

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Valley Forge Christian College

**Extension Education Course**  
***PTHB544 The Spiritual Formation of the Minister***  
**February 3 – 7, 2003**

Russell Eggert, D. Min.

Spring Semester 2003

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A study of the spiritual dynamics in the growth and service of the minister with emphasis upon the role of the Holy Spirit and personal practice of the disciplines of Christian life.

**OBJECTIVES**

The student should demonstrate through the academic, relational, and spiritual requirements of this course that he or she has satisfactorily met the objectives of each of the following domains:

***Knowledge***

1. A biblical theology of spiritual formation including character development and sanctification, and personal relatedness to the larger body of Christ.
2. A biblical theology of the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian life and ministry giftings.
3. A general awareness of the historic body of spiritual literature with detailed knowledge of at least one of the great spiritual masters.
4. A sound grasp of the classic Christian disciplines.
5. An awareness of the unique Pentecostal-charismatic dimensions of Christian spirituality.

***Attitudes***

1. A healthy self-critical perspective toward one's personal life and ministry.
2. Openness to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit and constructive criticism from fellow members of the body of Christ.
3. A sense of responsibility for as well as dependence upon the larger body of Christ.
4. Sensitivity to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in personal life and ministry.
5. Desire to identify and maximize one's personal spiritual gifts in ministry.

***Skills***

1. Development of small group participation and leadership skills.
2. Utilization of empirical personality inventories as tools of personal growth.
3. Leadership of group devotionals and spiritual exercises in a timely and professional manner.
4. Development of research and expository skills with reference to classic Christian spirituality.
5. Application of personal learning in spirituality to varied corporate settings and responsibilities with a view to future ministry.

### **SUGGESTED TEXTBOOKS**

Boa, Kenneth. Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.

Bunyan, John. Pilgrim's Progress.

Deere, Jack. Surprised by the Voice of God. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Foster, Richard J. Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth. Revised edition. New York: Harper and Row, 1988.

\_\_\_\_\_ and J. B. Smith (eds.). Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1993.

Ortberg, John. The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Rutland, Mark. God of the Valleys. Ann Arbor: Servant Pub, 2000.

Tan, Siang-Yang and Douglas Gregg. Disciplines of the Holy Spirit: How to Connect to the Spirit's Power and Presence. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

### **BASIC OUTLINE**

Introduction

- I. Theological and Psychological Integration
- II. Biblical and Theological Roots
- III. Christian Disciplines and Worldview
- IV. Spiritual Gifts in Personal Life and Ministry

### **METHODOLOGY**

This course will employ lectures, personality inventories, written reports, guided discussions, student testimonies and presentations, and group practice of many of the Christian disciplines in classroom and non-classroom settings. While the course will have a strong cognitive component, it is intended also to be a group experiment in Christian growth.

**REQUIREMENTS**

1. Reading Requirements. A minimum of 1,200 pages of reading is required including the required texts and all other research readings with submission of a detailed reading report attesting completion on **February 7, 2003**. At least 500 pages should be in primary sources. Incomplete reading reports will adversely affect the grade.

***Pre-Session Reading:*** Read Foster’s Celebration of Discipline. Begin Foster’s & Smith’s Devotional Classics and select one of the spiritual masters in that volume for extensive reading and research for the term paper. Begin to gather books and materials for your reading and research..

2. Personal Project in Christian Spirituality. Introduction: Develop some kind of growth plan to draw closer to God more intentionally. Try something that is “new to you” seeking a deeper intimacy with God. These plans should incorporate a sensitivity regarding your particular personal circumstances. Individuals for centuries have sought to grow closer to God through the practice of certain disciplines. Select some type of personal plan that would allow for creativity and the nurturing of your own soul every day. Try to include fasting (saying no), various types of prayer (saying yes), Scriptural meditation and or some type of reading (could be your texts for this class) that might speak to you right now. Work with the Holy Spirit to carry out your 6 to 8 week plan for personal growth. Write down the plan you desire to follow and then follow it strictly.

