



Spiritual Formation of the Minister
Professional Doctoral Seminar – THCH8301
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Spring 2015 Trimester March 31- April 2, 2015

(This seminar will be conducted CIV at the following campuses –New Orleans,
Atlanta, Jacksonville)

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Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

NOBTS Core Values and Core Value Focus

Doctrinal Integrity – Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. The doctrinal statements used in our evaluations are our Articles of Religious Belief and the Baptist Faith and Message Statement.

Spiritual Vitality – We are a worshipping community, with both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.

Mission Focus – We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Characteristic Excellence – What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Servant Leadership – We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us.

Annually, the President will designate a core value that will become the focus of pedagogy for the year. For 2015-2016 academic year that Core Value is *Spiritual Vitality*.

Course Description

The seminar delineates the sources, character, and dynamics of the spiritual formation of the Christian minister. Formation is viewed as a foundational ministry and as a reciprocal responsibility of pastor and congregation. It is vitally related to the quality of the congregation's worship and service, and the integrity of the pastor's prophetic awareness. Combining trenchant analyses of contemporary religion and culture with insights and analyses from Scripture and the classics of Christian devotion, the study sets forth the classical spiritual disciplines as essential ingredients of authentic formation. The seminar constitutes an urgent call for spiritual maturity in Christian ministry and provides clear directives for achieving it.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students successfully completing the seminar will demonstrate:

- foundational understanding of Christian spirituality and its major paradigms;
- awareness of the critical significance of spiritual formation for the minister;
- capacity to identify and critique elements of contemporary religious culture that distort and trivialize Christian spirituality and impede spiritual formation;
- intentional and regular practice of disciplines contributing to Christian maturity;
- ability to communicate the value and principles of spiritual formation in the local ministry context.

Textbooks

NOTE: Not all textbooks will be required by each participant in the class. Some books are assigned to specific Individuals or groups. Review the list of assignments before purchasing textbooks.

Each student is to read the following textbooks and to be prepared to integrate their content into seminar discussions and presentations:

Required Texts:

Richard J. Foster and James Bryan Smith, eds. *Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups*, revised edition (HarperOne, 2005).

Issler, Klaus. *Living into the Life of Jesus: The Formation of Christian Character*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 2012

You will be assigned to read and report on one of the following:

Estep, James R. and Jonathan H. Kim, Eds. *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*. Nashville, TN: B& H Academic. 2010
Foster, Richard J. *Prayer:*

Finding the Heart's True Home. San Francisco, CA:
HarperOne, 1992.

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Spirituality*. Baker, 1999.

Eugene H. Peterson, *Subversive Spirituality*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997.

J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*. IVP Books, 1993.

Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.

Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. Harper & Row, 1988.

Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (NavPress, 2002).

Before the Seminar:

- 1. Primary Textbook Review:** Prepare a written review of Issler *Living into the Life of Jesus*. The review, 6-8 double-spaced typewritten pages, should be written in an acceptable style, reflect serious study and analysis, and include the following sections: 1) biographical sketch of author, 2) author's purpose, 3) author's thesis or major arguments, 4) summary of contents, 5) significant teachings or insights, 6) quotable passages, 7) strengths and weaknesses, 8) contributions to Christian spirituality, and 9) concluding evaluation. Parenthetical references are permitted for this assignment.

Due Date: Students are to submit book reviews online in the discussion board and through the Assignment link on Blackboard no later than **Friday, March 27, 2015**, according to the instructions in the syllabus for availability to the other students in the seminar.

2. **Secondary Book Summary:** Each student will complete a 4 page summary handout of one of the secondary texts (a template will be supplied by the professor). Summary should include at least one page of application suggestions in the local ministry context. Summaries will be submitted in pdf format on Discussion Board in Blackboard by **March 27, 2015**. Be prepared to present your summary to the class. Allow approximately 20 - 30 minutes of presentation and discussion. **Each student may send an email to both professors with a list of choices from the secondary texts in order of preference. Assignments will be made March 3, 2015.**
3. **Spiritual Formation Journal:** Each student is to keep a spiritual formation journal. A minimum of 5 entries per week is expected for at least 10 consecutive weeks between March 1 – June 1. Entries should include spiritual insights based upon the selected reading assignments, personal devotional materials and the practice of spiritual disciplines. Entries will not be reviewed by the faculty instructors but should be referenced in the assigned reflection paper.
4. **Interview:** Interview an experienced and respected pastor (or staff member) on the theme of spiritual formation. Prepare a written summary (3-4 pages) of the interview highlighting the most salient responses. Be prepared to discuss your conclusions during the seminar. Ask the pastor to:
 - Define spirituality and spiritual formation and state the importance of spiritual formation for the pastor
 - Identify marks of spiritual maturity
 - Indicate how spiritual maturity can be achieved
 - Note particular challenges or problems related to the spiritual formation of a pastor

During the Seminar:

