



The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction

Eugene H. Peterson

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Any pastor who needs and wants to get back to basics will do well to absorb this book. Eugene Peterson, well known as "a pastor's pastor," here speaks words of wisdom and refreshment for pastors caught in the busyness of preaching, teaching, and "running the church."

In *The Contemplative Pastor* Peterson highlights the often-overlooked essentials of ministry, first by redefining the meaning of pastor through three strengthening adjectives: *unbusy*, *subversive*, and *apocalyptic*. The main part of the book focuses on pastoral ministry and spiritual direction "between Sundays": these chapters begin with poetic reflections on the Beatitudes and then discuss such themes as curing souls, praying with eyes open, the language of prayer, the ministry of small talk, and sabbatical--all with engaging, illustrative anecdotes from Peterson's own experience.

The book ends with several meaning-full poems that pivot on the incarnation, the doctrine closest to pastoral work. Entitled "The Word Made Fresh," this concluding section is a felicitous finale to Peterson's discerning, down-to-earth reflections on the art of pastoring.

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