



Spiritual & Ethical Formation: *The Theology and Practice*

ITS Learning Guide

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**I N S T I T U T E O F
T H E O L O G I C A L
S T U D I E S**



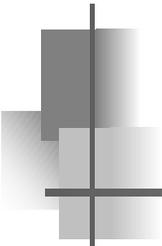


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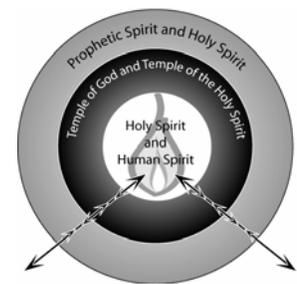
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Introduction

Description of Lecture Series

Spiritual and ethical formation is a topic of discussion in many circles. We all long for that miracle when a friend or loved one begins to see his/her life in light of the story of God and makes decisions based on that truth. And many of us long for the kind of intimacy with God that we see in others. But how is that growth and maturity developed? What are the dynamics in which God most often works in the heart of believers to make them like his Son, Jesus Christ?

This lecture series, *Spiritual & Ethical Formation: The Theology and Practice*, addresses these and other questions in order to lay a biblical, theological foundation for proper Christian thought. In addition, to the biblical, theological and philosophical framework, this series also identifies and describes specific practices that the listener can apply immediately to his/her life of faith. The overall goal of the series is to introduce an evangelical approach to spiritual and ethical formation in a way that is accessible to the beginner but also challenges advanced students in both thought and practice.



The Three Dimensions of Spiritual Formation

Intended Outcomes of Lecture Series

By the end of the series you should be able to:

1. Understand the biblical foundations for spiritual and ethical formation and the relationship between them.
2. Evaluate your life for areas where you can become more intentional and open to the work of the Spirit.
3. Analyze the ways you make decisions in order to identify habits and values that are contrary to the moral will of God.
4. Think critically about your approach to life in light of the biblical foundations for spiritual and ethical formation.
5. Apply the three dimensions of Christian spiritual formation to your daily life of faith.
6. Apply a biblical model for decision-making that will enhance your moral and spiritual formation.
7. Value both spiritual and ethical formation as important aspects of the Christian life (both individual and corporate).

****See the last page of this Learning Guide for an Evaluation form that will help you assess whether or not you accomplished these intended outcomes. *Submit this Evaluation form to ITS for a discount on your next purchase.***

Introduction

Lecturers

Richard E. Averbeck is professor of Old Testament and Semitic languages at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois (1994-present). He has published numerous journal articles as well as contributed to several books and dictionaries, including the *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Baker 1995), *Faith, Tradition, and History* (Eisenbrauns 1994), *Cracking Old Testament Codes: Guide to Interpreting Old Testament Literary Forms* (Broadman & Holman 1995) and the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Zondervan, 1997).

As the Director of the Spiritual Formation Forum, he is also a leader in evangelical spiritual formation. He and his wife, Melinda, have two sons. His education credentials are:

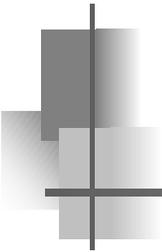
Calvary Bible College, B.A.
Grace Theological Seminary, M.A., M.Div.
Annenberg Research Institute (formerly Dropsie College), Ph.D.



James M. Grier is Distinguished Professor of Philosophical Theology at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, where he served for fifteen years as Executive Vice President and Academic Dean. Dr. Grier has taught and pastored for over thirty years. A recognized authority in the area of ethics and moral theology, he has served on numerous hospital boards as a counselor for medical ethics. Dr. Grier is in high demand as a conference speaker on philosophical theology and worldview. He and his wife, Shirley, have one son. His education credentials are:

Baptist Bible College, B.Th.
Grace Theological Seminary, M.Div.
Westminster Theological Seminary, Th.M.
Grace Theological Seminary, Th.D.





Introduction

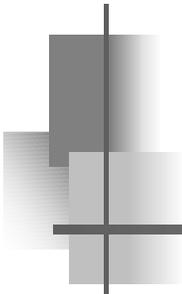
Instructions

There are *three primary learning avenues* in this series that will walk you through the material and guide you in interacting with and applying it to your life.

1. **Audio Lectures:** Twelve (12) audio lectures present the material in a succinct and engaging way. You may listen to these lectures on the go (i.e. in your car or mp3 player) and receive great benefit. However, there are two perhaps more effective ways we recommend working through the material:
 - a. At your desk or computer where you can look up important biblical passages, stop the lectures to reflect, and take time to answer the reflection questions.
 - b. With a group where you can discuss and clarify the material for each other. We cannot emphasize enough the value of studying in a context of relationships where you can immediately apply and test the material while also seeking or giving clarification.
2. **Lecture Outlines:** The outlines that accompany each lecture provide reinforcement for what you hear in the lectures and also offer space to take notes.
3. **Questions:** The questions that accompany each lecture are vital to the learning process. *Do not skip over them.* They will guide you in interacting with the material and formulating the concepts in your mind in a way that you can communicate to others and more readily apply to your life. There are two types of questions:
 - a. **Preparation:** Before each lecture outline there are a few questions that are intended to prepare you to interact with the content of the lecture. They require you to begin thinking about the concepts of the lecture in order to identify your current views or practices. Having considered these ahead of time, you will be able to evaluate them in light of the lecture content.
 - b. **Reflection:** After each lecture outline there are a few more questions that are intended to ensure your understanding of the main concepts and guide you in applying them to your life.

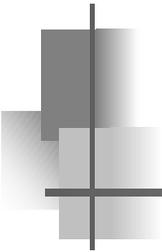
With all of these questions, it is recommended that you take the time write your answers as best you can. The process of formulating answers (even incomplete ones) from original thought is vital for learning, and your answer will serve as a valuable journal or record of your development through the series.

Above all, perhaps the most important feature of this series is not part of the series at all—*it is your posture of prayer and meditation in openness to the Spirit of God as He speaks to you and moves you to respond to his leading.* It is recommended that before and after each lesson you spend time in prayer (either alone or with others), listening for the voice of God and aligning your heart with his purposes.



Lesson One

Introduction to Spiritual Formation



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

What is “spiritual formation”? In this lesson, Dr. Richard Averbeck introduces a concept that has generated interest in many circles. Spiritual formation is a biblical concept that identifies the mysterious process by which the Holy Spirit works in the lives of believers to change them to be more like Jesus Christ both individually, relationally, and missionally. How this happens, though, is a subject of debate across many theological traditions, so it is important to understand the theological issues at stake. In addition to defining the term and explaining its background, Dr. Averbeck discusses these issues at stake and describes a uniquely evangelical approach to spiritual formation.

“These lectures focus on a whole Bible approach to spiritual formation, Old Testament and New Testament. We're interested in collecting things and using the entire Bible to understand what spirituality is all about. We're interested in collecting what is good and beneficial, then, from [the] history of spirituality, and arranging it under the umbrella of a focused biblical spirituality.”

– Richard E. Averbeck, Ph.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Define “spiritual formation” biblically and how it relates to discipleship and sanctification.
- ◆ Begin to understand the three dimensions of spiritual formation and how they relate to each other.
- ◆ Understand and evaluate various historical forms of Christian and non-Christian spiritualities as they compare and contrast with a biblical evangelical spiritual formation.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline



Introduction: “Spiritual formation” is increasingly becoming a term used in many different kinds of evangelical ministry settings for building depth, commitment, and active pursuit of God into the lives of individual Christians and their communities of faith. It requires a commitment to in-depth biblical spirituality in the lives of those who have put their trust solely in the pure Gospel of salvation by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ our Lord.

I. The Focus of Spiritual Formation

From a biblical point of view, probably the best way to define spiritual formation (a synonym of spiritual growth) is to consider passages that put the Holy *Spirit* in the context of (trans- or con-) *forming* one's life toward Christ likeness (Galatians 4:19).

Understood in this way, "spiritual formation" is first of all, above all, and throughout, the shaping (i.e., *forming*) work of the divine Holy Spirit, carried out according to the will of God the Father, for the purpose of *conforming* us to the image of his son Jesus Christ:

Romans 8:27-29 – “the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but *the Spirit* himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints *in accordance with God's will*. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be *conformed to the likeness of his Son*, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (emphasis added; Cf. Rom 12:1-2; 2 Cor 3:17-18).¹

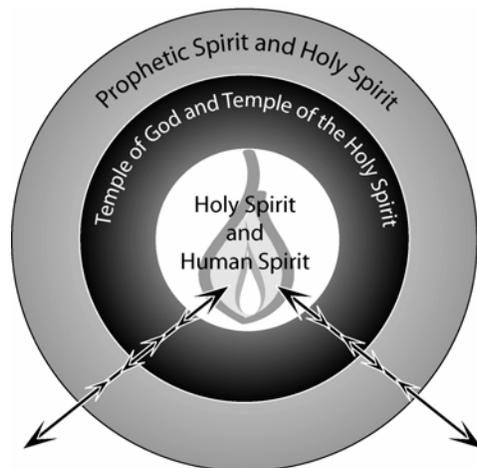
II. Dimensions of Spiritual Formation – At the core of this “spirituality” is *intimacy with God* through the presence of the Holy Spirit who works in us and among us to conform us to the image of Christ, bind us together in *community with other believers*, and empower us as servants of God our *kingdom*

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mission to spread the Gospel and live as salt and light in the world.

- A. In a spiritual formation **ministry** *we seek to stimulate and support the ongoing spiritually transforming work of the Holy Spirit in and through the personal lives, relationships, and ministries of genuine believers so that we all progressively become more conformed to the image of Christ according to the will of God the Father.*
- B. **Dimensions:** There are basically *three dimensions* of this work of the Holy Spirit. Each of them has connections from the OT into the NT, each has specific NT applications for the Christian life, and each dimension is inextricably bound up with the other two. The following chart is intended to illustrate the three dimensions and the relationship between them:



III. “Discipleship” – “Sanctification” – “Spiritual Formation”

- A. **Discipleship** – a “disciple” is an adherent to a particular teacher; a learner, or pupil, or apprentice.
1. He or she is a committed and *disciplined* follower of a particular teacher, a “Rabbi” (see John 1:38, 49).
 2. As a Rabbi, Jesus not only *taught* us how to live, but actually *lived* in such a way that we can see what it looks like to live out what he taught.



