



But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. -

Matthew 15:9

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Why Avoid Spiritual Formation?

Have you been taught that spiritual formation is satanic and should be avoided? I have. But when I heard it I didn't have a clue what spiritual formation was. Elkanah and I looked it up in the dictionary and didn't find anything in the definition that would cause us to feel we should avoid it.

As time passed I kept hearing people claiming that spiritual formation is evil and we shouldn't have anything to do with it. When I had heard that enough I began to do the research to find out what exactly spiritual formation is and why we should avoid it.

Once again I found a teaching that is being spread throughout the church I used to attend that is incorrect information. Here's what I found. I began my search by contacting my pastor son and asking him what is spiritual formation. He told me that it isn't what people will tell you it is. They will tell you it's evil and to avoid it. He had taken a class on spiritual formation while he was attending Southern Adventist University. The textbook they used was *Steps to Christ* by Ellen White. If you are unfamiliar with that book it basically outlines the steps needed in order to have a loving relationship with Jesus.

With that knowledge behind me I began listening to a college class taught by Dr. John Coe at Viola University. These lectures are available for free viewing on YouTube. I am still in the process of listening to these lectures but I have enough information that I can share what I have learned.

Here is Dr. Coe's verbatim definition of spiritual formation:

[Spiritual formation is the divinely sanctioned process by which a](#)

person is conformed to the image of Christ by union with the Holy Spirit and in conjunction with our will and effort which begins in this life and continues in the next one. – John Coe, Ph. D.

divinely sanctioned John 4:23-24

process Philippians 1:6, Genesis 2:7

conformed to the image of Christ Colossians 1:28, John 15:5, Galatians 5:22

in conjunction with our will and effort Philippians 2:12-14

which begins in this life and continues in the next

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-WVzrtWsaI&list=PLP8U7g92cPBuksH8voFRXhar5BGQ2i_0Y&index=4&t=105s

Spiritual formation is a Biblically sound means of developing a loving relationship with Jesus. This is what we need to have. It's what our very being yearns for.

When you are told that something is bad and you should avoid it, or you are told something is good and you should practice it, it's not a good idea to accept this as truth until you verify it for yourself. Blindly following the teachings of someone else is a foolish thing to do (remember Eve and the forbidden fruit). God gave us brains and expects us to use them.

I'm finding these lectures by Dr. Coe to be fascinating. He is teaching things that I should have been taught when I attended church. My gratitude goes out to God for leading me to these lectures thereby granting me more information that I need in my journey of character development.

May God bless you as you continue with your own journey.

Much love to all,

Hannah