

Evangelicals and spirituality

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'Spirituality' has recently become a subject much talked about by evangelicals. Many evangelical theological colleges now offer courses in spirituality; evangelicals are seeking out spiritual directors, and going on guided retreats; and most Christian bookshops have a section on spirituality. Many evangelicals will know what to expect from books on the subject. They will often emphasize Catholic and Orthodox, rather than Reformed, traditions of prayer; they may well recommend techniques of prayer that stress a quietist, mystical element. They may give the impression that the way to intimacy with God lies in abandoning conscious effort and intellectual endeavour, and learning instead a way of responsive relaxation. And they will offer guidance on many other disciplines besides that of prayer: meditation, visualization, contemplation, fasting, and a personal rule of life.

It is important to realize from the beginning that the use of the word spirituality to refer to certain specialized techniques

and approaches to the devotional life would not have meant anything to Christians of the NT church, or indeed of the church of any era until the later Middle Ages. 'The earliest known use of the Latin word *spiritualitas* remains very close to what St Paul meant by "spiritual" (*pneumatikos*): Christians, by virtue of their baptism, are meant to be "spiritual" in the sense that they are meant to be "led by the Spirit" and to "live by the Spirit".'

Spirituality in its original sense is therefore for all Christians of every age, temperament and theology; in its modern usage, spirituality includes teaching on special types of devotion which appeal mainly to one group within the church, and which are certainly not necessary means of grace for all Christians.

However, having acknowledged that this latter use of the word is unbiblical and can be misleading, this article will use the term 'spirituality' principally in its modern, technical sense. 'Spirituality' in this sense is of great interest to many evangelicals. Is this because of a genuine hunger for God, and

a desire to go deeper into different ways of praying and listening to God than the traditional 'quiet time' taught? Or does part of the interest come from a dissatisfaction with the biblical, reformed faith, and a hankering after what is novel, strange, and gives a pleasing sense of belonging to a spiritual élite? Evangelicals have become divided on the issue, with some rejecting the whole subject as unbiblical, and others, uncritically perhaps, trying every new technique with enthusiasm. This article will try to assess what, if anything, may be of value to evangelicals in this particular tradition of spirituality.

How does God speak?

The central issue is our understanding of the way that God speaks to us. Broadly speaking, there are two different ways of seeing this, one or other of which is implicit in books on spirituality. The more mystical (and perhaps the prevalent approach today) is to try to listen to God's voice primarily through an inward light, or direct prompting of the Spirit: such an approach will put most stress on clearing aside any distractions, or even the barrier of our rational minds, so that we can be open to God's still, small voice within. Evangelicals, however, are committed to the understanding that God has spoken uniquely and most clearly through his Son Jesus Christ, and through the Scriptures that bear witness to him. Far from setting aside or bypassing our rational minds, we must therefore use all our mental faculties and our understanding to study Scripture, and listen to God's voice in it. We certainly cannot hear God without the work of the Holy Spirit in illuminating our minds, but he will normally do this by enabling us to understand the truths taught by Scripture, and applying them to our lives. Our first responsibility is to use every aid given us to study the Bible (including commentaries, sermons and devotional literature), and to seek the principles of interpretation which the Bible itself gives us.

Most evangelicals would agree on this central principle of special revelation, but recently some have questioned whether this way of listening to God is completely adequate. They have asked if evangelicals, by stressing rational understanding of Scripture so much, have not cut themselves off from other ways in which God speaks to us. Can he not use direct, inward promptings; the beauty of the natural world; visions and dreams; tongues and prophecies; or private messages from Scripture, unrelated to the original context and meaning?

A short answer is that of course God can use all these ways, and can reveal himself to us in any way that he chooses (including the mouth of a donkey, Nu. 22:21-23). Scripture itself gives examples of God giving such direct promptings: Nehemiah 2:12; Acts 16:7; 21:11; 1 Corinthians 14; 2 Corinthians 2:13. Evangelicals, however, should beware of too quickly abandoning the surest and clearest way in which God promises to speak to us (through Scripture) in favour of secondary ways, which he has not promised to all people at all times: such ways are 'extraordinary, exceptional and anomalous'.² They are certainly not more spiritual than the hard work of applying ourselves to interpret Scripture, and they are not therefore to be sought in the same way.