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3. Jesus has commissioned us to “*make disciples* of all nations, *baptizing them* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teaching them to obey* everything *I have commanded* you.” (Matthew 28:19-20)²



- B. **Sanctification** – “*sanctification*” (see Latin *sanctus*) terminology arises from the Old and New Testament words for “holy” or “sacred.”
1. From the same set of terms we get “*sanctuary*,” referring to a “holy place,” and “saints,” referring to those who have become “*sacred*/holy persons” by the purifying and sanctifying blood of Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
 2. This is our identity before God. We are his “*sanctified* holy ones,” and the ongoing process of our sanctification is a continuation of the saving work of God in our lives.
- C. **Spiritual Formation** – The Holy Spirit is the one who God the Father, at the request of Jesus the Son, has given us in this day and age to guide and enable us to function as followers of Jesus (John 14:16-17).
1. Spiritual formation is, first, *dynamic* in its emphasis on the divine power and means of formation, **and**
 2. Second, *deep* in its focus on the inner workings of the human person.
 3. The Spirit of God reaches into the spirit of the person to do the core of his work³
 4. God has not called us to something without enabling us to do it.
 5. There is a divine person, the Holy Spirit, continually at work in us, who acts directly on the deepest parts of us, our human spirit.⁴

² Cf. Acts 14:21

³ E.g., Romans 8:16, 23-27

⁴ Romans 8:16, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13, 16

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IV. Important Historical and Contemporary Theological Issues

- A. Ignatius of Loyola (ca. 1491-1556), the founder of the “Society of Jesus” (the Jesuits) and one of the leaders of the Counter Reformation, wrote the following at the very beginning of his “Spiritual Exercises”:

“By the term ‘Spiritual Exercises’ is meant every method of examination of conscience, of meditation, of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer, and of other spiritual activities that will be mentioned later. For just as taking a walk, journeying on foot, and running are bodily exercises, so we call Spiritual Exercises every way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid itself of all inordinate attachments, and, after their removal, of seeking and finding the will of God in the disposition of our life for the salvation of our soul.”⁵

- B. Consider also the current Roman Catholic catechism:⁶
1. It makes much of the fact that justification (and even sanctification) is by the grace of God alone, and our “merit” derives from the fact that, on his own initiative, “God has freely chosen to associate man with the work of his grace”⁷
 2. Nevertheless, it also says that, “Moved by the Holy Spirit and by charity, *we can then merit* [their emphasis] for ourselves and for others the graces needed for our sanctification, for the increase of grace and charity, and *for the attainment of eternal life* [my emphasis]”⁸
 3. The point is that official Catholic doctrine teaches that grace “releases people from the condemnation of the Old Law and ***allows them to perform meritorious works worthy of eternal life.***”⁹



⁵ *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* [New York: Random House, 2000], p. 5, emphasis mine; first paragraph of his “Spiritual Exercises.”

⁶ See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (New York: Doubleday, 1994, abbrev. CCC).

⁷ CCC, 538-541.

⁸ CCC, 542.

⁹ See Frank Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A contextual Approach* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1994), 17 (emphasis mine).

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C. There are certain “spiritualities” that are not “Christian” at all, much less biblical. For example, there is a relatively new kind of Western spirituality that really consists of a set of new spiritualities (plural), some newer than others, put together in various combinations.¹⁰

1. It is in the air we breathe, at least in Western culture.
2. It is promoted by powerful cultural forces developed since the 1700’s, including the “Enlightenment,” corrosive biblical criticisms, scientific advances used to promote “spiritual” science and scientific religion, psychoanalytical humanistic spirituality, occult spiritualities, the influence of Eastern spiritualities (esp. Buddhism and Hinduism), and all promoted by media and politics of various kinds.
3. This is part of “Modernity,” but the “New Age Movement” and “Postmodernity” make much of such spiritualities in their own way.
 - a. The focus is on the potential inherent within a person, not on the potential of God's transforming activity in a person's life through the Holy Spirit's application of the Gospel in a person's human spirit.¹¹
 - b. They reject the notion that there is only one way to one true God (i.e., faith in Jesus Christ, 1 Tim 2:5-6), arguing that through personal enlightenment, freedom, and liberation one obtains, for example, Christian “salvation,” Buddhist “nirvana,” and/or Hindu “samadhi,” etc.



V. Evangelical Spiritual Formation

A. The term “evangelical” derives from the Greek word *euangelion*, which means “gospel” or “good news.” We are

¹⁰ See James A. Herrick, *The Making of the New Spirituality: The Eclipse of the Western Religious Tradition* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003). See esp. the fine summaries and evaluations in the introduction (pp. 20-35) and conclusion (pp. 250-281).

¹¹ 1 Cor 2:10-16; Rom 12:1-2; etc.

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committed to the good news of Jesus Christ. Trusting in Jesus is the only way to God.¹²

- B. In his last book entitled *Sabbatical Journey*, Henri Nouwen he wrote in the November 10th 1995 entry about a meeting of “The Gathering,” a group of evangelical Christians to whom he had spoken about giving in the spirit of the Gospel (p. 46). He reflects on the fact that they:

“believe that without an explicit personal profession of faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we cannot make it to heaven. They are convinced that God has called us to convert every human being to Jesus. . . . Their love for Jesus is deep, intense, and radical. They spoke about Jesus fearlessly and were prepared for rejection and ridicule. They are very committed disciples, not hesitant to pay the cost of their discipleship” (p. 51).

“ . . . I felt somewhat uncomfortable, even though this belief was present in my own upbringing. My conviction as a young man was that there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church and that it was my task to bring all ‘non-believers’ into the one true church. But much has happened to me over the years. . . . Today I personally believe that while Jesus came to open the door to God’s house, all human beings can walk through that door, whether they know about Jesus or not. Today I see it as my call to help every person claim his or her own way to God. I feel deeply called to witness for Jesus as the one who is the source of my own spiritual journey and thus create the possibility for other people to know Jesus and commit themselves to him. I am so truly convinced that the Spirit of God is present in our midst and that each person can be touched by God’s Spirit in ways far beyond my own comprehension and intention” (p. 51).

- C. Gnostic/Elitist “mystical” spirituality and “perfectionism” versus biblical spirituality and spiritual formation
1. In some contexts spiritual formation has sometimes degenerated into a search for a mystical form of gnostic or elitist spirituality and perfectionism.
 2. Biblical “spirituality,” however, is above all practical, and it is for *every* Christian. When the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 3:1, “Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual (*pneumatikos*) but as worldly (*sarkinos*, lit.



¹² E.g., John 14:6 and Acts 4:12

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fleshly)—mere infants in Christ,” he was exhorting *all* the Christians at Corinth to pursue true “spirituality.”

NOTE: 1 Thess 3:11-4:12, esp. 4:9-12, “Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, . . .” (v. 11a)

3. The rising common ground of concern for spiritual formation appears to be offering us an opportunity to develop a unified pursuit of true godliness of life and effectiveness of ministry together in the church worldwide. Consider the importance of the unity of true believers.¹³

D. The history of Christian spirituality

1. The history of the church since the NT days includes the story of Christian spirituality.
2. Unfortunately, reading this dimension of church history reveals a rather “mixed bag” of principles and practices, some of which fit well under the umbrella of biblical spirituality and spiritual formation, and some of which do not.¹⁴
3. We are, of course, concerned to recognize and make use of all that is of value in these traditions or streams of historical Christian spirituality.¹⁵

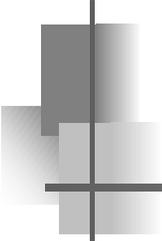
E. Concluding thoughts on an Evangelical, “whole Bible” approach to Spiritual Formation



¹³ E.g., John 17:20-23 and Ephesians 4:1-6

¹⁴ See, e.g., the very fine survey in Gordon Mursell, editor, *The Story of Christian Spirituality: Two Thousand years, from East to West* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001).

¹⁵ One of the most generous but also discerning short summaries of the historical streams, resources, and issues is Bruce Demarest, *Satisfy Your Soul: Restoring the Heart of Christian Spirituality* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1999), 255-281. See also several writings from other traditions: Thomas aKempis’ *The Imitation of Christ*, Teresa of Avila, the Desert Fathers, etc.



Pause to Reflect

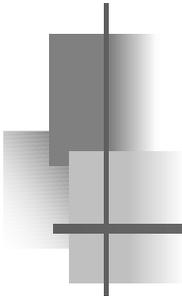
Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

1. Look at the life of Christ as displayed in the four Gospels. Where do you see the work of the Holy Spirit and the three dimensions of spiritual formation displayed?
2. Consider this statement: “The church did not begin with the Reformation, but the Reformation was about something important.” How is this important for understanding spirituality and spiritual formation? How does it challenge your own assumptions?

Application for Life:

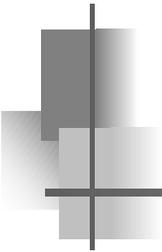
3. How have the three dimensions of spiritual formation been at work in your personal life? What dimension (if any) have you emphasized least? What can you do to be more intentional in this dimension?
4. List the people, events or situations that have been most influential to forming you spiritually. As best you can, describe how the Holy Spirit has changed you.



Lesson Two

Holy Spirit, Human Spirit, & Individual Spiritual Formation

Part I: The Biblical Theological Foundation



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

What is the nature of the human “spirit,” and what happens when the Holy Spirit works in our hearts? In order to answer these questions, we must first ask, what does the *Bible* say about the human spirit and Holy Spirit? In this lesson, Dr. Averbeck establishes a biblical, theological foundation for discussing the spirit/Spirit dynamic by surveying the relevant passages from both the Old Testament and New Testament. He summarizes how these passages fit together and explains a biblical metaphor (a sailboat) that captures well how the Holy Spirit mysteriously affects those who make themselves available.

