

**Spiritual Direction Forum UK**

[www.sdforum.uk](http://www.sdforum.uk)



**Theology, Spirituality &  
Spiritual Direction**

# Spirituality

Lived experience of God

Finding a deeper meaning and connection within yourself with others and with the universe or the sacred.

Google

# Theology

Words about God

The study of the nature of God and religious beliefs.

Google



# How have we got here?

Scripture: **St Paul** – Living according to the Spirit / spiritual

5th C: Latin word *Spiritualitas* - living according to the spirit, where the whole person lives in harmony with God's will.

16th-17th C: 'Spiritual' gradually became associated with the inner life of the soul.



# How have we got here?

17th–18th C: The **Scientific Revolution** and the **Enlightenment** contributed to the separation between facts, theology, and the individual's inner life.

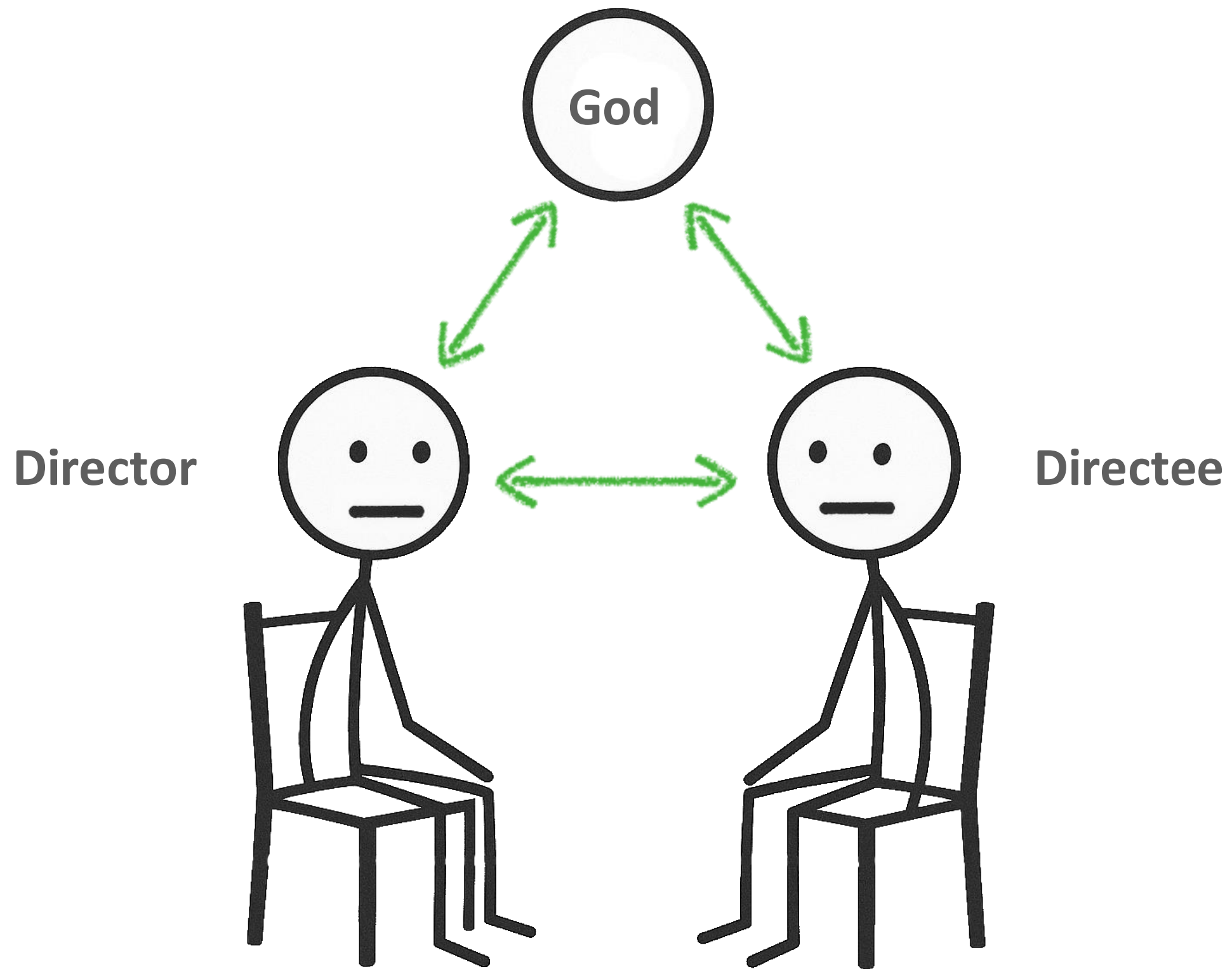
20th C: **Religious liberalism**, linked to the Enlightenment, where openness to individual rights to interpret the Bible, other religions, and so on. This led to a separation between personal interpretation and authority, as well as between the institution and theology. The spirituality of the individual becomes vital and separate from theology and the institution of the Church.

