

SP720: The History & Theology of Christian Spirituality (12 Units) Tony Jones

DESCRIPTION:

Christian spirituality is a topic both wide-ranging and specific, and this first year of the three-year cohort cycle will put some boundaries and definitions on just what Christian spirituality is. Instead of tracing the history of Christian spirituality in a linear fashion, the topic will be investigated via the many spiritual disciplines that have been popular over the last two millennia. Students will also be given reading choices within the corpus of historical texts. And regarding the theology of Christian spirituality, students will begin to articulate their own theological method and begin to fashion a theology of Christian spirituality.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Explore the vast treasury of literature in the history of Christian spirituality, focusing on three texts.
- Investigate and practice one historic Christian discipline.
- Determine and articulate a theological method.
- Develop a first draft of a personal theology of Christian spirituality.

COURSE FORMAT:

This course is an intensive that will meet daily, Monday, June 6 – Thursday, June 9 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Friday, June 10, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on the Fuller campus; Saturday, June 11 – Wednesday, June 15 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at a southern California monastery.

RELEVANCE FOR MINISTRY

Pastors and ministry leaders often neglect their own souls as they nobly minister to those in their care. Herein, students will learn not only the content of the rich history of Christian spirituality, but also consider how this spirituality can become enmeshed in their own theologies of ministry, and, finally, to be applied in their own lives and ministries.

REQUIRED READING: Students must complete a minimum of 4,500 pages of pre-course reading. If you have read any of the required books for another course, please select an alternative text from the lists below.

Read **all** of the following:

- Howard, Evan B., *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008)
Jones, Tony, *The Sacred Way: Spiritual Practices for Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2003)
Kadloubovsky, E. and G.E.H. Palmer (translators), *Writings from the Philokalia on Prayer of the Heart* (London: Faber and Faber, 1951)
McGrath, Alister E., *Christian Spirituality: An Introduction*. (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1999)
McLaren, Brian, *Finding Our Way Again: The Return of the Ancient Practices* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008)
Miller, Donald, *Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003)
Mursell, Gordon, editor, *The Story of Christian Spirituality: Two Thousand Years from East to West* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001)
Norris, Kathleen, *The Cloister Walk* (New York: Riverhead, 1997)
Sittser, Gerald, *Water from a Deep Well: Christian Spirituality from Early Martyrs to Modern Missionaries* (Carol Stream: IVP, 2010)
Tickle, Phyllis, *The Divine Hours: Prayers for Summertime: A Manual for Prayer* (New York: Doubleday, 2000)
Thompson, Marjorie J., *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995)
Winner, Lauren, *Midhouse Sabbath: An Invitation to a Life of Spiritual Discipline* (Brewster, Mass.: Paraclete, 2009)

REQUIRED READING: Read **three** books from the attached list of spiritual classics

REQUIRED READING: Read **one** of the following; each student will choose one book from this list, and only one student will read each book:

- Dawn, Marva, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Healing* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1989)
Nouwen, Henri, *Walk with Jesus: Stations of the Cross* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1990)
Peterson, Eugene, *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993)
Forest, Jim, *Praying with Icons*, (Orbis: Maryknoll, New York, 1997)
Linn, Dennis, Shelia Fabricant Linn, and Matthew Linn, *Sleeping with Bread: Holding What Gives You Life* (Mahwah, New York: Paulist, 1995)
Main, John, *Moment of Christ: The Path of Meditation* (New York: Continuum, 1998)
Pennington, M. Basil, O.C.S.O., *Centering Prayer: Renewing an Ancient Christian Prayer Form* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1980)

Merton, Thomas, *The Silent Life* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1957)
 Casey, Michael, *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina* (Ligouri, Missouri: Ligouri, 1995)
 Foster, Charles, *The Sacred Journey: The Ancient Practices* (The Ancient Practices Series) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010)
 Leblanc, Douglas, *Tithing: Test Me in This* (The Ancient Practices Series) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010)
 Chittister, Joan, *The Liturgical Year: The Spiraling Adventure of the Spiritual Life* (The Ancient Practices Series) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009)
 Gallagher, Nora, *The Sacred Meal: The Ancient Practices Series* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009)
 Benson, Robert, *In Constant Prayer* (The Ancient Practices Series) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008)
 McKnight, Scot, *Fasting: The Ancient Practices* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009)
 Allender, Dan, Bob Abernethy, and William Boles, *Sabbath: The Ancient Practices* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009)