Nevertheless, evangelicals have something to learn here from Christian writers of other traditions of spirituality. Evan-

gelicals have rightly stressed the use of the mind in listening to God, but sadly they have not always realized that God's words must penetrate more deeply than the mind, to affect conscience, heart and will as well. The result has been a generation of evangelicals with a good knowledge of Christian doctrine, but with a shallowness in spirituality, and little realization of the depth of fellowship and intimacy with himself to which God calls us. The purpose of Bible reading is not finally to increase our intellectual understanding, but to bring us into a living encounter with Jesus Christ; such a meeting cannot leave us unchanged, but will expose our sin and spiritual poverty, and show the way to a transformation of our lives and witness.

That is one reason why evangelicals are turning to books on spirituality (many from Catholic or Orthodox traditions). They want to learn to meditate on Scripture, to dwell on and chew over God's words, so that they do penetrate from mind to heart. J. I. Packer has said: 'Meditation is a lost art today. Christian people suffer grievously from their ignorance of the practice.'³ We need to learn again how to bridge the gulf between intellectual understanding and heart-warming devotion.

The use of techniques

Several books on spirituality recommend various techniques for quieting the mind in preparation for meditation and prayer. These usually include concentrating on various bodily sensations; listening to all the sounds that can be heard; and fixing the attention on breathing, being aware of air as it goes in and out of the nostrils. The aim of such exercises is to deal with the problem of mental and outward distractions that plague most Christians when they try to pray. It is an impossible and fruitless task to try to *empty* the mind of distracting thoughts; the better approach is therefore to *fill* it with neutral or pleasant stimuli (such as an awareness of sounds and bodily sensations). Through these means, it is said, the mind can be quieted so that it is ready to hear the still, small voice of God.

It is obvious that this approach has much in common with the techniques of Eastern meditation. However, Eastern and Christian meditation are radically different in their aims. Eastern meditation tries to quieten the mind, and experience a mystical consciousness. Christian meditation does not try to bypass the mind, and its aim is not an altered state of consciousness, but to hear the voice of God. This comes to us, not simply from within, but from Scripture interpreted by the Holy Spirit.

There are dangers in a book like *Sadhana*, by Anthony de Mello,⁴ which contains advice on several such techniques. Although Anthony de Mello does draw attention to some dangers, he seems sometimes to suggest that such techniques are themselves a way to intimacy with God. However, if such techniques have any value at all, it must be recognized that it is only a limited one. It is dangerous to confuse them with prayer: at best, they can be only a preparation for prayer.

There is therefore a danger in such techniques if they become a substitute for Christian meditation and prayer, rather than a preparation for it; and they may also be dangerous for people who have come to Christ out of a background in Yoga or Eastern mysticism, and still feel its

attraction. In that case, the kind of approach suggested by Peter Toon in *Meditating upon God's Word* (pp. 30-31) may well be preferable. He advises that the most important preparation we can make is to spend time consciously recalling God's presence, and remembering what we are by the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Richard Foster comments wisely: 'Personally, I have very little interest in technique, but a great deal of interest in helping people come into relationship with God. Specific suggestions are helpful only to the extent that they bring us more fully into relationship so that we behold the "glory of God in the face of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).'⁵

But I should certainly not rule out the use of exercises in concentration by all Christians, as long as the aim which Richard Foster describes is kept firmly in mind. We all need to find a way of dealing with the problem of distractions that make prayer difficult, and these techniques suggest one way. The exercise of concentrating on sounds for a period of twenty minutes is in itself neutral, and may sometimes be helpful, particularly at those times when our minds are full of the events and anxieties of a busy day.⁶ If at such times we attempt to rush into Bible reading and prayer without proper preparation, we may well be discouraged by finding that the thoughts that fill our minds make concentration impossible.

While we may hesitate about the wisdom of using particular techniques, we should not lose sight of the important truths that those who advocate such techniques are stressing: the value of solitude and of silence. We see the stress that Jesus himself placed on solitude and silence in his invitation to the apostles: 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest' (Mk. 6:31). This plan was almost immediately foiled by the crowd, and Jesus made himself available to them in compassion for their needs (v. 34). But it is very interesting to notice that Jesus did not let the needs of the crowd and of the apostles frustrate his own need for communion in solitude with his Father. At the end of the day, he dismissed them all, and went up the mountain-side alone to pray (v. 46). The prayer of *unavailability* is a necessary part of spiritual discipline.

