

"Stanley Grenz's Eschatology As An Orienting Motif: A Practical Theological Approach to Transforming the Ministry of Evangelical Spiritual Direction at Urban Sanctuary, Edmonton,

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This paper will demonstrate a practical theological approach to the study of Baptist spirituality by illustrating an example from Urban Sanctuary, located on the campus of the Baptist affiliated Taylor Seminary, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. This will be accomplished by providing a review of the retreat center and a description of Larry Crabb's *NewWay* model of spiritual direction used by Urban Sanctuary. This will then be placed in dialogue with Stanley Grenz's proposed theological category of 'eschatology as orienting motif.' Grenz's perspective was intended to provide a broader understanding of salvation history by giving the Christian community a way to reflect on God's ongoing story in their historical situation; to guide them in the task of living out in their own contexts the vocation all Christians share. The implications of Grenz's suggestion will be assessed for possibilities in generating strategic proposals that will augment the model of spiritual direction currently used at Urban Sanctuary.

Practical Theology, Spirituality, and the Practice of Spiritual Direction

Practical theology recognizes the importance of studying communities of faith as a way of understanding the interaction between their theological beliefs and the contemporary culture in which the community is embedded.- As such, practical theology seeks to assist communities of faith to follow Jesus more faithfully by assisting the church in renewing its beliefs, actions and

attitudes. Similarly, Christian spirituality is concerned with an individual's and community's experience of life and its connection with the divine, specifically with respect to Jesus Christ. Research in this area seeks ways to describe the connection(s) between everyday life and our relationship with God and the practices that foster that relationship.

In highlighting the parallel histories of practical theology and Christian spirituality, Randy Maddox notes that contemporary scholarship in both areas have been concerned with the "defining expression of theology not in apologetics, or in second-order doctrinal reflection, but in Christian praxis . . . in Christian activity that arises from orienting convictions and gives rise in the process to reflection on the adequacy of these convictions."- Maddox suggests that considerations of spirituality, especially formative activities that are unrelated to the responsibilities of clergy, could enrich practical theological understandings.-

Similarly, Claire Wolfeich has explored the connections between practical theology and Christian spirituality, and has identified similarities between the two fields of study including: interdisciplinary methodology, the imperative of understanding the interrelated nature of theory and practice, and the self-implicating nature of research. Furthermore, she emphasizes that both disciplines have, as their subject matter, contemporary spiritual practices and that the objective of this research is the description, critical analysis, and presentation of constructive interpretations, with the goal of transforming these practices.-

Wolfeich goes on to discuss the various approaches that have been used in the study of spirituality, noting that they are complementary, "allowing for greater attention to human experience, history, and the insights of the human sciences."- Recognizing these similarities, she makes four proposals to practical theologians doing research in the area of spirituality. First, to

pay attention to spiritual practices that inform the life of religious traditions. Second, to help those traditions and communities look to their own sources as they face contemporary spiritual questions and respond to the needs of the people in their communities. Third, to provide a critical critique of those traditions with the aim of challenging, clarifying or modifying the communities assumptions. And finally, she advocates using the previous steps to facilitate insights for spiritual formation in a variety of settings including theological education, congregational life and retreat centers, among others.

One formative practice that is receiving increased attention among evangelicals is spiritual direction.- However, because of the long and diverse background of spiritual direction, scholars and practitioners have had difficulty agreeing on the nature and purpose of this ministry.- This heterogeneity is evidenced in the number of definitions for spiritual direction on the *Spiritual Directors International* website.- Although spiritual direction has a long history in the Christian tradition, it is one that, until recently, has been virtually absent from the practice of most North American evangelicals. Yet as James Houston notes, the use of spiritual direction as a spiritual discipline for evangelicals in our rapidly changing context will be essential for navigating this increasingly confusing pluralistic terrain.- However, he warns, "fads come and go . . . I am nervous of Christian ministries that become popularized. They tend to indicate how much they belong to the contemporary culture."-

One way of addressing Houston's concerns is through the development of a model of spiritual direction that takes seriously the theological foundations,- historical-contextual factors, as well as receiving input from the social-sciences; areas that are either underdeveloped or missing altogether in recent attempts by evangelicals working on this issue. At this point there is

a movement that has begun to examine what spiritual formation in general entails,- but those few who are considering spiritual direction from a uniquely evangelical perspective have failed to integrate the range of theological concepts that inform this ministry.

