



Spiritual Theology: The Theology of Yesterday for Spiritual Help Today

Diogenes Allen

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Often spirituality today is isolated from church teaching and doctrine, as in Joseph Campbell's treatment of myth and the many forms of New Age theologies, but doctrine apart from the life of prayer is abstract and sterile. In *Spiritual Theology* Allen turns to the great teachers of the past—the church fathers, Augustine, Maximus the Confessor, Bonaventure, Hugh of St. Victor, Calvin and Luther, George Herbert—to recover a spirituality that is rich with the doctrines and disciplines of theology.

Allen covers the great questions of the spiritual life: what is the Christian goal? what leads us toward that goal, and what hinders us? what is conversion? how can we discern our progress in the spiritual life? what are the fruits of the Spirit?

A second purpose of the book is to introduce readers to the disciplines and texts of the threefold way, found in the eastern church from the fourth century on. Allen writes simply and clearly of the active life and the development of virtue, and the contemplative life, which includes coming to know God through the Book of Nature and the Book of Scripture as well as directly, face to face, which is the domain of mystical theology.

This book is a basic and accessible introduction to the classic writings and doctrines of the spiritual life.

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