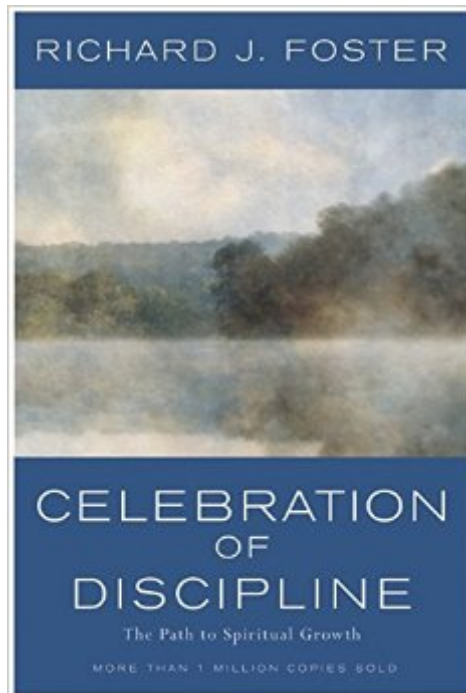


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# Celebration Of Discipline: The Path To Spiritual Growth



## 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

This is a Christian classic. Foster has written a comprehensive guide to spiritual disciplines. It is deep, yet accessible. Most of the reviews here agree with that. I've read this book 5 times in 8 years. I've been in churches where multiple people were reading it at the same time. I've been in small groups where everyone read it together. I've seen mature Christians read it. I've seen new Christians read it. And I've concluded that THIS BOOK CAN BE DANGEROUS. The reason I say that is that even in the most non-legalistic churches I've ever seen, I've seen immature Christians stumble in part because they are overwhelmed by everything in this book. And when I say "stumble", I'm talking about people going back into severely addictive lifestyles. And the pressure they felt from feeling like they have to do all these disciplines contributed to that. Unfortunately, it's easy for any of us to filter even the most well-intentioned, well-written book through our false self,

that part of us that is performance- and fear-oriented. Spiritual disciplines do not change us; they open our hearts to the change that the Spirit of God wants to bring. Again, I think this is a phenomenal book. But lest we feed our heads instead of our hearts and lest we frustrate ourselves with a standard of righteousness that Foster never intended, I'd like to humbly, humbly suggest some things:\* I personally recommend that people start with Henri Nouwen's "Way of the Heart" for a primer on spiritual discipline. It is just much simpler. The big stuff can come later. (Other books by Merton, Nouwen, Keating, etc., will work just as well.

I first discovered "Celebration of Discipline" through Terry Glaspey's "Great Books of the Christian Tradition." Glaspey listed Foster's book as one of the top ten (cream-of-the-crop) books that every Christian ought to read and know. His opinion is obviously shared by many others as shown in Christianity Today's listing of "Celebration of Discipline" as one of the top twenty most influential books of the 20th century. Why is the book so influential? Because it gives Christians important and practical details regarding the scriptural key (self-discipline) to living a holy life which is the door to true liberty in all its facets. The 12 spiritual disciplines he expounds on, if faithfully practiced, will lead to inward and outward harmony (wholeness; holiness) with oneself as well as social harmony with others both within and without (as an evangelistic light) the corporate body of Christ. Four disciplines are allotted to each one of the spheres (inward, outward, and corporate) and valuable insights from the spiritual masters within Christian history are provided as supplements to the biblical foundation that grounds the book. Another book that makes a nice companion to this one is Dallas Willard's "The Spirit of the Disciplines." Willard's book is highly recommended by Foster who considered it the book of the decade (1980s) and now considers Willard's new book "The Divine Conspiracy" as the one he has been searching for all his life because of its biblically comprehensive, holistic and practical nature. Both Foster and Willard value the deep, spiritual insights of the older Christian classics (including those penned by so-called Christian "mystics") as seen by their many references and quotes.

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