“If the Holy Spirit is the wind, then we Christians are the boat. The point here is that the wind will not take us very far if our sail is down; that is, if our *human* spirit is not engaged. Just as the writers of Scripture needed the Holy Spirit to drive them along in writing the Bible [2 Pet. 1:21], so every Christian needs the same divine wind to drive them along in living the Christian life. The discipleship and spiritual formation practices that we engage in are like putting up the sail. They are ways of getting our human spirit engaged with the Spirit of God.”

Richard E. Averbeck, Ph.D.

(Plenary address at the Spiritual Formation Forum, May 19, 2004)

Learning Outcomes

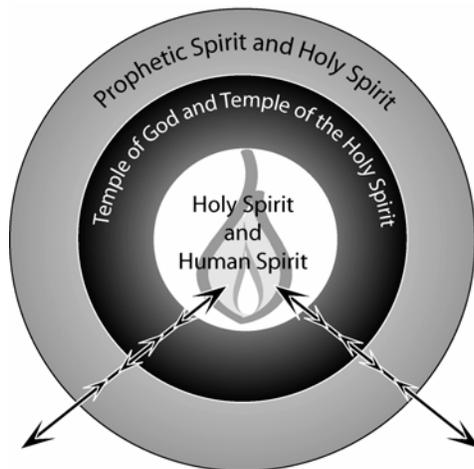
By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the nature of “spirit” and the teachings about the human spirit according to the scriptures.
- ◆ Integrate the Old Testament teachings about the human spirit with that of the New Testament.
- ◆ Understand how the Holy Spirit works to have effect *on* the human spirit, and *through* the spirit into the whole life of the person.

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Lecture Outline

Introduction: Recall our previous discussion of the chart below. The goal here is to work through the three dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit. From a biblical point of view, each of the dimensions has connections from the OT into the NT and specific applications for the Christian life. They are inextricably bound up together.



Holy Spirit and human spirit: At the core of spirituality is the work of the Holy Spirit in our human spirit. The *agent* of “spiritual formation” is the Holy Spirit.

This dimension of spiritual formation focuses on the significance and power for the Christian life derived from personal *solitude, devotion, and meditation*.

I. The Human “spirit” in the Bible

First, in 40% of its occurrences the Old Testament Hebrew word “spirit” (*rûah*) means “wind, breath,” not “spirit” as we use the term in the church today. The New Testament Greek word (*pneuma*) is also sometimes used in this way.

Second, we need to recognize that when these words are used they often refer to the *human* spirit, and certain passages draw out the correspondence between the Spirit of God and the

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human spirit, and the importance of God's work through that correspondence. We will start there.¹

- A. **Human “spirit” and “wind/breath”** – The terms for “spirit” and even “(Holy) Spirit” in both the Old Testament (Hebrew *rûah*) and the New Testament (Greek *pneuma*) are the same words that are used for “wind” or “breath.” See, e.g.: Ps 1:4, ***Ezek 37:7-9***, 14, & ***John 3:5 with v. 8***; 2 Thess. 2:8.
- B. **Human “spirit” in the Old Testament** – Hebrew *rûah* is often used for elements of the human “spirit” in Scripture (ca. 120 times). It refers to:
1. Vitality of life (e.g., Gen. 45:27, Joshua 5:1, 1 Kings 10:5)²
 2. Moral and spiritual character³
 3. Capacities of mind and will (e.g., Job 20:3 lit. “the spirit of my understanding,” Psalm 51:12[10], 14[12])⁴
 4. Various dispositions or states of the human person and personality (e.g., Num 5:14 “spirit” = feelings, suspicions; “spirit” = anger, resentment;⁵ “low of spirit” = humble, but “high spirit” = prideful,⁶ “a crushed spirit” = discouraged, depressed;⁷ “long of spirit” = patient;⁸ “short of spirit” = quick-tempered;⁹ etc.).
 5. Ecclesiastes 12:7, “***the dust*** (*‘āfār*) returns to the ground it came from, and ***the spirit*** (*rûah*) returns to God who gave it.”¹⁰



Greek *pneuma*: cf. English "pneumonia" which is a condition in the lungs.

¹ See Richard E. Averbeck, “The Holy Spirit in the Hebrew Bible and It’s Connections to the New Testament,” in Daniel B. Wallace and M. James Sawyer, editors, *Who’s Afraid of the Holy Spirit? An Investigation into the Ministry of the Spirit of God Today* (Dallas, Texas: biblical Studies Press, 2005), 15-36

² Cf. 1 Kings 21:5, Isaiah 38:16

³ E.g., positive: Isaiah 26:9, Malachi 2:16; and negative: Isaiah 29:24, Ezekiel 13:3

⁴ Cf. Exodus 28:3; Psalms 77:4[6]

⁵ Judges 8:3

⁶ Proverbs 16:18-19

⁷ Proverbs 17:22

⁸ Ecclesiastes 7:8

⁹ Proverbs 14:29

¹⁰ Cf. Ps 146:4, Isaiah 42:5

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Job 34:14-15, “If it were his (God’s) intention and he withdrew his **spirit** and **breath**, all mankind would perish together and man would return to **the dust**.”

God is the one “who forms **the spirit of man** within him” (Zechariah 12:1), so it naturally returns to Him at death.



C. Human “spirit” in the New Testament

1. Jesus and “human” spirit (*pneuma*):
 - a. David wrote, “Into your hands I commit **my spirit** (*rūah*); redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth,” entrusting his spirit to God for deliverance from death (Psalm 31:6[5]).
 - b. Jesus said, “Father, into your hands I commit **my spirit**’ (*pneuma*), entrusting his spirit to God in death (Luke 23:46).
 - c. The parallel passages in Matthew and John simply refer to the fact that at this point Jesus “gave up his spirit” (Matthew 27:50, John 19:30).

Mark 15:37, “And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and **breathed** His last.”
2. In the NT there is also a close connection between “spirit” and “breath” or “breathing.” When the “spirit” of a person departs, their physical body dies because it no longer “breathes.”
 - a. “As the **body** without the **spirit** is dead, so faith without deeds is dead” (James 2:26).
 - b. Even in life one can refer to the combination of “body” (*soma*, or “flesh” *sarkēs*) and the “spirit” (*pneuma*) as making up the whole person,¹¹ although other combinations can also be used.¹²

Greek *exepneusen*: Note the root *pneuma* “spirit” in this verb.

¹¹ E.g., 1 Cor. 7:34, 2 Cor. 7:1, Col. 2:5, and the combination of body, flesh [as embodied sin], and spirit in 1 Cor. 5:3-5

¹² E.g., “soul and body” in Matt. 10:28 and “spirit, soul, and body” in 1 Thess. 5:23

Plan to Listen

- c. The “spirit” is the seat of human character as well as capacities and dispositions. For example, it can be treated as the seat of intuition,¹³ discouragement or internal despair,¹⁴ joy,¹⁵ intense affection,¹⁶ an internal sense of being in one form or another, and so on.

Cf. 2 Timothy 1:7, a spirit of fear, as opposed to a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline; 1 Cor 4:21, a spirit of gentleness

NOTE: “spirit” can refer to the whole immaterial human being or some element of it.

II. The Holy Spirit and the Human spirit – The Holy Spirit “enlivens” the human spirit to God¹⁷

A. Water purification, spirit, and Spirit – Ezekiel 36:22-32

The Lord promised to respond to the rebellious defilement of the nation of Israel and their profaning of His holy name among the nations. This is His promised response:

“I will *sprinkle clean water on you*, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and *put a new spirit in you*; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And *I will put my Spirit in you* and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.” (Ezekiel 36:25-27)

Three points in this passage are especially important to our present discussion:

1. First, the Lord promised to “cleanse” the nation from all their “impurities” and “idols” by sprinkling (actually ‘splashing’) the people with “clean water.”
2. Second, the Lord promised to change their human spirit by putting within them “a new spirit.” Thus, He will change their “heart” from being hard like stone (non-



NOTE the breathe and S/spirit imagery that follows in **Ezek 37:1-14**.

¹³ Mark 2:8

¹⁴ Mark 8:12

¹⁵ Luke 1:47, parallel with “soul” in v. 46

¹⁶ John 11:33

¹⁷ See Ezek 36, 1 Cor 2, Rom 8:15-16 below, etc.

Plan to Listen

responsive) to being soft like human flesh and, therefore, responsive to God's touch.

3. Third, the Lord promised to put His "Spirit *in* (the midst of)" them and thereby move them to follow the Lord's covenant law (v. 27).

B. Jesus with Nicodemus (John 3:5-6)

"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again [or 'from above']" (v. 3).

"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of *water* and *Spirit*. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit" (vv. 5-6)

Jesus is calling Ezekiel 36 to mind here:

1. Water is mentioned first because purification from impurity and infidelity is the necessary environment for revival of the heart and spirit of people by the work of God's Spirit.
2. Ezekiel was born both as a priest and called to be a prophet (Ezekiel 1:1-3); the two offices come together here.
3. John the Baptist was also both born a priest (Luke 1:5, 57-66) and called as a prophet (Matthew 3:1-4, 11:7-15; note especially the quotes from Isaiah 40:3 in Matthew 3:3 and Malachi 3:1 in Matthew 11:10, and compare John's lifestyle with Elijah, Matthew 3:4, 11:7-8, and 2 Kings 1:8).
4. The connection of John 3 back to John 1:
 - a. John the Baptist came to prepare the people for the Messiah, and he did this through water purification, a baptism of repentance (John 1:24-28; cf. Matt. 3:2, 8, 11, Mark 1:4-5, Luke 3:3, 8).
 - b. But the Son of God Himself would be the one who would "baptize with the Holy Spirit" (John 1:33b).