Therefore, because such reflection is still, for the most part in its infancy, current approaches to spiritual direction in North American evangelical circles such as the *NewWay* model, require a critical evaluation and concise articulation of the theological and methodological assumptions that undergird the nature and purpose of this practice. This project attempts to demonstrate, using a practical theological approach to the study of Christian spirituality as suggested by Wolfeich, that Stanley Grenz's appropriation of 'eschatology as an orienting motif' provides a potential theological conceptualization which could assist Urban Sanctuary in a constructive critique of the *NewWay* model, and the development of a more holistic theological articulation in their model of spiritual direction.-

Centre for Evangelical Spiritual Formation

The Urban Sanctuary is part of the *Centre for Evangelical Spiritual Formation (CESF)*- which is a non-profit, para-church organization committed to impacting and transforming Canadian churches in their understanding and practice of moving toward spiritual maturity.

The CESF originated in the fall of 2000 when Dr. Larry Crabb presented a 'Connecting Community' conference at Beulah Alliance Church in Edmonton. It was at this time that founder Len Thompson developed a relationship with Dr. Crabb who invited him to participate in a new venture called 'The New Way School of Spiritual Direction,' located in Glen Eyrie, CO. Based on his own pastoral experience, and conversations with Larry Crabb, Len was motivated by what

he terms "weak evangelicals" - those who call themselves evangelical Christians, but are driven by the selfishness of having the church meet their needs, a marketing approach to church growth, a drifting from biblical literacy, and an increasing acceptance of postmodern epistemologies. Len believes the answer to getting evangelicals out of the mess they are in lies in a full recovery of the theological understandings of what it means to be evangelical.-

By the spring of 2003, CESF had found office space and Urban Sanctuary was spending most of its time training spiritual directors. Eventually they began to provide free monthly lectures on various classic Christian spiritual authors, and established a two-year experiential-educational program in the area of spiritual formation (Urban Institute). By the fall of 2008 CESF had moved to the campus of Taylor Seminary, and was approved to offer a twelve credit spiritual formation certificate and provide mandatory spiritual direction for Taylor's MDiv students.

In his search for a clear, contemporary articulation of evangelical spirituality, Len discovered that there were few authors dealing with the topic; the most prominent authors being Dallas Willard and David Benner. Nevertheless, what he found missing in both of these authors was the originality of evangelical thought; they were simply rewriting the classic texts, while relying on secular counseling for practical implications. Therefore, in choosing a model for spiritual direction, Len wanted to make sure it appealed to evangelicals who might critique the use of other tradition's models (ie. Ignatian Spiritual Exercises), and therefore discount what was being attempted at Urban Sanctuary. In doing so, Len wanted to make a solid link to traditional evangelical theologians in an effort to decrease the number of points of attack on this new ministry. As a result, Len believed that an explicit evangelical connection would place Urban

Sanctuary in a better position to counter potential opposition to those who might offer criticism against authors such as Henri Nouwen who are not only seen as Roman Catholic, but also tolerantly pluralistic. In the end, Larry Crabb was the only evangelical who has done any serious work on creating a uniquely evangelical model of spiritual direction.

The NewWay model of spiritual direction

Urban Sanctuary's spiritual directors are trained using the *NewWay* model being developed by clinical psychologist and Christian counselor Larry Crabb. Crabb, who admits to a lack of theological training and to being a novice in the discipline of spiritual direction, has undertaken the ongoing task of "cross-fertilizing" psychotherapy and theology to form his model.- Crabb defines spiritual direction as

the process of exploring and understanding the interior world of another, recognizing both the work of the flesh and the work of the Spirit, and following the Spirit's work in transforming the person's interior world to become more like Christ.-

In this way, the *NewWay* approach to Spiritual Formation deals with the internal dynamics of the soul that are normally thought to be the province of counseling and therapy.- This model is based on five assumptions: first that being a Christian predisposes a person to hear from God and desire to do God's will; second, spiritual direction focuses on real-life issues, evaluating one's relationship with God based on existing relational difficulties and emotional problems; third, spiritual direction requires one to face his or her defensive patterns (created by various traumatic life events) that hinder one from giving themselves to God; fourth, one cannot expect a satisfying relationship with God in the present and must wait until the end of the ages; and finally, spiritual direction has no goals or agenda other than being open to the Spirit's unpredictable moving.

