

# Spiritual Formation: 2005 Update

CATHOLIC MIND-TRAINING DEVELOPED BY JESUITS

PART ONE OF FOUR

The current July-September *Senior Sabbath School Quarterly* was written by Derik Morris. He was a teacher at Southern College (later called Southern Adventist University), beginning in the early 1990s. He is now pastoring a church in Florida.

Because he was teaching "spiritual formation" to his students, I wrote a lengthy report on the problem in 1995 (*Spiritual Formation, Parts 1-3 [WM-658-660]*). A major portion of that background information is included in this present study.

Because Morris wrote the current *Quarterly* and because **"spiritual formation" is now beginning to be promoted far more extensively in the denomination, you should be made aware of what is involved in "spiritual formation."**

After Morris left the college about 1996, it appeared that Spiritual Formation disappeared. **But now it has reappeared; and it must be dealt with!**

**At the end of this four-tract study, we will quote current church statements—showing that training in "spiritual formation" is now spreading through our colleges and universities, and is beginning to be taught to church members by some pastors!**

It is unlikely that you will find many problems in the current *Quarterly*. Because Clifford Goldstein edited it, he probably weeded out errors placed in it by Morris.

## SPIRITUAL FORMATION TRAINING ORIGINATED WITH THE JESUITS

"Spiritual formation" sounds very good when you first hear about it. The objective appears to be to help improve each of our pastors and church members to become "more spiritual," improve his or her spiritual life, and learn new ways to pray and think about religious things.

However, you need to understand that **Spiritual Formation was first devised by Ignatius Loyola, as part of His *Spiritual Exercises***, the name of his book that was dictated to him by, what he called, "an angel." Occasionally during those séances, Loyola would fall to the ground in a seizure.

I wrote about Mohammed a couple years ago, and noted that he had a similar experience: Both Loyola and Mohammed would go off alone somewhere. An "angel" would appear. Each was told to take dictation; that is, write down exactly what the "spirit being" said to write. Each would occasionally fall to the ground and have a seizure. (The seizures were probably given to help keep them frightened and submissive. Demons use fear to keep their followers in line.)

The result was that Loyola produced the *Spiritual*

*Exercises* and several other training books for Jesuits; and Mohammed gradually wrote the various portions of the *Koran* on palm bark. (See *Legacy of Mohammed, Parts 1-3 [WM-1053-1055]*, and *Teachings of the Koran [WM-1069]*.)

Without Ignatius Loyola's "spiritual exercises," his organization would quickly have fallen apart. **But, by employing those mind-control methods, he was able to transform young men into robots; each one obeying the priest assigned to him.**

Here is an interesting statement, by a knowledgeable Protestant, which declares that "spiritual formation" was originated by the Catholic Church:

**"The term 'spiritual formation' has been given to us by the Roman Catholic Church.** Across the centuries, in the training of priests, the Roman Catholic Church has always expressed a concern for the 'priestly character' of its clergy and has included courses in spirituality in its ministerial curriculum.

**"When Roman Catholic seminaries became members of the accrediting association of theological schools** in the United States, it was natural that they should continue 'doing their thing.' An increased emphasis on spirituality quickly surfaced. **Soon theological seminaries, Protestant and Catholic alike, were sending representatives to conferences on spirituality, and the accrediting association established a special commission to deal with the spiritual life of seminarians.** Rather quickly, and certainly providentially, this emphasis on spirituality caught fire on many seminary campuses, and **spiritual formation plans were inaugurated.**"—*Frank B. Stranger, Spiritual Formation in the Local Church (published by Zondervan).*

Two comments on the above statement: First, centuries of "spiritual formation" of Catholic priests has produced a pack of child-abusing sex perverts.

Second, it is of special interest that, as the above statement indicates, worldly accrediting associations have pushed their way into this—and "set standards" for spiritual instruction given in Protestant and Catholic seminaries in the U.S.! Very likely, our own Seminary at Andrews is accredited, and must submit to those outside standards on its spiritual instruction.

## THE MOST DANGEROUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The special factor in *Spiritual Formation*, which makes it so insidious—is this: **In order to "improve**

**your spiritual experience,” you must “practice certain spiritual exercises,”—and in order to do that properly, you need to frequently (frequently) consult your human “spiritual leader,” who “disciples you.”** He sees how you are doing (confession of sin to him may be involved) and then instructs you as to what you need to do next in order to “advance spiritually.”

*Do you see it!* We have here something quite foreign to the instruction in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy! Spiritual Formation requires that **you go to a frail, erring man for spiritual guidance, tell him your problems, do exactly what he tells you to do. And you must go back and consult with him regularly, and tell him about your progress and failings.**

This arrangement is something like a little papacy! Man looking to man for the spiritual guidance needed for salvation.

**The priest in the confessional booth does the same thing.** The Catholic goes to him every week or so, confesses his sins, and is told what to do in order to be more closely accepted by God.

#### DERIK MORRIS' BOOK

While at Southern Adventist University, Morris wrote an 8½ x 11 stapled book, titled *Spiritual Formation in Ministry* [SFM], which he gave to his students as required reading. In the book, he told how he, himself, had been taught “spiritual formation” when he was disciplined by a Catholic.

Morris' book is **a 12-page summary of how to use meditative imaginings and submission to the guidance of priests and others trained outside our church—as a means of religious attainment.**

As such, it parallels the “spiritual exercises” which form the basis of training for every novitiate Jesuit priest.

In his book, Morris explains that on his very first “session” with his new “spiritual director,” he was given an article to read, written by a Jesuit; but this did not seem to bother him.

**“As I left that initial session, I sensed that the Lord was inviting me to embark on a spiritual pilgrimage that would change my life. When I arrived home, I read the article by Connolly [a Jesuit priest] that Barry had given to me. The opening statement seemed to be a prophetic word about the spiritual journey that lay ahead.”—Morris, *Spiritual Formation*, pp. 11-12.**

Morris' new “spiritual director” was a man named Barry Young, who, at their first visit, handed him Connolly's book. Morris was well-aware that Connolly was a Jesuit, because he affixes “S.J.” to his name in all his articles and books. **Morris knew he was being trained by a man who demanded, as part of his “spiritual formation,” that he read Catholic books!** (More on those books later.)

“For much of the Christian era, the practice of spiritual direction was confined to Catholicism, particularly monasticism and the Society of Jesus [Jesuits].”—Morris, *Spiritual Formation*, p. 6.

Morris quickly sensed that it was wrong for him to depend on man, instead of God, as His spiritual guide to heaven. His conscience caused him to resist trusting solely in one man in this way. More on this later.

In his book, Morris quotes Forster Freeman's 1986 monograph, *Readiness for Ministry through Spiritual Direction*, as part of the solution to deepening one's personal Christian experience.

“Freeman concluded by recommending that ‘each Protestant seminary administration . . . should obtain the services of a trained spiritual formation team.’”—Morris, *Spiritual Formation*, p. 2.

“Seminaries” are where all degreed ministers are trained, before being sent out to pastor churches and, later, take responsibilities as denominational leaders. **The plan is for each seminary to have “spiritual formation teams” to work over each student. The objective is to mold his thinking into the ideal pattern. What is the ideal? It is what the men in charge think it should be.**

Morris continues on with his quotation from Freeman:

“ ‘Experiential courses in spiritual disciplines should be offered as well as personal direction with students.’ ”—Morris, *Spiritual Formation*, p. 2.

As originally conceived by Ignatius Loyola, each student, preparing for Jesuit ministry, must maintain **an ongoing program of rigorous daily exercises in meditation, visualization, silence, and reading of prescribed books.** That was the “spiritual discipline” or “spiritual exercises” part of his daily regime.

Then there were the spiritual formation overseers. Each student in training had a spiritual adviser which he must confess to, discuss all his thoughts with, and implicitly obey.

**The result was a thoroughgoing “spiritual formation”!** A youth with no specific purpose in life was molded into a machine which the black pope (the name Catholics give to the head of the Jesuit society) could use to carry out any objective. He was, as quoted in one of Loyola's books, trained to be “a rod in the hand of his superior” and had “no will of his own.”

The rest is history. What the Jesuits accomplished in penetrating schools, churches, and governments; corrupting society in general; arranging for assassinations and mass murders of Jews and Christians; and commercial enslavement of blacks—has been discussed in other writings.