NOTE: The Lord putting His Spirit "*in* (the midst of)" them is the essence of "putting a new (human) spirit *in* (the midst of)" them in the previous verse (v. 26).

Plan to Listen

- c. The Jewish leaders had sent “priests and Levites” (John 1:19) to question John about who he was (vv. 19-23) and the purpose of his baptismal water purification practices (v. 25).

NOTE: See them responsible for this in Lev. 14, Matt. 8:4, John 3:25, etc.

- d. John baptizes “with water” (John 1:31) but Jesus will baptize “with the Holy Spirit” (v. 33).

Water baptism > Spirit baptism (“coined” here by John)
= human body (cleansed by water) > human spirit (cleansed by the Holy Spirit)¹⁸

NOTE the links to:

- i. The woman at the well, **John 4:13-14** (cf. 7:37-39)
- ii. Our Trinitarian “abiding” with God, **John 14:10, 16-17, 23**

C. The Holy Spirit and the New Covenant

1. Compare Ezek 36 with **Jer 31:31-34**, esp. v. 33,

“‘The time is coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will make *a new covenant* with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,’ declares the LORD. ‘I will put *my law* in their minds and *write it on their hearts*’”

2. Then see both Ezek 36 and Jer 31 in **2 Cor 3:3-6**,

“You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, *written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God*, not on tablets of stone but *on tablets of human hearts*... ministers of *a new covenant*—not of the letter but *of the Spirit*, for the letter kills, but *the Spirit gives life*.”



¹⁸ See also Matt 3:11-12; Acts 1:5, 8; 8:16-17; 10:44-48 with 11:15-16; and 19:1-7 (with John 4:13-14 and 7:37-39)

Plan to Listen

D. God's "Spirit" and Our "spirit"

1. 1 Corinthians 2:10b-12

"The *Spirit* searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's *spirit* [lit. *the spirit of the man*] within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except *the Spirit of God*. We have not received the *spirit* of the world but *the Spirit who is from God*, that we may understand what God has freely given us."

2. Romans 8:17

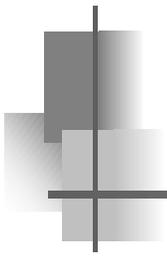
"*The Spirit* himself testifies with *our spirit* that we are God's children."



E. The Holy Spirit as the "Wind" in Our Sail

1. Note the image: 2 Peter 1:21 "carried along" in Acts 27:15. We should take this biblical analogy seriously.
2. Wind is a mysterious and powerful force.
3. However, although we cannot completely understand and control the Holy Spirit, we can draw upon His power. Using the analogy of a ship driven by the wind (see above), we can "put up the sails" in our lives.
4. Putting up the sails begins, above all, with being "born" of the Spirit into the kingdom of God (John 3), by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9).
5. It continues through the ongoing work of God's grace through faith empowered by the Spirit (the "wind") so we live faithfully, doing the kind of works the Lord has called us to do.¹⁹

¹⁹ Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 3:1-9



Pause to Reflect

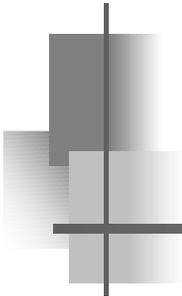
Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

1. What insights did you learn from this lesson that clarifies your understanding of the human “spirit”?
2. Drawing from the biblical passages in this lesson and the sailboat metaphor, describe in your own words what happens when the Holy Spirit works in the human spirit. What is your role in this process?

Application for Life:

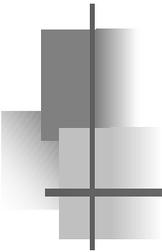
3. What is the basic nature of your personal human spirit? For example: Are you more often fearful or angry? Are you more often compliant or resistant? Etc. Why do you think this is so?
4. What do you think the Lord is *pleased* with in the way you approach life? What do you think the Lord is *displeased* with?



Lesson Three

Holy Spirit, Human Spirit, & Individual Spiritual Formation

Part II: The Practice



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

What are the spiritual sails we can use to catch the divine Wind of God? Having laid a biblical, theological foundation for the spirit/Spirit dynamic in the previous lesson, here Dr. Averbeck describes the spiritual disciplines (the sails) as a way of “breathing” spiritually. He focuses primarily on one particular discipline, *lectio divina*, the spiritual reading of the Bible. The Bible is spiritual writing, so we should read it spiritually. However, it also has information with meaning, so we should submit to that meaning. In other words, the proper way to read the Bible has both informational *and* spiritual aspects, which will help us avoid common pitfalls.

“No one can live without breathing, and breathing involves alternately inhaling and exhaling. The spiritual disciplines are about doing life with God and one another by inhaling and exhaling with the life-giving, dynamic relationship between them.”

– Richard E. Averbeck, Ph.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the spiritual disciplines as ways and means of engaging oneself in the work of the Holy Spirit in the human spirit and one’s whole life.
- ◆ Understand the biblical basis of the “spiritual reading” (*lectio divina*) of the Bible, analyze its various elements, and learn how it integrates with regular daily life.
- ◆ Discern the problems that can arise in spiritual reading and learn how to avoid them.
- ◆ Place a high value on both informational and spiritual reading of the Bible.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline



Introduction: Some of the main scriptural ways God has given us to put up the “sails” to “catch the wind” of the Holy Spirit for transformation of our lives are called “spiritual disciplines.” These are regular daily and weekly “disciplines” that “disciples” practiced. These “practices” are a means of training, not just behavior training but “spiritual”; that is, training that trains the human spirit under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

I. The “Spiritual Disciplines”

It is hard to determine what to include in the list of disciplines, and how to categorize them. Here are some proposed lists and categories:

A. Dallas Willard divides them into disciplines of two types:

1. **Abstinence** (solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, chastity, secrecy, and sacrifice)
2. **Engagement** (study, worship, celebration, service, prayer, fellowship, confession, submission)¹

B. Richard Foster divides them into three groups:

1. **Inward** (meditation, prayer, fasting, study)
2. **Outward** (simplicity, solitude, submission, service)
3. **Corporate** (confession, worship, guidance, celebration)²

C. Spiritual “breathing” – another approach is to divide the spiritual disciplines in two categories, corresponding to human breathing.

1. Recall “spirit” also means “breathe” – no one can live without “breathing,” alternately breathing in (inhaling) and breathing out (exhaling).

¹ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988, esp. pp. 156-192).

² Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (third edition; New York: HarperCollins, 1998).

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2. The spiritual disciplines are about doing life with God and one another, inhaling and exhaling, with a life giving dynamic relationship between them:
 - a. **Inhaling** – reading, studying, and meditating on Scripture; solitude and silence; fasting
 - b. **Exhaling** – prayer and worship; fellowship, service, and mission; fruit of the Spirit
3. Like physical breathing, doing one (exhaling or inhaling) without the other is to lose the life of it.
4. Numerous biblical passages could be cited for each of these disciplines and other disciplines as well.
5. In Acts 2:37-47

“They devoted themselves persistently to the **apostles’ teaching** and to the **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to the **prayer**” (v. 42, my literal translation).

- i. In the context and in real life it begins with entrance into a new and dedicated life. This is what the baptisms by water and the Spirit are about in Acts 2:38-39.
- ii. All of this happens in the midst of mission to the lost world, Acts 2:41b and 47b.
- a. They mutually committed themselves to (v. 42):
 - i. Taking in the apostles’ teachings (inhaling) and to doing life together in fellowship (exhaling)
 - ii. To the breaking of bread together (inhaling) and praying together (exhaling)
- b. The following verses expand on v. 42.
 - i. There was a sense of awe about all that God was doing (vv. 43a and 47a).



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- ii. The Apostles' teaching was confirmed by signs and wonders just as Jesus' teaching had been (v. 43b; cf. Acts 2:22).
- iii. The bond of fellowship was so close that they held all things in common (vv. 44-45). They did life *together* as followers of Christ (even their meals much of the time, v. 46).
- iv. Surrounded and immersed in praise worship and effective witnessing, "enjoying the favor of all the people" and regularly adding to their number those that believed (vv. 41b and 47b).
- v. These "spiritual disciplines" or "practices" took center stage in the life of the church right from the beginning.



II. Spiritual Reading, *lectio divina* (Latin = "divine reading").³

Christian meditation is one of the main ways of "inhaling" in the Christian life:

1. It is slow, thoughtful, praying of the Scripture
2. Christian meditation is deliberate dwelling upon a passage, with the aim of encountering God in it.
3. The chief aim of Christian meditation on the Bible is not to learn more information about God, but to encounter God in His Word.
4. While Christian meditation includes discovering the meaning of a passage, it moves naturally to prayerful hearing or responding to the Lord in that Scripture.

³ The most thorough and helpful descriptions I have found are the books by Mario Masini, *Lectio Divina: An Ancient Prayer that is Ever New*, translated from Italian by Edmund C. Lane, SSP (New York: Alba House, 1998) and, most recently, Eugene H. Peterson, *Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), esp. pp. 80-117.

Plan to Listen

A. Since the Bible is “spiritual writing,” to read it well we need to do a kind of “spiritual reading” that corresponds to the nature of what we are reading.

1. It is the “core curriculum” in the school of the Holy Spirit (Peterson 4-11).
2. It is “A way of reading that intends the fusion of the entire biblical story and my story” (Peterson 90).

B. Guigo the Second (12th century):

“**Reading**, as it were, puts the solid food into our mouths, **meditation** chews it and breaks it down, **prayer** obtains the flavor of it [and swallows it] and **contemplation** is the very sweetness which makes us glad and refreshes us [digesting it as we go about our daily life]” (from Peterson p. 91 n. 1; emphasis and additional insertions by me)

C. There is, however, a basis for this in Scripture too. For example, consider:

“Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful,” (Joshua 1:8).

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night,” (Psalm 1:1-2).

1. The term for “meditation” is literally “murmur” or “mumble” quietly, but out loud. It is not a purely mental silent practice.
2. It is like “a dog with a bone” (Peterson).

