DM 856 Incarnating the Word

M. Robert Mulholland

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PERSPECTIVE: Jesus prayed, “. . . that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” (Jn 17:21 NRSV). This radical prayer asks that we may be in God as Jesus was in God that we might be in the world as he was in the world. Paul knew this reality. He affirms to the Colossians, “in him (Christ) all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell” (Col 1:19 NRSV), and then prays for the Ephesians, “that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph 3:19 NRSV). These passages suggest that as the Word became flesh in Jesus, so God purposes that the Word become flesh again in us. This may be what Paul is saying when he tells the Galatians, “it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal 2:20 NRSV). Ministry is incarnational!

PURPOSE: We will seek to actualize God's purposes for us in this course through the development of a sound understanding of incarnational living and the development of disciplines to facilitate such living in the world.

PARTICULARS: It is prayerfully expected that your faithful stewardship and discipline in this course will be used by God to enable you to acquire the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Understanding the nature of incarnational living in the context of Christian history.
- Skills to facilitate incarnational interpretation of Scripture.
- Daily practices to inculcate incarnational life and ministry.

PROCEDURES: The following will provide some of the scholarly spiritual disciplines of loving obedience and stewardship through which I trust the Lord will enable us to actualize His purposes for the course:

   - Eslinger, Elise S. *The Upper Room Worship Book*. (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1985)

2. Preparation:
   a. It is hoped that you will enter into a covenant of prayer for the class and the course.
b. It is urged that each period of individual study be started with prayer, interlaced with prayer and praise and dedicated to God in prayer at its close.

c. It is expected that you will be a faithful steward of time in two areas:
   i. Disciplined time set aside for pre- and post-course work.
   ii. Consistent participation in the Daily Office and class sessions during the week of class.

d. It is expected that you will come to the week of class fully prepared through disciplined prayer and study that you may be all God wants you to be in the class session.

e. It is presumed that you will exhibit graduate level competence in comprehension of reading, integration of learning, and presentation of understanding.

3. Class Sessions:

   a. Lecture-Discussion. One major source of the learning experience will be the class seminar. This phase will give high priority to class discussion of the various aspects of incarnational life and ministry.

   b. Daily Office. The other major source of the learning experience will be participation in the Daily Office (Morning Prayer, Eucharist, Evening Prayer, Covenant Group, Night Prayer, The Great Silence)

4. Assignments:

   a. Pre-Course Assignments:
      i. Read all texts (except the Worship Book)
      ii. Develop two preliminary papers (5-10 pp. each) integrating the learning from the texts: (1) Your understanding of incarnational living, and (2) your understanding of incarnational ministry.

   b. Post-Course Assignment: Utilizing the results of the pre-course assignments and the learning of the class experiences, develop a program of disciplines whereby you will intentionally seek to become an incarnational Christian with an incarnational ministry.

5. The quality of written assignments should reflect work done "as unto the Lord" for they will reflect the cumulative results of the depth and faithfulness of your stewardship of time and study.

PERFORMANCE: Your comprehension and integration of the particulars of the course will be evaluated on the basis of the written assignments and participation in all aspects of the retreat class.
SCHEDULE

Daily Schedule:
7:30 Morning Prayer
8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Seminar Session
10:00 Silence for Reflection
11:00 Seminar Session
11:45 Eucharist
12:30 Lunch
2:00 Seminar Session
3:00 Silence for Reflection
4:00 Seminar Session
5:00 Evening Prayer
5:30 Dinner (Depart for home after dinner on Friday)
7:00 Covenant Groups
9:00 Night Prayer – Silence until Morning Prayer

Seminar Schedule:

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