Throughout this study, keep in mind that Derek Morris' objective is the restructuring of the thinking of the theology student or pastor. His concern here is

not with church members. **Morris knows full well that if he can successfully instill his type of “spiritual formation” in the religious leaders—the church members sitting in the pews will soon receive a similar formation.**

In his paper, Morris goes on to explain that **each theology student or pastor should obtain this new “formation” by relying on another’s mind to guide him as he structures it.** It is in this way, he explains, that the one striving to deepen his experience can come to know God:

“My working definition of ‘spiritual direction’ is ‘help given by one Christian to another which enables that person to pay attention to God’s personal communication with him or her, to respond to this personally communicating God, to grow in intimacy with this God, and to live out the consequences of the relationship.’ This spiritual direction can be offered in an incarnational setting, fleshed out in the life of the spiritual friend, or in an interpersonal setting, where mutual guidance and accountability is shared between two or more people.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, p. 3.*

**Morris explains to his students that the best way to approach God is through another man. That, of course, is a Catholic concept. But we need not be surprised; for we find, not only Roman Catholic teachings in Morris’ paper but also quotations from Catholic authors.**

What does he mean by “incarnational setting”? Reading in some of the books Morris recommends, we learn that this is a slogan for an experience, which summarized, means this: **having Christ come to dwell within you as you submit your plans and activities to the review and guidance of your personal spiritual director**—who is nothing more than a fellow frail human being.

Morris goes on to explain that the theology student and pastor should use **“modeling”** to advance spiritually. This is done by **copying the mode, manners, and presentation of another.** Each pastor, in turn, is to “model” a pattern which the church members should imitate. **Each one is to receive spiritual growth from his earthly mentor; and then pass it on to yet others.**

“Here again we see an incarnational model of spiritual direction, with an emphasis upon the offering of spiritual guidance and direction through modeling and example.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, p. 4.*

Morris expresses great confidence in the spiritual power which can be attained by imitating someone else. **According to him, our “spiritual directions” tend to be confused until we have another human being to copy.**

Repeatedly, Morris explains that we come to Christ through others. **We grow in Christian experience by following the advice and example of frail humans.**

**Then, having attained to some degree, we then become “spiritual fathers” to still others. This was the Jesuitic pattern: Interlock men together while being careful to place the leading ones under still others, who were higher up the organizational ladder.**

In this way, **there is no rebellion; for there is little thinking. There is just obedience.** Each one is a staff in the hand of another. This is the Jesuitic way of providing a *pax Romana*. How can there be questioning or independent thinking in a church that is dead?

“Paul encourages Timothy to continue to move forward in his spiritual journey . . . Paul also encourages Timothy to offer spiritual guidance and direction to others.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, p. 6.*

**Having thus introduced his topic, Morris next takes the theology students, under his training at Southern College, into the inner sanctum of his own tortured experience:** He explains the source of his insights regarding “spiritual formation” and “spiritual direction,” so that the naive college student will think it good to go to the same sources for further guidance:

“We discover the importance of spiritual guidance and direction as a means of nurturing ongoing spiritual formation in ministry. **The focus of this spiritual direction is both through modeling and also through spiritual counsel and instruction.** It is given in person and also by letter . . .

**“For much of the Christian era the practice of spiritual direction was confined to Catholicism, particularly monasticism and the Society of Jesus. In recent years there has been a revival of interest in spiritual direction as a resource for personal spiritual formation among both Catholics and Protestants.**

“A leading advocate of spiritual direction is **Tilden Edwards**, director of the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation in Washington, D.C. As I began my own prayerful search for a spiritual friend, **I came across the significant work by Tilden Edwards, *Spiritual Friend: Reclaiming the Gift of Spiritual Direction.* I strongly recommend this book as a valuable resource.** There, for the first time, I caught a glimpse of the real value of spiritual direction as a means of nurturing spiritual life.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, pp. 6-7.*

By this point, Derek Morris is leading his students into the deep things of Satan. **Step by step he is directing gullible students at Southern College directly into practices which, he admits, were originated by monks and Jesuits!**

And he also tells them where they can go to obtain further training in “spiritual direction.”

“In the final chapter of this book, Edwards refers to a spiritual direction training program at the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation in Washington, D.C.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation*, p. 7.

*Later in this report, we will give you a remarkable glimpse into what is in that book by Tilden Edwards. Later still, statements from the Shalem Institute will be quoted.*

**Morris appends a footnote to the above paragraph, giving names and addresses, where your son or daughter, attending Southern College, can write to enroll. He says that, of the five training centers listed below, only the last one is not Roman Catholic!** Is this why you send your youth to our colleges and universities?

“The **Shalem Institute** for Spiritual Formation began its experiment with long-term group spiritual direction in the fall of 1973. Its spiritual direction training program commenced in the fall of 1978. Another such program began at the same time at **Wainwright House** in Rye, New York, under the Guild for Spiritual Direction. The two most intensive Roman Catholic training programs offering graduate degrees in spiritual direction are run by the **Jesuits of Weston**, MA, and by the **Dusquesne Institute** of Formative Spirituality in Pittsburgh, PA. **The only non-Roman Catholic graduate program** in spiritual direction is offered by the Center for Christian Spirituality at the **General Theological Seminary (Episcopal)** in New York.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation*, p. 7.

**Derek Morris is not teaching New Testament Christianity! Far from it; he may refer to Paul and Timothy, but he is teaching something the Jesuits gave to Roman Catholicism.**

This is, indeed, an unfortunate situation. Morris may be a very fine man and very well-intentioned. But, because of his beliefs and teaching objectives, he is not qualified to teach our future pastors and church administrators. And he is not qualified to write our *Senior Sabbath Lesson Quarterly!*

Unless the library removes it, you will find the “*Journal of Spiritual Formation*” on the magazine racks of the Southern College Library, for the students to read. It is published by one of the Catholic organizations mentioned above by Morris (Institute of Formative Spirituality, Dusquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania).

Another interesting magazine on the racks for the students, at Southern, to read is the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, published by the Catholic Biblical Association of America, an organizational front for Catho-

lic University of America, a Jesuit school in Washington, D.C.

Morris continues:

“I called Shalem and shared with Dr. Gerald May that I was a pastor, interested in the process of spiritual direction. His response was very positive. He offered to send me a list of several individuals in my state who had completed or who were presently enrolled in the Spiritual Guidance Program. He suggested that I select a spiritual friend that I could easily relate to, and that I seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the process.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation*, pp. 7-8.

Incredible! This is an Adventist college religion teacher, with a Bachelor of Arts degree, from Columbia Union College, and Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees, from Andrews University (1987); who, with a wealth of spiritual treasure in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy books on his shelves,—goes to Protestants, Catholics, and mystics in the hope of finding “spiritual direction”!

And what is he told to do? The instruction given is that, in order to adhere to the Catholic methods, **he must find a graduate of the Jesuitic “Spiritual Guidance Program,” sit under his shadow, and learn from him how to be a Christian!**

Unfortunately, like many other leaders in our denomination (especially in North America), Morris is listed as having taken both LAB I and LAB II; both of these courses contain several hours of training in neurolinguistic programming. That instruction has probably made it easier for devils to harass Morris into delving into subjects he should not subject himself to.

The last five pages of this twelve-page monograph, by Derek Morris, describes his own experience in trying to find a spiritual father which he could talk to and spiritually lean upon.

**Discussing his experience in adapting to the process of making a fellow human being his spiritual guide, Morris repeatedly found that he was fearful to take this jump—and place his spiritual life in the hands of another.** But he relates that he was encouraged to do so, after reading a certain book which predicted that such fears would come to mind.

“I was experiencing a high level of resistance [from his conscience; the voice of the Holy Spirit warning him]. **I was to learn later that such resistance is common**, not only in the context of developing a relationship with a spiritual friend, but also in the context of developing one’s relationship with God. In their book, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, Barry and Connolly spend an entire chapter exploring this common re-

Continued from the preceding tract in this series

sponse of resistance.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, p. 8.*

**“Barry and Connolly” are Roman Catholic Jesuit priests who have spent years training others to let “spiritual fathers” do their thinking for them.**

In their book, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, Barry and Connolly direct the reader to Ignatius Loyola’s “spiritual exercises” as the means, along with consulting “father guides,” to achieving one’s personal spiritual Utopia.