D. *Lectio divina* is usually broken down into steps or stages in the process, whether it is practiced in private or in a group setting:

1. *lectio* – listening to and interpreting the biblical text, 10-20 verses perhaps, reading it through several times, slowly. Watch for metaphors.



Plan to Listen

2. *meditatio* – deepening and taking to oneself its message, its implications for one’s own situation in life. This is entering the world of the text.
3. *oratio* – transforming the word of God into prayer by praying its impact and implications back to God for one’s own life or that of the group.
4. *contemplatio* – submitting to the word by taking it into mind for the whole day everyday (preoccupation).

[*collatio* – sharing its impact on oneself with others in the group, if it is being practiced in a group setting, usually fits between 2 and 3 above]

- E. We need to remember that, by and large, believers through the ages have not had their own personal (or even family or clan) copies of the scriptures available to them, and many were not even literate.
- F. Some of the things written about *lectio divina* are quite alarming to me as an evangelical Christian and biblical scholar. For example, as **spiritual** reading, it is often placed in contrast to the disciplines of study, exegesis, hermeneutics, and theological reflection. This is a problem. The best writers on spiritual reading emphasize the importance of serious interpretational reading.
1. Richard Peace goes so far as to recommend and work out a plan for group *lectio divina* where there are two sessions on each passage.⁴
 2. Eugene Peterson spends an entire chapter on the Bible as a text that requires “exegesis.” It is a means of “submitting” to the text and *God’s* intended meaning in it.

“...without exegesis, spirituality gets sappy, soupy. Spirituality with out exegesis becomes self-indulgent. Without disciplined exegesis spirituality develops into an idiolect in which I define all the key verbs and nouns out of my own experience. And prayer ends up limping along in sighs and stutters.” (Peterson 57-58)



Exegesis: a Greek word for telling about something or someone, explaining (e.g., John 1:18, Jesus “has made him [the Father] known”).

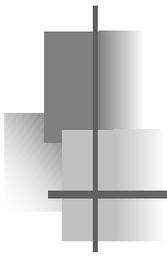
⁴ Richard Peace, *Contemplative Bible Reading: Experiencing God Through Scripture* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998), 17-20 cf. also Masini, *Lectio Divina*, 21-22.

Plan to Listen

3. Spiritual reading is not a “less than” but rather a “more than” approach to the reading of the Bible.
 - a. Informational and spiritual reading should function together.
 - b. We leave neither our intellect nor our spirituality behind.
 - c. Taking God seriously in his Word must involve taking seriously what he actually means to say in his Word.
 - d. Yes, sometimes there are legitimate differences of opinion on what a particular passage means. Some level of subjectivity is unavoidable, but we are looking for a “well-informed subjectivity.”
- G. The problem goes the other way too, however. Some react strongly to any kind of what they perceive as “mystical” practice.
 1. However, there is still much about God that is a “mystery” to us, and there is indeed something “mystical” about practicing his presence day-by-day, moment-by-moment.
 2. There *is* a proper Christian mysticism that pays attention to the work of the Holy Spirit in the human spirit.

“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the (lit. ‘a’) Spirit (or ‘spirit’) of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘*Abba*, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (Romans 8:15-16).





Pause to Reflect

Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

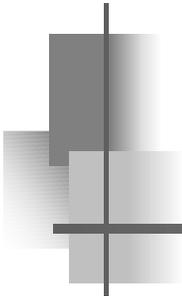
1. How do you understand the connection between physical and spiritual breathing?

2. Describe the practice of *lectio divina* in your own words (along with its potential pitfalls) and discuss your typical approach to reading Scripture (i.e. informational vs. spiritual). What might help you find a better balance?

Application for Life:

3. What has been the most important disciplines for you so far in your personal journey and walk with Jesus by the power of the Spirit?

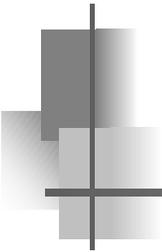
4. Which of the other spiritual disciplines do you think might be of special help to you in your own spiritual growth, and why?



Lesson Four

Holy Spirit, Redemptive Community, & Relational Spiritual Formation

Part I: The Biblical Theological Foundation



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

One aspect of spiritual formation we often forget is that *we are not alone and we cannot do it alone*. We need redemptive relationships through which we can speak truth and love into each other's lives and experience grace and mercy. Furthermore, the point of spiritual formation is that, as we change individually, our relationships change as well. We love others more fully. In this lesson, Dr. Averbeck discusses the biblical, theological foundation for this relational dimension of spiritual formation, tracing both Old and New Testament scriptures. He covers such concepts as the "temple of the Holy Spirit," the "priesthood of believers" and Christian sacrifices, showing how these inform our understanding of spiritual formation. You will begin to see your identity in Christ in a new light.

"The point is that the work of the Spirit is about character formation. It's about changing our character in such a way that we become truly people who, in our relationships with other people, are known for how well we love and how well we show that love through joy and peace and kindness and faithfulness and gentleness and all these various qualities."

– Richard E. Averbeck, Ph.D.

Learning Outcomes

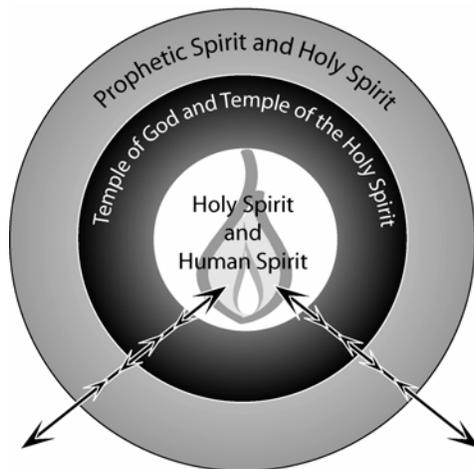
By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit, making us into individuals and redemptive communities that are temples of the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Integrate the presence of God in your life with your manner of life.
- ◆ Apply the priesthood of believers and the sacrifices of the Christian to "practicing" God's presence in your life.
- ◆ Place high value on relationships and community in spiritual formation.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline

Introduction: We have previously worked through the first core dimension of spirituality – *Holy Spirit and human spirit* – and its implications. We now turn to the second dimension. It flows naturally from the first.



Temple of God and temple of the Holy Spirit – since the Holy Spirit is actually “present” in us as he works in our human spirit, we are the *temple* of God today. This is an essential part of our *identity* in Christ *individually and corporately*.

This dimension should cause us to emphasize “practicing the presence of God” through *prayer, worship, purity, relational love, and spiritual giftedness*.

I. Exodus 40:34-38 – the tabernacle presence of God

“Then *the cloud* covered the Tent of Meeting, and *the glory of the LORD* filled the tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. In all the travels of the Israelites, whenever the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, they would set out...So the cloud of the LORD was over the tabernacle by day, and *fire was in the cloud by night*, in the sight of all the house of Israel during all their travels”¹

¹ See Lev 1:1ff and also Lev 9:22-24; 16:1-2; 1 Kings 8:10-11; etc.

Plan to Listen

NOTE: A tabernacle/temple is by definition a place of *prayer* and *worship!!!*

Compare this “glory” cloud with:

A. **John 1:14**

“The Word became flesh and *made his dwelling among us*. We have seen *his glory, the glory of the One and Only*, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

B. **John 17:22**

“*I have given them the glory* that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one”

C. **2 Corinthians 3:7-18**, especially vv. 17-18

“Now *the Lord is the Spirit*, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect *the Lord’s glory*, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is *the Spirit*”²

II. The Individual Perspective – 1 Cor 6:19-20

“Flee from sexual immorality...Do you not know that *your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit*, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”

NOTE the purity concern here. Compare:

A. **1 Pet 1:15-16**, and esp. v. 22,

“Since you have in obedience to the truth *purified your souls* for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently *love one another from the heart*”³

NOTE the connection between purifying our “souls” and loving others well.



² See also 4:6-7, 16-18; and 5:5

³ New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation (www.Lockman.org). Used by permission.

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B. 1 Tim 1:5

“...the goal of our instruction is *love* from a *pure heart* and a *good conscience* and a *sincere faith*.”

See also the following concerning LOVE:

- Matt 22:36-40, summary of the whole law and prophets
- John 13:34-35, mark of the Christian
- 1 Cor. 12:31-13:13, more important than giftedness

C. Galatians 5:22-23a

“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

NOTE that this “fruit” is primarily relational!

III. The Community Perspective

“Don’t you know that *you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you*? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple” (1 Cor 3:16-17).

- A. **Ephesians 2** – Paul is concerned about the unity of the church, the breaking down of the wall between Jew and Gentile:

“now in *Christ Jesus* you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ...For through him we both have access to the *Father* by one *Spirit*. [note the Trinity here again] Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s *household*, built on the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief *cornerstone*. In him the whole *building* is joined together and rises to become a *holy temple* in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become *a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit*.”

1. Note the follow up to this in Ephesians 3:14-21, esp. v. 19, the goal being “that you may be *filled* to the measure of all the *fullness* of God.”⁴
2. Our calling (Eph 4:1) is to have humility, gentleness, patience, tolerance, and diligence (4:2-3), and

⁴ Compare with 4:10 (the Son) and 5:18 (the Holy Spirit, see below).



Plan to Listen

“to **keep the unity of the Spirit** through the bond of peace. There is **one body** and **one Spirit**— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— **one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all**, who is over all and through all and in all.”
(Again the Trinity together)



3. See also in context Ephesians 4:30-32, “do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.”
- B. This “filling” terminology applies to **the church** as the “fullness” of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23), and the filling of Christians and the church by the Father (3:19), the Son (4:10, 13), and especially **the Holy Spirit**, Eph. 5:18-20.

“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, **be filled** [the only imperative from here on!] with **the Spirit**. Speak (lit. ‘speaking’) to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing (lit. ‘singing’) and make music (lit. ‘making music,’ Greek *psallontes*) in your heart to the Lord, always **giving thanks to God the Father** for everything, in the name of our Lord **Jesus Christ**. Submit (lit. ‘submitting’) to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (note the Trinity again!)

