

pastoral education. The chapter on group supervision is especially relevant for students with an Association for Clinical Pastoral Education supervisory training background.

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F. LeRon Shults and Steven J. Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 304 pp.

In *Transforming Spirituality*, Father LeRon Shults, Professor of Theology at Agder University in Norway and Steven J. Sandage, a licensed psychologist and adjunct professor at Bethel Theological Seminary, offer the reader a rich and varied exploration of “spirituality” from their respective perspectives of systematic theology and psychology. Their goal is reflected in two ways that are both captured in the book’s title: (1) they are interested in transforming *spirituality* by contributing to contemporary understanding of scholarship in this area, and (2) they are interested in a *transforming* spirituality, which assists people’s spiritual growth.

The book is interdisciplinary, complex, and well documented; it is not an easy read, but engaging. This text is well worth the effort. The authors attempt to integrate insights from several disciplines and they do so responsibly. In laying out their model of spiritual transformation, for example, they draw on the “crucible” metaphor of therapist David Schnarch, the sociological models of “spirituality of dwelling” and “spirituality of seeking” associated with Robert Wuthnow, and the classical stages of spiritual growth (purgation, illumination, and union). Their overarching goal is to seek a deeper understanding of spiritual transformation through asking the question, “How do people change?” Both authors reflect the philosophical move from “substance” to “relation,” that is, the self as constituted in and through relationships.

The first half of the book, written by Shults, focuses on the need to reform pneumatology (our theology of the Holy Spirit) to develop an understanding of “Spirit” that is meaningful and transformative for persons in the 21st century. In doing so, he turns to the underlying longings of the human person

identified in classical thought: the desire for truth, goodness, and beauty. After a chapter in which he explains his approach, he then proceeds to three chapters on becoming wise (truth), becoming just (goodness), and becoming free (as freedom relates to our being drawn to the beauty of the Divine). In each chapter he looks at the topic from the viewpoint of scripture, the history of spirituality, and insights from philosophy and the natural sciences. He then describes what it might mean to know in the Spirit (truth), act in the Spirit (goodness), and be in the Spirit (beauty).

The second half of the book, written by Sandage, reviews some of the social scientific literature. In his words, “The differing ways in which people perceive sacredness or psychologically sanctify their lives can be empirically associated with other health-related factors” (p. 157). These chapters deal with spirituality and human development, spirituality and health, spirituality and darkness, and spirituality and maturity. He draws on a variety of authors, as well as scripture, to argue for an understanding of spirituality that is relational (to self, God, and others) and culturally mediated. To give a sample of the richness found in these pages: Sandage suggests at one point that a life-giving spirituality is intentionally embodied, developmentally generative, relationally connected, justice-enhancing, and narratively coherent (pp. 210–213). Each of these characteristics invites further reflection!

The authors demonstrate a better knowledge of scholarship in the reformed tradition than in the Catholic tradition (their understanding of the “dark night” in St. John of the Cross needs further development). Shults’ treatment of the history of spirituality tends to remove authors from their cultural and historical context in order to focus on concepts that appear similar. That being said, Shults and Sandage have made a creative and insightful contribution to contemporary understandings of spiritual transformation. In terms of formation and supervision, this book provides readers with an innovative and challenging theoretical framework within which to pursue conversations about spiritual growth and development.

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