

**ANCCI UNIVERSITY**  
**PO BOX 19805 AMARILLO, TEXAS 79114**  
**PT 201 SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE**

**RATIONALE**

Christianity is not merely a religion; it is a *relationship* with Jesus Christ, empowered and facilitated by the Holy Spirit in accordance with the Father's will. Like all relationships, our relationship with the Triune God must be nurtured and developed. Thus, an ongoing practice of devotion, prayer, and personal reflection is essential to the student of theology and biblical studies so that a vibrant and fruitful relationship with God may be developed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

As Jesus taught, our priority in life is to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness (Matthew 6:33). Those who are called to be leaders among the community of faithful believers must develop in their daily lives patterns of thought and behavior that reflect a deep commitment to the values of the kingdom of God inaugurated by our Lord Jesus Christ. Living according to the principles of the kingdom of God is our "spiritual practice," a habit of living that can be learned and developed as these principles are revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in our ongoing practice of devotion, prayer, and personal reflection.

**OBJECTIVES**

The Spiritual Pilgrimage course will help students to learn and develop specific principles that are practiced on a daily basis by those who live according to the values of the kingdom of God. This course will challenge students to live according to values that are contrary to those of modern Western culture, for in the kingdom of God, to be first is to be last, to find one's life is to lose it, and to be great is to become the servant of all.

The spiritual principles that will be examined in this course are biblical principles that have been practiced throughout the centuries by faithful, dedicated believers. These principles are also practiced today by many self-help groups to facilitate the necessary spiritual growth of those who seek to overcome the problems associated with addiction, abuse, the dysfunctional family, divorce, debilitating illness, and other crises.

At the end of the course, students will be able to provide general answers to the following questions (this list is not exhaustive):

- What spiritual principles are illustrated in the life of Joseph?
- How do the stories of Abraham, Moses, and the Exodus illustrate the biblical principle of living by faith, not by sight?
- How do fear and desire inhibit our spiritual progress?
- What biblical event demonstrates the necessity of living “one day at a time,” and what does God intend to teach us through this event?
- What does Jesus teach us about worry, and how is worry essentially a distrust of God?
- What are some of the modern “idols” that many worship and trust today?
- What does it mean to “let go of outcomes,” and how is that related to faith?
- What is the meaning of “surrender,” and how is it related to Christian living?
- How does the life of the Apostle Paul illustrate the principles of renunciation, surrender, and letting go of outcomes?
- What essential spiritual principle is illustrated by the “way of the cross”?

## **STRATEGY**

The course will use the Exodus story, found in the Old Testament, as the paradigmatic model of the spiritual journey. Like many of the great biblical stories, the Exodus story is much more than a historical record of events that happened centuries ago. The Exodus story is an *archetypal* story; that is, it is true at a spiritual and psychological level for all people across time. At some point in our lives, God calls each of us to embark on the spiritual journey from Egypt to the Promised Land.

The Spiritual Pilgrimage course is intended to be more devotional and practical than academic. Because the content of this course is suitable for use in daily devotional practice, the student will be encouraged to reflect on the spiritual principles described in this course by keeping a personal written journal (the contents of the journal will not be read by the instructor). The student’s journal will be a record of his or her thoughts and insights regarding the content of the course, as well as a plan for how the student may implement the material in his or her life.

The student will be required to answer essay questions to demonstrate their grasp of the spiritual principles examined in the course. Formal papers, however, will not be required as the student's journal will substitute for the writing of academic papers.

### **REQUIRED READING (available through Internet book sellers)**

Davis, M.M. 2004. *Ashes into Gold: The Journey of Spirituality*. Enumclaw, WA: Winepress Publishing. 155pp. This book was written by the instructor for this course.

Additional readings may be required as resources become available over the Internet at no cost to the student.

### **EVALUATION**

All Nations Seminary system of grading will be employed. The student should not be overly concerned about grades. A sincere effort to fully engage the course material at a mature level will be rewarded.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER READING**

Blackaby, H., Blackaby R., & King, C. 2008. *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (revised and expanded). Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing. 368pp. This material is also available in workbook form.

Manning, B. 2000. *The Ragamuffin Gospel*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah. 235pp.

Willard, D. 1999. *Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP. 229pp.

Willard, D. 1991. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco. 276pp.