, the Reformation rejected the mystical and mythological elements in Christianity. Alister E. McGrath writes, "Protestantism has often been described as the 'religion of the Bible.' This is perhaps seen most clearly in traditional Protestant preaching, which often takes the form of biblical-based cycles of sermons..."<sup>16</sup>

### **THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Chafer writes,

A Christian is a Christian because he is rightly related to Christ, but "he that is spiritual" is spiritual because he is rightly related to the Spirit, in addition to his relations to Christ in salvation. It therefore follows that any attempt to discover the fact and conditions of true spirituality must be based upon a clear

---

<sup>16</sup> Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Spirituality: An Introduction* (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc. , 1999), 18.

understanding of the Bible revelation concerning the Spirit in His possible relationships to men.<sup>17</sup>

Christ, as the incarnated Word of God, is the triune God, the most related to this category.

### **Rationalist/Activist**

#### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Donal Dorr, a Catholic Missionary Theologian, approaches spirituality not only through the personal and inter-personal aspects of the Christian faith, but also through its political aspects, advocating the need for a transformation of society by kingdom values. He defines spirituality as follows:

Our spirituality must be rooted not in just one or two aspects of conversion but in all three—the “religious”, the “moral” and the “political.” It is a distortion of Christian faith to neglect any of them or to fail to work for a full integration of the three.<sup>18</sup>

Although Dorr is Activist in his emphasis on the active political responsibility of Christians, his approach is distinguished from Liberal Theology in the acknowledgment of the transcendent and immanent God as a reality. He also emphasizes prayer for the spiritual life of Christians, something to which Liberal Christians do not often give priority.

#### **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

As Young points out, rooted both in the African spiritual heritage which does not separate secular from sacred, and the African historical heritage, in which they were victims of slavery and social discrimination from the whites, the Liberation Theology, the radical form of the Rationalist/Activist seeks spirituality in political action against social oppression toward the poor and marginalized people. It employs a

---

<sup>17</sup>Lewis Sperry Chafer, *He That is Spiritual: A Classic Study of the Biblical Doctrine of Spirituality* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Academie Books, 1918), 23.

<sup>18</sup>Donal Dorr, *Spirituality and Justice* (New York: Maryknoll: Orbis Books), 18.



## 114-ORIENTATIONS FOR SPIRITUALITY

Marxist's social analysis to judge society. In this perspective, spirituality that opposes apartheid is an incarnational witness in the real world, in contrast to the escapism of much that passes for a spiritual and soul-converting orientation. The emphasis on human reason and action eliminates supernatural aspects from the Scripture. This is one of the by-products of the enlightenment.

### **THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Rational/Activist spirituality places its centrality in human reason and societal restoration. God is viewed to be in struggle against injustice in order to establish His Kingdom. Human life-experience is the soil of this spirituality. In the struggle, spirituality happens as believers sense the wrath of God against injustice, and depend on Him more in prayer and critical reflection.<sup>19</sup> The primary concern for this spiritual orientation is the human reason, human society, and justice in it. Thus, the focus of this orientation is anthropology.

### **Mystical/Social**

#### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

This category expects supernatural phenomena or experience as a sign of spirituality. Russel P. Spittler describes Pentecostal spirituality:

Spirituality...refers to the personal or individual quality of being spiritual. And spiritual describes a committed believer who is perceived to be...open to the things of the Spirit, fully consecrated to God, endowed perhaps with one or two spiritual gifts besides speaking in tongues...perhaps the gifts of healing, knowledge, discernment of spirits or wisdom.<sup>20</sup>

The religious experience is a significant dimension of spirituality in this category. The experience is often identified with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is often manifested as speaking in tongues.

This category is distinct from Mystical/Retreatist in its active approach to others or to society. Members of this category do not just

---

<sup>19</sup> Young, 90.

<sup>20</sup> Russel P. Spittler. "The Pentecostal View," *Christian Spirituality: Five Views on Sanctification* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press. 1988), 140.

seek for the individual religious experience, but become active in proselytizing and testifying to others. The recent rapid growth in Pentecostal/Charismatic churches throughout the world indicates the activeness of the Mystical/Social category.

### **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The historical example of this category is the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement of 20th century. Based on the black heritage of the key figure of the movement, the Pentecostals integrated Negro spirituals into traditional Christian liturgy. The Pentecostal movement was expanded through the excitement of signs and wonders, and participants' personal experiences of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. In spite of opposition from rationalists and fundamentalists, the movement developed all over the United States and is spreading to various parts of the world. However, when the movement lost much of its revolutionary impetus, the Charismatic movement came into being with the same emphasis of spirituality.

