

# The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey)

By David G. Benner



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"Grant, Lord, that I may know myself that I may know thee." —Augustine

Much is said in Christian circles about knowing God. But Christians throughout the ages have agreed that there cannot be deep knowledge of God without deep knowledge of the self. Discerning your true self is inextricably related to discerning God's purposes for you. Paradoxically, the more you become like Christ, the more you become authentically yourself.

In this profound exploration of Christian identity, psychologist and spiritual director David G. Benner illuminates the spirituality of self-discovery. He exposes the false selves that you may hide behind and calls you to discover the true self that emerges from your uniqueness in Christ. Freeing you from illusions about yourself, Benner shows that self-understanding leads to the fulfillment of your God-given destiny and vocation.

Rest assured, you need not try to be someone you are not. But you will deepen your experience of God through discovering the gift of being yourself.

This expanded edition, one of three titles in The Spiritual Journey trilogy, includes a new epilogue and an experiential guide with questions for individual reflection or group discussion.



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#### The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey) By David G. **Benner Bibliography**

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#### **Editorial Review**

#### From Publishers Weekly

In contrast to other books filled with drive-through pop psychology and sound-bite spirituality, Benner, a psychologist and spiritual director, offers an impressively deep and challenging introduction to Christian self-discovery in a little more than 100 pages. The foundational premise is that true knowledge of God and true knowledge of oneself are inextricably intertwined. For those who view such an approach as simply an accommodation to our culture's obsession with self, Benner provides a multitude of quotes from historic, respected theologians such as Augustine and John Calvin. He offers a clear and practical outline for those seeking to begin the lifelong process of knowing God and knowing themselves in an authentic way. As a gift to Christian counselors everywhere, Benner explains the difference between authentic self-discovery and most psychological approaches. Without mentioning names, he uses the stories of "fallen" Christian leaders to illustrate how some Christians' well-intentioned avoidance of self-discovery can become a deadly snare. His discussion of accepting our flaws and sins as a necessary step to transformation is a model of lucidity. Although self-knowledge is the subject, it becomes clear that transformation is the ultimate goal both of this book and of the journey it invites readers to begin.

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#### Review

"In contrast to other books filled with drive-through pop psychology and sound-bite spirituality, Benner, a psychologist and spiritual director, offers an impressively deep and challenging introduction to Christian self-discovery in a little more than 100 pages. . . . He offers a clear and practical outline for those seeking to begin the lifelong process of knowing God and knowing themselves in an authentic way. . . . His discussion of accepting our flaws and sins as a necessary step to transformation is a model of lucidity. Although self-knowledge is the subject, it becomes clear that transformation is the ultimate goal both of this book and of the journey it invites readers to begin." (Publishers Weekly (starred review), January 26, 2004)

"Wise, compassionate and accessible, David Benner's *The Gift of Being Yourself* is truly a gift to the dedicated seeker. The author draws on his professional experience as a psychologist and his own lifelong vocation as a Christian. The result is a book that felicitously weaves together the insights of psychology and Christian spirituality." (Margaret Guenther, author of Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction)

"David Benner's *The Gift of Being Yourself* is the best treatment of the journey to becoming one's true self that I have ever read. I began reading the book as a favor to David; I finished it in one four-hour sitting as a favor to me. Drawing from his wisdom as a psychotherapist and spiritual director, insights from Scripture, and his own self and God discoveries, David gently describes the great disparity between the false self that most of us have become and the self-in-Christ that we are intended to be. I have never been so challenged and warmly inspired to receive the gift of being my true self." (Gary W. Moon, Vice President for Spiritual Development and Professor, Psychological Studies Institute)

"David Benner is a keen student of both God and human personhood. It is a rare kind of book that combines wisdom about faith and understanding about the self. This is that kind of book." (John Ortberg, author and teaching pastor, Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, Menlo Park, California)

"Slowly we are unpacking the full implications of incarnation. David Benner does exactly the same in this excellent book, using good theology, psychology and spiritual practice to make the profound obvious. This is

the work of all good teachers." (Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Center for Action and Contemplation, Albuquerque, New Mexico)

"As he has done many times before, David Benner guides us to a place of wisdom and devotion with this beautiful book. With empathy and insight he demonstrates that the two great tasks of life--knowing God and knowing ourselves--converge into a single adventure as we are drawn into the arms of our loving God." (Mark R. McMinn, Rech Professor of Psychology, Wheaton College, and author of Why Sin Matters)

"Rarely do I suggest a book in spiritual direction with the exception of the sacred Scriptures. However, *The Gift of Being Yourself* I would offer to directees with enthusiasm. David Benner has shown us where life experience, personal insight and prayer meet: in God. I highly recommend it, especially for people beginning in spiritual direction." (David I. Donovan, S.J., Provincial Assistant for Formation, New England Province of the Society of Jesus)

From the Publisher Features & Benefits

- \* Links knowledge of God with knowledge of self
- \* Shows how understanding yourself leads you to better discern God's purposes for you
- \* Shows how becoming more like Christ allows you to become more fully yourself
- \* Written by a psychologist and spiritual director
- \* Offers a biblical integration of psychology and spirituality
- \* Frees you from illusions about yourself
- \* Revitalizes your spiritual life
- \* Draws on classic Christian spiritual writers
- \* Includes questions and excercises for study and reflection

#### **Users Review**

#### From reader reviews:

#### **Donald Howard:**

As people who live in the modest era should be revise about what going on or facts even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era and that is always change and advance. Some of you maybe may update themselves by reading through books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know what kind you should start with. This The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey) is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and wish in this era.

#### Otis Kozlowski:

The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey) can be one of your basic books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to place every word into joy arrangement in writing The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey) nevertheless doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource data that maybe you can be considered one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial considering.

#### **Jacob Smith:**

Many people spending their moment by playing outside along with friends, fun activity along with family or just watching TV all day every day. You can have new activity to enjoy your whole day by reading a book. Ugh, you think reading a book really can hard because you have to use the book everywhere? It ok you can have the e-book, bringing everywhere you want in your Mobile phone. Like The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey) which is keeping the e-book version. So, why not try out this book? Let's see.

#### Gloria White:

In this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability to do something more are more precious than other. Do you want to become one of it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you must do is just spending your time not much but quite enough to enjoy a look at some books. One of many books in the top listing in your reading list is definitely The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery (The Spiritual Journey). This book and that is qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking upwards and review this publication you can get many advantages.

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