

SF 501 Living in God's Presence  
Fall 2022

Professor: Dr. Nathan Tarr  
Contact Information: ntarr@ps.edu  
Office Hours: By Appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course challenges students to take a fresh look at the Christian life of fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through the lens of God's transforming grace and unchanging truth. Through reflection and experiential engagement, students are invited to encounter our Triune God through a variety of classical spiritual disciplines while examining their own priorities.

### **COURSE OUTCOMES**

At the end of this course, the student will:

1. Be immersed in Scripture in such a way that they have experienced the Spiritual, or life-giving nature of God's word, as well as its authority over our thinking and speaking about spirituality.
2. Be familiar with the history of biblical spirituality, particularly ways in which, as Spurgeon put it, "the coals of orthodoxy [have proven] necessary for the fires of piety."
3. Understand how doctrines such as union with Christ, the indwelling of the Spirit, positional and progressive sanctification, remaining sin, and means of grace bear upon our spirituality.
4. Be practiced in engaging historical examples of spirituality, assessing them by a Scriptural standard, appropriating what is good, and commending their merits to others.
5. Be able to articulate the value of the spiritual disciplines as means of grace.
6. Be able to define and recommend a biblical spirituality over against cultural and other "Christian" versions of spirituality.

### **REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS**

1. David Mathis, *Habits of Grace: Enjoying Jesus Through the Spiritual Disciplines* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2016.
2. Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic), 2020.
3. Christopher Morgan ed, *Biblical Spirituality* Theology in Community (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2019.
4. Jonathan Gibson ed., *Be Thou My Vision: A Liturgy for Daily Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2021.
5. You will need to bring a copy of the Scriptures with you to class each week

### **RECOMMENDED COURSE TEXTS (for more information, see Assignment #2)**

1. Jennifer Adams ed., *In Love with Christ: The Narrative of Sarah Edwards* (Lynchburg, VA: Corner Pillar Press), 2011.
2. Thomas A'Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers), 1999.

3. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works Reader's Edition (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press), 2015.
4. Thomas Boston, *The Crook in the Lot: Living with that Thorn in Your Side* (Tillsonburg, ON: Christian Heritage), 2012.
5. Thomas Boston, *Repentance: Turning from Sin and to God* (Tillsonburg, ON: Christian Heritage), 2012.
6. Rosaria Butterfield, *The Gospel Comes with a House-Key: Practicing Radical Ordinary Hospitality in our Post-Christian World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2018.
7. John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (New York, NY: Penguin Books), 1987.
8. DA Carson, *A Call to Spiritual Reformation: Priorities from Paul and His Prayers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic), 1992.
9. John Jefferson Davis, *Meditation and Communion with God: Contemplating Scripture in an Age of Distraction* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic), 2012.
10. Jonathan Edwards, *Heaven is a World of Love* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2020.<sup>1</sup>
11. John Flavel, *Keeping the Heart: How to Maintain Your Love for God* (Tillsonburg, ON: Christian Heritage), 2012.
12. Matthew Henry, *The Pleasantness of a Religious Life: Life as Good as it can Be* (Tillsonburg, ON: Christian Heritage), 2012.
13. Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press), 2010.
14. Andrew Murray, *With Christ in the School of Prayer* (Gainesville, FL: Bridge-Logos), 1999.
15. Andrew David Naselli, *No Quick Fix: Where Higher Life Theology Came From, What it is, and Why it is Harmful* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press), 2017.
16. Dane Ortlund, *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2020.
17. John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin: Dealing with Sin in Your Life* (Tillsonburg, ON: Christian Heritage), 2012.
18. John Owen, *Communion with God* Puritan Paperbacks (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust), 2000.
19. JI Packer, *A Grief Sanctified: Through Sorrow to Eternal Hope, Including Richard Baxter's Timeless Memoir of His Wife's Life and Death* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2002.
20. JI Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP), 2012.
21. Eugene Peterson, *Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing), 2006.
22. J.C. Ryle, *Fighting for Holiness* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2022; **and** Thomas Chalmers, *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2020.
23. Samuel Rutherford, *Letters* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust), 1973.<sup>2</sup>
24. Michael Reeves, *Rejoice and Tremble: The Surprising Good News of the Fear of the Lord* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2021.
25. Francis Schaeffer, *The Lord's Work in the Lord's Way & No Little People* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2022.
26. Henry Scougal, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man: Real Religion* (Tillsonburg, ON: Christian Heritage), 2012.
27. John Starke, *The Possibility of Prayer: Finding Stillness with God in a Restless World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP), 2020.

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<sup>1</sup>To get the context of this, the final sermon in a series on 1 Corinthians 13, students will want to access Jonathan Edwards, *Charity and Its Fruits: Living in Light of God's Love* ed. Kyle Strobel (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2012.

<sup>2</sup>Students working on Rutherford will also want to consult the larger collection of his letters published by Banner of Truth.