### **THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Pentecostal/Charismatic spirituality is represented by four words: power, presence, passion, and praise. Concerning power, Jack Deere disputes the idea that miracles were only for the first century Christians. He counters, "If the miracle is for the infant church to help its growth, why not for today's churches?" He continues, "If the miracle was to testify of Jesus and the message about him, it can demean the inherent power of the Gospel." The miracles today are to testify to the resurrected Jesus. Christ's death on the cross, Deere asserts, is powerful enough to deliver every Christian from the bondage of sin, lust, anger, fear, death, and Satan.<sup>21</sup>

Charismatic Christians exercise their faith through their intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit in their daily lives. Deere warns about Christian religious forms that do not have the presence of the Lord. He reminds us that Satan uses a strategy of creating illusions; and, by doing

---

<sup>21</sup> Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Holy Spirit: A Former Dallas Seminary Professor Discovers That God Speaks and Heals Today* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), 109.

116-ORIENTATIONS FOR SPIRITUALITY

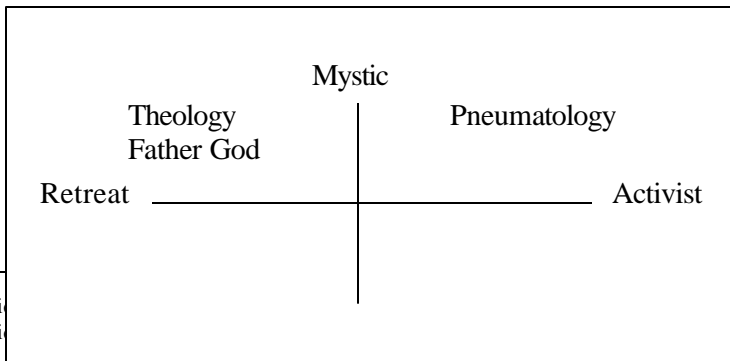
this, Satan distracts believers from prayer and meditation and can defeat those vulnerable Christians who do not practice the presence of God. Deere says, “The quantities of biblical knowledge nor powerful spiritual gifts will not...be profitable for his service, if we do not come into his presence on a constant basis.”<sup>22</sup>

The passion for the Lord is another characteristic of the movement. Deere identifies the passion for God as a sign of spiritual maturity. He writes,

Spiritual maturity is sharing the affections of God and discerning His voice. It is loving what God loves and hating what he hates. Spiritually mature Christians love God and his people passionately, and they hate anything that takes them away from God. Only in the context of such love will Bible knowledge and the gifts of the Spirit ever achieve their divine purposes.<sup>23</sup>

Another great contribution of the Charismatic movement to the Christian Church today is its lively and free style of worship. Adding to the traditional hymns, they usually enjoy singing simple choruses repeatedly in worship. There is no set style for worshippers; and, therefore, everybody is free to praise God with various physical expressions.

The movement’s motto, in a word, is to return to the faith of early Church *before* the Bible and *through* the Bible. They are not only content with understanding the Biblical message, but also seek to experience the Biblical truth of its power in the presence of the Spirit imparted to this world. This consequently leads believers to praise God with full passion for Him.



<sup>22</sup> Ibi  
<sup>23</sup> Ibi

Christology	Anthropology
Logos	Reason

Diagram 3. The Theological Foci of the Four Categories

### **BIBLICAL EXAMPLES**

In this section the examples that represent each orientation will be reviewed in a special focus on Jesus Christ, so that the biblical position on spirituality will be reflected in regard to the four spiritual orientations.

#### **Mystical/Retreatist**

Jesus, in the crucial time of his life, often retreated from the crowd or social life, and spent time in prayer. Before He began His public ministry, He went into the wilderness and experienced forty days fasting and prayer (Luke 4). He spent overnight in prayer in the mountain, before He called the Apostles (Luke 6:12). The night before His arrest and trial, He spent in agony and prayer in the garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:39-46).

In three years of discipling the Twelve, Jesus from time to time directed them to be separate from the crowd for solitude or prayer (Matt 14:22). From His childhood, Jesus stayed in God's presence. "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49). His abiding in His Father did not change in his later life. "Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work" (Luke 14:10).

#### **Retreatist/Rationalist**

For Jesus, the word of God in the Old Testament was the

absolute authority and truth. He told the disciples, “I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matt 5:18). He overcame Satan’s temptation by the Word (Luke 4:1-12). He also declared that His words are spirit. “The Spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life” (John 6:63). The whole Gospel of John was founded upon the proclamation that Jesus Christ is the Word (John 1:1). Chafer writes, “The written Word reveals the character of the spiritual life and exhorts to its fulfillment; but it faithfully reveals that the life can be lived only by the in-wrought power of God.”<sup>24</sup>

### **Rationalist/Activists**

One of the primary attributes of God is His righteousness. The Law and prophecies in the Old Testament exhibit the nature of God. He did not overlook the sinfulness of people: the Gentile’s rebellion against God and His righteousness, as well as the Jewish hypocrisy behind the mask of religiousness. He cared for the orphans, widows, and sojourners in the land. Donal Dorr writes,

