SF 800 Seminar in Spiritual Formation

Reginald Johnson

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Prospectus

SF 800 "Seminar In Spiritual Formation"

January 22-26, 1996
Dr. Reg Johnson

This course is designed to explore the dynamics of spiritual formation through an intensive, doctoral-level experience. A variety of resources and learning styles will be employed to achieve this purpose. The intent of this course is to enable students to experience personal spiritual formation and professional insights which will enrich their lives and ministries.

Texts:
Maxie Dunnam, Alive in Christ.
Susan Muto, Pathways of Spiritual Living.
Sue Monk Kidd, God's Joyful Surprise.
Ben Campbell Johnson, To Will God's Will.
Job & Shawchuck, A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants.

Pre-Class Assignments:
1. Read the first four texts.
2. Write a critical review of either the text by Dunnam or the one by Muto, according to the guidelines by Dr. John Oswalt (found in your D.Min. Handbook).
3. Initiate daily journal entries three weeks before you come to class.
4. Write a spiritual autobiography, a minimum of ten pages in length, to be submitted to Dr. Johnson by January 5, 1996. In this paper you are asked to relate stories of events in your life which have been spiritually formative. It is hoped that these stories will be representative of your journey. In them you will indicate important persons, places, and sources for the shaping of your life. You will recount the "outer facts" of the stories, as well as reflect upon the inner meaning of the events for you. The first two chapters of To Will God's Will, by Johnson will provide useful guidance in developing your autobiography. He includes exercises which have been useful to many. Again, this is to be turned in to Dr. Johnson by January 5, 1996.

In-Class Assignments:
1. Full participation in the seminar sessions.
2. Reading of assigned articles each evening.
3. Continuation of daily journal entries.
**Post-Class Assignments:**
Write a 15-20 page research paper on a topic of your choice which relates to an area of the seminar experience.

OR,

Write a 15-20 page prospectus of a practical ministry which you could develop from the seminar experience.

**Basic Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:45 - 9:00 am</td>
<td>Worship</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 - 10:15</td>
<td>Content Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15 - 10:30</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>Closure of Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:55</td>
<td>Parallel Essay Discussion Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 - 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 - 2:15</td>
<td>Text Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15 - 2:30</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 - 3:00</td>
<td>Plenary Exercises, Discussion and Closure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Journaling**
The spiritual discipline of journaling may be a new one for you. You will find that Susan Muto has a helpful section on Journal Keeping in *Pathways*.... You may want to read it before you begin.

For the class, no format is required. You may use a regular notebook, or some other bound or looseleaf book.

I'm asking you to make 21 entries prior to coming to campus, both as a means of familiarizing yourself with the process of journal-keeping, and to record impressions and insights that have surfaced in you for the three weeks leading up to the seminar. What you put in your journal is entirely up to you. They can be responses to readings, questions raised, anticipations, struggles, hopes, reflections, etc. Just let them be an expression of your heart as you approach the seminar.

**Parallel Articles**
On Tuesday though Thursday there will be group sessions in which articles related to the day's theme will be discussed. Dr. Johnson will give you this material each evening to read in advance of the session. The purpose of the group is to engage in peer learning, and to do it around an article that further expands the subject at hand.

**Text Discussion**
Text discussions constitute a second experience in peer learning for Tuesday through Thursday. The text which we will use is God's Joyful Surprise, by Sue Monk Kidd. This text has been chosen because it is a record of one person's spiritual journey and is an example of spiritual autobiography.

In advance of the seminar, read God's Joyful Surprise carefully. Hopefully you will be able to do this reading in an unhurried manner. As you read, record your insights under three headings:

"The Spiritual Life as seen through,
(1) Sue's spiritual discoveries"
(2) Sue's spiritual disciplines"
(3) Sue's spiritual expression" (how she seeks to live out her commitment to the Lord in daily life & relationships).

Every day, one of the above subjects will form the basis for group discussion.

**Paper and Project**
Guidelines for the research paper and practical project will be discussed during the seminar.