We cannot of course, simply by learning to use solitude and silence, force God to reveal himself to us. On the other hand, if we habitually neglect solitude and silence, if we are always surrounded by people and noise, we must not be surprised if eventually we make ourselves deaf to God's voice when it does come to us. And solitude and silence are not natural to us; everything in our culture militates against them. They therefore have to be learned, and given a deliberate priority in our lives. This is perhaps especially true for evangelicals, who by temperament and conviction often over-stress activity.

More than that, we have to realize that it is not only because of the pressures of secular society that we fear silence; it is also because of our unacknowledged fear of what we may hear in the silence — the legion of repressed fears, feelings of guilt and inadequacy that have to be faced before we can hear God speaking to us in the midst of them. Most of us need help in this area, and even if we decide not to use particular techniques, we need to find our own way of seeking the solitude and silence that may be the occasion of God's speaking to us.⁷

Imaginative contemplation

A book that has recently had a great deal of influence is *God of Surprises* by Gerard Hughes.⁸ Its aim is to make accessible to the modern reader a classic work on spirituality which most Christians would otherwise find quite impossible to read: the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola. In this book, the evangelical will find recommended a way of using Scripture which will probably seem quite strange to him. This is 'imaginative' or 'Ignatian' contemplation, in which the reader takes a scene from one of the gospels, and uses his imagination to relive it, as if it were taking place before his eyes, and he were an actual participant in it. Gerard Hughes gives a brief example of this, using the healing of the demoniac in Mark 5:1-20 (p. 39), and a much fuller example using the parable of the prodigal son (pp. 79-83). Anthony de Mello gives an equally full example in *Sadhana*, with the story of the healing of the paralysed man in John 5 (pp. 80-82).

This approach to Scripture raises problems for many evangelicals. It may seem quite unreal to them to try to see themselves at a time and place where in fact they were not actually present. And they also ask if to use this method is not to break the second commandment, which prohibits the making of images (mental as well as physical) in our worship of God.

In assessing these objections, it is as well to remember that our imaginative faculties were given to us by God, and that we cannot help using them to some degree as we read Scripture. The images come unbidden to our minds as we read descriptions of scenes as vivid as the feeding of the five thousand, or the stilling of the storm. Furthermore, the Bible itself seems actually to encourage us to use our imaginations: why otherwise would it include such vivid picture books as the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation, and why did Jesus use parables as his main form of teaching?

We must therefore recognize that, while there are genuine dangers in undisciplined use of the imagination, the answer lies not in trying to abandon the imagination, but in making sure that it is controlled by and subject to our rational minds. Christian meditation differs from non-Christian 'not in the absence of the intuitive, but in the presence of the rational'.⁹ Practically, this means that we will avoid *beginning* a study of Scripture with the imagination. First of all, we need to study Scripture with all the faculties of the rational mind and memory, using biblical principles of interpretation and all the help we need from commentaries. It will then be quite safe (and necessary) to let the impact of the passage sink deeper, from mind to heart, and the use of the imagination is one way of allowing this to happen. 'The imagination is not to be feared: it is to be welcomed and used, but used in service of the intellect and memory, not as their master.'¹⁰ The danger of image-making, or idolatry, is avoided if the objective truth of Scripture controls the imagination, rather than vice versa.

The use of this particular kind of imaginative contemplation is not of course mandatory for all Christians: it is not a 'necessary means of grace', and some will find it more beneficial than others. But all Christians should want to pursue the aim towards which Ignatian contemplation is directed, even if they prefer to use another method to get there. And that is that reading Scripture becomes not simply an intellectual exercise, but an occasion for a personal encounter between the reader and Jesus Christ. 'We must

move back and forth until we have identified ourselves with the many people who surround Jesus. For as long as we fail to recognize *ourselves* in these people, we fail to recognize the Lord. . . . The best thing to do is always to take up your position at exactly the same point where one of the persons who meet him or appear in his parables stands; to stand, for example, where John is in prison addressing doubting questions to him, or the Canaanite woman, who desires nothing of him but the crumbs that fall from the Lord's table, or the rich young ruler, who will not forsake the god Mammon and so goes away unblessed.¹¹

Meditation¹²

Another way of using Scripture that may seem strange to evangelicals is the kind of meditation that forms part of the 'Benedictine' method of prayer. In this, the Christian first reads a passage of Scripture, until he alights upon a particular verse or phrase which seems to come to him out of the passage with special force. This is the verse he chooses to meditate on; that is, he begins to murmur the words persistently over and over again (either mentally or aloud) until, through constant repetition, they sink deep into his heart. This period of meditation leads in time to a response to God in prayer.¹³

