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SF 620 The Spiritual Life of the Minister

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THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE MINISTER
SF 620 -- Fall 2000
Dr. Sam Kamaleson
(First Draft)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The catalog description of the course on “The Spiritual Life of the Minister” reads: “The relationship between spirituality and ministry is studied in the light of the contemporary society, gifts and graces, spiritual disciplines, and ministerial functions. The goal is to equip students to function in ministry with the strengths that sound spirituality provides” SF 620 is the course number.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

A. TO begin to learn ‘how’ to ask life’s questions to Life and come out with answers ‘in life.’

B. To begin to discover a ‘balanced vision of Christian Faith and Practice’ by growing into the one traditional stream of ‘spirituality’ with which the person may be least familiar yet, from among the six traditions available to us from within Church History.

C. To learn to develop an open-ended description of spiritual disciplines that will endure all through life.

D. To understand the ‘flow’ of Biblical Spirituality through all ‘seasons of life.’

III. COURSE COMMITMENTS:

A. Members who are part of the course will seek to gain knowledge about:

- special resources that are within the presuppositions of the Christian ministry.
- the experiences of the Christian ministry that demand the growth of the minister.
- the appearances that distract from the realities of the Christian ministry.
- the high risk of un-resourced self-giving in the Christian ministry.

B. Members who are part of the course will seek to develop skills in:

- Experiencing God within the expanding circles of ministerial influences.
- Discovering the therapeutic benefits of ongoing encounter with Jesus Christ.
- Opening and remaining open to the acceptance of the community of believers.
- Escaping the ‘dryness’ of Ethicism, through Christian ‘obedience.’

C. Members who are part of the course will seek to deepen their spiritual life by:

- developing accountability within a covenant community.
- appropriating the means of grace from within the Trinitarian foundation.
- learning and engaging in formative 'spiritual' reading.
- developing the discipline of a spiritual journal.
- expanding on the themes and resources used in the class sessions.
- participating regularly in the formative discussions within their small groups.
- appreciating the joy of sharing the process where by 'my story and His Story are now becoming 'our' story.'
- entering into the continuing exercise of developing the discipline of on going exercise of 'Spiritual Formation.'

IV. The Structure of the class:

- The class will group itself, naturally, as participants recognize one tradition of spirituality from among the six traditions known to the Church.
- The person will be accountable to this group through out the semester.
- A part of the process of Spiritual Formation takes place within the interaction that is maintained within this group.
- Weekly meetings of the group will be organized and maintained with personal commitment.
- Class lectures will center around the main components of the Christian spirituality to help surface the elements of this spirituality that may further form the core of discussions.
- Personal time with the instructor of the course will be regularly structured in order to facilitate the possibility of personalized direction.

V. Course Components:

- A. A definition/description of 'Christian Spirituality' will be written by each member at the begging of the semester.
- B. A careful diary of spiritual matters will be maintained by each participant with interaction with the Bible, and other Christian writings particularly from the six major traditions of Christian Faith and Life with which the person is interacting.
- C. A paper written on the specific tradition of Christian Faith and Life with which the participant is working during the semester. It may be about a 'person' who is singled out as the representative of the tradition. It may show the interactive strength of the participant with the discoveries made through this study.
- D. Reading and sharing during the group meetings and the class sessions from the material recommended as required reading for the course.

F. A definition/description of 'Christian Spirituality' will be written by each member of the class at the end of the semester to compare the growth in understanding and practice of the tradition of Christian Faith and Life with which there has been personal and collective interaction.

VI. Texts:

A Spiritual Formation Work Book, James Bryan Smith (Harper, San Francisco, 1999)

Devotional Classics, Richard Foster, James Bryan Smith (Harper, San Francisco, 1993)

Mere Christianity, C.S.Lewis, (Collier Books, Macmillian Pub.)

The Spirit Of Disciplines, Dallas Willard (Harper, San Francisco)

Faith In Leadership, Ed. Robert Banks, Kimberly Powell, (Jossey-Bass Publications, San Francisco, 2000)

Recommended/Collateral:

Proper Confidence, Lesslie Newbegin, (Eerdmans)

Enjoying Intimacy with God, J. Oswald Sanders (Moody Press)