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Write a five-page essay on each of the three books you've read from the attached list of spiritual classics. In each, briefly summarize the book, and spend the majority of the essay interacting personally with the text and the author. Be as creative as you like. These essays are due on the first day of the course.
2. Prepare a 10-minute presentation on one of the three books you've read from the list of spiritual classics.
3. Read one of the books from the list of spiritual practices (only one student will read each book on the list), and practice that discipline prior to the course. Prepare a 15-minute presentation for the class on the history of and your experience of that discipline.
4. Write a 20-page essay on your interpretation of the history of Christian spirituality, spending at least 25% of the essay reflecting on the history of Christian spirituality as it relates to your local ministry context.
5. Write a 20-page personal theology of Christian spirituality. This is a first draft, and this paper will be revisited and revised each year of the course.

LIST OF SPIRITUAL CLASSICS

Aelred of Rievaulx (12th century): *The Way of Friendship* – a reflection on Christ-centered friendships

Anonymous (14th century): *The Cloud of Unknowing* – a mystical treatise on contemplation; the basis of Centering Prayer

Anonymous (19th century): *The Way of a Pilgrim* and *The Pilgrim Continues His Way* – a Russian wayfarer discovers the Jesus Prayer during his journeys

Aquinas, Thomas (13th century): *The Aquinas Prayer Book: The Prayers and Hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas* – one of the greatest theologians of all times at prayer

Athanasius (4th century): *The Life of St. Anthony* – the biography of a Desert Father

Augustine of Hippo (4th-5th centuries): *The Confessions* – the greatest spiritual memoir of all time

Baillie, John (20th century): *A Diary of Private Prayer* – thirty-one daily devotions by a Scottish pastor

Benedict of Nursia (6th century): *The Rule of St. Benedict* – the foundation of the Benedictine way of life and spirituality

Bernard of Clairvaux (12th century): *On the Love of God* – a treatise on how to love God and how God loves us

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (20th century): *The Cost of Discipleship* – a classic on self-sacrifice in Jesus' name

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (20th century): *Life Together* – his reflection on how Christians need to live in the world and with one another

Brother Lawrence (17th century): *The Practice of the Presence of God* – the diary of a Carmelite monk who experienced God's presence daily

Brother Ugolino (13th century): *The Little Flowers of St. Francis* – a biography of the great medieval saint

Bunyan, John (17th century): *The Pilgrim's Progress* – a metaphor of our journey through the temptations of life

Catherine of Genoa (15th century): *The Spiritual Dialogue* – a reflection on the soul's purgation and movement toward God

Catherine of Siena (14th century): *The Dialogue* – the dictation of an ecstatic experience with sections on divine providence, discretion, prayer, obedience

Chambers, Oswald (19th-20th centuries): *My Utmost for His Highest* – a collection of 365 of his devotional writings

de Sales, Francis (16th-17th centuries): *Introduction to the Devout Life* – a meditation on following Christ in the secular world

Desert Fathers and Mothers (4th-19th centuries): *Lives of the Desert Fathers* – a collection of stories of the lives of the desert hermits

Desert Fathers and Mothers (4th-19th centuries): *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* – a collection of their sayings on fasting, silence, prayer, and many other categories

Desert Fathers and Mothers (4th-19th centuries): *The Philokalia* – a collection of their sayings and writings regarding the Jesus Prayer

Eckart, Meister (13th/14th centuries): *Collected Works* – a mystical treatise on the intersection between Greek philosophy and Christian theology with an emphasis on God's indwelling of humanity

Fénelon, François (17th century): *Meditations on the Heart of God* – advice on developing intimacy with God by seeking after his heart

Fox, George (17th century): *The Journal of George Fox* – the spiritual memoir of a Quaker leader who was persecuted, yet retained his faith and belief that all humans have access to God

Hammerskjöld, Dag (20th century): *Markings* – journal entries from a Secretary-General of the United Nations who worked for world peace out of his Christian convictions

Hildegard of Bingen (12th century): *Scivias* – description and explanation of twenty-six mystical visions she received from God, uniting, for the first time, mysticism and doctrine

Ignatius of Loyola (16th century): *The Spiritual Exercises* – the twenty-eight day retreat during which a believer examines his own life and moves toward unity with Christ

John Climacus (7th century): *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* – the handbook for eastern monastics, it portrays the Christian life as a ladder, each rung a virtue to be mastered

