

Spiritual Formation:
The Pathway To Deeper Life In Christ
(S.E.01-U)
Undergraduate Level
Fall, 2018

Instructor:

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Location: Pathways School of Ministry
159 Panin Road, Burlington Ontario

Schedule: September 10-13, 2018

Course Description:

“Follow me.” With two words, Jesus invited his disciples to a journey of being spiritually formed in and around him. This course will address some of the key aspects involved in pursuing a deep and fully-formed life in Christ, such as personal disciplines, calling, and giftedness in an approach that is biblically grounded, theologically engaged, historically rooted, and personally applied. As M. Robert Mulholland Jr. states, “Spiritual formation is a process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others.” Students will be invited to further formulate their own understanding of spiritual formation as they consider the biblical, theological, historical, and personal dimensions of life in Christ by engaging the thoughts and insights of other Christian writers – including C&MA founder Albert Simpson.

While biblical knowledge, theological reflection, historical insight, and spiritual practices are important, encountering Christ himself is the focus of genuine transformation in the life of a Christian; therefore, this course incorporates a two and a half day retreat for devotional instruction, spiritual reading, and focused time to practice and grow in listening to God’s voice. Because a biblically grounded approach to spiritual formation takes into account the importance of discipling relationships, this course includes a commitment to students seeking spiritual input from other, both during the prayer retreat as well as in the follow up journal assignment. In addition to lecture teaching, class time will include intensive group discussion and reflection.

The aim of this course is to help equip students to follow Jesus in every dimension of their lives as they journey with Christ in seeking to see his life become theirs and in the process be more equipped and experienced in helping others do the same. A practical outcome of the course will be the student using what they have learned to create a personal pathway of spiritual formation to begin to apply.

Course Objectives:

Knowing

1. Engage biblical and theological reflection as well as historical spiritual practices for spiritual growth.
2. Learn about various practices to listen to God's voice.
3. Understand the importance of one's own spiritual growth for the sake of others.

Being

1. A learning outcome will be the student's development in hearing God's voice for themselves while on retreat.
2. Begin to develop a personal "rule of life" to practice spiritual disciplines in the rhythms of everyday life.
3. Begin to recognize and celebrate the spiritual formation of others.

Doing

1. The student will develop an intentional personal path for spiritual formation based on spiritual disciplines, season of life, and personal traits.
2. The student will be able to articulate key aspects to the spiritual formation of a disciple of Jesus, including the scriptural ways God speaks and works by his Spirit.
3. The student will participate in a mentoring relationship with a seasoned minister or spiritual director, reporting back to the participant's supervisor and/or CCD leadership.

Course Responsibilities

As the instructor, my desire is to see each student become more alive to Christ within his or her life. Through reading, teaching, class interaction, and being on retreat together, I am trusting God to bring a fresh revelation of His presence along with a greater understanding of His call upon our lives. Genuine spiritual formation necessitates a heart attitude open to God and openness to the insights and journeys of others as we entrust the Holy Spirit to use the willingness of each participant to grow not only their own self but to help others around them spiritually grow as well. Each student will be required to commit to intensive group discussion and reflection. As the instructor, my responsibility will be to help empower each participant in her or his journey through instruction, thoughtful feedback, and prayerful facilitation in class on and on retreat.

The responsibility of each class member is to commit him or herself to the pre-course reading assignment, to participation in class, to the focus of the retreat, and the work of the follow up assignments, which have been designed to help stimulate and formulate greater understanding of spiritual formation within the Christian life.

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Required Texts & Resources:

Stevens, P. and Green, M. *Living The Story: Biblical Spirituality For Everyday Christians*. WM B. Eerdmans Publishing. 2003. (ISBN13:978-0-8028-6074-3)

Haley Barton, R. *Strengthening The Soul Of Your Leadership*. InterVarsity Press. 2008. (ISBN13:978-0-8308-3513-3)

Macchia, Stephen A. *Crafting A Rule Of Life*. InterVarsity Press. 2012. (ISBN13: 978-0-8308-3564-5)

Mulholland Jr., M. R. *Invitation To A Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*. InterVarsity Press. 1993. (ISBN13:978-0-8308-1386-5)

Roy, Jeff. *3 Crosses Instructional Guide to Hearing God's Voice*. (will be provided to you)

Simpson, Albert B., *A Larger Christian Life*. Wingspread Publishers. 2006. (ISBN13: 978-1-6006-6026-9) or available online as a pdf at:

<https://www.cmalliance.org/resources/archives/downloads/simpson/larger-christian-life.pdf>

Course Outline & Teaching Schedule:

Week/day	Topic covered	Work to be submitted or completed
Pre-retreat reading	Hearing God's voice.	Pre-retreat reading report
Pre-class reading	Biblical Spirituality	Pre-class reading report
Day 1	Colossians 1:9, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." A Christocentric Trinitarian approach to spiritual formation.	
Day 2	Three Crosses Retreat: Session 1: Discussion on journaling, contemplative conversational prayer, historical examples of listening to God's voice.	After each session there will be group reflection and opportunity for prayer.
Day 3	Three Crosses Retreat: Session 2: Hindrances to Hearing God's voice and safeguards to listening prayer.	Afternoon exercise of solitary, guided prayer followed by evening group reflection.

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Day 4	Three Crosses Retreat: Session 3: The importance of mentors and directors in the life of a disciple. Developing an Inner Circle.	
Post-class: Week 1	Book review	Post-retreat journaling, relating, and reading
Post-class: Week 3	Post-Retreat Journal Reflections	Post-class reading and research.
Post-class: Week 4	Compare & Contrast	Post-class reading and research.
Post-class: Week 5	Integration & Research	Writing of research and integration paper.