28. A. Craig Troxel, *With All Your Heart: Orienting Your Mind, Desires, and Will Toward Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2020.
29. B.B. Warfield, *The Emotional Life of our Lord* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers), 2022.
30. Joann Ford Watson ed., *Selected Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton: Eighteenth-Century, British-Baptist, Woman Theologian* Volume 3, Autobiography (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press), 2007.
31. Thomas Watson, *The Doctrine of Repentance* Puritan Paperbacks (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust), 2009.
32. William Wilberforce, *Real Christianity: Discerning True and False Faith* ed. James Houston (Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing), 2003.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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| <b>Ignatius Reflection</b>  | Students will submit a 250-word summary reflection of the in-class discussion of the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch, with a focus on how they serve our desire to live <i>coram Deo</i> in very different circumstances. This assignment will be <i>marked</i> , but <i>not graded</i> . The goal is two-fold: (1) to provide practice in the art of historical retrieval and (2) to allow students to learn the professor’s grading “style” before submitting further (and higher-stakes) assignments.  |
| <b>1. Gibson Reflection (15% of grade)</b><br><i>Outcome(s)</i> 1, 5, 6       | Students will commit to using the Gibson devotional alongside or in place of their customary daily worship during the semester. (It is divided into 31 days. Work through it at least 2x before writing.) Reflecting on this experience, as well as the Mathis book and in-class discussion, write a paper of at least 1250 words engaging the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How did the perspective of the Mathis book (re)shape your perspective on spiritual disciplines...like daily devotions?</li> <li>- In what ways was using a “liturgy” for daily worship new? challenging? enriching? Was there a particular part or piece of the liturgy that was impactful for you? Uniquely challenging?</li> <li>- How do you understand the relationship between the Spirit, the Scriptures, and your own sanctification? Was there a specific area/example where you saw this theory put into practice in your own life this semester?</li> <li>- Gibson’s title references <i>beholding</i> God and the Mathis subtitle highlights <i>enjoying</i> Him. How do you understand the relationship between God, His image in the incarnate Son, the illuminating work of the Spirit, the words of Scripture? What did you come freshly to see, or enjoy, this semester as a result of your reading?</li> <li>- If someone in your church asked you about bible reading/devotional resources, would you recommend the Gibson volume? Why or why not?</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Reading Presentation (25% of grade)</b><br><i>Outcome(s)</i> 1, 2, 3, 4 | Students will select <i>one</i> book from the Recommended Reading list and prepare a 10-minute presentation for the class. The presentation should be based on a thorough reading of the work and be built around the following three components: a summary of the argument (take 5 minutes and give us the main take-aways), a biblical assessment (take 3 minutes and suggest ways the book is in line or out of step with Scripture), and application (take 2 minutes and suggest ways your spiritual life could be stimulated by the truth in the book). We will select books on the first day of the course.  |
| <b>3. Biblical Spirituality</b>   | The Morgan and Lovelace books work to define a Biblical Spirituality. In-class lectures and discussion work to model this same idea from crucial biblical texts and our forebears in the faith (student presentations extend these examples  |

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| <b>Paper (40% of grade)</b><br><i>Outcome(s)</i> 1, 3, 5, 6 | beyond the Reformation). Drawing on these inputs, write a paper of at least 3000 words answering the question: what is biblical spirituality and why is it significant in the life of a believer? Defend your answer with examples from the biblical text and from church history. You should plan to cite at least <i>three</i> (3) sources <i>in addition</i> to those assigned for the course. To receive full credit for the paper, students should also reflect on how biblical spirituality resources believers to engage contemporary uses of “spirituality” in our culture (what do they mean? What are they looking for? How does the material in this course provide a better answer?). |
| <b>4. Attendance &amp; Participation</b><br>(10% of grade)  | Students should be present in class and prepared to contribute to discussion based on completing their reading assignment for the day and staying engaged in the discussion/presentations.  |

### COURSE SCHEDULE

*Course schedule, topics, evaluation, and assignments may be changed at the professor’s discretion to responsively meet the needs of this class.*