John of the Cross (16th century): *The Dark Night of the Soul* – an ecstatic poem that traces the soul through its purgation of sin toward union with God in divine love

Julian of Norwich (14th century): *Showings* – her sixteen revelations of God's love, including some beautiful imagery of God as divine Mother

Kelly, Thomas (20th century): *A Testament of Devotion* – five essays by a Quaker teacher about finding the peace of God's presence in the midst of a noisy life

Kempis, Thomas à (15th century): *The Imitation of Christ* – possibly the greatest spiritual classic ever written, a meditation on following Christ with humility

Lewis, C.S. (20th century): *Mere Christianity* – a classic on what it means to believe in and follow Christ

Merton, Thomas (20th century): *The Seven Storey Mountain* – the spiritual biography of the 20th century's most famous monk

Merton, Thomas (20th century): *New Seeds of Contemplation* – Merton's classic treatise on the contemplative life

Nouwen, Henri J. M. (20th century): *In the Name of Jesus* – Nouwen's reflections on the trials and joys of Christian ministry

Nouwen, Henri J. M. (20th century): *The Way of the Heart* – short devotions on the three bases of the contemplative life: solitude, silence, and prayer

Pascal, Blaise (17th century): *Pensées* – a collection of his notes and essays on science, the weakness of our humanity, and the wager of faith

Schaeffer, Francis A. (20th century): *True Spirituality* – living a life in Christ in the midst of the modern world, focusing on the redemptive power of his resurrection

Teresa of Ávila (16th century): *The Interior Castle* – her account of building one's soul toward perfection and thus making it a dwelling place for God

Thérèse of Lisieux (19th century): *The Story of a Soul* – the autobiography of a mystic who battled illness, died young, and is considered by some to be the great modern saint

Underhill, Evelyn (20th century): *The Spiritual Life* – an outline of the spiritual life and cooperation with God by arguably the greatest mystic of the 20th century

Weil, Simone (20th century): *Waiting for God* – excerpts of journals, letters, and essays by a convert to Christianity from Judaism who attained almost daily mystical union with Christ

Woolman, John (18th century): *The Journal of John Woolman* – the spiritual autobiography of an early Quaker who emphasizes revolution through peace and harmony

RECOMMENDED READING: Choose from the following to complete the number of required pages for pre-course reading.

Paradigm Theological Shifts

Barna, George. Revolution. Tyndale, 2005.

Easum, Bill and Travis, Dave. Beyond the Box. Group, 2003.

Easum, Bill. Leadership on the Other Side. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2000.

Frost, Michael and Hirsch, Alan. The Shaping of Things to Come. Hendrickson Publishers, 2003.

Hamel, Gary. Leading the Revolution. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2000.

Kimball, Dan. The Emerging Church. Zondervan, 2003.

Lewis, Robert. The Church of Irresistible Influence. Zondervan, 2001.

Leadership Development

Bridges, William. Managing Transitions. Reading, MA: Perseus, 1991.

Collins, James and Jerry Porras. Built to Last. San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins, 1997.

Kouzes, James and Posner, Barry. The Leadership Challenge. Jossey-Bass, 2002.

Lencioni, Patrick. The Five Dysfunctions of a Team. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002.

McNeal, Reggie. Revolution in Leadership. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1998.

O'Toole, James. Leading Change. New York, NY: Ballantine, 1996.

Quinn, Robert E. Building the Bridge as You Walk on It. Jossey-Bass, 2002.

Rusaw, Rick and Swanson, Eric. The Externally Focused Church. Group 2004.

Scott, Cynthia D. and Jaffe, Dennis T. Managing Organizational Change. Crisp Publications, 1989.

Senge, Peter. The Fifth Discipline. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1994.

Personal Growth

Buckingham, Marcus and Clifton, Donald. Now, Discover Your Strengths. Simon and Schuster, 2001.

Buford, Bob. Finishing Well. Integrity, 2004.

Clinton, J. Robert. The Making of a Leader. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988.

Cloud, Henry and John Townsend. Boundaries. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992.

Dotlich, David, Noel, James and Walker, Norman. Leadership Passages. Jossey-Bass, 2004.

Dotlich, David and Cairo, Peter. Why CEO's Fail. Jossey-Bass, 2003.

McIntosh, Gary and Samuel Rima. Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997.

McNeal, Reggie. A Work of Heart. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

Thrall, Bill; McNicol, Bruce and McElrath, Ken. The Ascent of a Leader. Jossey-Bass, 1999.