André Louf says this is *meditatio* — 'not meditation, that is consideration or reflection in our more rational sense of the word, but in the primitive sense of a constant repetition, a persistent murmuring of the same words'.¹⁴ A metaphor which was often used in the Middle Ages to describe this kind of meditation comes from the word *ruminari* — a *chewing* of the word. It suggests the picture of sleepy cows incessantly chewing the cud. So we too are encouraged to chew the Word, patiently engrossed upon it until it becomes part of our very being.¹⁵

To some evangelicals, this may seem suspiciously close to the Hindu or Buddhist use of a mantra — an incantation which the worshipper repeats continuously until he achieves an altered state of consciousness through the repetition. But the key issue once again is the use of the mind. For the Hindu or Buddhist worshipper, the meaning of the words is not crucial: it may not even be known to the worshipper, and it is the very act of repetition, rather than comprehension with the rational mind, which induces the altered state of consciousness. Anthony de Mello (who has been heavily influenced by Hinduism) comes close to suggesting the same thing: 'What is important, however, is that you keep repeating these words (even if you do so mentally) and reduce your reflection on their meaning to a bare minimum'.¹⁶

But the wiser writers on spirituality stress that it is of the utmost importance not to abandon the use of the conscious intellect. Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh says that the attitude of the Christian during meditation and prayer is something different from either activity (working very hard to bring God down to where we are) or passivity (sitting doing nothing at all). It is more like the vigilance of a soldier standing guard at night: 'in a way he is inactive because he stands and does nothing; on the other hand, it is intense activity, because he is alert and completely recollected. He listens, he watches with heightened perception, ready for anything.'¹⁷

This seems to me to be a very good way to describe the attitude to aim at during meditation.

The Christian will not try to empty his mind. Instead, he will murmur the words again and again with complete mental alertness, waiting to see how the Holy Spirit will apply them particularly to himself. It may be that people or events, or feelings of guilt, anxiety or longing in himself will come into his mind, and he will be given the insight to see how the words of Scripture apply very directly to them.

It is interesting to compare the Orthodox use of the 'Jesus Prayer' ('Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me, a sinner'), which the Orthodox are encouraged to carry with them through the day, murmuring the words repeatedly and as often as they can. The meaning of the words is crucial: it is because they sum up the gospel itself that the Orthodox Christian is taught to concentrate on what they say, and to go deeper and deeper into the truth they teach.¹⁸

This is very different from the complete passivity of the Buddhist. On the other hand, it also challenges a weakness in some evangelical spirituality. Evangelicals have rightly stressed that we must bring to our Bible reading and prayer all our self-discipline, our intellectual abilities, our watchfulness and energy. But the corresponding danger in this is obvious: we may forget that when we have done our utmost, and prayed with all the knowledge and force of which we are capable, our prayers and our attempts at intimacy with God are perfectly useless unless God himself chooses to come to us. In this respect, we need to learn from Catholic and Orthodox writers (as well as from Paul himself: Rom. 8:26) that true prayer begins when we come to the end of our best efforts, and admit our helplessness to the Holy Spirit.¹⁹

A personal spirituality

What, then, should be the evangelical response to the modern interest in spirituality? My belief is that it should be one of qualified welcome. It is as foolish to dismiss it all as a perversion of the gospel, or a manifestation of the New Age movement,²⁰ as it is to accept all that it teaches uncritically.

It is very important for every evangelical Christian to work out for himself a personal spirituality: a discipline of Bible reading and prayer which will be for him the best approach to God. What will such a personal spirituality look like?

First of all, it will be *evangelical*. That means that it will take very seriously the doctrines of sin and human depravity, and the need for conversion. The great weakness of most modern Catholic books on spirituality is that they show hardly any awareness of these doctrines. The evangelical, on the other hand, will come with great humility and self-suspicion to listen to God. He will put much stress on the doctrine of revelation, and, rather than rely on any inner light or voice within, will trust in Scripture interpreted by the Holy Spirit.