Based on these assumptions, the model that Crabb teaches focuses on paying attention to the directee's psychological dynamics, which "consist of the affective forces that necessarily develop in a person's interior world in response to life events."- These responses are, according to Crabb, anti-God strategies that people use to avoid getting hurt and to enjoy life.

While the psychological-counseling methodology of his model presents certain problems, most notably his reduction of spiritual maturity and the objective of spiritual direction to inner healing, that aspect of his work lies beyond the scope of this project. What is of interest is Crabb's underdeveloped theology of spiritual direction. Since Crabb himself indicates his model is undergoing continual revision, it is open to a number of critiques that, if addressed, could provide an improved model for evangelical spiritual direction at Urban Sanctuary.

Crabb's model is based on three key theological themes. First, drawing on the doctrine of the Trinity and humanity having been created in the image of God, Crabb concludes that people were created for relationship. This relationality includes four basic capacities: the capacity to desire (the drive to want, to have, and to find significance); the capacity to perceive (the ability to interpret and make meaning); the capacity to choose (goals and means of achieving those goals); and the capacity to experience emotions. The second theological theme is the fall. Here Crabb avers that the consequence of Adam and Eve's actions is that every human being is born with that image of God in a morally diseased state. This resulting 'flesh nature,' as Crabb refers to it, produces perverted desires - which are the root of all our 'presenting problems' - because humanity is determined to make life work without including God. Finally, Crabb incorporates the doctrine of positional sanctification. Crabb suggests that sanctification offers a new purity through the blood of Christ; a new identity based on a believer's adoption into God's family; a

new inclination or desire to be obedient; and a new power which enables them to live the life God desires of them.

Contradicting his fifth assumption (that there is no goal of spiritual direction), Crabb indicates the goal of spiritual direction is to move through a five-fold pattern of brokenness, repentance, abandonment, confidence, and release.- Brokenness is the recognition of one's tendencies and the sinful actions that come from it. Repentance involves becoming aware of and accepting God's grace and being forgiven. The process of abandonment produces the desire to be broken and find forgiveness in every area of life. As unhealthy patterns of relating are broken, the directee gains confidence in their emerging new identity which facilitates the release of the Holy Spirit's power to continue the cycle of healing.

While these concepts are an important starting point, and have precedence in other spiritual direction models (such as the First Week of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*), Crabb's model does little to move beyond the expectation of the directee to overcome 'unhealthy' attitudes and behaviors. In this way, the *NewWay* model tends to reduce spiritual maturity to a type of psycho-social healing and moral 'conditioning' and at the same time fails to articulate a more biblically holistic, culturally engaged spiritual theology. While essentially limiting his understanding of the process of salvation to an infused grace which hopefully will call forth the motivation to overcome one's negative life experiences, Crabb ignores a large segment of important themes from the Christian formation tradition including a more complete understanding of the nature and purpose of sanctification and the nature of God as it relates to community-based ethics. Therefore, while the individualistic, introspective nature of the *NewWay* model provides a necessary starting point for spiritual growth, it stops short of

articulating a well-developed, comprehensive theology of spiritual direction necessary to move evangelicals (including MDiv students at a Baptist seminary) toward a complete understanding of Christian maturity.

What is interesting to note in this choice of model is that its limited theological foundation could be seen to be at odds with, or at least incomplete when placed in context of the more extensive paradigm of spiritual formation as taught at the Urban Institute. While the *NewWay* model takes into account 'overcoming the flesh nature,' the second element of Urban Institute's spiritual formation framework, it fails to address the remaining processes of listening to God, the role of community, and discerning the call of God - all of which have eschatological elements associated with them.

Stanley Grenz and Eschatology as Orienting Motif

Recognizing the historical trend of separating theology from lived experience, Baptist theologian Stanley Grenz calls for a recommitment to reuniting the two disciplines of theology and spirituality. In this way, the function of the theologian is to keep in mind the importance of assisting the Christian community in their journey toward a transformed way of living so as to "fulfill [the church's] responsibility of proclaiming *and living out* the message that God has appeared in Christ for the sake of salvation of human kind."- It is this conviction that motivates much of Grenz's theological reflection.

In joining with John Franke, Grenz introduces a proposal for a methodological framework that might assist the evangelical church's theological agenda in the transition to a postmodern situation. This construction of an interpretive framework is presented as the conversation

between three sources of Christian theological reflection (Scripture, tradition and context) and the articulation of three primary pieces of the Christian faith mosaic (Trinity, community and eschatology). While each of these contributes a fundamental element in its own right to a theological consideration of the ministry of spiritual direction, they are ultimately mutually informing. Nevertheless, the following discussion is limited to eschatology because it lends the strongest voice to the conversation; filling in a significant gap found in Crabb's model.

