



The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey)

By David G. Benner

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"Grant, Lord, that I may know myself that I may know thee." —Augustine

Much is said in Christian circles about knowing God. But Christians throughout the ages have agreed that there cannot be deep knowledge of God without deep knowledge of the self. Discerning your true self is inextricably related to discerning God's purposes for you. Paradoxically, the more you become like Christ, the more you become authentically yourself.

In this profound exploration of Christian identity, psychologist and spiritual director David G. Benner illuminates the spirituality of self-discovery. He exposes the false selves that you may hide behind and calls you to discover the true self that emerges from your uniqueness in Christ. Freeing you from illusions about yourself, Benner shows that self-understanding leads to the fulfillment of your God-given destiny and vocation.

Rest assured, you need not try to be someone you are not. But you will deepen your experience of God through discovering the gift of being yourself.

This expanded edition, one of three titles in The Spiritual Journey trilogy, includes a new epilogue and an experiential guide with questions for individual reflection or group discussion.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In contrast to other books filled with drive-through pop psychology and sound-bite spirituality, Benner, a psychologist and spiritual director, offers an impressively deep and challenging introduction to Christian self-discovery in a little more than 100 pages. The foundational premise is that true knowledge of God and true knowledge of oneself are inextricably intertwined. For those who view such an approach as simply an accommodation to our culture's obsession with self, Benner provides a multitude of quotes from historic, respected theologians such as Augustine and John Calvin. He offers a clear and practical outline for those seeking to begin the lifelong process of knowing God and knowing themselves in an authentic way. As a gift to Christian counselors everywhere, Benner explains the difference between authentic self-discovery and most psychological approaches. Without mentioning names, he uses the stories of "fallen" Christian leaders to illustrate how some Christians' well-intentioned avoidance of self-discovery can become a deadly snare. His discussion of accepting our flaws and sins as a necessary step to transformation is a model of lucidity. Although self-knowledge is the subject, it becomes clear that transformation is the ultimate goal both of this book and of the journey it invites readers to begin.

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Review

"In contrast to other books filled with drive-through pop psychology and sound-bite spirituality, Benner, a psychologist and spiritual director, offers an impressively deep and challenging introduction to Christian self-discovery in a little more than 100 pages. . . . He offers a clear and practical outline for those seeking to begin the lifelong process of knowing God and knowing themselves in an authentic way. . . . His discussion of accepting our flaws and sins as a necessary step to transformation is a model of lucidity. Although self-knowledge is the subject, it becomes clear that transformation is the ultimate goal both of this book and of the journey it invites readers to begin." (Publishers Weekly (starred review), January 26, 2004)

"Wise, compassionate and accessible, David Benner's *The Gift of Being Yourself* is truly a gift to the dedicated seeker. The author draws on his professional experience as a psychologist and his own lifelong vocation as a Christian. The result is a book that felicitously weaves together the insights of psychology and Christian spirituality." (Margaret Guenther, author of *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction*)

"David Benner's *The Gift of Being Yourself* is the best treatment of the journey to becoming one's true self that I have ever read. I began reading the book as a favor to David; I finished it in one four-hour sitting as a favor to me. Drawing from his wisdom as a psychotherapist and spiritual director, insights from Scripture, and his own self and God discoveries, David gently describes the great disparity between the false self that most of us have become and the self-in-Christ that we are intended to be. I have never been so challenged and warmly inspired to receive the gift of being my true self." (Gary W. Moon, Vice President for Spiritual Development and Professor, Psychological Studies Institute)

"David Benner is a keen student of both God and human personhood. It is a rare kind of book that combines wisdom about faith and understanding about the self. This is that kind of book." (John Ortberg, author and teaching pastor, Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, Menlo Park, California)

"Slowly we are unpacking the full implications of incarnation. David Benner does exactly the same in this excellent book, using good theology, psychology and spiritual practice to make the profound obvious. This is

the work of all good teachers." (Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Center for Action and Contemplation, Albuquerque, New Mexico)

"As he has done many times before, David Benner guides us to a place of wisdom and devotion with this beautiful book. With empathy and insight he demonstrates that the two great tasks of life--knowing God and knowing ourselves--converge into a single adventure as we are drawn into the arms of our loving God." (Mark R. McMinn, Rech Professor of Psychology, Wheaton College, and author of Why Sin Matters)

"Rarely do I suggest a book in spiritual direction with the exception of the sacred Scriptures. However, *The Gift of Being Yourself* I would offer to directees with enthusiasm. David Benner has shown us where life experience, personal insight and prayer meet: in God. I highly recommend it, especially for people beginning in spiritual direction." (David I. Donovan, S.J., Provincial Assistant for Formation, New England Province of the Society of Jesus)

From the Publisher Features & Benefits

- * Links knowledge of God with knowledge of self
- * Shows how understanding yourself leads you to better discern God's purposes for you
- * Shows how becoming more like Christ allows you to become more fully yourself
- * Written by a psychologist and spiritual director
- * Offers a biblical integration of psychology and spirituality
- * Frees you from illusions about yourself
- * Revitalizes your spiritual life
- * Draws on classic Christian spiritual writers
- * Includes questions and exercises for study and reflection

Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Johnson:

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Marlene Tiggs:

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to do! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or their own friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic in the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Do you wish to something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book is usually option to fill your free of charge time/ holiday. The first thing you will ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the publication untitled *The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey)* can be good book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Jennifer David:

The reason? Because this *The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey)* is an unordinary book that the inside of the reserve waiting for you to snap that but latter it will jolt you with the secret it inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who also write the book in such awesome way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of advantages than the other book get such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I have been you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

Betty Patton:

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