Later in this report, we will provide you with insights into the remarkable teachings of Barry and Connolly’s book.

What was it which produced such intense anxiety within Derek Morris, that he repeatedly avoided going to see his forthcoming spiritual father? It was the Holy Spirit! Yet Morris was so wrapped up in the Catholic and Protestant books he had been immersing himself in—that he could not recognize the warning voice of God’s Spirit.

**Having read enough to convince himself he could safely entrust his soul to a non-Adventist mentor, Morris went to see his new spiritual guide, Barry Young. And what did Barry do?**

“Barry also shared with me an article by William J. Connolly, entitled “Noticing Key Interior Facts in the Early Stages of Spiritual Direction.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, p. 11.*

There is that code word again: “spiritual direction.” Earlier in his twelve-page paper, Morris told us that this originated in the monasteries and Jesuit training centers of Europe.

The footnote reference for this item is “William J. Connolly.

“Noticing Key Interior Facts in the Early Stages of Spiritual Direction,” *Review for Religious* 35 (1976):112-121.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, p. 11.*

Checking that out, we learn that William J. Connolly is a Jesuit priest, the coauthor of *Practice of Spiritual Direction* mentioned earlier. **No wonder the Spirit of God pled with Derek Morris not to make a “spiritual directions” graduate—his spiritual guide! Barry Young had been taught Jesuitic methods, and immediately began passing them on to Morris.**

In this guru-disciple arrangement the “spiritual father” acts as a conscience for his “directee.” Many of them are pastors, teachers, or local church leaders of some kind. **While we all sleep, the Jesuits are busy at work. How many of our pastors and teachers are in training under such agents?** (More on this near the end of this four-part tract study.)

“Barry Young generally meets with directees on a monthly basis. It is interesting to note that approximately 70 percent of his directees are

involved in some form of ministry.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, p. 11.*

Derek Morris has been trained in this Jesuitic spiritual directionism; and he wants the young future ministers, who are attending Southern College, to find their own spiritual father.

It is clear from reading Derek Morris’ own experience with a spiritual father, that **it includes a confessional experience.** This is understandable; for the entire concept was developed, according to Morris, in monasteries and Jesuitic studies. **Should we not expect that terrible monstrosity of Catholicism, the confessional, to be part of submitting to one of their “spiritual fathers”?**

Morris concludes his twelve-page paper with these significant words:

**“As I left that initial session, I sensed that the Lord was inviting me to embark on a spiritual pilgrimage that would change my life.** When I arrived home, I read the article by [the Jesuit priest] Connolly that Barry had given to me. The opening statement seemed to be a prophetic word about the spiritual journey that lay ahead:

“ ‘Christian life is reception of and response to God’s initiatives. **It is participation in a dialogue, not only of words but also of lives,** that has been begun by God. This dialogue shifts ground and situation, **and tends to change the lives of the men and women who engage in it.**”

“In the years that followed I discovered experientially what Roy Oswald had concluded from his research of 102 Seminary graduates some years before: Crossing the boundary from Seminary to Parish [going from the college into the ministry] is never easy. And the need for personal spiritual formation is ongoing. But the process of spiritual direction is a tremendous resource. He notes that ‘those who had the good fortune of finding a spiritual father/mother/friend as they began in the parish found the going somewhat easier.’ ”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation, pp. 11-12.*

Notice carefully what the closing words of Morris’ paper focuses on: **The young theology student, having learned about “spiritual formation,” should get a “spiritual direction” graduate to be his spiritual guide—as soon as he arrives in the parish! In Adventist terminology, that means as soon as he is called into the ministry.** This is what Morris is teaching his students! **Yet the only spiritual guides he can recommend to them are graduates of one of six training centers; five of which are Catholic and one is Episcopal!**

The students in our colleges who are taught “spiritual formation,” learn the deeper things of Jesuitic faith

and practice; and they are taught that, as soon as they become pastors of local churches, they must locate a person trained in spiritual formation to be their spiritual guides.

**Derek Morris believes in this Jesuitic system enough that he openly teaches it, not only to his students but also to visiting Protestant luminaries.**

A number of years ago, Adventist college Bible teachers founded an “*Evangelical Theological Society*,” where they could discuss current theological speculations of modern mainline churches. In recent years, they have tried to attract ministers and theologians of other denominations to attend.

The March 12-13, 1993, gathering, held at Southern College, was entitled “*Theology for Ministry*,” and was attended by a variety of Protestant church leaders and theologians. **It had a wide-ranging roster of non-Adventist speakers.** I will list some of them, so you can see how Ecumenical our church is becoming:

Millard Erickson (*Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*, Fort Worth, TX); John C. Thomas (*Church of God School of Theology*, Cleveland, TN); Maurice Robinson (*Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary*, Wake Forest, NC); Kirk Kilpatrick (*Mid-American Baptist Theological Seminary*, Memphis, TN); Darwin Glassford (*Montreat-Anderson College*, Montreat, NC); David Dockery (*Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, Louisville, KY); Norman Geisler (*Southern Evangelical Seminary*, Charlotte, NC); and more. Hoping to be accepted by them, our intellectuals are trying hard to be “like the other churches.”

**Sixteen of the speakers were non-Adventist theologians, pastors, and church leaders; and about six were Adventists** (from Southern College and Andrews). A large number of the lectures were given during the holy Sabbath hours (March 13).

One of those slated to speak was Derek Morris. His topic, “*Spiritual Formation*,” was one which could be appreciated by men from a variety of Jesuit-infiltrated denominations. But a sudden, severe snowstorm prevented him from giving it.

#### **EDWARD'S BOOK RECOMMENDED BY MORRIS**

**This book, given to him by Barry Young on their first visit, is the one which Derek Morris said changed his life for the better:**

*Tilden Edwards, Spiritual Friend: Reclaiming the Gift of Spiritual Direction. Paulist Press, NY. 1980. 264 pages, paperback.*

Regarding the extreme importance of this book in reshaping his own life, Morris said this:

“As I began my own prayerful search for a spiritual friend, I came across the significant work by **Tilden Edwards**, *Spiritual Friend: Reclaiming the Gift of Spiritual Direction*. **I strongly recommend this book as a valuable resource.** There, for the first time, I caught a glimpse of the

real value of spiritual direction as a means of nurturing spiritual life.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation*, p. 7.

Tilden Edwards is director of the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation in Washington, D.C. Derek Morris claims that it was through a reading of this book that he first got into the “spiritual direction/spiritual formation” movement.

**Edwards is an Episcopal priest and the book was published by Paulist Press, a well-known Catholic publishing house.**

**The stated objective of Edwards' book, as indicated by its title, is to encourage each person to seek out someone else to be his spiritual guide.**

Regarding this book, Derek Morris tells his students (your sons and daughters attending that college):

“There, for the first time, I caught a glimpse of the real value of spiritual direction as a means of nurturing spiritual life.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation*, p. 7.

Edwards explains that **the spiritual ideal is a combination of all the mystical arts of ancient and modern world religions.**

**Here is a sampling of what Morris learned in this book, which he says has so wonderfully changed his life:**

“**This mystical stream [“Eastern Orthodox spirituality”] is the Western bridge to Far Eastern spirituality (and to that of Sufi Moslems and some Hasidic Jews in the West as well).**”

“**The Zen warning** not to confuse the pointing finger (the *kataphatic* form) for the moon to which it points is a saying that a Christian mystic easily understands. It is no accident that **the most active frontier between Christian and Eastern religions today is between contemplative Christian monks and their Eastern equivalents.** Some forms of Eastern meditation informally have been incorporated or adapted into the practice of many Christian monks and increasingly by other Christians.

“This exchange, together with the more popular **Eastern impact in the West through transcendental meditation, Hatha Yoga, the martial arts, and through many available courses on Eastern religions** in universities, **has aided a recent rediscovery of Christian apophatic mystical tradition**, which has been subordinate to the other two ‘schools’ in most Roman Catholic and Protestant practice for centuries.”—*Tilden Edwards, Spiritual Friend*, pp. 18-19.

To this, is mixed in modern secular learning:

“Mixed with these three polarizing historic strands in the Church today is the whole stream of learned secularization.”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 19.