The word eschatology, which refers to the study of last things has, historically, either fostered an enormous amount of conversation and over emphasis, or has been avoided because of its complex and divisive nature. As a consequence, both attitudes "all too readily separate eschatology from other topics of systematic theology . . . [a]nd both easily divorce eschatology from the life of the church, reducing it to simply the delineation of what will happen sometime in the future."

Grenz indicates that all Christian theology is ultimately eschatological in that it teaches about the "promising God, who is bringing creation to an eternal *telos*."- As such, eschatology determines the content of theology since Christian theology must be directed toward and be informed by a Christian understanding of God's desire for creation.- This perspective orients theological reflection because it is connected to the Scripture's disclosure that God is actively at work in creation; the biblical story in its entirety is the account of how God is moving toward an intended goal.- Therefore, "[t]heology is thoroughly eschatological when at every turn the theological construction finds its orientation from the perspective of our human *telos* together with the *telos* of creation as a whole. Hence a method that fosters a thoroughly eschatological theology engages all theological questions from the perspective of the future consummation."

Grenz and Franke note that there are several implications in their proposal of eschatology as an orienting motif. First, in acknowledging the biblical text as the narrative of God's intentional and directed work in the lives of the people of Israel and the early church, the biblical faith community is invited, by the Holy Spirit, into the ongoing story to experience for themselves the actions of God in their contemporary setting and thereby live as members of the eschatological community. In this way, they suggest that a method which considers the eschatological trend of the biblical story realizes the future in the present, instead of being centered on the past and the making of propositional doctrinal statements.- Stated differently, eschatology as orienting motif makes it possible to construct a theology which finds its completion - and more importantly its meaning - in the present, ongoing story of God bringing history to its perfect conclusion.-

Not only does eschatology as an orienting motif invite believers into the narrative *telos* of the Scriptures, it provides a more biblical ontological understanding for Christians. This perspective of identity leads to the second implication for eschatology as orienting motif for the Christian life in the here and now. But suggesting that those who are 'in Christ' are already a new creation and do not have to wait until the end of the age for this to be realized, believers can understand that they are currently living the eschatological reality.- That is to say, as the future becomes a narrative reality, our "lives are ultimately oriented toward a communal future from which our identity - our essential nature - is derived. Consequently, that future comprises the ultimate defining moment in one's ongoing personal narrative."- The consequence of this ontology carries with it practical and concrete responsibilities for the spiritual life. Noting that as God's image bearers who see the present as it will one day will be, those in the church are

responsible for constructing their identities now in accordance to the anticipated, guaranteed future. In other words, Christians have been called to participate in "God's work of constructing a world in the present that reflects God's eschatological will for creation."

In many ways the presentation in *Beyond Foundationlism* is somewhat ambiguous in that it neglects to integrate eschatology into other theological themes such as the image of God or the process of salvation. Likewise, it remains vague as to what is included in this participation of creating the eschatologically desired world envisioned by God. In order to better understand the theological and practical implications for eschatology as orienting motif it is necessary to turn to Grenz's work in the areas of sanctification and Christian ethics.

In *Theology of the Community of God*, Grenz presents a richer articulation of sanctification than that provided by Crabb. Moving beyond the static, positional understanding, Grenz describes the more dynamic process of conditional sanctification which he understands as work of the "Holy Spirit accomplishing God's purpose in us as Christian life proceeds. Or viewed from the human perspective, it is our cooperation with the Spirit in living out in daily life the regeneration, justification, freedom, and power which is ours through conversion, so that we grow in Christlikeness *and service to God*."- Therefore conditional this way, sanctification functions as the measure for one's current level of Christian maturity as determined by one's character and conduct.

