

# Spirituality of the 12 Steps

## Step 12: What Goes Around Comes Around

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON  
RICHARD ROHR'S  
*BREATHING UNDERWATER*





Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. — **Step 12 of the Twelve Steps**

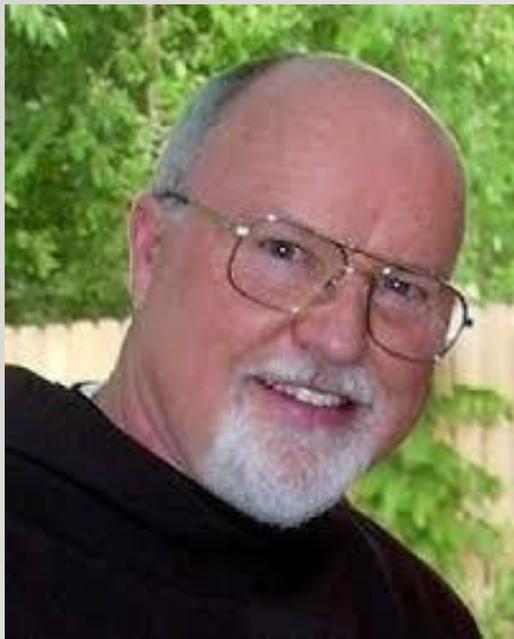
“You have cured me and given me life, my suffering has turned to health. It is you who have kept my soul from the pit of nothingness, you have thrust all my sins behind your back! The living, the living are the ones who praise you, as I do today.” — **Isaiah 38:16–17, 19**



“What we have heard and known for ourselves must not be withheld from our descendants but be handed on by us to the next generation.”  
— **Psalms 78:3–4**

“Simon, Simon, you must be sifted like wheat, and once you have recovered, you in your turn must strengthen your brothers.”  
— **Luke 22:31–32**

“What was given to you freely, you must give away freely.” --**Matthew 10:8**



Rohr: **“I did not ask more of people from the very beginning...to turn outward...”** vs. personal self-development, spiritual consumerism, church as “more attendance” at things, or “deepening my relationship with Jesus.”

We live in a “patho adolescent” culture. ...our troubles are basically of our own making...self-will run riot...we must be rid of this selfishness.

### **Step 12: we must serve others**

Spiritual gifts increase only by using them (material gifts normally decrease by usage).

**(Jesus) knew we had to hand the message over before we really understood it or could appreciate it ourselves.**



## Attraction rather than promotion

**Lifestyle Christianity** vs. doctrinal theories:

James insists on **orthopraxy** instead of mere verbal orthodoxy.

**Passive parish members:** trained in **taking**, trained in **not giving**...civil religion/cultural Catholicism...Enabling unhealthy codependency:  
Most people need tough love or they do not grow beyond selfishness.



יהוה

### Inhalation and Exhalation:

“Yahweh” an imitation of the sound of breathing in and breathing out

### “Having Had a Spiritual Awakening”

The necessity of “a vital spiritual experience” ...a spiritual awakening

God loves and respects freedom – to the final and full and riskiest degree



When these two great freedoms meet, we have a spiritual awakening! Awakening just happens, as certain as the dawn, when the two great freedoms meet. ...most awakenings are not “in the nature of a sudden and spectacular upheaval, but usually they are of the “educational variety”: they develop slowly over a period of time.”

Rohr counsils man (with children).

**Marriage and parenting is made to order to steal you from your selfishness.**

Again and again, you must choose to fall into a love that is greater with both friends and children. It is all training for the falling into The Love that is the Greatest. **All loves are a school of love, and their own kind of vital spiritual experience – until a lasting Relationship with the Real**



# A Spiritual Disease

Addiction is a spiritual disease, a disease of the soul, an illness resulting from longing, frustrated desire, and deep dissatisfaction — which is ironically the necessary beginning of any spiritual path. ...souls searching for love in all the wrong places.

Addiction emerges out of a lack of inner experience of intimacy with oneself, with God, with life, and with the moment.

In the Hebrew Bible there is only one sin: idolatry



## Questions for Discussion

In church are we encouraged to turn outward (to service)? Or do we allow each other to be “takers” and “non-givers.” Do we seek personal self-development (spiritual consumerism) or are we called away from selfishness to service?

Addiction is a spiritual disease. Can you give examples of addictions (other than to alcohol) that has souls searching for love in all the wrong places?

