

An Introduction to Spirituality: Spirituality for Life

Kim Bentley

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An Introduction to Spirituality is a clear-cut overview of spirituality, showing how it can lead to more fulfilling living.

Kim Bentley's *An Introduction to Spirituality* breaks down spiritual principles to show how people can live with purpose.

Bentley notes that philosophers have a long tradition of debating what it means to be human. His book takes the position that people are more than just their flesh-and-bone bodies: they have minds, souls, gifts, talents, and strengths, all attributed to a divine force.

Bentley also asserts that not all humans follow their designs; some end up feeling lost and cut off. Drawing on the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, an eighteenth century scientist, inventor, and philosopher, his book argues that the soul, mind, and body work together to lead individuals away from selfish impulses and toward fulfillment and the afterlife.

An Introduction to Spirituality is a riveting book. While it draws on philosophies that are several centuries old, it ably brings those concepts to life for a modern audience, presenting them in a logical, straightforward manner. It also preserves the mysteriousness that is inherent to spirituality, bending explanations in metaphysical and supernatural directions, all while infusing them with scientific sensibilities that result in credence.

And the book is straightforward in its design: its seven chapters each cover one spiritual topic, including the self, consciousness, and spiritual development. This organization is mindful of a certain hierarchy of spiritual concepts, which is demonstrated by the decision to place divine love in the center of the book. The subjects are further broken down into subtopics, so that the book's most complex ideas are forwarded with room to stop and ponder their implications. There are also tables and other relevant infographics to help make the topics less abstract.

Further, this is inclusive work: while Swedenborg's ideas were based in Christianity, Bentley's work takes an omnist approach, showing how its spiritual concepts line up with multiple religions and philosophies. When talking about the self, for example, the book draws on the Hindu concept of chakras and the Chinese concepts of nadis and meridians to explain connections between the soul, higher and lower minds, the spiritual body, and the physical body. Bentley's work ends up being approachable to those from many religions and belief systems as a result.

The book's joyous tone makes it all the more appealing. There's exuberance to its treatment of concepts like divine love, and even difficult topics, including hell, are treated in a way that encourages turning toward what's light. And throughout, Bentley projects hope and excitement that his concepts can change and help humanity.

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