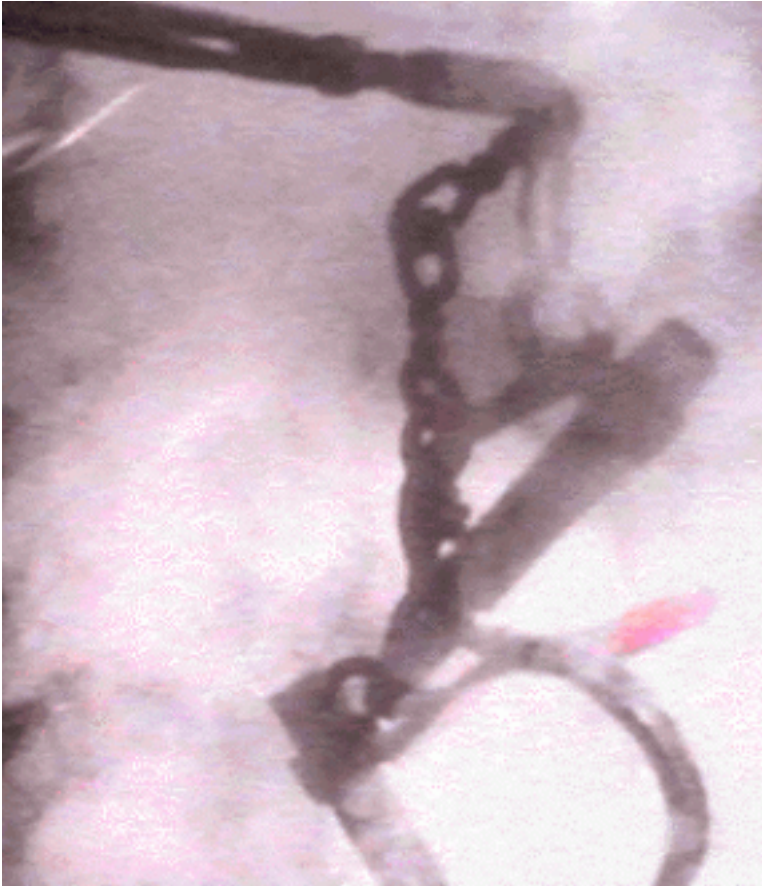


# DISCIPLINES TO DECEPTION IN THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

By Rev. Ken Silva, Southern Baptist pastor-teacher, Jul 14, 2009



Within a source paper called [Spiritual Disciplines: Pathway to Christian Maturity](#) (SDPCM), from the [Georgia Baptist Convention](#) (SBC), we learn what is now considered consistent with a proper Protestant approach to spirituality for Christians in the [Southern Baptist Convention](#). Continuing along the lines of [Richard Foster Forming Protestant Southern Baptist Convention Spirituality](#) here [Apprising Ministries](#) begins with the following from [Living Spiritual Teacher](#) and [Quaker](#) mystic [Richard Foster](#) in SDPCM.

You can find SDPCM e.g. under [Discipleship Resources](#) of the [State Board of Missions of the Alabama Baptist Convention](#) (SBC) right [here](#) and it opens with a quote from Foster's magnum opus of spurious spirituality,

which Dr. Gary Gilley correctly called [a virtual encyclopedia of theological error](#):

Thirty years ago, Richard Foster, in the beginning of his book, *Celebration of Discipline* wrote these words: “Superficiality is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant satisfaction is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people. The classical Disciplines of the spiritual life call us to move beyond surface living into the depths.” ([Online source](#))

This begs the question: What “classical Disciplines of the spiritual life,” which apparently escaped the attention of God’s Church Reformers, are we talking about? Pastor Bob DeWaay has done a scholarly expose [The Dangers of Spiritual Formation and Spiritual Disciplines: A Critique of Dallas Willard and The Spirit of the Disciplines](#); for those who don’t know ordained Southern Baptist minister [Dallas Willard](#) is Foster’s twin spiritually, who was once Willard’s pastor.

DeWaay is dead-on-target in his [Critical Issues Commentary](#) piece, where he quite capably Biblically dismantles these “disciplines” of neo-Pietism:

To hear evangelicals like Dallas Willard and Richard Foster tell us that we need practices that were never spelled out in the Bible to become more like Christ or to get closer to God is astonishing... The ideas of total depravity, the wrath of God against sin, the blood atonement, and the cross are either absent or distorted in Willard’s theology. What replaces these truths is the hope that we will realize our potential through tapping into the spiritual kingdom of God. This is to be done by the use of spiritual disciplines to obtain the necessary power to transform the world. The terminology that Willard uses is strange and unbiblical...