| DATE           | HOOR 1                    | HOOR 2                                 | DUE  |
|----------------|---------------------------|--|--|
| <b>16 Aug</b>  | Galatians 1-2             | Letters of Ignatius                    | Mathis, <i>Habits</i> , pt 1   |
| <b>23 Aug</b>  | Galatians 3-4             | Polycarp                               | Mathis, <i>Habits</i> , pt 2; <b>Ignatius Reflection Due</b>                       |
| <b>30 Aug</b>  | Galatians 5-6             | <i>Didache</i>                         | Mathis, <i>Habits</i> ; pt 3   |
| <b>6 Sept</b>  | Romans 5-6                | <i>To Diognetus</i>                    | Morgan, <i>Biblical Spirituality</i> , 1-2; Presentations 1-3                      |
| <b>13 Sept</b> | Romans 7-8                | <i>Odes of Solomon</i>                 | Morgan, <i>Biblical Spirituality</i> , 3-4; Presentations 4-6                      |
| <b>20 Sept</b> | John 14-15                | Cyprian <i>On Patience</i>             | Morgan, <i>Biblical Spirituality</i> , 5-6; Presentations 7-9                      |
| <b>27 Sept</b> | John 16-17                | Augustine’s <i>Confessions</i>         | Morgan, <i>Biblical Spirituality</i> , 7-8; Presentations 10-12; <b>Gibson Due</b> |
| <b>4 Oct</b>   | Ephesians 1-3             | <i>Confession</i> of St. Patrick       | Morgan, <i>Biblical Spirituality</i> , 9-10; Presentations 13-15                   |
| <b>11 Oct</b>  | Ephesians 4-6             | Gregory’s <i>Pastoral Care</i>         | Lovelace, <i>Dynamics</i> , 1; Presentations 16-18                                 |
| <b>18 Oct</b>  | Philippians 1-2           | <i>The Rule</i> of St. Benedict        | Lovelace, <i>Dynamics</i> , 2; Presentations 19-21                                 |
| <b>25 Oct</b>  | Philippians 3-4           | Anselm’s <i>Prayers and Meditation</i> | Lovelace, <i>Dynamics</i> , 3; Presentations 22-24                                 |
| <b>1 Nov</b>   | 1 Cor. 12-14              | Bernard on the Song                    | Lovelace, <i>Dynamics</i> , 4; Presentations 25-27                                 |
| <b>8 Nov</b>   | 1 Cor. 12-14              | Calvin’s piety                         | Lovelace, <i>Dynamics</i> , 5; Presentations 28-30; <b>Final Paper Due</b>         |
| <b>15 Nov</b>  | <i>Reading Week</i>       |  |  |
| <b>22 Nov</b>  | <i>Thanksgiving Break</i> |  |  |
| <b>6 Dec</b>   |                           |  |  |

## GRADING INFORMATION

| Letter Grade | Percentage | Grade Points | Description  |
|--------------|------------|--------------|--|
| A+           | 100–97     | 4.0          |  |
| A            | 96–93      | 4.0          | Excellent; superior achievement.                                     |
| A-           | 92–90      | 3.7          |  |
| B+           | 89–87      | 3.3          |  |
| B            | 86–83      | 3.0          | Good; commendable achievement.                                       |
| B-           | 82–80      | 2.7          |  |
| C+           | 79–77      | 2.3          |  |
| C            | 76–73      | 2.0          | Satisfactory; acceptable achievement.                                |
| C-           | 72–70      | 1.7          |  |
| D+           | 69–67      | 1.3          |  |
| D            | 66–63      | 1.0          | Poor; marginal achievement.  |
| D-           | 62–60      | 0.7          |  |
| F            | 59–0       | 0.0          | Failure to advance in the course. No credit earned. Computed in GPA. |

### SEMINARY ACADEMIC POLICIES

All Seminary policies affecting student work, appeals, and grievances, as outlined in the Academic Catalog or Student Handbook will apply, unless otherwise indicated in this syllabus.

### Writing Center

The Phoenix Seminary Writing Center exists to help students become better writers who communicate biblical truth with clarity. The Writing Center provides one-on-one consultations with students at any stage in the writing process. In addition to giving feedback on papers, tutors can also help students define a research topic, navigate sources, or learn SBL citation style. Appointments are available in-person or online and can be booked by visiting <https://ps.edu/writing-center/>. If you would like a consultant to review a paper, please send a copy of your draft at least 24 hours in advance to [writingcenter@ps.edu](mailto:writingcenter@ps.edu) with your name and appointment time in the subject line.

### Assignment Policies

- I am always happy to speak with students in order to recommend resources or help refine ideas! Please email me or drop in if my door is open (I am not in the office on Fridays). I'd love to hear how you are thinking or what you are wrestling with as the course proceeds).
- Please feel free to write in the first person in your papers (I/we), especially since much of the work will be reflective/personal in nature.

- Papers should be 12pt, TNR, and double-spaced, in keeping with seminary policy.
- Given the nature of the assignments, especially the presentations (which are budgeted class time) and the final paper (which is due at the end of the semester), late assignments will *not* be accepted.
- Because of the amount of content covered in each class, and as a way of showing love to your fellow students who present, please plan to be present for each class period.
- We will encounter a range of viewpoints in our reading and amongst ourselves. Confusion or disagreement is an expect part of the way we learn and grow. In our disagreements, I ask that we will (1) begin with clarifying questions instead of assumptions (2) be sure we understand/represent the other side well before we respond (3) model Christian charity in our speech and our manner of discussion.

### **Courteous Use of Technology in the Classroom (phone, tablet, laptop)**

Phoenix Seminary considers a student's character to be evidenced in part by their respect for their classmates, professors, and their valuable time in class. Please consider *how not to be rude* in the use of your technology by bearing in mind the following:

- Laptops and tablets are welcome in class to take notes and to access readings we're discussing. Using them for anything else (social networking, accessing non-course related websites, checking email) is discourteous and distracting to others.
- Phones must be silenced in class and stowed. That includes turning off the vibrate function. (We can hear it buzzing.) Is texting ok? No. If an emergency situation exists out of which you feel you must use your phone you should quietly step out of class to do so.