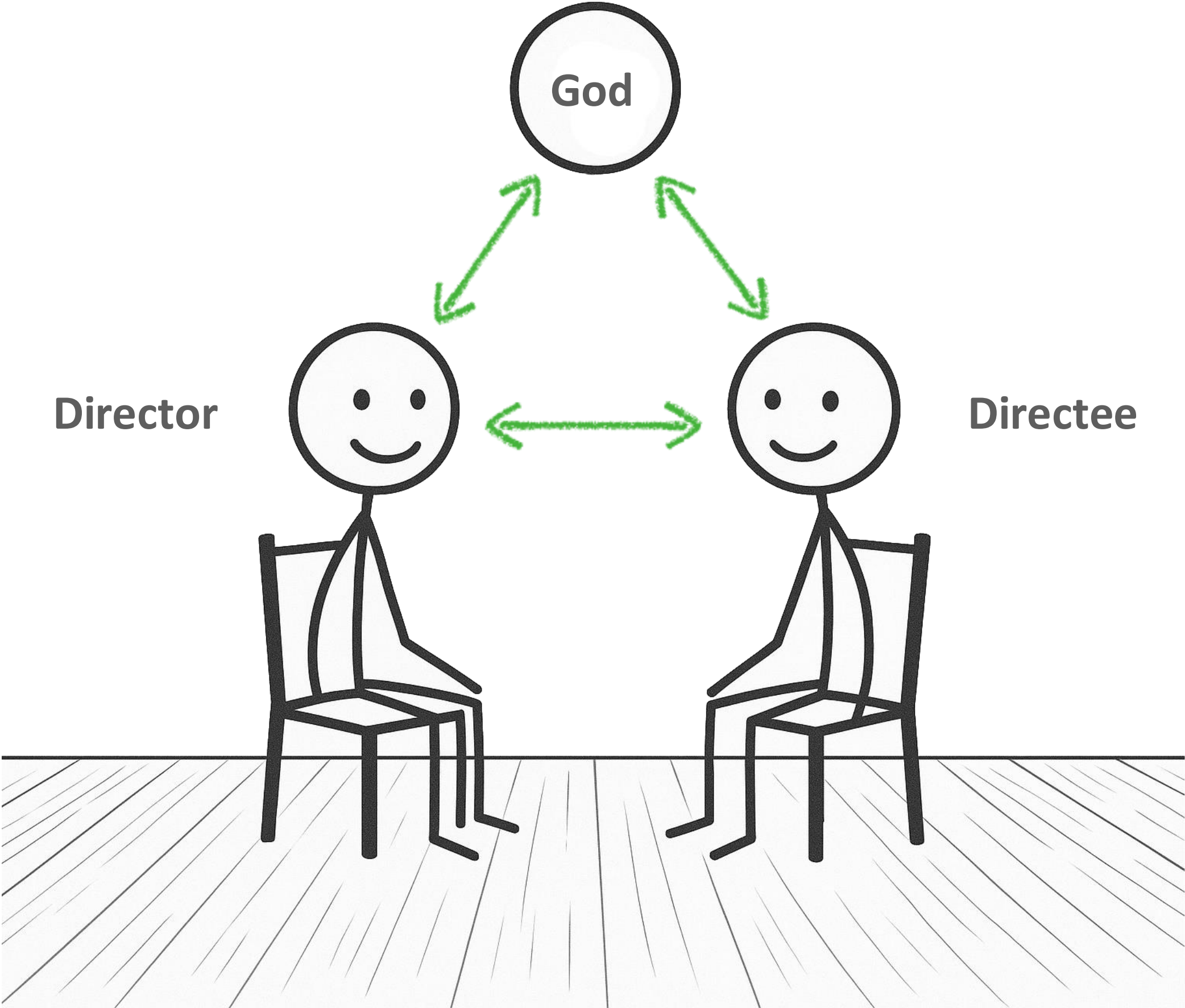
Early theologians and spiritual masters would be puzzled by this division of theology and spirituality.