Reflect on your experience and be prepared to share with the class the top ten truths you learned, read or discovered during this exercise. Bring one copy of a 3-5 page paper discussing those major lessons or discoveries with you to class on the first day.

3. Term Paper. One 15-page term paper is required setting forth an exposition and critique of the spirituality of one of the spiritual masters in Foster’s and Smith’s anthology, Devotional Classics. Research and bibliography should include all the writings attributed to that author (unless unusually prolific) as well significant commentaries on his or her thought.

4. Devotional. As many members of the class as possible will be assigned to lead a devotional at the beginning of class. The devotional should be based upon the most unique and significant contributions of the spiritual master whom you are researching.

**GRADING PROCEDURE**

Reading and Discovery Journal	-33%
Term Paper	-33%

Personal Project in Christian Spirituality -33%

### **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- a' Kempis, Thomas. The Imitation of Christ. Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1963.  
BV/4821/.K42
- Augustine, Saint. The Confessions of Saint Augustine. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977.  
AC/1/.G72/vol. 18
- Bloesch, Donald G. The Crisis of Piety. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968. BV/4501.2/.B56
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. The Cost of Discipleship. Riverside, NJ: Macmillan, 1967.
- Bounds, E. M. Power Through Prayer. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972.
- Brother Lawrence [Nicholas Herman]. The Practice of the Presence of God. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975. BX/2349/.H42
- Cousins, Ewert (ed.). World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest. 25 vols. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1985-.
- Cully, Iris V. Education for Spiritual Growth. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984.  
BV/4501.2/.C85
- Deere, Jack. Surprised by the Spirit. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.
- Downey, Michael (ed.). The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993. REF BX/2350.65/.N49
- du Plessis, David. Simple & Profound. Orleans, MA: Paraclete Press, 1986. BR/1644/.D864x
- Edwards, Jonathan. Religious Affections. Ed. John E. Smith. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959.
- Farley, Benjamin W. In Praise of Virtue: An Exploration of the Biblical Virtues in a Christian Context. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. BS/680/.V56/F37
- Greig, Gary S. and Kevin N. Springer. The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Meant for the Church Today? Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993.
- Hamilton, Neill Q. Maturing in the Christian Life: A Pastor's Guide. Philadelphia: Geneva Press, 1984. BV/4501.2/.H293
- Hanson, Bradley C. (ed.). Modern Christian Spirituality: Methodological and Historical Essays. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990. BV/4490/.M62.
- Holmes, Urban T. A History of Christian Spirituality. Minneapolis: Seabury Press, 1980.
- Holt, Bradley P. Thirsty for God: A Brief History of Christian Spirituality. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993.
- Hood, Ralph W., Jr. (ed.). Handbook of Religious Experience. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1995.
- Houston, James. The Transforming Friendship. Batavia, IL: Lion Publishing Corporation, 1989.
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- Larson, Bruce. The Relational Revolution. Waco, TX: Word, 1976. BV/4501.2/.L329
- Lewis, C. S. Surprised by Joy. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1956. BV/4935/.L43/A3
- Lim, David. Spiritual Gifts: A Fresh Look. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1991.
- Lovelace, Richard F. Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978. BV/3773/.L63
- \_\_\_\_\_. Renewal as a Way of Life. Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1985. BV/4501.2/.L67
- Malony, H. Newton. The Psychology of Religion for Ministry. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1995. BL/53/,M365
- Murray, Andrew. With Christ in the School of Prayer. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1953.
- Nee, Watchman. The Normal Christian Life. Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature, n.d.
- Packer, James I. Knowing God. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973.
- Tozer, A. W. The Pursuit of God. Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1948.
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- Shawchuck, Norman and Roger Heuser. Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving Others. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.
- Willard, Dallas. The Spirit of the Disciplines. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.

*For research on each of the spiritual masters, see the bibliographies at the end of each chapter in Foster and Smith, Devotional Classics.*