

# CONGREGATIONAL SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Course MN 5010—Fall, 2004

Dr. Whitney

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This syllabus and other class materials are available at [www.BiblicalSpirituality.org](http://www.BiblicalSpirituality.org)  
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## I. Course Description from the catalog

*This course is designed to promote the student's understanding, practice, and teaching of spirituality in the life of the church. Through readings, discussion, research projects, and lectures the student will learn to nurture interdependent spirituality within the context of our contemporary culture.*

## II. Course Objectives

The institutional objectives of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary are consistent with Midwestern's institutional mission (stated above). Through its exegetical, theological, and practical educational processes, Midwestern seeks to produce students who will: (1) believe that the Bible is authoritative and inerrant; (2) understand and apply biblical and theological truth; (3) exemplify biblical leadership and doctrinal integrity in ministry; (4) demonstrate Christlikeness in seeking and cultivating all relationships; (5) manifest a developing and disciplined Christian life; (6) be equipped to minister in culturally relevant ways; and (7) commit themselves to fulfilling the Great Commission in worshipping God, in evangelizing the lost, in edifying believers, and in establishing healthy New Testament churches.

Consistent with these institutional objectives, the objectives for this course include:

- a. The student will be persuaded that the Bible is authoritative and inerrant regarding the congregational spiritual disciplines.
- b. The student will grow in his understanding of biblical and theological truth about the congregational spiritual disciplines.
- c. The student will improve his ability to exemplify biblical leadership regarding the congregational spiritual disciplines.
- d. The student will manifest a developing and disciplined Christian life by maturing in his ability to practice the congregational spiritual disciplines.
- e. The student will be better equipped to minister in culturally relevant ways through the congregational spiritual disciplines.
- f. The student will be better prepared for establishing healthy New Testament churches that practice the congregational spiritual disciplines.

## III. Required Texts

- Adams, Jay. *Handbook of Church Discipline*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.
- Dever, Mark. *A Display of God's Glory*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Church Reform, 2001.
- Dever, Mark. *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2000.
- Whitney, Donald S. *Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church*. Chicago: Moody, 1996.

#### IV. Grades

- A. Five reading quizzes will be given at random during the weeks that daily class readings are assigned. The two lowest scores will be dropped. The total of these will count for *15% of the final grade*.
- B. **Four** papers of fifteen-hundred (1500) words **each** will be due on the days specified. *Each* of the four papers will each count for *15% of the final grade*.
  - 1. The papers should be on what you believe to be the most critical issues covered in Dr. Whitney's lectures from *Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church* since (and including) the day the previous paper was due. You may choose the issues that are most critical in your local church, or the issues you believe to be most critical in the church at large.
  - 2. In each paper you are to state why you chose the issue, and reflect upon/interact with the assigned readings for that subject (both Whitney's and the others) as well as the class lecture and discussion on the subject.
  - 3. You are to write each paper as though it were either a church newsletter column or a pamphlet. It is permissible to format and print your paper in newsletter column or pamphlet form.
  - 4. Include a word count for each paper.
- C. An eight-page position paper on church discipline will be due on the date specified and will count for *20% of the final grade*.
  - 1. In the paper you should, after reading Jay Adams's book, *Handbook of Church Discipline*, present your own position on the subject of church discipline.
  - 2. You should interact with the relevant Scripture passages.
  - 3. The paper may include references to what you formerly believed regarding church discipline, as well as how Adams' book has influenced your thinking.
  - 4. How your present understanding of the Biblical teaching on church discipline might have applied to a previous situation known to you, or might apply in a current situation known to you, may be discussed (without revealing unnecessary specifics, such as people's names).
- E. A two page paper on the IX Marks Ministries website ([www.9marks.org](http://www.9marks.org)) will be due on the date specified and will count for *5% of the final grade*.
  - 1. In the paper you should affirm that you spent at least ninety (90) minutes exploring the IX Marks Ministries website ([www.9marks.org](http://www.9marks.org)).
  - 2. You should list the names (but not the URLs) of the articles you read.
  - 3. You should reflect/comment on the usefulness of the website to your present and/or future ministry.
- F. Extra credit may be gained by writing a critique of John Calvin, *The Necessity of Reforming the Church*. 1544; reprint ed., Audubon, NJ: Old Paths Publications, 1994. It is in the library, and also at [http://www.swrb.com/newslett/actualnls/NRC\\_ch00.htm](http://www.swrb.com/newslett/actualnls/NRC_ch00.htm)
- G. In all cases the student should make a hard copy of his paper before it is submitted to the professor. Each time you work on your paper you should print out a copy, save the file to a removable disk, and save it to the hard drive. (If the hard drive crashes, the paper can still be completed and printed elsewhere, such as the seminary library, Kinko's, etc.)
- H. Papers that are not formatted and printed in newsletter column or pamphlet form must correspond to Turabian form, and must be no more than double-spaced, using no more than a 12-point font, and having no more than one inch margins all around.
- I. The papers will be evaluated by both content and style, by their adherence to the assignment, and by whether they are clear, cogent, and concise. You're spelling counts. Correct grammur—

its important to. (And if you can't find five things wrong with the previous two sentences, you may find points deducted from the work you submit for this class due to incorrect spelling and grammar.)

- J. Papers/projects received after the due date will be marked down one letter per day.
- K. Classroom preparation, participation, and attitude may influence the final grade assigned by the professor.
- L. More than three absences from class, as well as excessive tardiness, may reduce your grade. According to the catalog, "A student must attend at least 75 percent of class sessions to receive credit."
- M. A reminder from the catalog: "Course requirements such as readings, reviews, research and term papers assume that a student will invest one and one-half to two hours for every one hour in class. Students are advised to adjust their academic workload and employment to provide thorough preparation for each course."
- N. All the textbooks are on reserve in the library. In your studies this term, take advantage of our seminary library. New resources related to this course are added to the library regularly. You'll find that the personnel at our library serve our seminary community willingly and well.
- O. Before recording, students must complete and submit the following request form to the professor:

I, \_\_\_\_\_(student name)\_\_\_\_\_, will record \_\_\_\_\_(class sessions)\_\_\_\_\_ and agree that I will not reproduce, distribute, or sell electronic recordings or transcriptions of class sessions.

Signature of Student, Date