5. **Seminar Participation:** Students are expected to be active participants in all sessions of the seminar. Note: The seminar actually begins with the receipt of the syllabus and continues through the material completed after the three day component. The seminar does not consist only of the three day session time component.
6. **Presentations of the Primary Textbook:** Each student will present the content and implications of an assigned segment of the *Issler* textbook. Assignments will be made by February 24, 2015. Students will be expected to succinctly present the main ideas, ask relevant questions, and generate group dialogue. Allow approximately 15- 20 minutes for your presentation.
7. **Presentations of the Secondary Textbooks:** Each student will present the review of one of the secondary textbooks. The template for the review is available on Blackboard. Allow approximately 20 - 30 minutes for your presentation, including discussion.
8. **Group Presentations:** Students will be placed into groups and assigned topics from the *Devotional Classics* textbook to read and to present during class time. Assignments will

be made by February 24, 2015. Students will be expected to succinctly present the main ideas, ask relevant questions, and generate group dialogue. Allow approximately 15- 20 minutes for your group's presentation.

9. Reports on Interviews: Students will report briefly on their interviews.

Following the seminar:

10. Reflection Paper - Due June 1, 2015

Submit a paper synthesizing the content and experience of this seminar. The paper, 8-10 pages in length, should utilize the data gathered from the interview (Assignment 3), personal practices and theological/theoretical concepts. The paper will have two sections, personal and corporate. This paper may take some time. (You are strongly urged to formulate your content as you complete your course assignments.)

Students should address the following concerns and answer the following questions:

Personal:

- Compare the interview responses to the principles learned during this seminar.
- Which 3 disciplines are most impactful to your spiritual formation?
- Which spiritual discipline do you most need to add to your lifestyle? Why?
- Which spiritual discipline seems the most difficult to continue in your life? Why?
- What insights about your spiritual walk or personal life did you discover?
- How does your own spiritual life influence the spiritual health of the congregation or leadership team?
- What disciplines should be emphasized more strongly in your congregation?

Corporate/Congregational:

- State how a pastor may facilitate spiritual formation of the congregation.
- Discuss how spiritual health shapes a pastor's priorities, perception of authority and power, leadership style, and the content and spirit of preaching and congregational worship.
- Offer suggestions how a Pastor can make spiritual formation a more integral part of local Christian ministry.

Final Project - Due June 15, 2015

Each student must generate a teaching session for his or her congregation or a leadership group within his or her own church. Content should incorporate ideas, principles and personal insights gained from this seminar. Submit a complete lesson including Power Points, handouts, learning activities, etc. Students may use the lesson planning worksheet on Blackboard if you choose. This project may take some time. Course professors strongly recommend beginning development early in the trimester.

Evaluation

Interview	10%
Book Review	15%
Book Summary	10%

Journal	15%
Presentations	10%
Reflection Paper	20%
Final Project	20%

Class Schedule: (Subject to Change)

The seminar is scheduled to meet from 1:00 to 9:00 p.m. (Central Daylight Saving Times) on Tuesday, March 31, 2015; 8:00am to 4:00pm on Wednesday, April 1, and 8:00 to 4:00pm on Thursday, April 2.

Tuesday

1:00-1:30pm	Introductions and Seminar Overview (Dr. Stone)
1:30-2:30pm	Biblical/Theological Backgrounds (Dr. Butler)
2:30- 3:30pm	<i>Christian Character</i> Part 1, Presentations & Discussion (Dr. Stone)
3:30 – 4:00 pm	Break
4:00 – 6:30pm	<i>Christian Character</i> Parts 2 & 3, Presentations & Discussion (Dr. Stone)
6:30- 7:00pm	Conclusion, Presentation Preparation (dismiss)

Wednesday

8:00- 8:30am	Devotion & Review (Dr. Stone)
8:30-10:00am	<i>Devotional Classics</i> – Review and dialogue (Dr. Butler)
10:00-10:15am	Break
10:15-11:45am	<i>Devotional Classics</i> – Review and dialogue continued
11:45- 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00- 2:30pm	Interview Reports
2:30-4:00pm	Book Reports
4:00 -4:30pm	Break
4:30- 6:30pm	Book Reports

Thursday

8:00- 8:30 am	Devotion & Review (Dr. Butler)
8:30-10:00am	Book Reports
10:00-10:15am	Break
10:15-11:45am	Book Reports
11:45–1:00pm	Lunch
1:00- 2:30pm	Observations & Discussion
2:30-3:30pm	Assessment and Application
3:30-4:00pm	Wrap up, unfinished business, follow up assignments.

Directed Study:

As part of a directed study for this seminar, students will read and review three (3) additional books from the reading list (selected and assigned by the professor). Students are expected to complete all other assignments as if they were participating in the class. The reviews should follow the same pattern as the review of Dallas Willard's *Renovation of the Heart*.

Textbook Review:

The review should be 8-10 page double-spaced typewritten pages, written in an acceptable style, reflect serious study and analysis, and include the following sections: 1) biographical sketch of author, 2) author's purpose, 3) author's thesis or major arguments, 4) summary of contents, 5) significant teachings or insights, 6) quotable passages, 7) strengths and weaknesses, 8) contributions to Christian spirituality, and 9) concluding evaluation. Reviews should be submitted via email by the end of the trimester, June 30, 2015.