Through Zen, which Edwards clearly favors **by**

1 **means of a meditative trance, we can obtain en-**  
2 **lightenment from any object or any source:**  
3

4 “[In the work of the “spirit”] **We are dealing**  
5 **with an uncontrollable mystery.** We cannot do-  
6 mesticcate it through a neat system of guidance  
7 and progress. The Spirit is too free and subtle  
for that. It resists every label and cage. If the Spirit  
is willing and our spirit (unbeknownst to us) is  
ready, **as an old Zen saying has it, we can look**  
**at a stone and be enlightened. Anything and**  
**everything can be our spiritual teacher.**”—  
*Spiritual Friend, p. 91.*

**The kind of “spirits” described here by Edwards**  
**takes control** of your mind! **Edwards also teaches**  
**Hindu Nirvana**, although describing it in different  
terms:

“The apophatic more emphatically relativizes  
any affirmation to **the ‘Cloud of Unknowing,’**  
**where sense, concept, and self-image are sus-**  
**suspended,** and the Holy is free as it wills to mani-  
fest as it is, rather than as we might project it.”—  
*Spiritual Friend, p. 18.*

On subsequent pages, **Edwards refers to this**  
**“Cloud of Unknowing” several times.** Everything is  
spiritualized away, even obedience to God’s Word:

“The often tragic side of our Western theologi-  
cal/philosophical inheritance is seen where it  
forces choices that need never be made. If this is  
right, then that must be wrong. The truth, per-  
haps, often is more subtle (a constant discovery  
of the apophatic path). What is surface conflict,  
jagged peaks of icebergs facing off with each other,  
beneath may be joined when we have eyes to see.  
They appear in glorious/inglorious profusion, yet  
in whatever form, they grow from the same eter-  
nal Source always present.”—*Spiritual Friend,*  
*p. 25.*

**The picture is that, on the surface apparent right**  
**and wrong, good and evil may confront us; but un-**  
**derneath—everyone is one.** These men offer us the  
opportunity to luxuriate on the tree of good and evil.

Edwards: **The better light comes from the East:**

“One modern contemplative, Abbot Thomas  
Keating, once told me that he believes **this is why**  
**many people turn to Eastern gurus now.** They  
come with two questions, ‘What do I do?’ and  
‘How am I doing?’ **Eastern gurus are much more**  
**habituated to deal with such long-term ques-**  
**tions of spiritual guidance.**”—*Spiritual Friend,*  
*p. 28.*

Edwards tells us that **“holistic” medicine** is  
changing medical science and modern psychology,  
because **the eastern religions are superior:**

“It is interesting to note that many of these re-  
cent challenges have been influenced by Eastern  
religions and cultures. Those who have studied  
**Buddhism**, for example, find a situation where

psychological and spiritual development were not  
cut off from each other. **Psychology**, as once was  
true in the West, is seen as a way of understand-  
ing the mind **so that it can be prepared for [Bud-**  
**dhist-type] enlightenment,** or as we might say  
in the West, for deeper conversion into the image  
of God.”—*Spiritual Friend, p. 30.*

Edwards then spends several pages explaining how  
**the West and its religions ought to return to the**  
**East and its mysticism.**

However, later in the book, **he also notes that a**  
**return to the Mother Church is also needed.**  
**Edwards says that it is well that the Protestant de-**  
**nominations are increasingly observing the tradi-**  
**tions of Rome. As they do so, they are increasingly**  
**having true peace of heart:**

“**Catholic and Orthodox traditions** include  
other forms of guidance that recently have had  
influence with many Protestants. Such forms in-  
clude greater appreciation of **the guidance of li-**  
**turgical forms, the Church calendar of seasons**  
**and saints, private confession** (the rite of rec-  
onciliation), retreats, **silent meditation,** and  
**spiritual direction.** These forms have grown in  
influence with Protestants especially in the years  
since the Second Vatican Council, as their old  
corruptions have been purged and as **Protestants**  
**began to see that they perhaps had thrown out**  
**a lot of valuable gems at the Reformation.**”—  
*Spiritual Friend, p. 92.*

“**Many Protestants now sense the unneces-**  
**sary limitation of their own forms, and seek**  
**to recover some of those lost at the Reforma-**  
**tion.** Both groups now often look with awe at the  
mystical depths preserved in Eastern Orthodox  
traditions.”—*Spiritual Friend, p. 92.*

Edwards explains that **it is the church ceremon-**  
**ies which can bring us closest to God:**

“It [corporate worship] . . . allows us to **sink**  
**into a different quality of consciousness** that  
can feed our awareness of transforming connect-  
edness with the Real. **The words and acts of**  
**liturgies serve these ends,** reincorporating wor-  
shipers into the gist of the Christian experience  
of God. Such worship, **especially in the form of**  
**Eucharist,** is particularly central to the guidance  
of Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and Orthodox  
traditions, and is important to all Christian tra-  
ditions.”—*Spiritual Friend, p. 95.*

But **the adoration of saints also helps a person**  
**come to Christ:**

“The **calendar of saints** gives opportunity for  
a range of heroes to be held before us as signs of  
grace and ‘ways in’ to the Holy.”—*Spiritual Friend,*  
*p. 97.*

According to Edwards, **it is not trying to obey**  
**God’s laws which counts, but practicing mental**

**inactivity. Not using the will is the way of holiness:**

“If the experiences are of God, as John of the Cross sees it, then **they will do their work in us without our having to do anything**. If they are not of God, then we don't want to pay attention anyway. In either case, **just attentively seeing and letting be, letting go, is enough**. Such a view echoes Far Eastern apophatic religious traditions' approaches to such phenomena as well, as seen perhaps most extremely in **Zen Buddhist practice**.”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 143.

On pages 152-153, Edwards recommends the **practices which Ignatius Loyola taught** in his writings.

On pages 156-157, **Edwards teaches “journal keeping.” This is not a diary! It is a day-by-day letting your hand be moved by an unseen power as it writes randomly across the page.**

“Christian experience points to trusting not primarily in our own isolated prowess, or in the ultimacy of these blind or hostile forces, but **in a collaborative flow of the ‘Powers of Light’ in and around us**.

“**Journal keeping, in helping us be in touch with this flow**, can include any form of writing: poetry, prose, dialogue, picture. These can be spontaneous or focused . . . They can deal with thoughts, feelings, intuitions, and dreams, the past, present, and future.

“The more casual our writing, the better. If it is too ‘heavy,’ too full of expected ‘good’ insight [*i.e.*, too moralistic], ego easily becomes attached. No longer is something flowing freely through us, but we are ‘trying’ to do something, trying to make something happen. There is an extreme form of avoiding this tendency [to try to control the flow] in a **Zen Buddhist writing practice**, where no pronoun is allowed to be used (*e.g.*, ‘hand moves across page,’ not ‘*my* hand writes in *my* journal’).”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 157.

But, according to Edwards, **we will find the desired release into the Infinite One if we submit our bodies and minds more directly to practices of the eastern religions:**

“**By openness to Buddhism, to Hinduism, and to these great Asian traditions, we stand a wonderful chance of learning more about the potentiality of our own traditions**, because they have gone, from the natural point of view, so much deeper into this than we have. The combination of the natural techniques and the graces of the other things that have been manifested in Asia and the Christian liberty of the gospel should

bring us all at last to that full and transcendent liberty which is beyond mere cultural difference and mere externals—and more this or that.’ ”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 165.

The above paragraph was quoted from a well-known Catholic mystic and monk, **Thomas Merten**, by Edwards as the reason why Christians should closely investigate and indulge in Eastern mysticism and practices.

**Edwards relates how he has been helped by using “various yogic practices of breathing and bodily postures”** (pp. 165-166).

He then explains that a key factor in success occurs when you permit another human to guide your mind:

“**Cultivation of this awareness is basic in the preparation of a spiritual director, a guru**, in many Eastern traditions. It is in fact still the ideal in Eastern Orthodox Christian practice.”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 166.

So **a person needs a “spirit being” controlling his mind**, so he can become a guru, or spiritual guide. Edwards next tells how the mind-controlling-mind technique is supposed to help you. **Your “director” will be guided to speak the right words to you:**

“In such moments, **words come through the director that are not predetermined**. They just come spontaneously, **guided subconsciously** by the basic motive of desiring the **transcendent loving Presence** to flow through the other.”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 167.

