



Just Spirituality: How Faith Practices Fuel Social Action
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“Mae Cannon reminds us that we, too, are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. They call us to a life that is more deeply connected to God and more fully poured out for the broken and bruised world that he loves. There is power and calling in her wise guidance into just spirituality.”

—John Ortberg, senior pastor of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, Menlo Park, California

Getting to the Heart of Social Justice

One of the strengths of the social justice tradition, according to Richard Foster, is “constantly calling us to a right ordering of society—right relationships and right living.” The tradition of social activism also has significant weaknesses, however. Foster identifies one of the greatest risks of the social justice stream as “caring for social needs without reference to the condition of the heart.” This book seeks to address the core of that concern. Why is the cultivation of one’s soul so important? What differentiates the engagement of the body of Christ from the justice-oriented action of other groups? How might we as Christian leaders and servants learn from those who have gone before us? What can we do to be molded, shaped and transformed more into the image of Christ in our work of compassion and justice?

Just Spirituality responds to these questions by looking at the examples of seven Christian leaders and their practice of spiritual disciplines. How did the spiritual lives of these leaders influence their concern for the poor, their responses to the oppressed and their activism to overturn unjust systems?

Spirituality is the mechanism by which we come to understand God’s work in our souls and the world around us. The spiritual lives of Christians are further fostered by discipline and intentional engagement with God through Jesus Christ. *Just Spirituality* presents the case that the practice of disciplines—such as silence, prayer, study, community, worship, sabbath and submission—provide the fuel by which people are inspired to make a difference in the world. These disciplines are not mutually exclusive, and certainly many, if not all, were practiced simultaneously by the spiritual leaders highlighted in this book. It is helpful to look at the distinct nature of each of these spiritual practices, however, in order to consider how we might apply them to our own lives. This book provides lessons from history as Christians in the twenty-first century seek to integrate spiritual lives with God’s call to make disciples of all nations, respond to the needs of the least of these and anticipate the kingdom of heaven.

—Adapted from “Introduction: Spiritual Practices as Fuel for the Soul”



Mae Elise Cannon

Mae Elise Cannon serves as the senior director of advocacy and outreach - Middle East for World Vision USA. She is a minister, writer and academic who cares deeply about God's heart for the poor and the oppressed.

Mae is an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC), was formerly the executive pastor of Hillside Covenant Church located in Walnut Creek, California, and has served as director of development and transformation for extension ministries at Willow Creek Community Church in Barrington, Illinois. Prior to joining World Vision, Mae lived in East Jerusalem and served as a consultant to the Middle East for child advocacy issues for Compassion International.

Mae holds an M.Div. from North Park Theological Seminary, an M.B.A. from North Park University's School of Business and Nonprofit Management and an M.A. in bioethics from Trinity International University. She is now a doctoral candidate in American History with a minor in Middle Eastern studies at the University of California - Davis, focusing her dissertation on the history of the American Protestant church in Israel and Palestine.

Mae is the author of *Social Justice Handbook: Small Steps for a Better World* (IVP, 2009) and *Just Spirituality: How Faith Practices Fuel Social Action* (IVP, 2013).

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