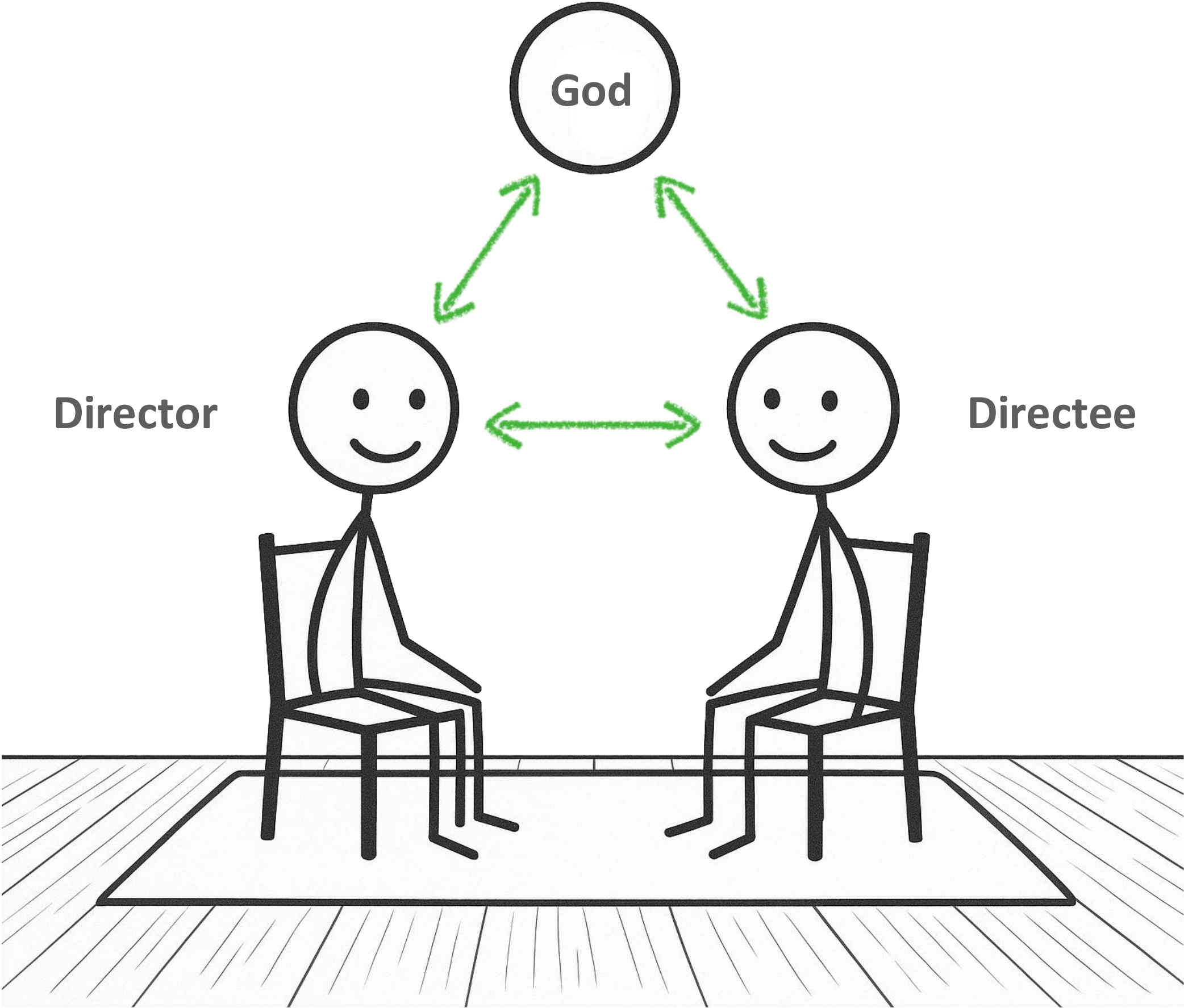


# Reflecting on Theology and Spiritual Direction









# Practical Theology

## The Four Voices of Theology

The Four Voices of Theology are part of the TAR Method (Theological Action Research)

