

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
**PTH 544 The Spiritual Formation of the Minister**

Jay P. Taylor, D. Min.

Fall 2002  
3 Hours

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is 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. More specifically, this course will relate to the priority of developing the "inner life" of the minister in order to produce greater effectiveness as a spirit-filled leader.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Each participant should demonstrate through the academic, relational and spiritual requirements of this course that he or she has satisfactorily met the following objectives:

***Knowledge***

1. A biblical theology of spiritual formation including personal application.
2. A biblical theology of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian Life and ministry giftings.
3. A general awareness of the historic and interdenominational body of spiritual literature.
4. A sound grasp of the classic Christian disciplines and the virtues of the spiritual life.
5. An awareness of the unique Pentecostal-charismatic dimensions of Christian spirituality.
6. An awareness of the unique dimensions of small group peer accountability in Christian spirituality.

***Attitudes***

1. A healthy self-critical perspective toward one's personal life and ministry.
2. Openness to the edifying 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, as it relates to spiritual development.
4. Sensitivity to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in personal life and ministry.

***Skills***

1. Utilization of empirical inventories as tools of personal growth.
2. Utilization of the Appreciative Inquiry method as a tool of personal growth.
3. Development of ability to effectively engage in a broad range of spiritual disciplines, and meaningfully reflect upon the experience.
4. Participation in small group and spiritual exercises in a timely and professional manner.
5. The ability to identify and maximize one's personal spiritual gifts in ministry.
6. Application of personal spiritual growth to varied corporate settings and responsibilities with a view to future ministry.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

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

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

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.

## **RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS**

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

McNeal, Reggie. *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This course will utilize a wide variety of learning methods and approaches including lecture, class discussion, small groups, readings, student testimonies, and practice of many of the Christian disciplines both in and out of the classroom. While the course will have a strong cognitive component, it is intended to be a personal experience in the spiritual growth process.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. *Reading Requirement*: Read the required texts.
2. *Reading Reports*: Prepare a two-page typewritten "Reading Report" on the textbooks by Ortberg, Tan/Gregg, and Boa. In this report you are to state whether or not you have completed the reading in its entirety, and identify the author's thesis or purpose for writing. Then, discuss 3-4 concepts from the book that were meaningful to you, and why.

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Ortberg, John. <i>The Life You've Always Wanted</i> .  | <u>Due: September 23</u> |
| Tan and Gregg. <i>Disciplines of the Holy Spirit</i> . | <u>Due: October 21</u>   |
| Boa, Kenneth. <i>Conformed to His Image</i> .          | <u>Due: November 25</u>  |
3. *Small Group Participation*. Each student will be assigned to a small group. These groups will meet weekly during a portion of the class time. The groups will serve as peer accountability groups to encourage each other in their spiritual development (a crucial function of the body of Christ and this course). Small group grading assessment will be made by the professor based on a combination of both attendance and involvement.
4. *Development of a Personal Spiritual Growth Plan*: Each student will develop an in-depth personal spiritual growth strategy. Specific details for developing this plan are contained on the attached sheet. Development plan due: October 7.

5. *Implementation of Personal Spiritual Growth Plan:* Each student will carry out his or her personal spiritual growth plan for the duration of the semester. Students will keep a personal log/journal of their spiritual journeys throughout this time. Students may record insights from your readings of Scripture, textbooks and weekly assignments, encounters with people, prayer needs, answers to prayer, etc. **Your primary journaling focus should be on your progress in carrying out your growth plan.** (The expectation for an average grade is 3-4 journal entries per week.) Your small group should be a great place to encourage and support each other in your progress on your spiritual development plans. Journal due: December 9.
  
6. *Class Presentation.* Each small group will make an 8-10 minute presentation to the class. Presentations will spotlight various individuals from Foster and Smith's *Devotional Classics* who have contributed to the Christian tradition. The presentation should do three things:
  - a. introduce/acquaint the class with the person;
  - b. emphasize the person's contribution to spiritual formation;
  - c. conclude what we can glean from that person today (practical application).
 A copy of the presentation should be given to the instructor; aids for learning are encouraged. Presentations will be given during the first 10 minutes of each class, beginning October 14.
  
7. *Spiritual Transformation Reflection Paper:* Each student will complete a 5-7 page reflection paper discussing their spiritual journey over the course of the semester. This paper should primarily assess the student's effectiveness in carrying out the spiritual growth plan, but should also make projections for an ongoing personal spiritual growth plan. Specific details for developing this plan are contained on the attached sheet. Paper due: December 9.
  
8. *Midterm examination:* Each student will complete a midterm exam. The nature of the exam will be discussed in class. The midterm will be given October 28.
  
9. *Final examination:* Each student will complete final exam. The nature of the exam will be discussed in class. The final will be given December 16.