The contested concept of 'being' versus 'doing' is developed further in *The Moral Quest: Foundations of Christian Ethics*.- Here Grenz indicates the moral vision associated with sanctification is rooted in the new creation whose theological foundation is the will of God.- By linking the themes of God's will and creation, Grenz asserts that this uniquely Christian vision of

ethics removes the focus from people as the basis and goal of ethical living and reorients the emphasis to understand what God is like and what God's purposes are.- The ultimate revelation of God's eschatological desire is found in the person of Jesus who provides an ontological basis for our ethics. Since the believer is united in Christ, our true identity lies in God's future which is already present. That is, Scripture's ethic calls us to "[b]e/become who you are! Live in the present in accordance with the perfect conformity to Christ which one day you will enjoy, because in fact you [already] are the glorified saints you will one day become."- Therefore, it is from this ontological understanding of the identity of the redeemed people of God being now who they will one day become, which flows our Christ-like ethical behavior.-

Furthermore, Jesus provides a demonstration of Christian ethics, showing "that moral obligations and virtuous living are united, fulfilled and complete in the Christian ethic of love, for love encompasses both act and character."- This unification of being and doing produces a genuine integrity which is defined by authenticity and courage of conviction. By this Grenz means that people of integrity will act in full accordance to what they say they believe, even if it comes at great personal expense.- Such an ethic of integrity comes from the narrative of God's revelation of God's own character, and includes the attributes of faithfulness and justice.

The implication of such a perspective is that Christian ethics (and therefore all theology) is eschatological in orientation. The narrative of Scripture in its entirety appeals to the vision of God's future in calling for ethical living in the present. Therefore, eschatology orients the church's continual seeking of how God's will should influence how the present is lived out. This has important corollaries for the ministry of spiritual direction.

Strategic Proposals for Spiritual Direction at Urban Sanctuary

Before considering the possibilities, it is important to return to the question of the nature and purpose of the ministry of Christian spiritual direction. What are its objectives? Is it to foster psychological healing? Should it be limited to forming the inner life or can it provide assistance for engaging a larger sphere of life? Definitions of spiritual direction run the gamut from Crabb's interior, psychological focused understanding cited earlier in this paper to Thomas Merton's more explicitly world-engaging suggestion that spiritual direction is:

a continuous process of formation and guidance, in which a Christian is led and encouraged in his [her] special vocation, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit, he [she] may attain to the particular end of his [her] vocation and union with God.-

One of the more popular definitions finds its expression somewhere in the middle. Jesuit spiritual directors William Barry and William Connolly define Christian spiritual direction as:

help given by one Christian to another which enables that person to pay attention to God's personal communication to 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.*-

Despite the increasing overlap in the two disciplines,- Susan Phillips succinctly summarizes the issue, noting that spiritual direction, unlike psychotherapy is not a paradigm of treatment and cure, but rather pays attention to God's presence and call.- Furthermore, I presuppose that spiritual formation, and consequently spiritual direction, is about more than just an examination of one's interior world, nor should it be limited to privatized considerations of one's relationship to God, but rather, the Christian spiritual life involves active participation in the world. In this way, a theologically complete model of spiritual direction must move beyond the prolegomenon offered by Crabb's *NewWay* perspective.

Possibilities

At first glance, the ambiguity of Grenz's proposed eschatology as orienting motif could be considered a limitation. The project of *Beyond Foundationalism* was content to engage postmodern thought by positing a new methodological approach for evangelical theology. In the process, there was very little developed as to how these changes might be incarnated. Even Grenz's earlier discussions on sanctification and ethics, while insinuating specific practices, was never made explicit, and Grenz failed to flesh out practical implications in subsequent works such as *The Social God and the Relational Self*.- Nevertheless, such perceived ambiguity need not limit its creative appropriation in various Christian practices. Since Grenz's concept of eschatology is to orient all theological questions around God's original intent (however one decides to define that), it lends itself to a series of theological considerations for thinking about the nature and purpose of spiritual direction at Urban Sanctuary.

First, it needs to be stated that eschatology as orienting motif as a whole is not in conflict with Crabb's development of a theology of spiritual direction. For example, both emphasize the interrelatedness of humanity having been created in the image of God and the *telos* of healthy interpersonal relationships. Here Grenz's presentation of the narrative *telos* of the Scriptures as well as his conception of ontological priority of the future can refine Crabb's understanding of reordering one's capacities. Second, his understanding of ontological priority could provide a more hope-filled nuance to Crabb's rather bleak statement that there is no possibility of having a vital relationship with God here and now. Finally, a more refined perspective on the dynamic nature of sanctification can give some theological substance to Crabb's five-phase cycle of

internal healing (self-reconciliation).- Nevertheless, such a reframing of Crabb's current articulation is insufficient to provide an adequate understanding of spiritual direction, and will have to consider theological questions beyond just an interiorized being/becoming to consider theologically informed insights regarding the necessity of engaging the world as the hands of feet of Jesus.