**Edwards then explains that it is necessary to meditate—and he explains the yogic method of meditation. It all may seem quite ridiculous; yet this is what instructors in “spiritual directions” teach their students:**

“*Meditation: Practice thirty to sixty minutes* a day letting your mind be ‘cleansed’ in some such way as I suggested earlier under ‘cleansing.’ Lightly noticing thoughts and images and letting them go by without ‘identifying’ with them can free you for a more open quality of awareness. You can begin noticing the space between your thoughts as very free, alive, and in touch with reality more directly than the words and images that come to describe it.”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 167.

The serpent said you would be as god, if you did as he directed. **Edwards goes on to explain how this meditation will place you on a higher plane of being. Yet notice there is never any mention of putting away sin and obeying the commandments of God. You can be an active pervert, sinning every**

Continued on the next tract

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**day, yet be an excellent yoga meditator.**

Edwards spends this and the next page trying to describe the imaginings he feels as he sits cross-legged meditating on nothingness.

“You may begin to discern the difference between the ‘closed,’ ‘interpreted’ qualities of mind events, and **the open or driven energy from which they come.**”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 167.

**Yet this is the book which Derek Morris says has changed his life.**

“It is such an innocent, **intuitively discerning mind that helps make the Eastern guru and the Desert Abba ‘master.’** It is such a mind that he or she seeks to cultivate in the disciple. There may be great compatibility here with the intimate mind Jesus sought in his disciples, and Paul described as being ‘in the mind of Christ.’”—*Spiritual Friend*, p. 169.

**To Edwards it is all the same: being in Christ or being in a yoga trance. —Yet this is the book that Derik Morris “strangely recommended” for his students to read!**

“As I began my own prayerful search for a spiritual friend, I came across the significant work by Tilden Edwards, *Spiritual Friend: Reclaiming the Gift of Spiritual Direction*. **I strongly recommend this book as a valuable resource.** There, for the first time, I caught a glimpse of the real value of spiritual direction as a means of nurturing spiritual life.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation*, p. 7.

## **BARRY AND CONNOLLY’S BOOK RECOMMENDED BY MORRIS**

**Then there is the second book which Derek Morris highly recommended:**

*William A. Barry, S.J., and William J. Connolly, S.J. The Practice of Spiritual Direction. Harper and Row, 1982, 212 pages, paperback.*

These two books by Tilden Edwards and William Barry and William Connolly—are basic textbooks required in course work to become “Spiritual Directors.” A book by Thomas Merten, the Catholic monk, is also considered important. (Merten visited yoga, Buddhist, and Confucianist centers, and mingled it with his Catholic monasticism and asceticism.)

In his twelve-page monograph, Morris made this comment about the Barry and Connolly book:

“Almost three weeks passed from the time I received the correspondence from Dr. May [at the Shalem Institute] until I made the initial contact with Barry and Louise Young. **I was experiencing a high level of resistance.** [The Holy Spirit was warning him not to make Barry his spiritual father.] **I was to learn later that such resistance**

**is common,** not only in the context of developing a relationship with a spiritual friend, but also in the context of developing one’s relationship with God. In their book, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, **Barry and Connolly** spend an entire chapter exploring this common response of resistance.”—*Morris, Spiritual Formation*, p. 8.

This was another basic book which helped remold the religious views of Derek Morris. You will recall that, on his first visit to Barry Young, his new spiritual father, he was given an article to read by the same Connolly which Morris highly valued.

**The “S.J.” after each of the authors’ names tells it all: Both are Jesuit priests. They fully admit this in the book, and favorably recommend Roman Catholic practices and Loyola’s methods frequently in the volume.**

Here are the opening words in their book:

“During the last ten years spiritual direction has gained a surprising currency in Christian circles [surprising, since it is totally Roman Catholic]. **Many more people, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, know about it. Many more are engaged in it, both as directors and directees, than was the case in previous decades.** Moreover, where once the great majority of those who sought spiritual direction were Roman Catholic members of religious orders and seminarians [monks, nuns, and future priests], and the great majority of those who gave spiritual direction were Roman Catholic priests, **today there is diversity; Protestants and Roman Catholics . . .** Training programs for spiritual directors and service centers for spiritual direction have been established in a number of places.”—*W.A. Barry, S.J., and W.J. Connolly, S.J., Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. vii.

**Barry and Connolly then explain the origins of their project. It was devised by Jesuits:**

“This book has a history of its own. **In 1970 the authors, with four other Jesuits, began discussing the possibility of starting a spirituality center** in the Boston area. One of us had given retreats and spiritual direction for years and was at that time also engaged in doctoral studies in spiritual theology. The other had finished doctoral studies in clinical psychology and was teaching pastoral counseling and doing spiritual direction at Weston School of Theology. In 1971 we six Jesuits founded the Center for Religious Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts.”—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, pp. viii-ix.

They go on to say that it was founded to “provide spiritual direction to the people of God” and educate men and women to start training centers elsewhere. **They also cite the source of their method, none**

other than Ignatius himself:

**“We [the authors] are both members of the Society of Jesus and have, therefore, been strongly influenced by the spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola and his *Spiritual Exercises*.”—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. xi.**

If you have read our earlier studies on Ignatius and the methods and history of the Jesuits, **you know it is Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises*, along with the practice of submitting one’s soul to the direction of a fellow human being, which transforms the young student priest into an automaton. He is to have no will of his own, but be “as a staff in the hand of his spiritual director.”**

Just after the above statement, **Barry and Connolly mention another key aspect of the *Spiritual Exercises*, one which William Loveless taught in the 1990s at Loma Linda University in his *meditative imagery retreats* for Adventist ministers, while urging them to go back to their churches and teach those hypnotic concepts to their church members.**

**You will recall, in one of our earlier tract studies on the penetration of hypnotism into our church, we found that Loveless urges his hearers to practice meditative trances and keep daily journals, in which they jot down their imaginings.**

“In the history of spirituality, the *Exercises* of Ignatius would be seen as an example of the kataphatic way of prayer, the way **that draws on images, concepts, and reason, as distinct from the apophatic way, which does not depend on images and concepts.** Our use of the word ‘contemplative’ will have more affinities with the kataphatic way of prayer.”—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. xi.

“*Kataphatic*” means using imagery, such as statues, the rosary, or a Gregorian chant. “*Apophatic*” means using prayer and Bible study instead of focusing on images for spiritual guidance.

**The key here is the use of imagery, imagination, if you will. Another word for it is daydreaming. “Oh,” you might say, “what is wrong with that?”**

**When you turn your mind loose to just wander, as thoughts and pictures form of themselves—and then believe the result will be spiritual impressions put there by the Spirit—you are going to get messages from the wrong spirit!**

Those of our readers who have read our detailed tract set on *Ericksonian hypnosis* (which, along with NLP, is the basis of LAB 1, 2, 3, and 4) will quickly recognize that **we are here viewing the basis of the Ericksonian informal method of hypnotizing people** (*Hypnotism Enters the Adventist Church, Part 1-10 [WM-323-332]*).

Classical hypnotism occurred when the controller waved something in front of the one about to be possessed, and told him softly he was going to sleep.

Then, while in apparent sleeping hypnotic trance, the person was told what he should think and do at the time and after he came out of hypnosis.

Sounds dangerous? It surely is. Read our Spirit of Prophecy compilations on the dangers of hypnosis and psychology, in our 134-page, 8½ x 11 *Hypnotism Tractbook*.

**But Ericksonian hypnosis operates far more subtly.** It is taught to men and women who have taken “professional training” as counselors, as well as to psychologists and psychiatrists. **We warn you: Do not go to professionally trained counselors! This includes anyone who has a state certificate or other qualified approval as a counselor.** It also includes some pastors. They were taught hypnotic techniques in order to receive that certification. To begin with, inquire whether they have any certificates showing they have received any specialized training in counseling. If they have, leave immediately!

**In the Ericksonian method, the hypnosis occurs during a casual conversation.**

Here is something which has broken up homes and destroyed families: Instead of going to God with her problems, a person (typically a woman in her mid-30s) goes to a professional counselor. The counselor listens to her tell how she has felt depressed for several weeks. Then, after a few minutes, he or she leans forward and softly says, “Your problems may stem from your childhood. Someone may have abused you. Just for a minute, relax, shut your eyes, and let your mind go blank.”