### Normative Theology

Scripture, creed, official church teaching, liturgy

### Espoused Theology

articulation of belief



Four voices  
of  
Theology

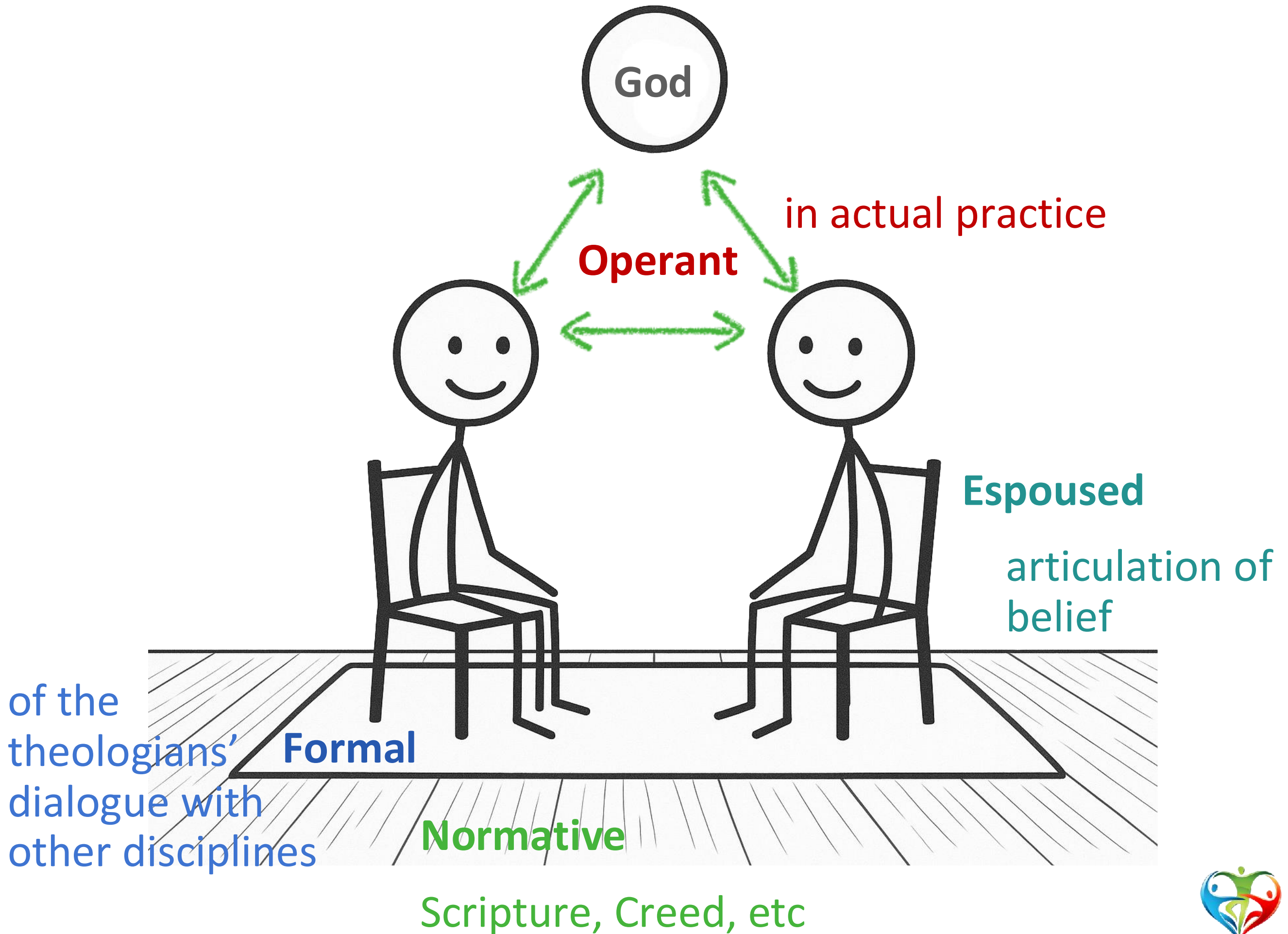
### Formal Theology

of the theologians' dialogue with other disciplines

### Operant Theology

in actual practices





God

Operant

What do we actually do in SD?

Espoused

What do we say SD is?

What formal theology is supporting us in SD?

Formal

Normative

What normative theology do we sit on?