. . . whole prophetic strand in the Bible is that Yahweh is not just an “ethnic” God but an “ethical” God. . . . He is a God who is concerned about injustice not merely when it is inflicted on the Jews by foreign powers; he is equally or even more outraged by injustice practiced by the kings and ruling class of the Jews themselves on their own people. So the prophetic tradition makes it clear that God is on the side of the victims of injustice.<sup>25</sup>

Jesus Christ had divine authority and lived in lowly humility as the incarnated One. He lived His earthly life with the poor and marginalized ones. His early life was spent in a despised village. He lived a simple life, mixed with the ordinary people, and fellowshiped with social outcasts. In contrast to his kindness and meekness, Jesus boldly confronted social and religious injustice by the political and religious leaders. His harsh words against the authorities were provocative enough to put Himself in danger, “You disregard God’s command, in order to follow your own teaching”

---

<sup>24</sup> Chafer, 61.

<sup>25</sup> Dorr, 88.

(Matt 15:16), “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! . . . on the outside you appear to people as righteous but the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness” (Matt 23:25), “You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?” (Matt 23:33).

### **Mystic/Activist**

In the Bible this emphasis is expressed in the festivals or celebrations of the Hebrew tradition. The festivals for Israel were times to remember the mighty acts of God in protecting and saving His people in history. The Israelites in the festivals repented of their sins, prayed to God for the power of God, practiced the presence of God, praised God with the joy of salvation, and expressed a passion for Him.

Jesus also told that His coming into this world was a wedding celebration, when the Pharisees criticized His disciples for not fasting. His parable of the wedding banquet is another symbol for celebration of the Christian life. The eschatological description of the kingdom is the very expression of celebration: the throne and all other appointments are decorated in a way that any earthly beauty cannot exactly describe. The praises and performance of worshippers, both angels and humans, as well as nature, were offered to the Lamb in majestic succession. The crowd of the redeemed expressed the excitement of the victory of the Lamb in a triumphant shout of praise.

## **A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF EVANGELICAL SPIRITUALITY**

In the quadrants of spiritual orientation studied above, the Evangelical approach belongs to the third dimension, which is Rational and Retreatist oriented. This seems to have historical roots in theology of the Reformation: *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, and *sola scriptura*. Although Reformation theology tremendously contributed to the development of the Church, it also has had a negative impact on the spiritual life of the believers.

For example, the doctrine of *sola gratia* could be a cause for the

## 120-ORIENTATIONS FOR SPIRITUALITY

lack of the spontaneity of believers, as it could be interpreted as a suggestion of a passive faith. Chafer views the connection of spirituality and the service for believers, “We discover Christian service to be a direct exercise of the energy of the Spirit through the believer...The very service of the Christian, like his salvation, has been designed in the eternal plan and purpose of God; ‘For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them’ (Eph 2:10).”<sup>26</sup> The Bible encourages believers to be active in their faith life; Jesus enjoined His disciples to ask, seek and knock in order to receive the Holy Spirit, and He also instructed political responsibility (Matt 22:15-22). An Activist’s approach might help balance the Evangelical view.

The doctrine of *sola fide* might give the impression that Christians have to expect only invisible things by faith; and, therefore, to seek something visible may be understood as a lack of faith. Do Evangelical Christians seriously expect to experience God’s real presence in their lives just as the disciples of the early Church? They were led by the Holy Spirit, to the level that the Spirit and disciples chatted with each other like a father with his children. “The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them” (Acts 11:12); “When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bythunia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to” (Acts 16:7).

The doctrine of *sola scriptura* can lead to the idea that our faith is right so long as the final authority is placed in the Scripture. However, as Masaaki Tezuka pointed out, words are merely representing reality. He explains this character of the words and also pitfall of bibliolatry for the Evangelicals:

What I would like to point out is, the question why the “aspect of experience,” which used to be the substance of Christian faith, had been removed from Christianity? And I assume it was because of the believer’s illusion that “it is the Bible upon which Christian fiat fundamentally stands.”<sup>27</sup>

Tezuka refers to Luther saying that Luther’s actual intention in the

---

<sup>26</sup> Chafer, 51.

<sup>27</sup> Masaaki Tezuka, *Kirisuto Kyo no Daisan no Nami: Karisuma Undo toha Nanika [The Third Wave in Christianity: What Charismatic Movement is]* (Tokyo: Kirisuto Shinbun Sha, 1986).

doctrine of *sola scriptura* was “to return to the Early Church” through “returning to the Bible.” Of course, this does not mean that Luther wanted to discard the authority of the Bible. But it must be understood that the Bible, as a book written with words, is as a symbol of reality. Tazuka explains, “[a] religious symbol is a form in which the fourth dimension (spiritual affair) can be expressed in the third dimension (this world).” He thinks that the Bible is a reflection, or an orbit, of “the experiences and events” of the early Christians.