What Grenz has left ambiguous, other people have provided potential conversation partners to flesh out the nuances of eschatology as orienting motif and fill in the gaps of the *NewWay* perspective. John Webster for example has suggested that the transforming power of the gospel is not a passive waiting, but rather a call for active renewal by joining with God as fellow workers. This does not imply a salvation by works, or the attempt to create God's Kingdom through human efforts, both of which cause concern for many evangelicals, but rather "when we consider the agency of those who participate in the new reality of Jesus risen, we remain in the sphere in which the primary acting subject is God."- Similar proposals have been made by those working in the area of Trinitarian thought and what it means to be made in the *imago dei*. For instance, David Cunningham suggests a move beyond simple relationality to consider the character of those relationships. In doing so, he argues for an understanding of participation in the trinitarian life; a participation that goes deeper than just working with the 'other' but involves "dwelling in, and being indwelt by, one another."- This 'fusion of horizons' as it were, produces a singleness of virtue and mission between God and Christian believer. These themes of eschatological action and participation with the triune God can be incorporated into Grenz's understanding of ethics, and could lead to a consideration of the role of the formation and practice of virtue.-

Upon closer inspection this call to the active life is not such a new idea in the broader tradition of Christian spiritual direction. Ignatius of Loyola, author of the Spiritual Exercises, organized his model of spiritual direction around the assumption that the Christian spiritual life is about gaining union with God which means not only ordering one's desires (fostering the inner life), but also requires concrete action for/with God. According to Jesuit spiritual director William Barry, spiritual direction is concerned with one's entire existence, and paying attention to present experiences. If we understand our experiences as the work of God then "we are talking of an action of God that is going on continually, not of an action that has happened in some distant point in time. When we have such experiences, we are experiencing the present action of God."- As we allow ourselves to become immersed in the love of this God, we will develop the ability to discern what God's *telos* is, and experience the desire to respond to a specific call to action in fulfilling that *telos*. This lived spirituality is evidenced in the emphasis of Jesuit spirituality being tied to ministries of service, especially in the areas of education as well as social justice, which attempts to incarnate the reconciling love of God for the whole of creation.

Of course, the use of Catholic theologians and models of spiritual direction has been intentionally avoided so as to limit suspicion from possible supporters of Urban Sanctuary. As such, it would seem unwise to explicitly incorporate such sources for any attempted revision of Larry Crabb's evangelical-friendly model. However, with such precedence for a more expansive understanding of the spiritual life and spiritual direction, and the logical necessity of having a style of spiritual direction that more closely matches the overall intentions of Urban Institute, the use of Baptist theologian Stanley Grenz's eschatology as orienting motif provides promising potential for engaging such revisions from an evangelical point of view.

One such way of doing this might be to use eschatology as orienting motif to expand Crabb's five stages of brokenness, repentance, abandonment, confidence, and release to include three new stages. These might include: discovering God's call (acknowledging God's eschatological desire for creation and how the director's passions and gifts fit into God's desires); formation of virtuous character (recognition of their true self so that they can live out a Christ-like ethic); and freedom to serve (move beyond the constraints of understanding Christian spirituality as concerned only with what goes on on the inside, to engage culture and work with God to move toward an eschatological reality).