**Soon afterward, an overwhelming false memory will seemingly flash into the counselee’s mind! It is remarkable both for its powerful vividness and the acknowledged fact that it had never before existed.**

From this satanic wizardry has come the false memory lawsuits which have plagued American courts for over a couple decades. It is but another device of the devil to spread woe and bring grief to innocent people. Yet the warning was given in 2 Kings 1. **Do not go to the professionally trained servants of the god of Ekron to inquire as to the cause of your problems! Is there not a God in Israel? Has He not given you the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy? Do you pray to our High Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary?**

“Spiritual direction/spiritual formation” techniques offer you similar psychological dangers.

**In their book, Barry and Connolly explain that these imagination sessions can be experienced through Catholic, Jesuit, or Eastern techniques. However, in order to most effectively induce those dreamy thoughts (and false memories)—one must make contact with, and submit to, a trained “director.”**

“The kind of direction we espouse, however, **is not tied to any particular kind of prayer** or way. The only prerequisite for engaging in the type

of direction we describe is that the person being directed have affective [emotional] experiences of God which he notices and which he can talk about with a director. **Whether these experiences come through centering prayer, the rosary, Ignatian contemplation, dreams, Zen meditation, or any other method of prayer matters little.** When a person has such experience, he has the ‘foodstuff’ for spiritual direction as we conceive it, no matter what its source. At the same time we gratefully acknowledge our Ignatian roots [what we have personally learned from Loyola] and wish to thank our Jesuit brothers who have helped us to appropriate this spirituality.”—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. xi.

Milton Erickson, the one who developed Ericksonian hypnosis several decades ago (he died in the 1980s), said **the only requisite to his method was that the person ideally should put his mind “in neutral.” This is done by letting the mind wander in the presence of a trained counselor,** or it can be done via self-hypnosis as one does while carrying out a senseless action, such as working with prayer beads. Another method (which happens to occur while reciting a rosary) is to mouth senseless words. Repeating the same words many times makes them meaningless to the mind. So, without realizing it, Ericksonian self-hypnosis has been practiced by those saying their rosary for hundreds of years.

Another variation is that recommended by Pentecostals. They teach newcomers that an excellent way to receive the gift of tongues “from the spirit,” is to repeatedly say a nonsense syllable (“bu-bu-bu,” etc.) over and over again, until the spirit falls and takes control of your mouth.

**Sounds hideous. And it is. These are methods for letting demons take control of your mind. Beware of them. Guard your loved ones.**

In the above quotation, notice that the authors define “spirituality” as being able to effectively use Zen, beads, or whatever to induce their waking hypnotic trances. The authors, strict Jesuits, thus acknowledge that all the various *worldly* religions attain similar spiritist results.

**Elsewhere in the book, the authors laud Ignatius Loyola for taking the road less traveled, and pioneering it for the rest of us.** After noting that Loyola emphasized emotional feelings as a basis for Christian experience, they say:

**“He was willing to choose untraveled roads** because he knew that God would lead and sustain him along those roads . . .

“It is appropriate that our final example be Ignatius of Loyola. His *Spiritual Exercises*, based on the conviction that God can and wants to be met in dialogue, have for many generations exemplified the Christian tradition’s acceptance of experience and encouragement of the dialogue

with God. The *Exercises* have also expressed for us the conviction that **talking about one’s experience of that dialogue with a spiritual director can be helpful** for the development of the dialogical relationship.”—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 27.

**Man controlling man is the important ingredient. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that, whenever one man controls another man’s mind, Satan controls both minds!** (*See Mind, Character, and Personality*, by E.G. White, Vol. 2, pages 706-710.) Therefore, it is to the devil’s advantage to teach men these mind-control arts. —So-called **“spiritual formation” is a mind-control technique.**

**Yet, in order for it to succeed, the person must be suggestible; and he must be led to stop worrying about putting away sin.**

“Spiritual directors sometimes have to work long and patiently with people to **help them reach the point of being able to forget themselves** . . . For instance, **a man who concentrates on his failings and sins** may be considered and consider himself an honest, self-knowledgeable man; yet he may never change his behavior.”—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 49.

Throughout this book, Loyola is praised as the great master director. That is significant, since we recognize that, **what these men call the “director” is actually a spiritist medium linking the hapless counselee with a devil.**

“Once again the wisdom of Ignatius of Loyola as a director becomes apparent.”—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 57.

“Traditional Christian teaching on spiritual life has often spoken of movements of the spirits. In his *Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, **Ignatius of Loyola describes characteristic movements of the ‘good spirit’ and the ‘evil spirit.’** A major purpose of the ‘evil spirit’ is to thwart the movement of the ‘good spirit’ toward God.”—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 81.

How convenient. Satan taught Loyola which people were “evil” and should be converted to Catholicism or destroyed. Since Loyola was taught by impressions and church leaders that all Protestants fell into that class, they were to be eradicated. As a result, Loyola’s agents went throughout Europe, coercing rulers into slaying all Protestants in their realms. Attempts were made to assassinate rulers who did not yield to Rome’s wishes. That is how the Protestants in Poland and France were eliminated.

Derek Morris said that pp. 80-100 (“*Development of Relationship and Resistance*,”), in Barry and Connolly’s book, especially helped him.

In it, the authors note that **Ignatius taught that anything which keeps one person from submitting to another person is satanically inspired:**

“Ignatius of Loyola speaks of ‘fallacious rea-

sonings' as one of the movements of the evil spirit when his sole purpose, it seems, is to stall movement toward discipleship."—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 91.

In the place of true godliness, based on obedience by faith to the commandments of God, Loyola gave his followers "imagining." **Imagination is the foundation of his *Spiritual Exercises*. Coupled with slavish obedience to an assigned superior, it transformed the young priest into a loyal animal, ever ready to do whatever he was assigned.**

"Directees will need much help at the beginning to let God enter their lives in a real relationship if their images are undeveloped . . . **This is no time to focus on sin**, since all [that] such a focus can do is lead to self-absorption and continued fixation."—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 87.

We have, in the above paragraph, a devilishly brilliant way to eliminate conscience, concerns, and strivings to obey God's Word: All such efforts are said to be selfish! Instead, tell the people that dreamy thinking is the key to spirituality.

In the same and next paragraph, the authors declare that **efforts to eliminate sin only lead to "the self-image," which tends to separate the soul from God.**

For Barry and Connolly, it is wrong to plan to serve God and one's family, when one could instead yield the control of oneself to a spiritual father. Using a married woman as an example, they tell us she will fail in achieving spirituality if—

" . . . [she] goes back to a more prosaic kind of prayer that consists in planning how she will serve God and her family better . . . She is resisting . . . The contemplative attitude can be particularly frightening in such circumstances because it seems to ask one to give up control."—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 89.

In the above paragraph, **the difficult people to obtain mind control over are those who give their attention to loving and serving God, and helping others.** Control can only be obtained over people willing to spend an increasing amount of time obeying their spiritual director and thinking about imaginary concepts.

According to the authors, **the important thing is not the putting away of sin, but the telling of it to the controller.**

"We also recall Ignatius of Loyola's experienced voice saying that 'the enemy of our human nature . . . earnestly desires that they (his wiles and seductions) be received secretly and kept secret,'

and urging manifestation to a confessor or 'spiritual person.' "—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 99.

Ignatius knew he was on the right track, because **he saw an image of a snake in the air about him:**

"He [the person entering this 'contemplative life'] may well, without thinking about it, concentrate for days or weeks on the new experience precisely because it is an attractive spiritual experience.

"In his *Autobiography*, Ignatius tells us that something like this happened to him. He often saw in the air before him a beautiful image that gave him great comfort. **It seemed to him to have the form of a serpent with many things that shone like eyes**, though they were not eyes. He found great pleasure and consolation in seeing this thing, and the more he saw it the more his consolation increased. When it disappeared he was saddened.

"Immediately after the experience of God at the river Cardoner, while kneeling in front of a crucifix, he saw the image again. This time, however, he noticed 'that the object did not have its usual beautiful color, and with a strong affirmation of his will he knew very clearly that it came from the demon.' "—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 103.