### **GRADING PROCEDURE**

|  | <i>Points</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Reading and Reading Reports (50 points each) | 150           | 15%               |
| Development of Spiritual Growth Plan         | 150           | 15%               |
| Small Group Participation/attendance         | 100           | 10%               |
| Class Presentation                           | 50            | 5%                |
| Implementation of Growth Plan (Journal/Log)  | 100           | 10%               |
| Spiritual Transformation Reflection Paper    | 150           | 15%               |
| Midterm Exam                                 | 150           | 15%               |
| Final Exam                                   | <u>150</u>    | <u>15%</u>        |
|  | 1000          | 100%              |

*Note: Late work will be penalized.*

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Class Session Topic</i>                                | <i>Work Due</i>                  |
|-------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 9/09        | Introduction to the Course                                | -----                            |
| 9/16        | Assessing Your Present Spiritual Formation                | Completed <i>CLP/T-JTA</i> tests |
| 9/23        | Facilitating Your Ongoing Spiritual Transformation        | Ortberg Reading Report           |
| 9/30        | Understanding Authentic Spiritual Transformation          | -----                            |
| 10/7        | Understanding Authentic Spiritual Transformation (cont.)  | Spiritual Growth Plans           |
| 10/14       | Understanding Authentic Spiritual Transformation (cont.)  | -----                            |
| 10/21       | Understanding Authentic Spiritual Transformation (cont.)  | Tan/Gregg Reading Report         |
| 10/28       | <b>Midterm Examination</b>                                | -----                            |
| 11/4        | How Christian Traditions Shape Sp. Transformation         | -----                            |
| 11/11       | How Christian Traditions Shape Sp. Transformation (cont.) | -----                            |
| 11/18       | How Christian Traditions Shape Sp. Transformation (cont.) | -----                            |
| 11/25       | How Christian Traditions Shape Sp. Transformation (cont.) | Boa Reading Report               |
| 12/2        | The Role of Small Groups/Accountability in Sp. Formation  | -----                            |
| 12/9        | How to Lead Others in Spiritual Growth                    | Reflection Paper & Journal       |
| 12/16       | <b>Final Examination</b>                                  | -----                            |

# **Personal Spiritual Development Plan**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this assignment is to be intentional and proactive in creating a strategy to assist you in your spiritual transformation process. The exact nature of this plan will vary from person to person, for we are all at individual stages in our spiritual journeys.

## **Factors Influencing the Development of Your Growth Plan**

Your personal spiritual growth plan should flow out of thoughtful reflection on the following:

- Prayer/Guidance of the Spirit (Do you sense God's prompting in certain areas?)
- The *Christian Life Profile* test (How do the results of your self-assessment and the assessment of three significant others contribute to your growth plan?)
- *Taylor Johnson Temperament Analysis* results (How does your personal temperament contribute to your spiritual formation?)
- Reflection on appreciative inquiry focus questions given in class
- Small Accountability Group Interaction and input from significant others
- Personal spiritual timeline exercise/reflection

## **Elements to Include in Your Growth Plan**

Identification of your current spiritual formation status/routine

- How are you doing in cultivating God's friendship on a daily basis?
- Does your life have regular elements/time devoted to spiritual growth?
- What does your current devotional life look like? (What elements comprise it? Areas of strength? Areas for improvement?)
- What adjustments need to be made in your current patterns?

Identification of specific areas in your spiritual life which need development

- Are there disciplines or virtues in which God is nudging you to grow?
- Are there problems/neglects that need to be addressed?
- What obedience is the Lord calling you to do?
- What can you do to improve your relationship with God?
- What can you do to increase your spiritual transformation?

Identification of specific steps you will take to help you work on these areas

- In light of the desired growth, what response is necessary?
- What changes may you have to make in your life/behavior?
- Outline specific steps (action plan) you will take to pursue this growth.
- What potential pitfalls or challenges will you face?
- Be realistic: Your plan must fit your current life situation for the next 10 weeks.
- Be consistent: once a month won't cut it. Regularity and consistency is key.

Identification of spiritual formation assessment

- How will you assess if the desired growth is occurring?
- What accountability will you have to assist you in following your plan?

Identification of anticipated ramifications of growth in these areas

- What do you envision as a result of the anticipated growth?
- What changes will result in your life?
- Will these be welcome changes, or difficult?

## **Spiritual Transformation Reflection Paper**

## **Purpose**

Each student will complete a 5-7 page reflection paper discussing their spiritual journey over the course of this semester. This paper should primarily assess your effectiveness in developing and carrying out your spiritual growth plan, but should also make projections for an ongoing personal spiritual growth plan.

Reflection Papers should cover the following three elements. Foundational questions to get you thinking have been provided, but you are not limited to these.

## **Part 1: Development of Your Spiritual Growth Strategy**

Assess the process by which you developed your personal spiritual growth strategy.

How helpful were the following elements to the development of a realistic plan for you:

- Results from *Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis*
- Results from the *Christian Life Profile* test (self and others)
- Reflection on Appreciative inquiry focus questions
- Reflection on spiritual timeline exercise
- Input from peer accountability group and significant others

Did you invest the necessary time and effort to get honest heart-searching reflection?

