SPIRITUAL FORMATION FOR LEADERS
Applied Theology D.Min. Core, 2DM802
January 11-15, 2010
Steve Childers

Course Description

A Christian leader must lead from character before skill. Therefore, in this course students will be given an overview of the biblical and theological principles regarding the development of mature Christian character. This will help them develop a theological approach to spiritual growth and renewal in their ministries. Students will be shown how to experience the transforming power of the gospel in their lives and ministries through understanding and applying theological truths related to the Gospel of God’s grace. They will also learn ways to be agents of gospel transformation in light of the Church’s mission to make disciples of all nations. Special focus will be placed on the application of the practical theology of English Puritans (1550–1700) such as John Owen and Richard Baxter.

Course Instructor

Steve is a professor of Practical Theology (since 1995) and the director of the doctoral program at Reformed Theological Seminary, in Orlando, Florida, where he teaches spiritual formation, church planting, missions and evangelism. He is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America, having served two churches (urban and suburban) as church planter and senior pastor for 15 years.

Steve is also the President and CEO of Global Church Advancement, an inter-denominational ministry that provides training, consultations, and resources for church planters, pastors and missionaries throughout the world.

Through his conferences and seminars he has taught thousands of Christian leaders from more than 40 countries representing over 120 denominations and mission agencies. His educational background includes earning Master’s degrees from Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago and a doctorate from Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando. Steve has also done doctoral studies in global mission at Fuller Theological Seminary’s School of World Mission in Pasadena, California. Steve and his wife Becky live in Orlando, Florida, and have three grown daughters.
Course Objectives

A Mind for Truth

• To understand and articulate a biblical theology of personal spiritual growth and renewal, especially as it relates to the centrality of the cross and the gospel.

• To understand the biblical imperative for personal holiness and the priority of ongoing spiritual growth and renewal in the life of the church leader today.

• To understand the biblical nature of the gospel’s transforming power, especially as it relates to the Kingdom of God and mission of the Church.

• To understand, evaluate and appreciate various principles, methods and models used today to help people grow spiritually.

• To be acquainted with the extensive literature relating to personal spiritual growth and renewal (especially English Puritan literature) and be able to think biblically and critically about how it can be used properly and effectively in the student’s life and ministry.

A Heart for God

• To experience personal spiritual growth and renewal through the transforming power of the gospel.

• To diagnose and repent from the core idols (sin beneath the sin) that draw the student’s heart affections away from Christ.

• To appropriate the transforming pardon and power of the gospel of Jesus Christ through setting the student’s heart affections on Him alone by faith.

• To show love for God and others by loving God’s Law, obeying it by God’s grace, and allowing it to lead the student to Jesus Christ for transformation into His image.

• To practice spiritual disciplines (such as meditating on Scripture, prayer, journaling, fasting, witnessing, etc.) as a means of setting the student’s heart affection on Christ.

• To have a heartfelt burden and lifelong commitment to pray and work for a local, national and global spiritual awakening through the advancement of God’s Kingdom through the Church.

• To be used by God as an agent of personal spiritual growth and renewal in the lives of others.

A Life for Ministry

• To lay a strong foundation for future studies in the dynamics of how the gospel brings spiritual growth and renewal both personally and corporately.

• To lay a strong foundation for the practical development of church–based ministries of spiritual growth and renewal, especially for those planning to be church planters, pastors and missionaries.

• To obtain a set of criteria for evaluating spiritual growth and renewal principles, methods, materials, programs and trends.
Course Requirements

Reading Assignments
There will be 2000 pages of new reading (not having been previously read by the student) assigned for the course. The required reading for all students is designated on the “Spiritual Dynamics Reading List” below. If required reading texts cannot be found, the student may substitute other books from the list. If substitutions must be made, students are to read the highly recommended books on the reading list. All readings for the course must be taken directly from the list unless otherwise approved by the professor.

   Reading Reports
   Doctor of Ministry (credit) students are required to report each book, sermon or article read on the standard “Reading Report” format available in this course syllabus. Reading Reports should be submitted on the first day of class, all at once and be stapled. All reading reports not turned in on the first day of class are to be turned in with the course integration paper in approximately three months. Students will receive a grade reduction for late Reading Reports unless otherwise approved by the professor. Non-credit (audit) students do not submit reports.

Class Attendance and Participation
This course follows the lecture, discussion and small group sharing methods requiring attendance and participation at all classes. Class lectures and group discussions will be based on the assumption that the student has completed the assigned readings and assignments given during the course. Occasionally, individual and small group work sessions will be conducted during class time. Students will be required to create, present and participate in class presentations.

