
The mission of Genesis is to prepare humble hearts to begin again. Our vision is to empower our graduates to fulfill God-sized dreams according to his purpose.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an exploration of the processes and goals of spiritual formation in the life of the Christian minister or leader from personal, biblical, theological and historical perspectives. Students are introduced to the disciplines and practices of the Christian faith that promote intimacy with God and Christ-like character. Particular emphasis is given to Scripture memorization.

The overarching goal of this course is to equip students to establish a foundation for, and an unwavering commitment to, spiritual transformation, maturity and moral conduct.

I. Prerequisites

None

II. Measurable Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Analyze your life history and interpret past experiences in light of God's sovereign purposes for spiritual formation and vocation;
- Articulate how your personality informs your spiritual orientation and the process of spiritual and character formation;
- Describe key classical spiritual disciplines and explain how you will incorporate them into your life;
- Create a Personal Rule of Life to maintain spiritual vitality;
- Define spiritual formation and describe how transformation takes place at your points of unlikeness to Christ's image;
- Evaluate your relationship with God against the four stages of the classical Christian journey: awakening, purgation, illumination, and union;
- Formulate a definition of "holistic spirituality" that is compelling and meaningful for you;
- Formulate and articulate a vision for corporate and social spirituality;

- Quote from memory Romans 8:28-29 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 Create a project that articulates God’s vision for you to be a catalyst for leadership transformation

III. Required Resources

Books

Mulholland Jr., Robert M. *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016. (Note: Any edition is acceptable)

Nouwen, Henri. *Return of the Prodigal Son*. New York: Image, 1992.

Articles

Barton, Ruth Haley. “The Discipline of Spiritual Rhythm.” In *Ministry Essentials Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. 2014.

Foster, Richard. “The Discipline of Fasting.” In *Ministry Essentials Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. 2014.

Gaultierre, Bill. “Spiritual Disciplines List.” Soulshpherd.org.

Nouwen, Henri. “The Discipline of Community.” In *Ministry Essentials Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. 2014.

----. “The Discipline of Solitude.” In *Ministry Essentials Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. 2014.

----. “The Importance of Spiritual Disciplines.” In *Ministry Essentials Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. 2014.

Ortberg, John. “How to Spend a Day in Prayer.” In *Ministry Essentials Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. 2014.

Willard, Dallas. “Spiritual Formation: What it is, and How it is Done.” Dwillard.org.

Personality Test (provided):

“The MBTI Personality Test.” Artothinkingsmart.com.

(This test will be taken during Module 2)

IV. Recommended Resources

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

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*. New York: Touchstone, 1995.

----. *Life Together*. New York: Harper & Row, 1954.

Edwards, Jonathan. *The Religious Affections*. Uhrichsville OH: Barbour Publishing, 1999.

Fee, Gordon. *Listening to the Spirit in the Text*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

2000

Foster, Richard. *Celebration of Discipline*. New York: Harper Row, 1977.

Nouwen, Henri. *The Way of the Heart*. New York: Image, 1992.

Piper, John. *A Hungering for God: Desiring God Through Fasting and Prayer*. Wheaton: Crossway, 1997.

Willard, Dallas. *Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship With God*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999.

----. *The Spirit of Disciplines*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991.

V. Course Requirements and Assignments

A. Learning Activities

You are required to respond to a writing prompt in Modules 1-5. Each response must be 400-500 words and thoroughly answer the question(s) using material from that module's reading assignments. Your answers will be graded using the "Scoring Rubric for Seminary Writing Responses" (see *Genesis Writer's Manual*).

In Module 6 you will create a Personal Rule of Life, which is a formal commitment to practice spiritual disciplines that will help nurture your spiritual growth.

B. Book Critique

You will submit a critical evaluation of Henri Nouwen's *Return of the Prodigal Son* or any book from the recommended resources. The Book Critique, which is due at the end of Module 3, must be a minimum of 1000 words and must conform to MLA standards. See "How to Write Book Critiques" in the *Genesis Writer's Manual* for additional help.

C. My Spiritual Journey Narrative

Your current sense of personal, spiritual, and ministerial identity is a product of your journey or story. Writing your story will help you understand and more deeply appreciate how God has in a sovereign manner demonstrated his grace, mercy, providence, and provision for your life. Recounting your story shows how God has used events to develop specific spiritual capacities in you, such as how to minister to those who are experiencing what you have experienced in your journey.

Karen Blixen, author of *Out of Africa*, was asked in 1957 to comment on the dismantling of her life in Africa. She shared her story of great loss. Her husband was unfaithful and divorced her. He mishandled their

finances and, as a result, they were forced to sell their farm and home. She said “All sorrows can be borne if you put them into a story or tell a story about them.”

Those who recover from life’s hardest traumas are those who can write a new story for their lives in which their pain betters them.

What is your story? How has God’s grace redeemed your detours? How has God’s transforming presence met you at each turn of your journey? Where was God’s hand on your life even though at the time you didn’t recognize it as God’s hand?

This assignment gives you the opportunity to review your life history in terms of creating a spiritual narrative or autobiography. Several questions to help you decipher God’s invitation to you.

D. Portfolio Project

Each Master (Level 3) course at Genesis Bible Institute requires students to create a project that contributes to his or her Ministry Portfolio. A Ministry Portfolio is a usable, functioning body of work which demonstrates a student’s leadership skills, knowledge and abilities.

In this course, you will create a spiritual retreat that you can use in the church you currently attend, or among the community of believers with which you currently fellowship. You will keep your finished product in your Ministry Portfolio, demonstrating your ability to create and plan such things as retreats, special events, camps, conferences, etc.

What is a Spiritual Retreat?

A spiritual retreat is a time set aside from the hustle and bustle of life to give God your full and undivided attention. It is a concentrated time of spiritual growth and renewal. The retreat you design may be a one-day or multi-day event. While the details of your retreat are up to you and your creativity, you must include the practices and disciplines learned in this course.

Requirements

Your project consists of three parts: Presentation, Logistics, and Teaching Overview.

E. Final Exam

The Final Exam consists of material from the module presentations and assigned reading. The purpose of the exam is to measure your knowledge of course material.

A Final Exam Review is presented in Module 6 to help prepare you for the test. The exam will be administered after all 6 modules have been completed.