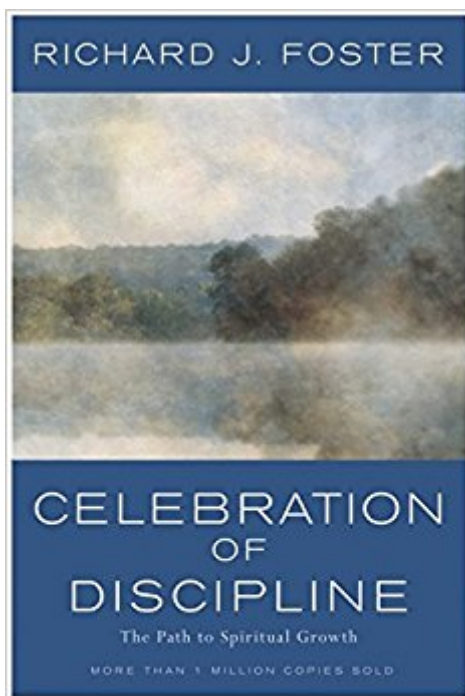


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# Celebration Of Discipline: The Path To Spiritual Growth



## Synopsis

Richard J. Foster's *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* is hailed by many as the best modern book on Christian spirituality with millions of copies sold since its original publication in 1978. In *Celebration of Discipline*, Foster explores the "classic Disciplines," or central spiritual practices, of the Christian faith to show how each of these areas contribute to a balanced spiritual life. Foster, the bestselling author of several books (*Prayer and Streams of Living Water*) and intrachurch movement founder of Renovar, helps motivate Christians everywhere to embark on a journey of prayer and spiritual growth.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When Richard Foster began writing *Celebration of Discipline* more than 20 years ago, an older writer gave him a bit of advice: "Be sure that every chapter forces the reader into the next chapter." Foster took the advice to heart; as a result, his book presents one of the most compelling and readable visions of Christian spirituality published in the past few decades. After beginning with a simple observation--"Superficiality is the curse of our age.... The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people"--Foster's book moves to explain the disciplines people must cultivate in order to achieve spiritual depth. In succinct, urgent, and sometimes humorous chapters, Foster defines a broad range of classic spiritual disciplines in terms that are lucid without being too limiting and offers advice that's practical without being overly prescriptive. For instance, after describing meditation as a combination of "intense intimacy and

awful reverence," he settles into such down-to-earth topics as how to choose a place and a posture in which to meditate. Perhaps most interesting and useful is Foster's chapter on the controversial Christian discipline of submission. According to Foster, submission does not demand self-hatred or loss of identity. Instead, it simply means growing secure in the conviction that "our happiness is not dependent on getting what we want" but on the fulfillment that naturally flows from love of one's neighbors. Such wise and encouraging suggestions have helped many readers to discard the idea that discipline is an onerous duty and to move toward a liberating and simpler idea of discipline--whose defining character, as Foster never forgets, is joy. --Michael Joseph Gross

“If everybody in the country could read and heed this book, what a difference it would make to the planet.” (Madeleine L'Engle)

“Foster has challenged us to see Christian faith as a life of spiritual transformation.” (Brian D. McLaren, author of *A New Kind of Christian*)

“Foster has taught me more about prayer and living faithfully than just about any other living author.” (Lauren Winner, author of *Girl Meets God*)

“This seminal work on the practice of spiritual disciplines is never outdated.” (Relevant Magazine)

“Richard Foster has given us a rare gift... The celebration of each discipline in this book hands us a tool that can be useful in helping us to integrate our inner and outer lives.” (Macrina Wiederkehr, O.S.B., author of *A Tree Full of Angels*)

“The best modern book on Christian spirituality..... No other book apart from the Bible has been so helpful to me in the nurturing of my inward journey of prayer and spiritual growth.” (Ronald J. Sider, executive director, Evangelicals for Social Action)

I'd had this book sitting around for a while, and a friend mentioned that it was a good one, so I finally read it. I thought it was great, not just good, although your own mileage may vary, of course. I suppose I was worried the book would be sort of a dry theological list of dos and don'ts, of various spiritual practices I should follow. But it wasn't at all. It simply expressed ways of drawing closer to God, in down-to-earth language, with interesting quotes, examples, stories and anecdotes. The advice isn't hard to follow. As the author says, "The Spiritual Disciplines are not hard. The primary requirement is a longing after God." I read the book, then went back through it and took 10-11 pages of notes that I could read later for my devotions. One quote near the beginning of the book stands out to me (among many others): "Our world is hungry for genuinely changed people. Leo Tolstoy observes, 'Everybody thinks of changing humanity and nobody thinks of changing himself.' Let us be among those who believe that the inner transformation of our lives is a goal worthy of our best

effort."There are great principles for inner change. I pray I can put forth the necessary effort.

This is an easy to read and understand book with lots of practical application.

Highly recommend journaling as proceed through the book. Personally spent one week per chapter, several hours per day, journaling experience, reflection and inspiration. Both book and journal will not collect dust on shelf . . .

Foster presents spiritual disciplines in a simple, straightforward manner that is at once both eloquent and informative. The author's perspective as a Quaker is enhanced by his encyclopedic understanding of a wide array of classic Christian writings. But he handles his expertise with grace, never coming across heavy-handed, but instead delivers his message with warmth and sincerity. The disciplines are presented in three groupings, the inward forms of meditation, prayer, fasting and study; the outward forms of simplicity, solitude, submission and service; and the corporate disciplines of confession, worship, guidance and celebration. As someone who has lived a great deal of my life in an independent and fairly undisciplined manner, I was drawn to Foster's prose from the first page and savored his message throughout the book. Maybe for me the time was just finally right for this, but I heartily recommend this book to anyone interested in deepening their involvement in the spiritual life. The only criticism I might express would be the way he over-generalizes eastern forms of meditation as being only about detachment. Western philosophers unfamiliar with the many schools of eastern thought often overlook the great diversity of practices from the east that focus on love and compassion every bit as much as Christianity does. I don't think Foster is being exclusive in his message about Christ, he is simply expounding the great truths that he knows best.

This book takes you beyond forms, styles and traditions to focus on ways to grow ever more intimate with the Creator of everything, who desires above all things to spend time with each of us. It is a guidebook only, but to a great treasure.

Definitely a slow cooker! BUT an indispensable part of your Christian faith. You'll see what i mean when you purchase it. P.S. Don't you think its SOOOO obnoxious when people feel the need to add their "credentials" as if anyone cares where they went to school? Like, do you even realize how many Christian colleges there are? We don't even know what you're talking about! Deflate the head!!

This book caught my eye at a book table and was then recommended by someone I respect. The idea of celebrating a subject that often makes me groan (discipline) sounded enticing and the chapter headings were about daily aspects of spiritual life that apply to a cross-section of religions. Two things I really like about this book are that it is written in simple, direct language despite the author's rich knowledge base of theologians throughout history. He can grasp themes and summarize them into meaningful and readable prose. The other thing I like is that the wisdom in this book translates to daily life. There are practical suggestions and guidelines as well as theological premises. I recommend this for anyone who seeks a positive and intimate guide for practicing disciplines like prayer, simplicity, and service in their spiritual journey.

I read this book for a class in college, and now I'm reading it again. It was good the first time, but I think time has made its truths so much more real to me now. It really is a foundational book in the formation of good Christians habits, which when followed will lead to a thriving relationship with God. The truth in this book is timeless.

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