Cleverly done. **The devil found he was able to use impressions and mystic images floating before Loyola's eyes to guide him.** If, for example, the conviction came to Ignatius that he should not try to kill so many Protestants, then a dark serpent would appear before him—and he would immediately banish the thought.

**What is the normative standard in morality? Not the Ten Commandments for Barry and Connolly; they tell us it is impressions and feelings.** That is how we should decide whether an idea is right or wrong:

"Here we see one of the criteria that people use to decide whether an experience is of God: **They compare it to another experience** that they are sure is of God. Then, if they see that in some respect the two conflict, they decide which experience to accept. Many people have a touchstone experience of God. **Any other experience that seems to run counter to that touchstone** they look upon with suspicion."—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, pp. 103-104.

**What a way to test the rightness or wrongness of a thought or action! Not "to the law and to the testimony" (Isaiah 8:20), not to Bible study and**

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**prayer, but according to the way you feel about it. The above is a landmark statement, revealing the spiritual phoniness of this whole system.**

As you will learn at the end of this research study, at the present time (2005), there is an increasing interest in our denomination in learning and teaching Spiritual Formation. There is no doubt that our denomination, its leaders, workers, and members need our prayers! Surely we must be nearing the end of time.

After spending several pages on this theme, **the authors add that there is one authority higher than one's impressions; it is the authority of the church** (p. 115), which is the command of ecclesiastical superiors and the counsel of "spiritual directors." Thus there are only two levels of authority: (1) impressions and the guidance of the spiritual director, and (2) the decrees of the church. According to this devilish teaching, neither God nor His Inspired Books have any authority over the soul.

In the chapter, entitled "*Becoming a Spiritual Director*," we are told that priests and ministers are the ones most often selected for this task (p. 121). And they are only successful as spiritual guides when they themselves are being directed by yet other humans (pp. 124-125).

**The plan is to tie everyone together in one great web of dependency on frail people. It is not God's Word which is to be the authority, but church leaders and spiritual directors.**

**Thus we see that this entire program has but one objective. You can call it "spiritual formation" or "spiritual direction"; yet it is nothing more than bringing Ignatius Loyola's "spiritual exercises" into our midst—and subduing church members everywhere with them.**

Doing so is but a fulfillment of Ignatius' own command:

"In his *Constitutions*, Ignatius of Loyola says of those Jesuits in studies: 'After they have had experience of the *Spiritual Exercises* in their own selves, **they should acquire experience in giving them to others.**'"—*Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 208.

Ignatius must have had the golden snake staring fondly at him as he wrote those words.

## **THE CURRENT REVIVAL OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN OUR DENOMINATION !!**

Spiritual Formation is now beginning to spread throughout our denomination! **The February 3, 2004, issue of *Adventist News Network* (ANN) says this:**

(1) Something is needed to improve the spiritual-

ity of our people. (2) Spiritual Formation has been found by other denominations to be the solution, so we can know it will be the solution needed to improve the spirituality of our own church members. (3) It is not doctrinal instruction that is needed now, but this new experience. (4) Our people are more concerned about "doing" (reading God's Word and obeying it) than "being" and "spiritual formation." (5) Our "doctrinal orientation" weakens our experience. (6) It is being taught by some of our pastors in various localities. (7) It is now being taught in our colleges and universities, so our present and future pastors can learn how to train church members in its procedures. (8) Special people are needed to instruct, disciple, and "model" how to produce spiritual formation in our church members. (9) A special *International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education* was established by the General Conference in September 2001, to promote and instruct pastors and other workers in "spiritual formation in each of the world's 13 regions."

*Here is this lengthy statement:*

**"Spiritual formation is a topic being raised by many pastors and church leaders in a growing number of Christian denominations.** It's no longer enough to just know doctrine and facts. In today's hectic society, people are searching for something deeper and more meaningful, something that makes sense in their whirlwind lives.

"For the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a 'wake-up call' was sounded after a 2002 survey showed that though doctrinal understanding was high, there were several 'areas of concern,' including low involvement in daily prayer and Bible study, active Christian witness to the community and participation in community service."

The lack of spirituality in our church has many causes, but especially the new theology teaching that you are already saved in your sins, the increasing rejection of the Spirit of Prophecy, ignorance of our basic beliefs, and rejection of our historic standards. (Notice that the above paragraph does not mention Spirit of Prophecy study.)

Continuing on with the statement:

"These concerns can be linked to how the church rates in the area of spiritual formation, **which has been defined by one Adventist Church pastor as 'the process of becoming a mature Christian** disciple of God.' Another person describes it as 'whatever you do to specifically nourish your relationship with God.'

"Today this subject is receiving serious emphasis in Adventist institutions, as well as in local congregations . . . Spiritual formation is not a new idea or concept, and 'a lot of Protestants are in the same boat. **We are rediscovering it,**' says **Dr. Jon Dybdahl, president of Walla Walla Col-**

lege . .

**“Pastor Martin Feldbush, associate director for Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, whose work brings him in contact with leaders of several other denominations, says that the Adventist Church is not alone in its quest for deeper spiritual formation among members . . . I think churches particularly that are conservative in their orientation and take their mission very seriously, and I believe we should do all of that, may have a tendency to stress the “doing” as opposed to the “being” and the formation.’**

“But why is there a need for spiritual formation? If people are part of a religious organization, shouldn’t they already be at a certain level of spiritual formation?”

“John Jenson, pastor of the 150-member South Bay Adventist Church in Torrance, California, says, **‘There’s a need for spiritual formation with the Church because we have been so doctrinally oriented** that people might be able to quote some or all of the 27 fundamental beliefs, and may have neglected having daily devotions that day or week or month.’ He explains that **there’s an overload of knowledge and information, but how to translate that into meaningful instruction and ‘marching orders’ for daily living is the key.**

“Jenson says that **without spiritual formation, a person would be ‘spiritually uncivilized.’ It is the process by which they can go from being a spiritual infant to spiritual maturity . . . developing the potential that God puts within you’ . . .**

“**Dr. Jane Thayer, assistant professor of Religious Education and coordinator of the Religious Education Program at Andrews University,** adds, ‘We have a big blank when it comes to taking care of people once they have accepted the Lord . . . I think what people need to know is ‘how do you live the life.’ **Spiritual formation or discipleship** needs to show how you live like Christ.’

“This issue stated, **Nicholas Satelmajer, from the church Ministerial Association [which is] responsible for continuing education for Adventist clergy, believes there’s now a shift in doctrine to more emphasis on spiritual formation within the Adventist Church.** He also says that ‘we’re finding a serious lack of knowledge of [by] our people [church founders] . . . The cause of any spiritual formation growth stunt is not because of a focus on doctrine. [The bracketed statement, “church founders,” was in the ANN article. In other words, people like Ellen White did not understand the necessity of these

spiritual formation practices.]

“Though it’s not a concept that’s easy to grasp for an organization as a whole, **spiritual formation is something each individual member can work on . . .** Spiritual formation is not about what one does, **but what the motivations behind one’s actions are” . . .**

Notice that, in order to properly “disciple” the church member for proper “spiritual formation,” the spiritual guide counseling him will have to question him carefully, *and dig into the motivations behind his actions. A focus on introspection is the key* to getting people all wrapped up in themselves as they confess to their director and obey him.

**“Overemphasis [is] on doing to the detriment of being . . . Spiritual formation takes on several forms:** ‘There are disciplines of devotion, meditation, prayer, listening, and so on,’ Feldbush explains. ‘It’s a discipline which can be heeded **through the assistance of a person who is trained** in helping people grow in these ways’ . . . **Spiritual formation is not something that happens overnight.**

“We think that **spiritual formation comes through socialization** [members working on members]. But we need to be intentional about it,’ says Thayer. ‘The culture we live in is so pervasive that the models there are more persistent and prevalent than **the little models we have,** just in terms of the time we’ve spent.’ Thayer refers to a need for showing others how to live like Christ in a real world . . .

**“The Adventist world church created the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education in September 2001, designed to provide overall guidance and standards to the professional training of pastors, evangelists, theologians, teachers, chaplains and other denominational employees involved in ministerial and religious formation, or spiritual formation, in each of the world’s 13 regions.”—Adventist News Network, February 3, 2004.**

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#### **A GLIMPSE INTO SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE NON-ADVENTIST WORLD**

The following information will provide you with an idea of what these mystical/Protestant/Catholic training programs are like—right now (2005).

