



Christian Spiritual Formation & Transformation 320 (3 credits)

Quito, Ecuador

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A study of what Christian Spiritual Formation is and how it is actually transformative in nature. The students will be studying what is involved in the process of becoming more like Christ through reading, discussion, and personal times of prayer and reflection. There will be special emphasis given to understanding the importance of one's identity being in Christ as a basis for all Spiritual endeavor, as well as discovery of the many things that compete for finding one's identity in them. There will be significant time spent on the problem of the hidden heart and the part sin plays in this journey.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To define what Christian Spiritual Transformation is and is not.
- To understand what potential obstacles or distractions there are to growth in Christ likeness.
- To allow meditating and memorizing Scripture to play a part in this transformative process.
- To have a better understanding of how one's background may help or hinder in this process.
- To deepen one's understanding of spiritual, emotional development helping produce growth in understanding one's self one's view of God, and any distortions that may exist in either one's self worth or image of God.
- To take time to pray, not talk of prayer or study it, but to spend time in prayer as a way of deepening one's understanding of the importance of prayer in our walk with God.
- To have times of reflection and solitude with God learning to attend to what is happening within as we are with God in these ways. Some of these will happen each week, and some will be extended retreats.
- To have times of debrief, discussion and sharing about what these experiences of retreat were like in order to further integrate what is being learned on individual basis but to foster learning from one another.

- To introduce and explore what is involved in opening to God and His Spirit on the basis of justification by faith because of Christ's finished work on the cross. The times of prayer and reflection are to practice this opening.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

<i>of the heart</i>	Willard, D. (2002).	, NavPress.
<i>r story</i>	Merle, J. (1999).	. John Knox Press.
<i>ion as if the Church</i>	Willard, D. (2008).	, Baker Academic.
<i>ines handbook</i>	Calhoun, A. (2005).	, IVP Books. To be used on Retreat.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

- _____:
Engagement and participation are essential to learning in any environment. Active course participation is therefore considered mandatory. Therefore it is required that students arrive ON TIME and attend each class session. If there is some extreme emergency for missing a class or arriving late, please contact the professor by phone or e-mail with as much advanced notice as possible (contact information on page 1). Absences, tardies and lack of participation will impact the final grade. Good preparation on the part of all members of the class will enhance the learning experience for everyone. Any student that misses 50% of the course sessions will not receive credit for the course.

Class hours will be focused on the class content and the community within the classroom. All cell phone use, social networking and e-mailing should be avoided. Cell phones should be turned off in consideration of others. Failure to do so could impact the final grade. Students may use laptop computers to take notes as long as the computer is used solely for class purposes.

It is expected that you will give credit to any author and book that you quote. Simply place the Author and Title of the book in parenthesis after the quote, and note the page number. All your work must be original to you, do not copy from one another. These are to be your personal thoughts and reflections on the material you have engaged with. Copying someone else and representing it as your own material is grounds for failing this class.

Course assignments (e.g., homework, projects, exams) will not be accepted late. Unless otherwise stated, homework is due at the beginning of each class time.

The syllabus is a guideline, not a contract, and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion as circumstances warrant. Changes will be communicated via email and/or in-class.

You will be graded in this class based on your participation in class discussions, and your engagement in the homework, and with your participation on retreats. Your papers must be submitted without grammatical and spelling errors. Reflections while not researched, must be backed up with personal anecdotes and examples that support your observations or reflections. Evaluation of your work is based on many factors. These include but are not limited to: participation, written assignments, and examinations. A "C" grade indicates adequate performance, a "B" grade indicates good, competent and complete work, and an "A" grade indicates creative excellence that is integrative and exceeds requirements.

COURSE OUTLINE:

- **Memorization/Meditation:** Each week you will memorize verses from Phil 2:1-11 and Romans 8:26,27 & 29-39. Your quizzes on this will be at the outset of class each week, and they will be cumulative. That is, first week you will only have Phil.2:1-2, but second week it will be Phil. 2:1-2 and 3-4. The third week it will be Phil. 2:5-6 and then either of the verses from the previous weeks (1,2,3 or 4). Each week it will be like this so you will be responsible for the verses of that week, and I will choose, randomly, any of the previous verses as the second verse. Other than the first week, you will be writing out by hand verses each week. The purpose of this is twofold: to ensure that you are actually hiding God's word in your heart, not just your tucking it into your head moments before class where it will stay only long enough for you to regurgitate it on paper, and then it will be gone again; and because the Word of God is deeply placed in your heart through constant review and saying it over and over, both out loud and silently, it can work its way deeply into your prayers and your day. In this way the Spirit of God will have effective weapons against lies and deception about who He is and about who you are.
- **Journaling:** Each week you will journal, using the prompt or prayer project that is given you. The minimum of a journal entry length is 4 pages. These must be typed; please double space and use font size 12. . You may have one pass for the semester. So I will accept one week of your choosing when you don't turn in a journal entry. Other than that there will be no late journals accepted. They are due at class time. If you have some extenuating circumstance like illness, you can make arrangements to drop them off at the office before class, or at

my home after class. Your journal should be formatted as a doc. With your initial, the Journal #__ in the title of document.