[His] ideas are more akin to Eastern Religion than Biblical Christianity... The spiritual disciplines that are supposedly necessary for spiritual formation are not defined in the Bible. If they were, there would be a clear description of them and concrete list... ([Online source](#))

But next in SDPCM we, in the **Slowly Becoming Catholic**, are then informed:

To become the spiritually mature people God intends us to be will require a disciplined life that will result in a lifestyle that will recognize and

consistently respond favorably to God’s presence in our lives. Brother Lawrence in his insightful little book, *The Practice of the Presence of God* wrote of being so in tune to God’s presence in his life that whatever he did at anytime of the day, he would be keenly aware of God and do those things that pleased and honored him. ([Online source](#))

That’s odd; “Brother” Lawrence (born Nicholas Herman) was a Roman Catholic mystic monk. [Lighthouse Trails Research](#) also brings out that [Lawrence was of](#) the “Carmelite order mean[ing] his spiritual practices were derived from or heavily influenced by Teresa of Avila.” Interested readers are referred to [Who Is Teresa of Avila?](#) for more about the emotionally troubled Roman Catholic nun. Sadly, these people are today undergoing a revisionist history within the visible church and then being romanticized.

What needs to be brought out here is this: For Lawrence, his “being so in tune with ‘God’s’ presence” would lead him to remain in spiritual slavery to the apostate religious system of the Roman Catholic Church with its false gospel (no gospel at all), which Dr. John MacArthur rightly referred to as “Satan’s best front for the Kingdom of God.” So, why would we even want to follow this kind of stupid spirituality; rooted, as it is, in the Counter Reformation of the Church of Rome?

SDPCM also tells members of the SBC:

Spiritual disciplines are not ends in themselves even though they are wonderful habits or practices for the Christian. Their purpose is to provide a means by which believers can grow into mature disciples of the Lord Jesus. Scripture does not contain a list of such activities as such, but various writers have classified such practices in a number of ways. Dallas Willard categorized them into Disciplines of Abstinence and Disciplines of Engagement. Richard Foster has labeled these habits as Inward Disciplines, Outward Disciplines, and Corporate Disciplines. ([Online source](#))

However, since these “spiritual disciplines that are supposedly necessary for spiritual formation are not defined in the Bible,” we’re now being steered to Foster and Willard who—through through their spurious [Spiritual Formation](#)—allegedly “discovered” what the Apostles neglected to include in Scripture. You may also recall that e.g. in [Tony Campolo With “Mystical Encounters For Christians”](#) we pointed out something very important to this discussion.

In a *Christianity ~~Asray~~ Today* article “The Emergent Mystique” we’re some information of vital importance that [Brian McLaren](#), a leader in the egregiously ecumenical [Emerging Church](#) aka [Emergent Church](#)—now morphing into [Emergence Christianity](#) (EC)—shared with CT. The following is from [Brian’s Annotation to “The Emergent Mystique” – CT article](#) where he adds his comment in italics:

**He cites Dallas Willard and Richard Foster, with their emphasis on spiritual disciplines, as key mentors for the emerging church. None of these thinkers has any inclination to throw out the baby of truth with the bathwater of modernity.**

*I’m grateful to Andy for including the preceding, because many people doubt this. ([Online source](#))*

But, what’s this got to do with anything? I’m glad you asked; the brainwashing going on within the SBC—and every other mainstream evangelical denomination for that matter—to reject Sola Scriptura and accept these white-washed tombs in the EC has now reached such a ridiculous low that SDPCM even encourages the spiritually bankrupt practice of [Lectio Divina](#), which originated with the Roman Catholic Benedictine monastic order. Do you really not understand that this practice would play a major part in leading to the Reformation?

This fickle foolishness would eventually cause the messed-up monastic systems within the Roman Catholic Church to come to their mystic “enlightenment” that Scripture needed to be interpreted by their special class of “holy men,” which then gave birth to the treacherous teaching magisterium of the Church of Rome in the first place. Yet in SDPCM we in the SBC are introduced to the practice of Lectio Divina by, of all people, “gay affirming” EC theologian [Tony Jones](#):

There is a dimension of sacred reading from Scripture known as lectio divina that is reading, not for assignment, but for life. Tony Jones in his insightful book, *The Sacred Way*, describes the Bible reading experience of a friend:

He came to the Bible naked, so to speak, and let himself be clothed by God’s Word. He came neither as a Bible scholar nor a teacher getting ready for a lesson; he didn’t have to stop every two verses and answer questions in a

study guide. No, he read the Bible as a sacred object, as a living, dynamic revelation of God to him.

This is lectio divina. It is reading from Scripture for the purpose of growing in intimacy with God, of discovering how the written Word can become the living Word in our lives. Such reading does not focus on the historical aspect of Scripture, but on the devotional component. From what is being read, how can one more fully practice God's presence?

The practice of lectio divina can be traced back to St. Benedict around 500 years after the birth of Christ and has been a part of monastery life ever since. However, it must be noted that this practice is not peculiar to the Catholic Church. ([Online source](#))

The author is correct, it isn't; but you'll also find it—along with its counterpart [Contemplative/Centering Prayer](#)—in the mainline denominations who gave in to the [Cult of Liberal Theology](#), embraced ecumenicism, and with it the [Contemplative Spirituality/Mysticism](#) described above in SDPCM. These denominations are now in their death throws (at best) after their own rejection of Sola Scriptura. And their battles right now over the issue of [homosexuality](#) will also soon be happening within mainstream evangelicalism as well because it has now placed itself firmly upon the same dead end track courtesy of the EC.