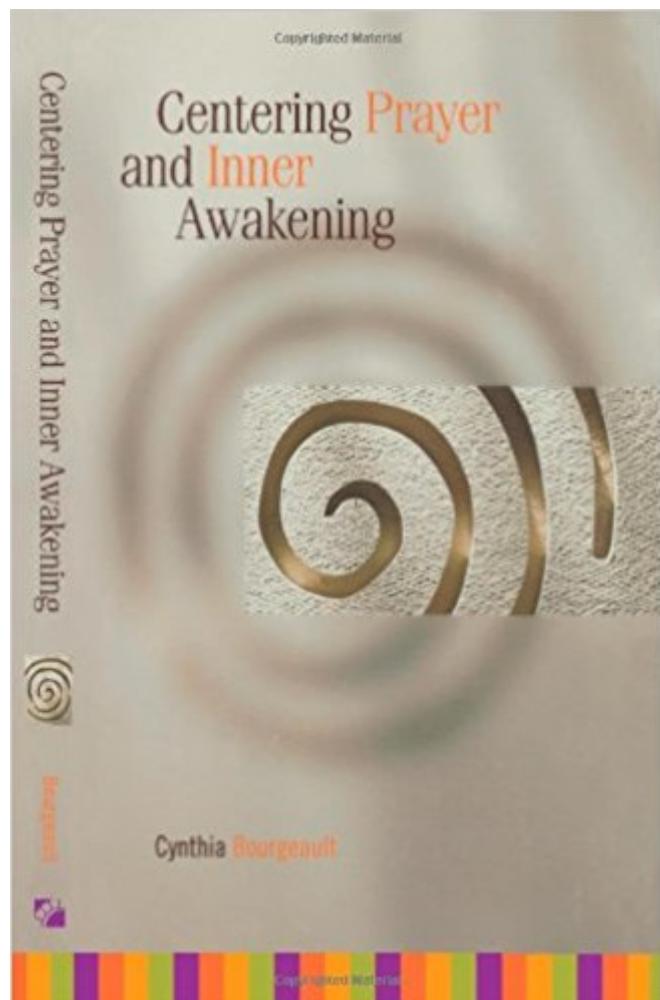


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Centering Prayer And Inner Awakening



Synopsis

Practitioners of Centering Prayer are known for the great enthusiasm they bring to the practice of this ancient discipline. Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening is a complete guidebook for all who wish to know the practice of Centering Prayer. Cynthia Bourgeault goes further than offering an introduction, however. She examines how the practice is related to the classic tradition of Christian contemplation, looks at the distinct nuances of its method, and explores its revolutionary potential to transform Christian life. The book encourages dialogue between Centering Prayer enthusiasts and those classic institutions of Christian nurture•churches, seminaries, and schools of theology•that have yet to accept real ownership of the practice and its potential.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

First, a disclaimer: the author is my (informal) teacher. Still, while this might be the reason that I might not submit a negative review, I can submit a positive one with enthusiasm not founded in my personal connection. There are numerous "de-constructionists" in the Christian market-place -- Bishop John Spong, Marcus Borg among them, and I argue that they perform an essential service. But for spiritual growth, these writers are a little more likely to give a stone than a drink of water. Cynthia's book is a refreshing answer to the vacuum that I feel after reading one of those books. Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening is thoroughly grounded in Christian tradition -- this is a Christian text by an Anglican (Episcopal) priest -- but it draws from a larger context than the 21st century North American one. In doing so, she challenges some perspectives that are unquestioned.

The first and perhaps the most important is the question of "where God is". In the long tradition of contemplatives, Cynthia suggests that attempts to look for God "out there" is going to lead to a religion that is fractured and a faith that is out-of-touch with what we know in our hearts to be true. No, God is to be found within -- which must be carefully contrasted with the notion that we are in any way "god". So the way to discover God? Cynthia gently takes us through the approaches that have been used over the millennia, but lands on a relatively modern approach (about 30 years old) usually called "centering prayer". It would be a disservice here to describe this, except perhaps to say a couple of things about what it isn't.

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