The evangelical will therefore not neglect books on spirituality by contemporary evangelical writers. When asked (at the Evangelical Ministry Assembly at St Helen's, Bishopsgate, in 1986) to recommend modern authors on spirituality, J. I. Packer put first the works of Dr Martyn Lloyd Jones, second, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* by Richard Lovelace,²¹ and (some way behind), the books of Richard Foster. To these, I should add the books of J. I. Packer

himself (particularly *Knowing God*). Dr Packer has also written a very instructive description of the contrasting evangelical and Catholic approaches to prayer in the chapter he contributed to *My Path of Prayer*.²²

Richard Foster has a very deep knowledge of spiritual disciplines of different ages and traditions, and he is perhaps the most accessible evangelical writer on the subject. There is much that is helpful in his books, but they need to be read with discernment and caution; occasionally (perhaps because of his Quaker background) he recommends exercises which are at best eccentric and at worst positively dangerous. An example is the meditation in which he encourages you, among other things, to 'allow your spiritual body, shining with light, to rise out of your physical body'.²³ This seems dangerously close to the occult experience of astral projection. It is at any rate not what Paul means by 'a spiritual body' (1 Cor. 15:44), or being 'caught up into the third heaven' (2 Cor. 12:2).

Secondly, a personal spirituality will be *catholic*. Evangelicals, while affirming that their own tradition of spirituality is a good and true tradition, will also acknowledge the poverty of modern evangelicalism in this area. They will not therefore claim a monopoly of the truth, but will look to other ages and other traditions to enrich their own spiritual life.

'Exercise the charity,' Alexander Whyte exhorted, 'that rejoices in the truth' wherever it is found, and however unfamiliar may be its garb. 'The true Catholic, as his name implies, is the well-read, the open-minded, the hospitable-hearted, the spiritually-exercised Evangelical; for he belongs to all sects, and all sects belong to him.'²⁴

This implies, first of all, that the modern evangelical will not restrict his reading to modern works. He will make sure that he becomes acquainted with evangelical classics of previous centuries, such as *The Confessions of St Augustine*; *Religious Affections*, by Jonathan Edwards; *The Saints' Everlasting Rest* by Richard Baxter; the letters of Samuel Rutherford; *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan; *A Lifting Up for the Downcast* by William Bridge; or the Journals of John Wesley and George Whitefield.

It is very likely that, as he reads these great works by evangelicals of the past, he will be surprised to find techniques taught in them that he had supposed to be of modern or Eastern origin. Much of contemporary evangelical suspicion of spirituality is due to the fact that we have lost contact with the spiritual heritage of the past. Our ignorance of the devotional aids thought important by our spiritual forefathers means that we are often needlessly suspicious of teaching that they would have regarded as self-evident. Modern evangelicals are the children of an over-rational age, and need to test the limitations of their spiritual practice by returning both to the Scriptures and to the ancient masters of spirituality.²⁵

He may also want to learn something of the stress on solitude, silence and receptivity in modern Catholic and Orthodox books, which redress the balance against an over-emphasis on activism in evangelical works. Good authors to begin with are Gerard Hughes, Henri Nouwen, André Louf, Jean Vanier, Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh; and Thomas Green.

Jean Vanier, who has founded 'L'Arche' communities for the mentally handicapped all over the world, is outstanding as a writer who shows that true Christian spirituality is not a retreat from the world, but the source of power for service in it. He has profound insights to give on community life, the ministry of the weak to the strong, and on the basic human need for intimacy, fruitfulness and joy.²⁶ He deserves to be read by all evangelicals. Henri Nouwen has been much influenced by Jean Vanier: he reveals his debt to him in his book *In the House of the Lord*, and he gives wise teaching on our relationship to ourselves, to others, and to God in *Reaching Out*.²⁷

Another author worth reading is Thomas Green. *When the Well Runs Dry* is based on the spirituality of Teresa of Avila, and is exceptionally helpful for understanding spiritual dryness as a necessary and positive part of Christian growth.²⁸ A minor classic (and the best antidote to activism that I know of) is *The Stature of Waiting* by W. H. Vanstone.²⁹

It will also be a *personal* spirituality. The wise Christian will realize that the spiritual life is a matter, not only of theology, but of character, temperament and background as well. What is a right discipline for other Christians may be quite wrong for him. It is therefore important for him to read widely and to test different approaches to the spiritual life to find out what is best for him.

Finally, it will be a *flexible* spirituality. A rule of life which works well at one time may eventually become stale and need to be abandoned. Or a spiritual discipline which is appropriate for the undergraduate with a relatively free pattern of life will probably be very inappropriate when that undergraduate becomes a working wife and mother. Too many Christians labour under a false sense of guilt because they find themselves unable to sustain a rule of life that in fact is no longer possible for them.