Post-Class Integration Paper
Students are required to write a 15-20 page (double–spaced, 12 point font) course integration paper. This paper must reflect new work done by the student as a result of this course. The paper must demonstrate the student’s theology of Christian growth and show how the concepts learned in the class lectures AND course readings can be applied to the student’s personal life and ministry today. The paper must also include a specific plan for the student’s continued growth (spiritual formation plan) and application of the course concepts to his/her personal life and ministry in the future. The integration paper is due April 30, 2010 (received hardcopy in D.Min. office) unless special arrangements have been made with the professor prior to the end of the class work.
Required Reading:

Baxter, Richard
ISBN:1428622896

Bridges, Jerry

Lovelace, Richard

Packer, J.I.

Prior, Kenneth

Recommended Reading:

Alexander, Archibald

Baxter, Richard


Berkouwer, G.C.

Bonar, Horatius

Bridges, Jerry


Brooks, Thomas

Bunyan, John

Calvin, John

Chalmers, Thomas

Chappell, Bryan

Charnock, Stephen

Childers, Steven L.

Curtis, Brent, and John Eldredge
1997  The Sacred Romance. Thomas Nelson.

Demarest, Bruce
1999  Satisfy Your Soul. NavPress

Edwards, Jonathan

Eldredge, John,  

Ferguson, Sinclair B.  


Fisher, Edward  
*The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. Presbyterian Board of Pub., n.d.

Flavel, John  
1963  *The Mystery of Providence*

Foster, Richard  
1978  *Celebration of Discipline*

Foster, Richard, and Emilie Griffin  

Gurnall, William  

Hoekema, Anthony A.  
1989  *Saved by Grace*. Eerdmans.

Hughes, R. Kent  

Keller, Timothy J.  

Lewis, Peter  

Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn  


Londgaard, Kris  

Luther, Martin  
*The Preface to Martin Luther’s Commentary on Galatians*.


MacDonald, Gordon  

Marshall, Walter  

McGrath, Alister E.  

Miller, John C. (Jack)  
1986  Outgrowing the Ingrown Church. Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resource Library. (Read especially The Ingrown Leader, The Pastor as Pacesetter, and Preaching by Faith)

Miller, Rose Marie  

Morris, Leon  
1983  The Atonement: Its Meaning and Significance. IVP.

Murray, John  


Newton, John  

Owen, John  

Packer, J.I.  

Piper, John  

Powlison, David  

Ryken, Leland  
Ryle, J.C.  
195 pp.

Schaeffer, Francis A.  

Stott, John R.W.  

Toon, Peter  
1990 Spiritual Companions: An Introduction to the Christian Classics, Baker.  

Wallace, Ronald  
1957 Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament. Eerdmans.

Watson, Thomas  

Welch, Edward T.  
1997 When People are Big and God is Small. Presbyterian & Reformed.

Whitney, Donald S.  

Willard, Dallas  

Winslow, Octavius  
Title of Book
Complete Bibliographic Reference

Overview—Give a brief overview of the book, including its theme, perspective and approach.

Critique—Offer a brief critique of the book, including elements of strength and weakness.

Application—Offer some specific application to your own ministry—demonstrating the value and relevance of the material in this book.

Best Quote—Be sure to include the page number where the quote can be found.
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Total Pages Read _________________

Signed __________________________

Date_____________________________
Core Skills for Spiritual Directors including Integration of Spiritual Formation & Direction May 23-June 1, 2022. The second year continues with historical models in church history and in the learning and practical skills of spiritual direction. In addition, we will look at Puritan and contemporary models of spirituality, develop and explore implications of spiritual formation for the local church, and develop and practice deeper skills for the ministry of spiritual direction. Care graduated from Fuller Theological Seminary with her D.Min. Her dissertation focused on spiritual direction for short term mission. Steve knows the realities of ministry leadership and desires to see pastors, leaders, and others carrying out their callings from a foundation of God’s experiential love for them. Obtain a Doctor of Ministry in Spiritual Formation from Liberty University and Learn How to Facilitate the Spiritual Growth of Your Ministry. As a ministry leader, you are responsible for the spiritual well-being of your congregation, staff, and community. Liberty University’s Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) in Spiritual Formation provides the opportunity to study innovative strategies to facilitate the spiritual growth of small groups and individuals under your leadership. Earning your online D.Min in Spiritual Formation degree from a nonprofit university with this kind of recognition will set you apart from others in your field. You’re pursuing your degree because you want to serve God and others with excellence. We want to honor that goal by making your degree as affordable as possible. Our spiritual formation curriculum is biblically grounded and Christ-centered, and our understanding of spiritual formation involves the intersection of Scripture, theology, psychology, and sociocultural factors. Spiritual formation courses are scheduled so that students can participate in formation courses throughout their degree program. It analyzes the theology of spiritual leadership and reviews elements such as accountability, boundaries, devotional habits, life balance, retreats, solitude, and emotional, spiritual, and physical health. The course also delves into some of the things that inhibit the exercise of spiritual leadership.