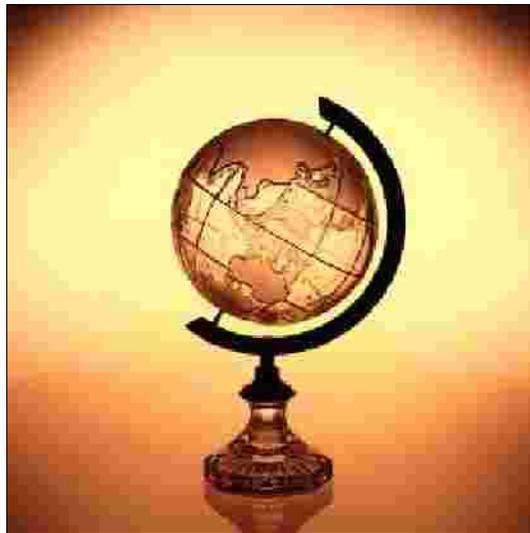


INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAM

MIN 101 SPIRITUAL FORMATION



COURSE SYLLABUS

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MIN 101 SPIRITUAL FORMATION
Revision 5/2013

DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the spiritual disciplines needed for successful Christian living

TEXTBOOKS

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian (ISBN: 1576830276)

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this course, the student will be able to:

1. List eleven different spiritual disciplines for successful Christian living
2. Explain the importance of spiritual discipline for the purpose of godliness
3. Give practical suggestions on applying spiritual discipline in personal life

PROCEDURES

Read the entire syllabus before starting any work and follow all directions carefully. If you have any questions, contact your instructor as soon as possible. Your instructor will also provide you with a class schedule and any deadlines for completing course assignments.

Begin with Lesson One, and complete the assigned reading and homework for each lesson before starting the next lesson. When you finish the last lesson, gather all your completed homework assignments and submit them for grading. If you are unable to email your homework, mail a printed copy for grading, but always keep a copy of your originals in case your homework is lost and must be resubmitted.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Each student is required to submit written answers to the assigned homework questions. The answers will be found in the assigned reading and will always be either a few words or a short sentence. Your final grade will be determined based on the percentage of correct answers.

COURSE OVERVIEW

- Lesson 1: Bible Intake
- Lesson 2: Prayer & Worship
- Lesson 3: Evangelism & Serving
- Lesson 4: Stewardship & Fasting
- Lesson 5: Silence, Solitude & Journaling
- Lesson 6: Learning & Perseverance

LESSON 1: BIBLE INTAKE

Reading

Read *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Chapters 1-3

Assignment

Write out the following questions and the associated answers found in the reading:

1. What is discipline without direction?
2. What is the goal of the spiritual disciplines (1Tim 4:7)?
3. What are the three primary catalysts God uses to change us?
4. What danger do we face by neglecting the spiritual disciplines?
5. What was the first practical suggestion for successful Bible reading?
6. What was the second practical suggestion?
7. What was the third practical suggestion?
8. What is the most important principle of Scripture memorization?
9. What is the goal of memorizing the Word of God?
10. What does Christian meditation involve?
11. What should be the outcome of meditation?
12. Who are the two people that must be involved in meditation?
13. What does a misunderstanding about the meaning of a verse lead to?

LESSON 2: PRAYER & WORSHIP

Reading

Read *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Chapters 4-5

Assignment

Write out the following questions and the associated answers found in the reading:

1. Who has commanded us to pray (Luke 18:1)?
2. What is the missing link between Bible intake and prayer?
3. What is the best way to learn how to pray?
4. What possibility must we reconsider if we "ask and receive not"?
5. What two elements are at the heart of private worship?
6. In what way will the true worshipers will worship the father?
7. What must every believer cross in his or her pilgrimage?

LESSON 3: EVANGELISM & SERVING

Reading

Read *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Chapters 6-7

Assignment

Write out the following questions and the associated answers found in the reading:

1. What is the simple definition of New Testament evangelism?
2. Why is evangelism expected of us?
3. What is success in evangelism?
4. Who is the power of evangelism?
5. What are the two broad categories of spiritual gifts (1Pet 4:10-11)?
6. What are Christians commissioned to do in Psalm 100:2 (NASB)?
7. What should be at the heart of service (Gal 5:13)?
8. What does the Holy Spirit bring when He comes to live in you?
9. What is God's purpose in giving you that gift?

