I. Course Description

An investigation into the meaning of biblical Christianity and its relationship to faith and practice.

II. Course Purpose

The primary overarching competency to be achieved in graduate theological education is the development of spirituality in each student. Seminary graduates should be persons of faith. The primary allegiance of their lives should be to Christ as He is revealed in Scripture. The Christian life is a personal response to the personal activity of God in His redemptive self-disclosure. This means that one's loyalty to Christ affects the full range of one's values and decisions. Loyalty to Christ in a personal relationship is set within the framework of the community of the redeemed. The common allegiance of this community is to its head, Christ, who ministers His grace for the spiritual development of His people through the interdependent functions of His body by means of Word and Spirit.

Faith should be lived out in every facet of life. Spirituality is the description of the quality of the believer's life whereby the new disposition is expressed in spontaneous reconstruction of God's preceptive will. It includes the character traits that result from the swift and sure use of one's will to will God's will. Spirituality is that quality in the believer which causes him or her to have a greater desire for and joy in prayer, Bible study, worship, and Christian service than a desire for and joy in wealth, power, sex, fame, or success.

III. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:

A. Understand the basic, biblical concept of spirituality as contrasted to contemporary ideas.

B. Understand the basic mystic teachings of Christian spirituality which have developed through the history of the church.

C. Recognize the influences of mystical spirituality in contemporary ideas relating to spiritual formation.

D. Understand the basic theological foundations of evangelical spirituality as these have developed through the history of the church.

E. Develop a functional definition of spiritual formation.

F. Recognize the impact of psychology on contemporary culture and spiritual formation.
G. Understand the biblical concepts of spiritual maturity, spiritual growth, and love.

H. Appreciate the corporate and community aspects of spiritual formation.

I. Apply basic biblical concepts to the process of spiritual formation within his/her own life.

J. Distinguish between the main traditions of spiritual formation.

K. Appreciate the need for the spiritual disciplines in the development of spirituality.

L. Understand the role of theological education in the spiritual formation of ministry students.

M. Recognize the need for a personal value set that reflects loyalty and commitment to Christ over the enticements of the world, flesh, and devil.

IV. Course Materials

A. Required Reading


B. Recommended Reading Bibliography

*Historical Backgrounds*


**Mysticism/Contemplative Spirituality**

Corduan, W. *Mysticism: An Evangelical Option?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991 (This text is out-of-print).


Tuttle, R. *Mysticism in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989 (This text is out-of-print).

**Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology**


**Spiritual Disciplines**


**General Works**


**V. Course Requirements**

**A. Reading**

1. Read the text by Alexander, *Christian Spirituality*, according to the schedule give in the Course Outline later in this syllabus. This is more
specifically laid out in the lesson guides in the documents folder in your course forum. Write a five-to-eight page report comparing and contrasting the five views according to the following criteria:

a. Discuss those aspects of each view which you feel set it apart from the other four views and make it unique. Explain the significance of the aspect within the view it represents and discuss fully why this aspect makes the view unique from the others.

b. In a final section of the paper, discuss which, if any, of the five views have common features with respect to the actual issue of spiritual formation. (You are not interested here in the obvious commonality of theology underlying all of that which calls itself evangelical.) Describe the common feature(s) and discuss their significance within the related views.

2. Read the text by Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, according to the schedule given in the Course Outline later in this syllabus and specifically in the lesson guides. Prepare a five-to-eight page written report in which you evaluate this book. Organize your report according to the points discussed below.

a. Discuss the concept of "life" and its significance with respect to spiritual formation as presented by Willard. How has his presentation of this concept affected your own thinking concerning spiritual formation?

b. Describe the role that spiritual disciplines should play in the development of spirituality. Analyze Willard's approach in terms of its relative emphasis on the individual versus the corporate aspects of spiritual formation.


3. Read the book by Johnson, *Christian Spiritual Formation*, according to the schedule given in the Course Outline later in this syllabus and specifically in the lesson guides. Prepare a written report describing and evaluating this book using the Reading Report Format provided below (VI). The report should be six-to-eight pages in length.

B. Reflection

During this course, you will write three "Insight/Reflection" papers. These papers should be one-to-two pages in length. The intention of this assignment is to provide you with the opportunity to reflect on a particular aspect of the course which has been meaningful to you or to share an interesting insight which you have gained to that point in the course. Focus on how the insight applies in a specific way to your particular situation. This is not to be a summary of material presented in class or which you have read. Rather, this should reflect some original and creative thought on your part based upon what has been
discussed in the lectures or upon what you have read. As such it is not a research paper, but an opportunity for creative application of the material.