- C. The husband and wife relationship is a continuation of this:

“submitting to one another...wives submit...husbands love ...children obey...and fathers do not provoke...servants obey...and masters do not threaten” (Eph. 5:21-33).

IV. Christians as Priests Who Offer Sacrifices

The Holy Spirit’s presence in us makes us not only the **temple** of God the Holy Spirit today but also the **priests** of that temple.

For the OT background:

1. **Recall that** Exodus 40:34-38 has the Lord occupying the tabernacle in the form of his glory cloud. This leads directly to the sacrificial laws in Leviticus 1-7, followed by the **ordination and consecration** of the tabernacle and priests (Lev 8), the **inauguration** of the tabernacle and priesthood (Lev 9-10), the purity laws (Lev 11-15), and finally the Day of Atonement (Lev 16), **and**
2. **Take special note** of the fact that at the foundation the Israelite covenant made with God at Sinai was that the

Plan to Listen

nation as a whole would become “a kingdom of priests and holy nation” (Ex. 19:6a), being ordained and consecrated as that in Exodus 24:6-8.⁵



A. The Priesthood of Christ and Christians

1. Hebrews 5-10 devotes a great deal of attention to the matter of the royal high priesthood of Jesus based on the pattern of Melchizedek into Genesis 14 and Psalm 110.
2. Jesus is our royal high priest (see #1 above), so this makes us as believers (individually and corporately):
 - a. A holy priesthood that offers sacrifices.

“As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be **a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices** acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:4-5).

- b. A kingdom of priests that belongs to God and his purposes.

“a **chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging** to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).

NOTE: Recall the background in Exodus 19:6.⁶

B. The Sacrifices of Christ and Christians

1. Jesus “fulfilled” the ritual sacrificial requirements for our salvation – see multitudes of NT passages, for example, **Mark 10:45, Luke 22:19-20**, 1 Cor 11:23-26, Acts 13:38-39, **Rom 3:24-31, Heb 9-10**, 1 Pet 1:18-19, Rev 5, etc.
2. Since Jesus gave himself as a sacrifice, Christians must also do this in order to be(come) like him. As Jesus responded to the Samaritan when she asked about where

⁵ Cf. Lev 8 and 14

⁶ Cf. Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:6

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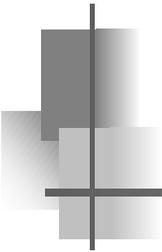
to worship, “God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).⁷

- a. In Rom 12:1, the metaphorical command “to *offer* your bodies as *living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God* -- this is your spiritual *act of worship*.”
- b. Some of the passages that explain or illustrate what this means are Acts 10:4; Rom 15:16; Phil 2:17; Heb 13:9-16 (cf. also 1 Peter 2:5 above)
- c. Consider the use of **Isaiah 53 in 1 Peter 2:18-25**

“Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, ***because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps.*** He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth [Isaiah 53:9]. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats [Isaiah 53:7]. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed [Isaiah 53:4, 5, 11]. For you were like sheep going astray, [Isaiah 53:6] but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”



⁷ Cf. 2 Cor 3:3, 6



Pause to Reflect

Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

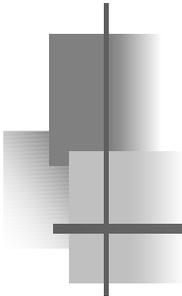
1. What do you think it means to present your body a living sacrifice to God? (Romans 12:1)

2. Describe in your own words how individuals are temples of the Holy Spirit, and the Church (as a whole) is the Temple as well.

Application for Life:

3. How do you experience the filling of the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) in your life?

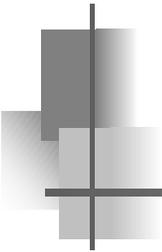
4. When have you experienced unjust mistreatment in your life and how have you handled it? (1 Peter 2:18-25)



Lesson Five

Holy Spirit, Redemptive Community, & Relational Spiritual Formation

Part II: The Practice



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

“Worship is the spiritual practice *par excellence*...Prayer, then, is embedded in worship.” In this lesson, Dr. Averbeck discusses perhaps the two most profound spiritual disciplines available to us: worship and prayer. We can engage these disciplines individually or in community with others, but their affect always reaches into our relationships. As we become more impressed with and open to God, all aspects of life (e.g. relationships, work, possessions, status, etc.) are put into proper perspective. Our focus changes and with it our priorities, which filters into every decision we make. God is looking for true worshipers (John 4:23-24), and we have the opportunity to respond.

“One of the main problems that we have to deal with in our lives and in our ministries is that we’re all too often impressed with the wrong things...The deepest kind of transformation takes place in us when we become so deeply impressed with God and his purposes in and through our lives that our will—our volition, our decision-making—becomes engaged in the process of change and growth...We pursue what we’re impressed with, and so if we get deeply impressed with God, we pursue God.”

– Richard E. Averbeck, Ph.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the foundations and basic principles of worship in the Old Testament and integrate them with the same in the New Testament.
- ◆ Understand the intimate bond between worship, prayer, and contemplation.
- ◆ Place a high value on worship and prayer, and their influence on our decisions and relationships.
- ◆ Integrate the practice of prayer with worship, Kingdom life, and daily needs for provision and the grace of God.

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Lecture Outline

Introduction: Earlier we focused on the spiritual discipline of “spiritual reading” (Latin *lectio divina*). Now we move to prayer, worship and day-long contemplation or preoccupation with God’s word and work in and through our lives.

- A. Note that these are actually closely bound up with the last two stages in *lectio divina* (i.e., *oratio* and *contemplatio*), but more in the area of “exhaling” rather than “inhaling” as spiritual disciplines (see lesson 3).
- B. At this turn, one says in their reading, “This is about me too, today!” so we **worship, pray, think, and live** God’s word back to him; motivated, guided, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, who “in**spired**” Scripture in the first place.
- C. Contemplation (“thinking and living out”) is all about taking the word of God into daily life with us. It becomes our preoccupation. Recall Psalm 1 and then Romans 12:2:

“Do not **conform** any longer to the pattern of this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

- NOTE:** (1) Daily life, lived well, is itself an act of worship!!!
(2) A temple is first of all and above all a place of worship and prayer.

I. Worship and Prayer are a Pair, Bound Together

Prayer is actually tied in directly with worship right from the beginning of the Bible.

- A. Genesis 4:26 as the answer to the fall: “At that time men began to **call on the name of the LORD**” (cf. Gen. 12:7-8, 13:4, 26:25).
 1. The **altar** is about the **place and action** of worship.
 2. The **calling on the name of the Lord** is the **word** of worship.



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NOTE: See the help on what this means in Exodus 33:17-20, 34:5-6; 1 Kings 18:24, 30ff.

3. See also Psalms **102**, 18:6, 55:16, 56:9, 80:18, **86:5**, **99:6**, 118:5, esp. **116:2, 4, 13, 17**, etc.
4. Joel 2:32, “everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved” (Link to Acts 2:21, 7:59, 9:14, 21, Rom. 10:13, 1 Cor. 1:2)

B. Many of the Psalms are prayers tied to worship; in fact, one could view some of them as inspired prayer journal entries. See, for example:

1. Psalm 2:12 “take refuge”¹ → 5:11-12, 7:1, 11:1, etc.
2. Psalm 102 → 103-106

C. The central unifying principle of truly biblical spiritual formation is **worship**.

1. **Worship** is **the** spiritual practice *par excellence*. It is the *dynamic core* of spiritual formation (individual and corporate).
2. **Prayer** is imbedded in worship (See the remarks on Genesis 4:26 above).
3. One can look at all of **life lived with God and for God** as an act of worship (See the remarks on Romans 12:1 above)

II. Worship

I am convinced that until we get this straight in our minds and work it into our daily lives and communities of faith we are just going to be working harder at the Christian life and getting nowhere.²

¹ NOTE: This verb is used 37 times in OT, 15 of them in Psalms 2-41, Book I.

² See Richard E. Averbeck, “Worshiping God in Spirit,” and “Worshiping God in Truth,” in *Authentic Worship: Scripture’s Voice, Applying Its Truth*, ed. Herbert W. Bateman (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 79-133.



Plan to Listen

- A. You may recall the passage about being filled with the Spirit of God in Ephesians 5. It begins this way:

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but ***understand what the Lord’s will is.***”

- B. The next few verses develop Paul’s point further:

“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be ***filled with the Spirit.*** Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Ephesians 5:15-20)

- C. Whether as individuals or as communities of believers, Christians are first of all and above all “worshippers.”

1. The first best thing we can do together is worship, because that is what puts everything else we do in proper perspective.
2. God becomes the focus of attention, and that, in turn, has a profound effect on the way we engage in everything else we do.
3. The most spiritually transforming activity we can engage in is genuine worship of God “in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).

- D. Worship is about seeing God, who He is and what He has done.

1. We do this with “the eyes of our heart,” an expression the Apostle Paul used in Ephesians 1:18 for the way we encounter God.
2. One thing is for sure: If we really see God, like Isaiah in the throne room of heaven (Isaiah 6), we will most certainly be impressed.
 - a. One of the main problems we have to deal with in our own lives and in our ministries is that we are all too often impressed with the wrong things.



Plan to Listen

- b. The deepest kind of transformation takes place in us when we become so deeply impressed with God and His purposes in and through our lives that our will, our volition, becomes engaged in the process of change and growth.
 - c. When what we are impressed with changes, then what we desire changes with it.
 - d. Worship is about God and about desiring Him more than anyone or anything else.
 - e. Deep and meaningful change takes place when the things that matter to us change.
 - f. The Holy Spirit's goal in worship is to overwhelm us with God, and the things He has freely given us (1 Cor. 2:12, cited above), as the primary driving force behind our spiritual transformation.
- E. But worship is not *just* about seeing God. It is about seeing God *while looking life squarely in the face*.
- 1. Worship is not an escape from life, but a presentation of our life to God, whether personal or communal.
 - a. We cannot leave life behind in order to worship, if our worship is to be authentic and genuine.
 - b. We come into God's presence and offer whatever is there to Him.
 - c. In worship we have a chance to bring to God what is true in our life, look Him straight in the face with it, see it in the light of His presence and purpose, leave it there before Him as an offering of prayerful worship.
 - d. Sooner or later we go forth from there transformed because life looks different when we look at it with God at the center of our vision.
 - 2. When we present our life to Him in worship we actually have a chance to put it in perspective – divine perspective.