Keep in mind that **the men and women leading out in our denomination in promoting and teaching Spiritual Formation—initially studied at these non-Adventist retreats, disciplined under non-Adventist “spiritual directors,” and carefully read spiritual mysticism books by such people.** As some of the following statements indicate, **these outside**

**sources frequently teach new age and Eastern mysticism, mingled with Christian terminology.**

**THE MYSTICAL SOURCE  
OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

**“What is ‘Spiritual Formation’?”**

“Spiritual Formation is **the spiritual process of mystical growth**. Christian mysticism proclaims several exciting ideas about humanity—about **our relationship to the cosmos, and our relationship to the loving Spirit who created us**. Spiritual formation is a process by which we allow the implications of these proclamations to become manifest in our lives.

**“What does it mean?”**

“What spiritual formation means is that **we are called to celebrate both our holy origin and our holy destiny. We came from God, and to God we shall return**. In the meantime, we have opportunities to live up to our radiant nature, by choosing to express love through our thoughts, words, and deeds—love for ourselves, love for our neighbors, love for all creation, love for the Divine.

**“Do we choose spiritual formation?”**

“Yes and no. Just as we did not choose to be created, but received our life as a gift, so also **we do not choose our destiny to have Christ formed in us**. Remember, it is the Holy Spirit who is the active agent in the formation process. We ‘are formed’—we ourselves do not do the forming. However, we do choose whether or not we will support the formation process, or hinder it. We choose openness, cooperation, **co-creation with God**, as ways to enhance the process of becoming the full image and likeness of Christ.

*“Is it something we control?”*

“**Control is a key issue in the formative spiritual life. No, we do not control our formation**—God does. Most of us will spend the rest of our lives trying to grasp that simple fact.

**“What is a spiritual director?”**

“The ‘soul friend’ is a person who chooses to walk with us as we live the spiritual life. The term comes from the Irish *anamchara*, which essentially means ‘friend in the spirit.’ **Other names for the soul friend include ‘spiritual director,’ ‘spiritual guide,’ and ‘staretz,’ an Orthodox term that literally means ‘spiritual father.’**

“Do you wish to form an intentional relationship with **a person who will provide mentoring, support, and challenge for you as you nurture a discipline of prayer?** If so, you may wish to find **a spiritual director, or a soul friend**.

“Spiritual direction is a gift from God. Both lay people and clergy make excellent soul friends.

Persons with training in the art of spiritual direction are often quite gifted, while those with no training make wonderful soul friends, and may make talented directors as well. Keeping an open mind about your director is wise. You may be surprised at the kind of person who makes the ‘best’ soul friend for you.

**“To find a spiritual director:**

“1. Pray about it. Seek Divine guidance. Trust that God will lead you to the person who is right for you. **See if anyone is available at a local monastery or convent**. Often monks and nuns have been trained in the art of direction, and certainly such people are familiar with the life of prayer.

“4. If you still have not located a director, **try contacting an organization which trains spiritual directors**. The Shalem Institute in Bethesda, MD, the Stillpoint School in Nashville, TN, and the Institute for Pastoral Studies in Atlanta, GA, all have training programs for spiritual directors. **Similar programs exist in virtually every major city in the United States**. Talk to your pastor to learn if there is a school for spiritual directors near you. Often such groups will be happy to make referrals, matching you with one of their current or former students.

**“Etiquette for spiritual direction.**

“Do not waste a spiritual director’s time unless you are serious about praying daily and meeting regularly (say, once a month) with the director. If you resist such a discipline, a few meetings with a gifted director may help clarify your resistance. Your discipline does not have to be perfect, but your intention must be mature, before spiritual direction will be useful to you.

“**Do not seek spiritual direction from a spouse, family member, close friend, or pastor**. You are too close to persons in these categories.”—*Shalem Institute Advertisement*.

**A LEADING  
CONTEMPLATIVE/DISCIPLESHIP  
TRAINING CENTER**

“The Shalem Institute, Spiritual Community for Spiritual Directors, **Franciscan Center**, Andover, Massachusetts. [This is one of several Shalem training retreats.]

“The Shalem Spiritual Guidance Program is designed to nurture the spiritual heart of those called to the ministry of “holy listening and directing,” known as **spiritual direction, spiritual guidance, or spiritual companionship**. Begun in 1978, this program was the first to offer both academic resources and experiential support for an ecumenical mix of spiritual directors. Since its inception, the Spiritual Guidance Program has

attracted and been enriched by men and women from a wide variety of professions and faith traditions from around the world.

“From the beginning, Washington Theological Union has offered graduate-level academic credit for participants in this program who wish it. The breadth of material available in this Program is similar to that of many academic programs, and its experiential component is of a depth that few can offer. The breadth of learning that takes place between participants is also nearly unrivaled as all participants must already be spiritual companions.

“Shalem’s Spiritual Guidance Program draws on the rich resources of **Christian contemplative [monastic and hermitage] tradition** to enhance and deepen the spiritual lives of those called to this ministry.

“This is done in a spacious, prayer-filled atmosphere with the support and guidance of committed peers and Shalem’s seasoned staff. Always, emphasis is on an open, immediate awareness of God’s presence.”

*[A different Shalem advertisement:]*

“This ecumenical program offers a solid foundation of reading, reflection, and practice. There are also the two residencies with the wellspring of experiential learning in groups and on retreat. Seminars are interwoven with participant-led prayer groups and provide opportunities for experiencing God in prayer and through the leadership of peers, as well as learning about leadership. Always, the focus is on deepening communion with God and contemplative awareness of God’s immediate presence in all of life.

**“Now in its seventeenth year, this program has attracted a diversity of lay people and clergy from different faith traditions and a wide range of vocations.** In 1973, Shalem began with a particular kind of contemplative group, meeting weekly over many months, and has continued to offer such groups in various forms ever since. These groups are grounded in a careful rhythm of silence, small-group reflection, and guided plenary times. There is exposure to a number of different practices or “ways in” to becoming present for God with our whole being. **The practices involve our senses, feelings, imaginations, minds, wills, and bodies as well as our image-less, silent presence.**

**“In 1987, a major program was begun for spiritual formation leaders, and this was the prototype for the current Leading Contempla-**

**ive Prayer Groups & Retreats Program.** Some of Shalem’s learnings about these groups and their leadership have been published in **Tilden Edwards’** book, *Living in the Presence: Disciplines for the Spiritual Heart.*”

*[A different Shalem advertisement:]*

“On Being a Spiritual Guide - Fall, Document Actions, Shalem Institute, Bethesda, Maryland— This introductory workshop to Shalem’s extension programs is for those who assist others with their spiritual lives and who wish to explore further **the ministries of spiritual direction and/or leading groups that assist people’s presence to God.**

#### **SPIRITUAL FORMATION: INCREASING LIKE BABY RABBITS**

“Spiritual Formation: A Pastoral Letter, by Richard J. Foster, Sunday January 18, 2004—Dear Friends, By now enough water has gone under the Christian Spiritual Formation bridge that we can give some assessment of where we have come and what yet needs to be done. When I first began writing in the field **in the late 70s and early 80s the term ‘Spiritual Formation’ was hardly known, except for highly specialized references in relation to the Catholic orders.**

“Today it is a rare person who has not heard the term. **Seminary courses in Spiritual Formation proliferate like baby rabbits. Huge numbers are seeking to become certified as Spiritual Directors** to answer the cry of multiplied thousands for spiritual direction. And more.

“Still, any genuine understanding of Spiritual Formation and its immense importance for the lives of individuals and churches is as remote as ever. **Many contemporary books on the subject (and their number is now legion)** simply take up the all too familiar recipe of consumer-Christianity-with-discipleship.

“Seminary programs become quickly polluted by issues that are a far cry from the spiritual growth of students: **money** (D. Min. programs give seminaries ready cash), **pride** (degrees abounding), **arrogance** (our program is better than your program), ATS [American Theological Seminaries] **accreditation concerns** (reading lists and **contact hours** take precedence over soul growth in grace), and a host of other issues that have nothing to do with the life of “righteousness and peace and joy” in the Holy Spirit, and, indeed, are more often than not counterproductive to it.”