C. Evaluation

1. Study Guide Questions: At the back of the Study Guide there are review questions corresponding to each recorded lecture. You may prepare written answers to these questions and submit them for feedback prior to writing any of the evaluation instruments listed below. The feedback will be formative in nature and not involve a grade factor. Grade factors related to the recorded lectures will be based upon your performance on each of the instruments listed below (items 2,3,4).

2. Examination One: Complete the first examination after you have finished Lecture 10. The examination will cover only the material covered in the recorded lectures. During the writing of the examination you are not allowed to refer to notes, texts, or other supplementary material. You may refer to and use the Bible during the exam. There is no time limit for this exam, but two (2) hours is recommended.

3. Examination Two: Complete the second examination after you have finished Lecture 17. The examination will cover only the material covered in the recorded lectures. During the writing of the examination you are not allowed to refer to notes, texts, or other supplementary material. You may refer to and use the Bible during the exam. There is no time limit for this exam, but two (2) hours is recommended.

4. 1 Corinthians 13 Application: Using any five of the characteristics developed in Lectures18-24, write a paper explaining what specific programs, steps, etc., that you would initiate to help develop the positive aspects of the characteristics you have chosen in a given ministry context. At the beginning of the project briefly describe the ministry context to which you are making application. The paper should focus on specific and concrete suggestions for implementation and should not simply be a restatement of the material in the Lectures (although it should be consistent with this material). The paper should be ten to twelve pages in length.

5. Discussion Questions on TriNet: Participate in the online discussion areas of this course using the TriNet system. Thoughtful responses should be given to at least one question in each discussion area, and responses to the comments of other students are encouraged.

VI. Format for Reading Reports

A. Bibliographic Data.

In a style from APA, American Psychological Association or other "new" scientific or technical journal, e.g.:

or


If available, also include purchasing and ordering data for books, e.g.: Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York 10545 (paper $4.95)

B. Purpose of the Author.

Why was the book or article written? Often the writer specifically gives his purpose for writing. In other cases you will have to infer his or her purpose.

C. Highlights.

What two to five propositions, questions or conclusions best represent what the book or article is about? (For an article or chapter of a book this section can be brief.)

D. Critical Commentary.

From your viewpoint what could or should be said about strengths and weaknesses of the material? What questions are well answered? What new questions are raised?

E. Notable Quotations.

One or two for an article; five to ten for a book. Select things you may want to directly quote in a paper that you might write later.

**VII. Grade and Evaluation.**

Your final grade will be based upon the following percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Reports</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willard</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Papers</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insight Paper #1</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insight Paper #2</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insight Paper #3</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
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<td>Final</td>
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1 Cor. 13 Application 10%

TriNet Discussion Questions 5%

All papers must follow the form outlined in the TIU Style and Format Guide which can be obtained from the DE Resources area of TriNet as well as on Trinity’s Library website.

All assignments should be submitted directly to your Course Tutor using the icon within your TriNet course labeled with your course tutor’s name. Exams should be mailed by your proctor to the address below. Course work may be submitted by mail if necessary.

Distance Education
Trinity International University
2065 Half Day Road
Deerfield IL 60015

If you have questions related to your assignments, please contact your Course Tutor in TriNet. All other questions should be directed to the Distance Education office (email or 847-317-6554).

VIII. Course Outline

A. Spirituality: What Is It?
   1. Spirituality - A Problem in Definition
   2. Secular Spirituality
   3. Biblical Spirituality

B. Spirituality and Maturity
   1. Teleios - A Lexical Study
   2. Biblical Concepts of Maturity and Growth

C. A Paradigm for Spiritual Formation
   1. Ephesians 4:11-16
   2. Spirituality and Love
   3. Christianity Without Love
   4. Love, the Essence of the Christian Experience

D. The Church: Decisive Context for Spiritual Formation
   1. The Church as the People of God.
   2. The Church as Event.
   3. The Church as Family
   4. The Church and the Spirit.
   5. The Church as Redemptive Community.

E. Contemporary Factors: The "Psycho-Culture"
1. Ethical Egoism  
2. Psychotherapy  
3. Individualism  
4. Feminist Ideology  

F. Historical Factors: Mystical Spirituality  
   1. Mystical Spirituality  
   2. Evangelical Devotion  
   3. The Mystical Elements of Biblical Faith  
   4. Areas of Tension  

G. Individual Disciplines  

H. Corporate Disciplines  

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