¹ Paul Ballard and John Prichard, *Practical Theology in Action: Christian Thinking in Service of Church and Society*, 2nd edition (London: SPCK, 2006); James Poling and Donald Miller, *Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985).² Randy Maddox, "Spirituality and Practical Theology: Trajectories Toward Reengagement," *Association of Practical Theology Occasional Papers* 3 (Spring 1999), 14.³ Ibid., 15.⁴ Claire Wolfeich, "Dialogue of Disciplines: Practical Theology and Spirituality," Association of Practical Theology Biennial Meeting, unpublished manuscript, St. John's University, Collegeville, MN, 2008.⁵ Ibid. Wolfeich, identifies three approaches: the anthropological perspective which seeks to study the universality of the human search for self-transcendence; the historical-contextual approach which examines the context from which a community or tradition has been formed; and the theological, which is responsible for judging the authenticity, faithfulness, wisdom or truthfulness of a particular spirituality.⁶ James Houston, "Seeking Historical Perspectives for Spiritual Direction and Soul Care Today," *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* 1 (2008): 88-105.⁷ George E. Demacopoulos, *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 2007); Gary Moon and David Benner eds., *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 2004).⁸ www.sdiword.org/What_is_Christian_Spiritual_Direction2.⁹ Houston, "Seeking Historical Perspectives," 89.¹⁰ Ibid.¹¹ William Reiser, *Seeking God in All Things: Theology and Spiritual Direction* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004), 1.¹² See for example recent publications by evangelicals including, Jeffrey P. Greenman and George Kalantzis eds., *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2010); Paul Pettit ed., *Foundations to Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008); and *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care*, published by the Institute of Spiritual Formation at Biola University.¹³ The purpose of the project is not to replace the *NewWay* model's use at Urban Sanctuary, but rather to augment it by adding some theological depth and breadth.¹⁴ CESF is an umbrella organization which is comprised of three entities: 1) Urban Centre (publication of small group material on spiritual formation); 2) Urban Institute (the educational component which is grounded on four elements of the spiritual life: listening to God, life in community, overcoming flesh dynamics and calling); and 3) Urban Sanctuary (a retreat centre and ministry of spiritual direction).¹⁵ For Len, these essentials are: 1) the supreme authority of Scripture, 2) Jesus Christ as incarnate God, 3) the Holy Spirit, 4) personal conversion, 5) evangelism, and 6) the importance of the Christian community. Len based this on Alister McGrath's

"Evangelical Distinctives" in *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity* (InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, 1995), 55-56.¹⁶ Larry Crabb, "Spiritual Direction: Entering the Battle That's Already Been Won," *Conversations* 5, no. 2 (2007): 14-19.¹⁷ "A Brief Statement on the NewWay Understanding of Spiritual Direction and Spiritual Formation," <http://www.newwayministries.org/ssd2.php> (accessed May 28, 2010).¹⁸ Ibid.¹⁹ Crabb, "Entering the Battle," 18.²⁰ Ibid., 19.²¹ Stanley J. Grenz, *Revisioning Evangelical Theology: A Fresh Agenda for the 21st Century* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 77. My emphasis.²² Stanley J. Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 242.²³ Stanley J. Grenz, *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 216.²⁴ Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, 240.²⁵ Grenz, *Renewing the Center*, 216.²⁶ Grenz and Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, 263.²⁷ Ibid., 262. ²⁸ Ibid., 265.²⁹ Ibid., 270.³⁰ Ibid.³¹ Ibid., 272.³² Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 574. My emphasis.³³ Stanley J. Grenz, *The Moral Quest: Foundations of Christian Ethics* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997). For a more detailed review of an evangelical perspective on the nature of salvation and humanity's responsibility in the process see Paul A. Rainbow, *The Way of Salvation: The Role of Christian Obedience in Justification* (Bletchley, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005).³⁴ Grenz, *The Moral Quest*, 214.³⁵ Ibid., 218-219.³⁶ Ibid., 269-270. Grenz explains that "[p]articipation in the resurrection is not merely a hope for our physical existence . . . we will likewise be morally transformed after the likeness of Christ."³⁷ Ibid., 225.³⁸ Ibid., 220.³⁹ Ibid., 230.⁴⁰ Thomas Merton, *Spiritual Direction and Meditation* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1960), 13.⁴¹ William A. Barry and William J. Connolly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1986), 7. My emphasis.⁴² I believe this mutual dialogue is necessary and beneficial as the two disciplines can inform each other. However, what is of concern here - especially for evangelical spiritual direction - is to clearly define its underlying theological assumptions and not become conflated with various forms of counseling.⁴³ Susan S. Philips, "Spiritual Direction as a Navigational Aid in Sanctification," in *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective*, ed. Jeffrey P. Greenman and George Kalatzis (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2010), 167.⁴⁴ Stanley, J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).⁴⁵ John Webster, "Eschatology, Ontology, and Human Action," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 7 (1991): 6, notes that eschatological reality in Jesus Christ means that one is not defined by "what they have been or what they are, but by what they become." His emphasis.⁴⁶ Ibid., 11.⁴⁷ David S. Cunningham, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology* (Malden: Blackwell, 1998), 166.⁴⁸ Taylor's president, Dr. David Williams has suggested that placing Grenz in dialogue with Alasdair MacIntyre might prove useful.⁴⁹ William A. Barry, *Allowing the Creator to Deal with the Creature: An Approach to the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola* (New York: Paulist Press, 1994), 43.