Did you attempt to be realistic in developing a plan that fit your context?

## **Part 2: Carrying Out and Logging Your Spiritual Growth Strategy**

Reflect personally on your experience.

How well did you carry out your personal spiritual growth plan over the semester?

How well did you do in keeping a personal log/journal of this growth over these weeks?

Were you realistic in your plan? Were adjustments necessary? Did you make them?

What kind of growth did you experience as a result of your plan?

## **Part 3: Projections for an ongoing personal spiritual growth plan.**

In light of this semester's experience, where will you go from here?

What adjustments will you make for your future growth plan?

Specifically, what elements of this process will you utilize in assessing, facilitating, and evaluating your future spiritual transformation?

Note: All supporting documentation should be submitted with the reflection paper (i.e. copy of *T-JTA* score sheet, copy of *Christian Life Profile* score sheet; personal responses to appreciative inquiry reflection questions, spiritual timeline, personal growth strategy/plan; journal/log).

## **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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## **SPECIFIC DATA**

Prepared by Jay Taylor, August 2002.

## **Personal Spiritual Growth Plan**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this assignment is to be intentional and proactive in creating a strategy to assist you in your spiritual transformation process. The exact nature of this plan will vary from person to person, for we are all at individual stages in our spiritual journeys.

### **Factors Influencing Your Growth Plan**

Your personal spiritual growth plan should flow out of thoughtful reflection on the following:

- The *Christian Life Profile* results (How do the results of your self-assessment and the assessment of three significant others contribute to your growth plan?)
- *Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis* Results (How does your personal temperament contribute to your spiritual formation?)
- Personal spiritual timeline exercise/reflection
- Reflection on appreciative inquiry focus questions
- Small accountability group interaction/input from significant others
- Prayer/guidance of the Spirit (Do you sense God's prompting in certain areas?)

### **Elements to Include**

Identification of your current spiritual formation/status/routine

- How are you doing in cultivating God's friendship on a daily basis?
- Does your life have regular elements/time devoted to spiritual growth?
- What does your current devotional life look like? (What elements comprise it? Areas of strength? Areas for improvement?)
- What adjustments need to be made in your current patterns?

Identification of specific areas in your spiritual life which need development

- Are there disciplines or virtues in which God is nudging you to grow?
- Are there problems/neglects that need to be addressed?

- What obedience is the Lord calling you to do?
- What can you do to improve your relationship with God?
- What can you do to increase your spiritual transformation?

Identification of specific steps you will take to help you work on these areas

- In light of the desired growth, what response is necessary?
- What changes may you have to make in your life/behavior?
- Outline specific steps (action plan) you will take to pursue this growth.
- What potential pitfalls or challenges will you face?
- Be realistic: Your plan must fit your current life situation for the next 10 weeks.
- Be consistent: once a month won't cut it. Regularity and consistency is key.

Identification of spiritual formation assessment

- How will you access if the desired growth is occurring?
- What accountability will you have to assist you in following your plan?

Identification of anticipated ramifications of growth in these areas

- What do you envision as a result of the anticipated growth?
- What changes will result in your life?
- Will these be welcome changes, or difficult?

## **Spiritual Transformation Reflection Paper**

Each student will complete a 5-7 page reflection paper discussing their spiritual journey over the course of this semester. This paper should primarily assess your effectiveness in developing and carrying out your spiritual growth plan, but should also make projections for an ongoing personal spiritual growth plan.

Reflection Papers must address the following three elements. Foundational questions to get you thinking have been provided, but you are not limited to these.

### **Part 1: Development of Your Spiritual Growth Strategy**

Assess the process by which you developed your personal spiritual growth strategy.

How helpful were the following elements to the development of a realistic plan for you:

- Results from the *Christian Life Profile* test (self and others)
- Results from *Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis* test
- Reflection on Appreciative inquiry focus questions
- Spiritual timeline exercise
- Input from peer accountability group and significant others

Did you invest the necessary time and effort to get honest heart-searching reflection?

Did you attempt to be realistic in developing a plan that fit your context?

### **Part 2: Carrying Out and Logging Your Spiritual Growth Strategy**

Reflect personally on your experience.

How well did you carry out your personal spiritual growth plan over the semester?

How well did you do in keeping a personal log/journal of this growth over these weeks?

Were you realistic in your plan? Were adjustments necessary? Did you make them?

What kind of growth did you experience as a result of your plan?

**Part 3: Projections for an ongoing personal spiritual growth plan.**

In light of this semester's experience, where will you go from here?

What adjustments will you make for your future growth plan?

Specifically, what elements of this process will you utilize in assessing, facilitating, and evaluating your future spiritual transformation?

Note: All supporting documentation should be submitted with the reflection paper (i.e. copy of *T-JTA* score sheet, copy of *Christian Life Profile* score sheets; response from appreciative inquiry questions, spiritual timeline, personal growth strategy; journal/log).