- **Prayer Projects:** Each week you will be given a prayer project to engage with. This will take a total of an hour spent at one sitting, or perhaps it will be 20 minutes 3 times in that week. Then a few minutes to type up the experience. The write up is **only a description of the experience and is to be kept to one page**. The purpose of these assignments is to give you a start point in prayer times. It is helpful to have a loose guide and questions to frame our times with God in some cases. It is hoped that it will be enough practice that you will begin to form your own prayer projects as issues or things arise in your walk with God. You will not be graded on the nature of your experiences, but rather on whether you engaged with the prompt, spent time and energy thinking, praying or reflecting on it, and then whether you are able to articulate what you experienced. If the assignment calls for one hour of time and you give only 15 minutes that will be reflected in your grade. It is absolutely acceptable to describe a difficult experience where you were restless or distracted etc. You will not be graded down for this as long as you take time to be descriptive and thoughtful in sharing what your experience was like. The important thing is to engage with your mind, emotions, spirit and body where that is appropriate. Again, this should be submitted digitally, in a doc. Format, with your initial, PPJ #___ in the title of doc.
- **Reading:** On the same page as your memory verse is written on at the beginning of class each week, you will write down that your reading for the week is completed, or what percentage you completed. Honesty is expected. It will be obvious most of the time whether you have actually read the material by your participation in class that covers that material.
- **Prayer of Intention & Paper:** You will be given the Prayer of Intention and instructions that go along with it. You will be asked for a log of this time, so please keep one, either in a notebook that you can turn in or on your computer— your initials and PPI Log is how it should be titled if doing it on a document by computer. You are being asked to participate 5 days a week over the weeks that this is assigned to you. You will also be writing a 3-5 page paper on what you learned, how this challenged you, what was difficult about it, how it changed you or formed you that was noticeable to you, and how you saw it influencing patterns of thought or mental habits and self talk. At least these elements should be included in your paper. This should be typed, double space, font size 12. These will be due 4 weeks after the assignment is given at the beginning of class. If you do not have them at class time, you will have to make arrangements to drop them off at my house by 5 p.m.
- **Retreats & Papers:** We will be going together as a class on two retreats: the first will be 4 hours and the second will be a full day retreat. Transportation will be provided for all of them. You may be asked to bring a sack lunch on one of them. Details will be given to you the week before the retreat. The dates of these retreats are preset and count towards your total hours of seat time. **Attendance is not optional.** FAILURE TO ATTEND A RETREAT WOULD RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE IN THE CLASS DUE TO THE LOST SEAT HOURS. A 1

page summary of Retreat 1 and a 2 page summary of retreat 2 will be turned in the week after the retreat at the beginning of class.

- **Reclaiming Your Story Reading and Paper:** You will read this short book, and choose one question from Questions for Personal Reflection, Spiritual Autobiography, or the questions on p. 96-99 to interact with, and write a 3-5 page paper answering the question you chose. Include why you chose this particular question to interact with.
- **POP Quizzes:** At the professor's discretion there will be pop quizzes given out over the reading from the previous week.

COURSE OUTLINE:

DATES	READING	DUE THIS DAY (CONTENT READ, ASSIGNMENTS SENT VIA EMAIL OR PRINTED CLASS)
Class #1	Willard, Prelude-Ch. 2	Memory Verse: Phil. 2:5,6 Journal # 1 (done in class and turned in)
Class #2	Wilhoit, Ch. 1&2	Memory Verse: Phil 2:7,8 +? 1v fr. 5-6 Prayer Project #1,
Class #3	Wilhoit, 3&4	Memory Verse: Phil 2:9,10 +? 1v fr.5-8 Prayer Project #2, Journal #2 RETREAT #1 PAPER DUE
Class #4	Wilhoit, 5&6	Memory Verse: Phil 2:11 + 2 v. fr 5-10 Prayer Project #3, Journal #3 FINAL FOR PHIL2:5-11
Class #5	Wilhoit, 7&8	Memory Verse: Rom.8:26-27 Prayer Project #4, Journal #4 (1 pg)
Class #6	Wilhoit, 9&10	Memory Verse: Ro. 8:29-30 Prayer Project #5, Journal #5 Prayer of Intention Log and Paper due
Class #7	Willard, Ch. 3&4	Memory Verse: Ro.8:31-33 Prayer Project #6, Journal #6
Class #8	Reclaiming Your Story	Memory Verse: Ro.8:34-35 Prayer Project # 7, Journal #7
Class #9	Willard, Ch. 5&6 Spiritual Disciplines Handbook	Memory Verse: Ro.8:36-37 Project #8, Journal #8 Prayer
Class #10	Willard, Ch. 7&8	Memory Verse: Ro.8:38-39 Prayer Project #9, Journal #9 FINAL ON RO.8:26-39
Class #11	----- -----	----- ----- Paper-Reclaiming Your Story: Due by 5pm

Retreat (off-site)	8am-12pm	
Retreat (off-site)	8am-4pm	Come with Retreat from Calhoun in hand
Beauty Project (movie night)	6-9 pm	

Retreats #1 & 2 will be scheduled on a semester to semester basis.

COURSE EVALUATION:

Projects/Assignments	Points
Attendance	20
Memory Verse(s)	30 ea.
Prayer Projects	50 ea.
Journals	30 ea.
Retreat Papers	50 #1; 100#2
Course Reading (%)	50pts ea.
Paper – Prayer of Intention	100
Paper – Reclaiming Your Story	100