Accordingly, he comes to the conclusion about the view of the Bible and its relationship with spirituality as follows:

If we try to return to the Early Church, it must be the return to the position “before the Bible,” whose contents are living work of the Holy Spirit and their experiences by the believers. Though there was no Bible in Early Church, but there were abundance of the living work of the Holy Spirit and the believer’s experiences. Experience preceded the documents which were the symbols of the experiences.<sup>28</sup>

Gordon Fee warns of two dangers that believers of the Word could make: to ignore the cultural setting the Word was given in; and to take the words as directly spoken to the readers of any generation. Fee says,

By being aware of God’s message both to the first century and to us, we avoid two dangers. First, there is the danger that the words may never leave the first century. Some passages seem to address and some do not...

The second danger is that the Epistle may never belong to the first century. In this case we suppose that every word comes directly to us... If we are to escape both of these dangers, then we must discover that God said to that setting, and it is that word which we must hear, even if we must hear it in a new setting or learn to recognize contemporary settings to which it should be

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.



addressed.<sup>29</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This paper studied the four primary orientations of Christian spirituality: Mystical, Retreatist, Rationalists, and Activists. In some stages of Christian history there were movements in which one or some of these spiritual orientations was emphasized. Following these traditions, we see various approaches to spirituality today. However, Jesus demonstrated all four categories of spiritual orientation in His life and teaching. This means that the Church is to pursue spirituality from all these angles.

In order to approach spirituality holistically, discipleship is the most appropriate way. Jesus discipled a small number of followers in order for them to grow spiritually, so that they could carry out the task of mission to the world. The effect has continued throughout two thousand years. In His discipleship, Jesus lived together with His disciples, and thus provided a model of how to live as God's missionary. Robert Coleman articulates, "It was by virtue of this fellowship that the disciples were permitted 'to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God' (Luke 8:10). Knowledge was gained by association before it was understood by explanation."<sup>30</sup> Jesus' teaching was not just limited to the classrooms and textbooks, nor to temple court or the book of the Law. For Jesus, any life setting was His classroom; all the incidents of life and the reflections from the Word of God were textbooks; and any elements of God's creation were tools for His teaching.

This challenges those who serve in a seminary. In the process of institutionalization, the goal of education might be shifted into academic excellence or a mere statement of vision in the school mottoes, without the seminary practicing as much as it should. The courses for spiritual maturity or character development might become the subjects to study. Teaching is confined to the classroom and the students are left for themselves in relation to actual spiritual growth. It should be remembered that only those who experienced the holistic nurturing of discipleship can disciple others well. If institutionalization of Christian education is

---

<sup>29</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1991), 9.

<sup>30</sup> Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism: with Study Guide* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Fleming Revell Company, 1993), 42.

unavoidable, the structure of the schools or seminaries, as well as churches, must be changed into a form that allows all the members to be disciplined and to disciple others. By doing so, we can pursue and fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, “Go and make disciples.”

### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, Donald L., ed. *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification, Reformed, Lutheran, Wesleyan, Pentecostal, and Contemplative*. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1988.
- Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *He That Is Spiritual: A Classic Study of the Biblical Doctrine of Spirituality*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Academie Books, 1918.
- Coleman, Robert E. *The Master Plan of Evangelism: With Study Guide by Roy J. Fish*. Foreword by Billy Graham. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Flemming Revell Company, A Division of Baker Book House, 1993.
- Dorr, Donal. *Spirituality and Justice*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1984.
- Fee, Gordon D. *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1991.
- Houston, James M. *Traditions of Spirituality in the History of the Church*.
- Julian of Norwich. *Showings*. Translated by Edmund College and James Walsh. *Classics of Western Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press, 1978.
- Kelly, Thomas R. *A Testament of Devotion*. New York: Harper & Row, 1941.
- Lawrence, Brother. *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Translated by John J. Delaney. Foreword by Henri J. M. Nouwen. London: Image Books, Doubleday, 1977.
- Rousseau, Philip. *The Desert Fathers: Antony and Pachomius, The Study of Spirituality*. Edited by Cheslyn Jones et al. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Torrance, James B. “Contemplating the Trinitarian Mystery of Christ.”

124-ORIENTATIONS FOR SPIRITUALITY

*In Alive to God: Studies of Spirituality Presented to James Houston.* Edited by J. I. Packer and Loren Wilkinson. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1992.

Young, Mark S. "Nurturing Spirituality in the Matrix of Human Development." *Christian Education Journal* 10, no. 2 (1987): 87-98.