

Spiritual Direction FAQ

The Soul Shepherding Network features Sr. Spiritual Directors that have been trained by [Dr.'s Bill and Kristi Gaultiere](#) to help you thrive with Jesus in your life, relationships, and ministry. In most cases they have completed the Soul Shepherding Institute and Spiritual Direction certificate. The Network also includes a larger community of spiritual directors, pastors, coaches, therapists, small group leaders, and soul friends utilizing Soul Shepherding's way and resources.

What is spiritual direction?

We define spiritual direction as an emotionally honest conversation with a mature Christ-follower who helps you appreciate God's presence in your life. As you talk about your circumstances, problems, hopes, relationships, work, and ministry you learn to pay attention to how you're experiencing the Spirit of Jesus (or not) and respond to his grace and guidance with growing trust, prayerfulness, and love.

Why is it important to receive spiritual direction?

Without regularly meeting with a Christlike spiritual director, soul friend, or counselor most people are not able to sustain intimacy with God, emotional wholeness, and fruitful ministry. You'll be vulnerable to discouragement or burnout.

What types of spiritual direction do you offer?

Soul Shepherding offers traditional spiritual direction ministry according to the guidelines of the [Evangelical Spiritual Directors Association](#). Additionally, our spiritual directors offer Sabbatical coaching, leadership coaching, pastoral care, and soul care coaching.

What is different about Soul Shepherding's spiritual directors?

Our spiritual directors serve as assistants to Jesus in caring for your soul. They minister empathy and prayerfulness to help you sense God's compassion, grace, and wisdom. They also specialize in helping you make use of Soul Shepherding's practical resources that foster intimacy with Jesus, emotional-relational health, Scripture meditation, spiritual renewal (to prevent or recover from burnout), and leadership effectiveness.

How can spiritual direction help me?

The benefits of talking with a Soul Shepherding spiritual director include:

- Receiving God's empathy
- Help with spiritual dryness, burnout, or when God feels distant
- Developing intimacy with Jesus
- Discerning God's will or guidance for your life or ministry
- Understanding your journey with Jesus (e.g., stage of faith)
- Soul care and spiritual renewal
- Growing spiritually through lectio divina, Ignatian meditation, breath prayers, solitude and silence, and other spiritual disciplines
- Improving your emotional and relational health
- Increasing your effectiveness in ministry or leadership

How is spiritual direction different from therapy?

Spiritual directors do not diagnose and treat psychological disorders like psychotherapists do – they help you grow in your relationship with God. In both spiritual direction and therapy you discuss your struggles, hurts, stressors, and hopes and expect to receive empathy, confidentiality, and support for making positive changes in your life. But in spiritual direction everything you share is listened to prayerfully and put into the larger context of your experiences with God in prayer and daily life.

How is spiritual direction different from Biblical counseling?

Spiritual directors use the Bible differently than Biblical counselors. Biblical counselors use insights and advice from the Bible to guide you through your problems, but spiritual directors seek to embody the values of the Bible in how they care for you. Additionally, they draw on the Bible in experiential ways to help you meditate, pray, and follow the Spirit of Jesus.

How is spiritual direction different from coaching?

Many of Soul Shepherding's spiritual directors also offer coaching for leadership, Sabbaticals, or soul care, but they define success differently than most other life and leadership coaches. Typically, coaching focuses on reaching your goals to achieve more of what you want in your business, relationships, or life. In contrast, spiritual direction focuses on discerning God's will for you and how that shapes your desires and goals for your life, work, and relationships. In other words, spiritual directors are less directive (contrary to their

title as “directors”) than coaches – they help you talk through your life events and feelings in order to be directed by the Spirit of Jesus.

What is the Sabbatical coaching you offer?

Some of our spiritual directors offer Sabbatical coaching. They help you pray about, plan, and implement a Sabbatical for rest and renewal. They are trained to help you make the most out of our [Sabbatical Guide](#), which is our all-in-one toolkit for a great season of replenishment. We help you get approval from your board or supervisor, prepare your staff and community or organization, incorporate your family, and plan for re-engaging your work or ministry after your time away.

What does a typical spiritual direction session look like?

In the first meeting your spiritual director will briefly introduce Soul Shepherding’s approach to spiritual direction and answer your questions. Then you’ll be given a safe and confidential space to introduce yourself and what you need from spiritual direction. Your spiritual director will ask you key questions to gently guide the conversation. You can ask for your sessions to include opening prayer, Scripture meditation, quiet prayer, or a closing prayer of empathy and blessing. Our spiritual directors do their best to customize the sessions according to your feedback and needs.

Where do the meetings happen?

We offer spiritual direction sessions on Zoom, a phone call, or in person at an office or other mutually agreed upon location. (Some of our spiritual directors offer all these options and others may offer only one or two.)

What does it cost and how often should I schedule sessions?

The cost is \$90 for a 45-minute session. (If you need a reduced fee you can ask about this.) Typically, meetings are monthly, but can be arranged more or less frequently. You can schedule single, multiple, or ongoing meetings.

How do I join the Soul Shepherding Network?

If you are a spiritual director, pastor, coach, therapist, small group leader, or soul friend and agree to our [Statement of Christian Faith and Doctrine](#) then you can join our Soul Shepherding Network. As part of your membership you will receive a listing with your photo and bio on our online directory, access to the extensive vault of Soul Shepherding ministry tools, and the opportunity to participate in an exclusive forum for community and training. [You can learn more and register here.](#)