It is therefore important that in this area we are not independent or self-reliant. We all need help from others whom we can trust to give us objective, honest help, whether to challenge us when we are lazy, or to encourage us when we are conscious of weakness and failure. It is a good development that evangelicals are now much more open to looking for a spiritual director (an older, wiser Christian who will give help in the spiritual life), to joining a group which will together try out and assess different spiritual exercises, and to going on guided retreats.

If we are willing to be guided, disciplined and taught by others about the spiritual life, we shall be safeguarded from the dangers of a spirituality that can easily become selfish, narcissistic and introverted, and we shall be led to a deeper intimacy with God. And when we meet the living God, we will very often find that the result is not the inner peace, stillness and calm for which so many long. Instead, it is that we are disturbed, challenged and uprooted from our complacency, to go out again into the world. Perhaps that is the surest mark of a genuine spirituality.

¹ Simon Tugwell O.P., *Ways of Imperfection* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1984), p. vii.

² J. I. Packer, *Hot Tub Religion* (Tyndale House, 1987), p. 126. (Published in Britain by IVP under the title *Laid-back Religion*.)

³ J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1973), p. 20; see also Peter Toon, *From Mind to Heart* (Baker Book House, 1987).

⁴ Anthony de Mello, *Sadhana* (Image Books, 1984). See especially pp. 28-36.

⁵ Interview in *Christianity Today* Vol. 31, No. 13, 18 September 1987, p. 19.

⁶ It is interesting to note that Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones recommends listening to the music of Mozart as a means of relaxing the mind before sermon preparation. This is a similar use of a neutral technique. (D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1971; Zondervan, 1972, p. 183.)

⁷ See Sister Margaret Magdalen CSMV, *Jesus, Man of Prayer* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1987), pp. 39-57; Henri Nouwen, *Reaching Out* (Collins, Fount Paperbacks, 1980), pp. 25, 60.

⁸ Gerard Hughes, *God of Surprises* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985).

⁹ Ed Clowney (quoted by James Sire in interview in *Christianity Today* Vol. 31, No. 13, 18 September 1987, p. 18).

¹⁰ Peter Toon, *Meditating Upon God's Word* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1988), p. 41.

¹¹ Helmut Thielicke, *The Waiting Father* (James Clarke, 1968), p. 18.

¹² Meditation involves much more than is described in this section. The best introduction to the subject is given in two books by Peter Toon: *Meditating upon God's Word* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1988) and *From Mind to Heart* (Baker Book House, 1987).

¹³ Anthony de Mello, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-111.

¹⁴ André Louf, *Teach us to Pray* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1974), p. 46.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47. See also Sister Margaret Magdalen CSMV, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-98.

¹⁶ *Sadhana*, p. 108.

¹⁷ Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, 'Living Prayer', in *The Essence of Prayer* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1986), pp. 91-92.

¹⁸ Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, 'School for Prayer', in *The Essence of Prayer*, pp. 154-165. See also Henri Nouwen, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-136.

¹⁹ For a very wise discussion of this point, and its implications for the use of techniques in prayer, see André Louf, *Teach us to Pray*, pp. 86-91.

²⁰ This is what Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon come close to doing in a book which gives important cautions, but is extreme in seeing modern spirituality as part of the great Apostasy: *The Seduction of Christianity* (Harvest House Publishers, 1985).

²¹ Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* (Paternoster Press, 1979).

²² David Hanes (ed.), *My Path of Prayer* (Henry E. Walter, 1981). Dr Packer describes there how much he owes to a spiritual classic by P. T. Forsyth, *The Soul of Prayer* (now unfortunately out of print).

²³ Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1980), p. 27.

²⁴ Quoted by J. M. Houston in his appendix, 'A Guide to Devotional Reading', to an edition of *Religious Affections* by Jonathan Edwards (Multnomah Press, 1984).

²⁵ C. S. Lewis wrote: 'It is a good rule, after reading a new book, never to allow yourself another new one till you have read an old one in between' (*God in the Dock*, quoted by James Houston, *op. cit.*).

²⁶ Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979); *Man and Women He Made Them* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985).

²⁷ Henri Nouwen, *In the House of the Lord* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1986); *Reaching Out* (see n. 7).

²⁸ Thomas Green, *When the Well Runs Dry* (Ave Maria Press, 1979).

²⁹ W. H. Vanstone, *The Stature of Waiting* (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1982).