Plan to Listen

3. The Psalms teach us this. As in the Psalms,
 - a. Sometimes we give thanks in worship because we are in a thankful place in life.
 - b. Sometimes we lament in worship because that is where our heart is at the time.
 - c. Sometimes we proclaim our faith and confidence in the Lord.
 - d. Sometimes we confess our sinful corruption.
 - e. Sometimes we cry out for help.
 - f. Sometimes we praise; sometimes we pray.



III. Prayer

Worship is at the center of spiritual formation, and **prayer** is at the heart of worship. See Jesus with the woman at the well in John 4:23-24,

“a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father **seeks**. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in **spirit** and in **truth**.”

- A. “Prayer” is part of “worship” and is an act of worship itself.
- B. Prayer is a spiritual discipline of “breathing out” (exhaling) by voicing back to God the impact of his word and work in the midst of our life circumstances (see “contemplation” above, at the beginning of this lecture).

C. Principles and Patterns of Prayer

1. **The Lord’s Prayer**, Matthew 6:5-15

- Introduction:
- a) Quiet solitude (vv. 5-6)
 - b) Meaningful words (vv. 7-8)

Plan to Listen

The content of the prayer:

- a. *Address to Our Father* (v. 9b): Begins with an invocation of God as Father,

“Our Father who art in heaven”

- i. Based in adoptive abiding relationship (cf. John 14-15)
- ii. Recall “calling on the name of the LORD” beginning in Genesis 4:26 (see above).

- b. *Praise to Our Father* (v. 9c)

- i. Worship posture; see above on worship/prayer relationship
- ii. Note that the remainder of the prayer is surrounded by “worship” of God as holy, powerful, and glorious (if the ending is genuine textually, v. 13b):

v. 9c, “Hallowed be Thy name.”

↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

v. 13b, “For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”

- c. *First petition*: Pray for the kingdom will of God **now**, in heaven **and** earth, and **my life** (v. 10)

- i. See Matt 3:2, 4:17, into Matt 5ff, kingdom living
- ii. The first and foremost petition is for God’s will in the world – that the world become pleasing to Him:

“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

- d. *Second petition*: Pray for our basic daily needs (v. 11, cf. vv. 19-34):

“Give us this day our daily bread.”



Plan to Listen

- e. *Third petition*: Pray for forgiveness of ***past*** sins (v. 12, cf. vv. 14-15):

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

- f. *Fourth petition*: Pray for deliverance from ***future*** temptations (v. 13):

“And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

NOTE how important the issue of their personal sin is (cf. how they handle the sins of others in vv. 14-15).

- Conclusion: a) Forgiving others (vv. 14-15)
b) Fasting (vv. 16-18)
c) Kingdom of heaven focus in life (vv. 19-34; esp. 19-21↔33-34)

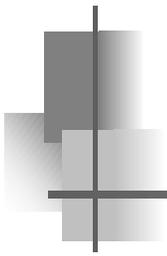
2. Prayer and Pain/Fear/Anxiety

See: 1) many of the Psalms
2) Matthew 6:25ff (in follow-up on the Lord's Prayer, see above)
Philippians 4:4-7
1 Peter 5:6-7

3. Pray without ceasing

1 Thess 5:17 with Matt 14:23, Luke 6:12; 9:28,
Acts 1:14, 2:42 (the *shema* etc.?)





Pause to Reflect

Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

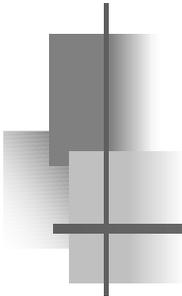
1. Describe in your own words the significance of worship for one's spiritual formation.

2. Describe in your own words how worship and prayer are related.

Application for Life:

3. In light of this lesson, what changes (if any) should occur in your practice of worship and prayer? What immediate steps can you take to improve?

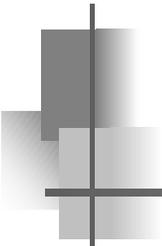
4. Reflect on the statement, "We pursue what we're impressed with." What is the Holy Spirit saying to you in this area?



Lesson Six

Holy Spirit, Prophetic Spirit, & Missional Spiritual Formation

Part I: The Biblical Theological Foundation



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

What is the role of the church in the world? What is *your* role in the community where you live? In this lesson, Dr. Averbeck moves into the third dimension of spiritual formation and establishes the biblical, theological foundation for the church's prophetic mission. Similar to the Holy Spirit's work through specific Old Testament individuals, he indwells and works through the church (and every *individual* believer) to proclaim and manifest his work today. This has direct implications for our spiritual formation. It explains both our role in the world as Christians and the goal to which we strive in the spiritual formation process.

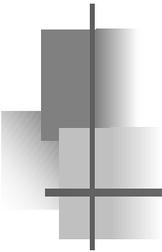
“The church, like the Old Testament prophets, is not supposed to fit in...We are made to stick out. If we fit in the world as it is, something is really wrong with us, terribly wrong. We are to be prophetic. This is one of the main things the Holy Spirit is working in us to make us that for Him.”

– Richard E. Averbeck, Ph.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the connection between the Old Testament institution of prophecy and the work of the Holy Spirit, and its trajectory into the New Testament.
- ◆ Integrate the prophetic impulse of the Holy Spirit in the Bible with the life of the New Testament church and the Christian.
- ◆ Understand the images of the Holy Spirit as water and wind, and the implications of these images for the nature of the Christian life and of Scripture itself.
- ◆ Place a high value on your prophetic role in God's mission in the world.



Prepare to Discover

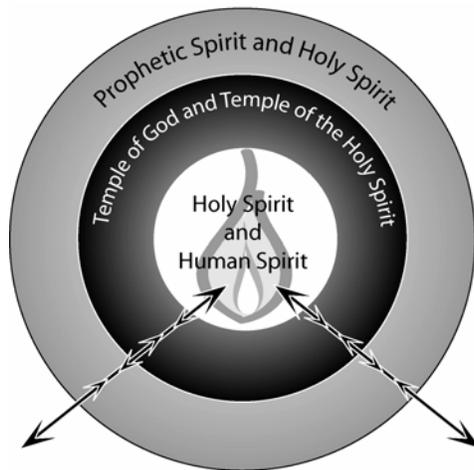
Before you listen to the next lecture, take a few minutes to think about and answer the following questions. Think critically and carefully about your current beliefs and practices in the area of prophecy, mission and engaging the world around you. Open yourself to what God may want to say to you through his Word.

1. How would you define “prophet” and “prophecy”? What does a prophet do?
2. How do you see your role as a Christian in the world? Describe how you reach out or relate to non-believers. Why is this your approach?
3. Reflect on this statement, “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me” (Matt. 5:11). How have you viewed persecution (e.g. violence, social alienation, ridicule)? How have you responded to persecution in your life?

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline

Introduction: Recall our previous discussion of the chart below. We have worked through the first two dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit in the previous lectures. “Holy Spirit and Human Spirit” should cause us to think about personal solitude and intimacy with the Lord, and “Temple of God and Temple of the Holy Spirit” focuses on worship, prayer, personal purity, relational love, and spiritual giftedness in spiritual formation.



Prophetic spirit and Holy Spirit -- the same Holy Spirit who indwells us and transforms us also empowers us for *prophetic ministry*. This is the essence of our *mission* in the church and world.

This dimension should cause us to focus significant attention on the believer's *witness and life as salt and light* for Christ, in the church and in the world.

I. The Holy Spirit and the Institution of Prophecy

Numbers 11:17-29 – Note the close connection between the prophetic institution and the Holy Spirit inherent in this passage:

“I will come down and speak with you there, and *I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them*. They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone (v. 17).

When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again (v. 25).

Plan to Listen

Moses replied, '...*I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!*' (v. 29)

- A. Recall here **1 Samuel 16:13-14** with the background of 10:1-13 (cf. 19:18-24, etc.)

On “evil spirit from the Lord” see also Judges 9:23 and 1 Kings 22:19-22.

Note especially David’s fear of this in Psalm 51:11 (cf. 1 Samuel 16:15-18, 23; 18:10-11; 19:9-10).

- B. One of the key links between the OT and NT is the quote of **Joel 2:28-32 in Acts 2:17-21**. Note vv. 17-18 (Joel 2:28-29)

“In the last days, God says, I will *pour out my Spirit on all people*. Your sons and daughters *will prophesy*, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”

All the OT and NT steps in between are also important:

1. Compare Isa. 40:3-5, Mal. 3:1-4, 4:5-6¹ with Luke 3:1-17.²

Compare Luke 3:16 with Acts 1:4-5, 8, 2:1-4, 38, and then 1 Cor 12:12-13.³

2. Also *compare* John 7:37-39 with 14:16-17 (esp. v. 17, the Holy Spirit “lives *with* you and will be *in* you”).

John 7:37-39 – “On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time *the Spirit had not been given* (lit. ‘[the] Spirit was not yet’), since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”

[Cf. also John 20:21-22? – “Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.’”]



NOTE: “in a few days you will be *baptized with the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 1:4-5)

¹ Cf. Matthew 11:7-15 with John 1:21

² See also Matthew 3:1-11

³ See more on this below.

Plan to Listen

Compare this with Acts 1-2 and the issue of the relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit in the OT (i.e., old covenant) kingdom of Israel and the NT (i.e., new covenant) church of Jesus Christ.