LESSON 4: STEWARDSHIP & FASTING

Reading

Read *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Chapters 8-9

Assignment

Write out the following questions and the associated answers found in the reading:

1. What is at the heart of a disciplined spiritual life?
2. Why is the use of time so important?
3. What tells more about you than almost anything else?
4. Who shall reap bountifully according to God's promise (2Cor 9:6)?
5. What principle is at the heart of the biblical discipline of time?
6. What is the biblical definition of fasting?
7. What did Jesus expect His disciples to do (Matt 6:16-17)?
8. Who else should know that you are fasting (Matt 6:16-18)?
9. How can fasting become little more than a "dead work"?

LESSON 5: SILENCE, SOLITUDE & JOURNALING

Reading

Read *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Chapters 10-11

Assignment

Write out the following questions and the associated answers found in the reading:

1. What discipline is required to balance silence and solitude?
2. What did Jesus prescribe to replenish His disciples (Mark 6:31)?
3. How does the discipline of silence lead to Christ-likeness (James 3:2)?
4. Who made the most rapid, consistent and evident growth in Christ-likeness?
5. What does the practice of keeping a diary promote?
6. What does writing down meditations in a journal help you do?
7. How do thoughts disentangle themselves (according to an old adage)?
8. What is the right way to keep a journal? What are the rules?

LESSON 6: LEARNING & PERSEVERENCE

Reading

Read *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Chapters 12-13

Assignment

Write out the following questions and the associated answers found in the reading:

1. What does an examination of the word "disciple" reveal?
2. Why are the truly wise also humble?
3. Why do non-learners become prime targets for cults and false prophets?
4. Why should you choose your books well and read the best books?
5. Which "fruit" of the Holy Spirit helps you persevere in spiritual disciplines (Gal 5:23)?
6. What does Christian Fellowship (New Testament *koinonia*) involve?
7. How long will we have to struggle to overcome sin?
8. Why are we commanded to put on the armor of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6)?
9. What connects discipline (self control) with godliness (2Pet 1:6)?

CAVEATS

Although the textbook accurately presents many biblical principles regarding spiritual disciplines and offers practical advice on how to apply them, the author writes from the perspective of traditional, Sunday-observing Christianity; therefore, a few corrections should be noted.

1. On page 151, the author writes: "But is it not possible that there is biblical justification here for all of us to give 'on the first day of every week' so that we do not appear empty-handed before the Lord when we come to worship Him?" In this passage, the apostle Paul is talking about a special collection of food or money that was taken up to provide famine relief for Jewish Christians in Judea. In the first century, Christians uniformly observed the seventh day Sabbath and therefore would have abstained from the physical labor required to gather nonperishable food items into a storage location or dealing with financial matters until after the Sabbath was over (i.e., the first day of the week). Although it is an example of systematic giving, this passage cannot be used to justify Sunday observance or worship.
2. On page 155, the author writes: "Hell is full of people who cry out in agreement with Hebrews 4:7 to those who are outside of Christ..." This statement is based on the traditional assumption that unbelievers are sent to a place of fiery eternal torment when they die; however the Bible makes clear that the dead are unconscious in the grave awaiting a resurrection to judgment (Psalms 6:5, 115:17, Eccl 9:5, 10, John 5:28-29).
3. On page 161, the author writes: "Since the body can normally function no longer than three days without water, we assume that He drank water during this time." There are several problems with this passage. First, the Bible does not speak of a *normal fast* as abstaining from food but not from water. Second, the human body can go for more than three days without water. In fact, the author later concedes that Moses (and possibly Elijah) experienced a *supernatural fast* without food or water for 40 days. In addition, the Bible says that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert (i.e., a waterless wasteland) to be tempted by the devil (Matt 4:1); therefore it seems more likely that Jesus did not have water.
4. On page 167, the author quoted David Brainerd: "I felt the power of intercession for precious, immortal souls..." This statement reflects the traditional view that human beings have an immortal soul; however, many Christians are now coming to see that this belief was imported into Christianity from paganism, that human beings do not possess immortality apart from the resurrection to eternal life (1Cor 15:50-52), and that wicked souls will be annihilated in the lake of fire (Matt 10:28).
5. On page 175, the author writes: "Nowhere in Scripture are we asked to fast for 40 days, or for any specific length of time." Here, the author assumes that the biblical Holy Days, including the Day of Atonement, are not to be observed by Christians today, but Scripture indicates that the biblical Holy Days have not been abolished and should be observed.