Retreat Details:

3Crosses Listening Prayer Focus: As a retreat participant you will leave with a basic guide and plan for journaling from the scriptures. In addition, you will have a plan for formalizing an ‘Inner Circle.’ The retreat will be a mix of instruction, guided prayer, and group reflection.

Location: 3Crosses Retreat Centre, 482 North Mary Lake Road, Huntsville, ON

Dates: Tuesday, September 11 – Thursday September 13, 2018 (staying over 2 nights)

Cost: \$160 (includes accommodation and meals) to be paid by cheque to the Central Canadian District with “3Crosses” indicated in the memo line

Transportation: Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from 3Crosses. Often students will arrange to carpool with one another.

Course Requirements Schedule:

Item	Pages Written	Value	Due date
Pre-retreat reading and written response	2-3	15%	Thursday September 6, 2018
Book Review: <i>Invitation To A Journey</i>	6-8	25%	Friday September 21, 2018
Post-Retreat Journal Reflection	6-8	25%	Friday September 28, 2018
Personal Pathway Integration Paper	8-10	35%	Thursday October 11, 2018
TOTAL	22-29	100%	

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1. Pre-Retreat reading and written response.

The student will read *Three Crosses Instructional Guide To Hearing God's Voice* (Jeff Roy) in preparation for a mid-week (Tues.-Thurs.) listening prayer retreat at Three Crosses Retreat Centre. Please respond as to your own personal experience in connecting to God. Reference what you appreciated in the reading and what challenged you.

This response should be 2-3 pages in length (double-spaced).

Due Date: Tuesday, September 6, 2018

Grade: 15% of final grade.

2. Book Review: *Invitation To A Journey*.

As a primer on the subject of Christian spiritual formation, the student is to read *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*. Write a book review and personal response describing Mulholland's approach to spiritual formation and your evaluation of it. In your paper, discuss points of comparison and contrast that overlap with A. B. Simpson's *A Larger Christian Life* and Jeff Roy's *3 Crosses Instructional Guide to Hearing God's Voice*.

Your response should include: a brief summary of Mulholland's approach and theological reflection and analysis on the themes identified. Also address how Mulholland has enhanced or challenged your understanding of Christian spiritual formation.

**Note that this assignment is not a book "report" but a book "review", requiring critical and theological analysis of the material read.*

This response should be 6-8 pages in length (double-spaced).

Due Date: Monday, September 21, 2018.

Grade: 25% of final grade.

3. Post-Retreat Journal Reflection.

After completing the in-course retreat at 3 Crosses, identify and form an "inner circle" with 2 others to debrief and share your experience of listening prayer. As part of your daily journal time, complete chapters 1-5 of Stephen Macchia's *Crafting A Rule Of Life*.

Your journal reflection should be at least 5 pages in length, providing highlights from your retreat experience of listening prayer and key insights from your personal responses to chapters 1-5 of *Crafting A Rule of Life*. In your reflection, include discussion of how you see

aspects of Mulholland's approach of spiritual formation as well as A.B. Simpson's A Larger Christian Life.

Your journal reflection should be at least 6-8 pages in length.

Due Date: Monday, September 28, 2018

Grade: 25% of final grade.

4. Personal Pathway Integration Research Paper.

From the various prescribed readings, both pre-class and required texts, along with class teaching and retreat experience, construct a paper that reflectively and critically examines your spiritual formation thus far with a proposed direction to further pursue.

Incorporate discussion regarding your personal spiritual formation from the following:

- 1) Stevens and Green's discussion of biblical spirituality in Living The Story
- 2) Haley Barton's discussion of soul care for Christian leaders in Strengthening The Soul of Your Leadership.
- 3) Macchia's Crafting A Rule Of Life: incorporate personal responses to Macchia's 6 priorities (spiritual, relational, physical, financial, missional, body of Christ) from Parts 2&3: "Forming Your Personal Rule Of Life" and "Fulfilling Your Personal Rule Of Life" (chapters 6-11).

In your paper, choose one of Macchia's 6 priorities, or a specific spiritual discipline, to further research and develop using additional books outside the required reading.

This personal integration and research paper is to provide: 1) a theological and critical reflection of your spiritual formation thus far, 2) research using additional sources on a spiritual priority or discipline, 3) and a prescribed rule of life for you to begin living by for the sake of being further conformed to the image of Christ in the rhythms and practices of your life. The final section of your paper should be a practical plan for your spiritual formation going forward (see Macchia pp. 167-180).

This paper should be 8-10 pages in length (double-spaced)

Due Date: Monday, October 11, 2018

Grade: 35% of final grade.

Additional Notes:**Late Penalties**

Any assignment received past its posted due date will be automatically docked a grade (ie, from A to A-). Late assignments will also be additionally penalized 1% for each day they are late (excluding weekends). Assignments not received by the end of the module time frame and without any written agreement of extension between the Instructor and the Student, will be marked with a failing grade of “F” for that assignment(s) and as such will affect the final course grade of the Student.

Formatting

Undergraduate students should submit all written work in Turabian style (see Kate Turabian in A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations; 8th Edition (ISBN 978-0226823379)).

Academic Dishonesty – Academic dishonesty is a serious offence in the academic world that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on the transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Inclusive Language - Pathways School of Ministry uses inclusive language for human beings in the classroom, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that all students will use inclusive language in all Pathways assignments.

Harassment - Harassment, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against another person or group of people that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

Examples of harassment include: offensive or intimidating comments or jokes; bullying or aggressive behaviour; displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials; inappropriate staring; sexual harassment; isolating or making fun of another person because of gender identity.

Among faculty, staff, and students harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Refer to the Pathways Student Handbook for more details regarding Pathways School of Ministry’s stance on Harassment and Violence.

Disclaimer - This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up until the first day of class.