- a. The most natural way to understand the intent of these passages is to say that in the days of Jesus the Holy Spirit was not yet active in the lives of believers in the way that He would be after Jesus was glorified, starting on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). But does this mean that OT “Abrahamic faith believers” were not regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit?⁴
- b. There is probably a combination of things going on:
 - i. The Jewish tradition about the cessation of the time of prophecy with the last of the Old Testament prophets (i.e., “the quenched Spirit” tradition).⁵
 - ii. Similar to the Old Testament, from Pentecost forward, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is closely tied to His prophetic work.⁶
 - iii. The church is by nature a **prophetic** institution!

All Christians are called to be “prophetic.” **We are one** in this way (Unity!).⁷ It is the will of God for each of us, not just an “elite.” It is the **norm** for **every** Christian!

This was **not** true of OT believers, see **Ps 51:11[13]**, with the background of 1 Samuel 16:13-14 (see the discussion above)



See Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Pub. Inc., 1994), 914-915.

⁴ See Richard E. Averbeck, “The Holy Spirit in the Hebrew Bible and It’s Connections to the New Testament,” in Daniel B. Wallace and M. James Sawyer, editors, *Who’s Afraid of the Holy Spirit? An Investigation into the Ministry of the Spirit of God Today* (Dallas, Texas: biblical Studies Press, 2005), 15-36.

⁵ Cf. Psalm 74:9, Zechariah 13:2-3, and Malachi 3:1, 4:5-6. Also see intertestamental literature: Josephus and Rabbinics.

⁶ See, e.g., Joel 2 in Acts 2

⁷ John 17:20-21

Plan to Listen

- iv. The coming of the Holy Spirit into our lives today brings with it the accomplished work of Christ in His life, death, burial, and resurrection.



C. The nature of the prophetic ministry

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, **for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you**” (Matthew 5:11-12).

NOTE: A person who lives the Sermon on the Mount lives as a prophet today!

II. The Holy Spirit as “Water”

A. Recall the Old Testament Foundation

“I will **sprinkle clean water on you**, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and **put a new spirit in you**; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And **I will put my Spirit in you** and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God” (Ezekiel 36:22-38).

Compare this with Ezekiel 39:29 > Joel 2:28-32.

B. The New Testament Application – note the double image in 1 Cor 12:13:

“For we were all **baptized by one Spirit** into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all **given the one Spirit to drink.**”

1. **Water Purification and Baptism with the Spirit** (1 Cor 12:13a)
 - a. Recall the connection of John 3:5-6 back to Ezek. 36:25-27 (see the earlier discussion of this)
 - b. Note also the water imagery in Titus 3:5-6:

“the **washing** of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he **poured out** on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.”

Plan to Listen

2. **Pouring/Drinking of the Holy Spirit, “Indwelling”** (1 Cor 12:13b)

Recall John 4:13-14:

“Jesus answered, ‘Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.’”

III. The Holy Spirit as “Wind”

- A. Recall the earlier discussion of the Holy Spirit as the wind that “drives (or ‘carries’) us along” if we have “our sails up.”

“Above all, you must understand that no *prophecy* of *Scripture* came about by the *prophet’s* own interpretation. For *prophecy* never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were *carried along by the Holy Spirit*” (2 Peter 1:20-21).

- B. The OT scriptures came to us through the institution of prophecy specifically because of prophecy’s connection to the Holy Spirit.

“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the *prophets* at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son [the ultimate ‘prophet’], whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe” (Hebrews 1:1-2).

“*from infancy* you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. *All Scripture* is God-**breathed** [*theopneustos*, i.e., breathed out by the wind/breath of the Spirit of God] and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:15-17).

- C. In its context, however, 2 Peter 1:20-21 does not limit itself to the OT.
 1. Peter’s main point is that the apostolic eyewitness of the transfiguration⁸ results in “the word of the prophets made more certain” (v. 19a).
 2. The readers need to pay close attention to this prophetic word until it actually comes to pass (v. 19b).



Note on 2 Peter 1:20: In my opinion, the NRSV translates better here, “that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of *one’s* own interpretation.” See the discussion below.

⁸ See 2 Peter 1:16-18; cf. Matthew 17:1-13 and parallels.

Plan to Listen

3. Jesus is yet to come in all his glory and power. They need to be ready for that coming, knowing first of all that “that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation” (v. 20b, NRSV).

4. 2 Peter 2:1 brings the main point into full focus:

“But there were also *false prophets* among the people, just as there will be *false teachers* among you.”

5. The prophets and apostles are also paired together in 2 Peter 3:2:

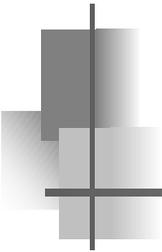
“I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy [OT] prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your [NT] apostles.”

6. 2 Peter 3:15

“Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.”

- a. He points out that some of what Paul writes contains “some things that are hard to understand,” and alerts them to the fact that some “ignorant and unstable people distort” Paul’s writings too, “as they do the other (OT) scriptures, to their own destruction” (v. 16).
 - b. Since the OT writings are referred to here as the “other” scriptures, therefore, the writings of Paul (and by implication the other apostles) are considered to be inspired “Scripture” as well.
- D. The point is that what God the Holy Spirit has done in giving us the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, is a substantial part of the Holy Spirit’s work in history and, in fact, is *essential* to our spiritual formation.





Pause to Reflect

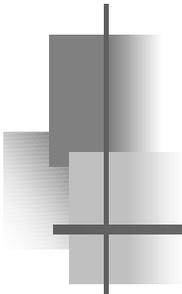
Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

1. In your own words, explain how “the church is by nature a prophetic institution.”
2. How is the Holy Spirit’s inspiration of the Bible important for our spiritual formation?

Application for Life:

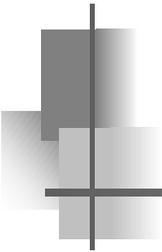
3. What do you think the “prophetic” life of a Christian should look like when lived out in the world? What activities should you practice that would be faithful to this prophetic calling?
4. How do you think persecution enters into the prophetic element of the Christian life? How much have you experienced that personally?



Lesson Seven

Holy Spirit, Prophetic Spirit, & Missional Spiritual Formation

Part II: The Practice



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

How should we engage the world missionally? In this lesson, Dr. Averbeck concludes his lectures with the practice of missional spiritual formation, focusing primarily on the role of story in evangelism and the role of Scripture as *the Story*, which explains all other stories. The Holy Spirit was active throughout the prophetic process of writing Scripture, and he continues to work through us prophetically to speak truth and love into the world. Dr. Averbeck concludes the lecture offering several comments on how the theology and practice of spiritual formation should influence ministry.

“One of the most effective ways today to do evangelism is by story. It gets into people’s worlds with them and helps them to see how the Bible explains their story—the good, the bad and the ugly of their story—and invites them to a new life, a Kingdom of God, living life, and they get a chance to actually switch lives...there is a redemption, a kind of new life effect, that comes out of this kind of engagement.”

– Richard E. Averbeck, Ph.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the importance and implications of the missional dimension of spiritual formation.
- ◆ Value the importance of understanding the “story” element of Scripture and its role as *the Story* that explains all our personal and local stories (a metanarrative).
- ◆ Integrate your personal “story” into the Story of Scripture and connect this directly to the missional dimension of your personal (and community) spiritual formation.
- ◆ Think through the nature of spiritual formation as it applies to the actual practice of the church and Christian ministries of various kinds.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline

Introduction: We have been discussing the theology and practice of spiritual formation according to the three concentric circles. In terms of the practice we have previously focused our attention on:

1. The work of the Holy Spirit in the human spirit through spiritual reading, *lectio divina*. (lesson 3), which focuses on the **individual** dimension of spiritual formation.
 - a. The Holy Spirit’s spiritual formation work “**in**” us.
 - b. We are called to be **transformed**.
2. The work of the Holy Spirit in making us into a redemptive community that is a temple of the Holy Spirit, a people that practices the presence of God through worship and prayer (lesson 5), which focuses on the **relational** dimension of spiritual formation.
 - a. The Holy Spirit’s spiritual formation work “**among**” us as he continues to work “in” us individually.
 - b. We are called to be a transformational **community**.

NOTE: Of course, much more could be said about practices that correspond to both of these two inner circles. But now we need to turn our attention to the outer third circle:

3. The work of the Holy Spirit in making us prophetic in the church and in the world—disciples of Jesus who stand up, step out, and speak up as a prophetic voice, individually and as a community of faith. This focuses on the **missional** dimension of spiritual formation.
 - a. The Holy Spirit’s spiritual formation work “**through**” us as he continues to work “in” us individually and “among” us relationally.
 - b. We are called to be a **missional** transformational community.



Plan to Listen

Caution: One does not just teach spiritual formation.

- a. One teaches spiritual formation as one actually engages in doing spiritual formation with people.
- b. We need to avoid doing spiritual formation in a way that undoes it!
- c. The importance of “story” and “journey”

I. History as “His-story” – God’s Story

- A. The Bible is an authoritative canon that tells a story—but not just *any* story.
 1. It is a true story, and (most important of all) it is a story we are all part of whether we know it or not and whether we like it or not.
 2. We have all joined the story in progress, along the way, so to speak.
 3. And it is the “script” for the lives of people who know the Lord, both in terms of what we face in life and how we would best face it.
 - a. It is “scriptive” for both the individual and the community of faith.
 - b. *Scripture* is both *de*-scriptive of what happened in the past and also *pre*-scriptive for how we should live now.
 - c. It tells the story about how things really are, and always have been, since the foundation of the world.
 - i. The narrative framework of the Bible consists of a story, and our lives follow a trajectory from it.
 - ii. This story, therefore, instructs us about our lives *as we are living them*.
 - iii. Stories instruct in their own peculiar way.



Plan to Listen

- iv. There are also other genres of literature imbedded in the Bible (i.e. law, prophecy, etc.). Each of these instruct in its own way as well.
- d. Our whole life, in its many seasons and dimensions belongs to this script.
- 4. As ancient as it is, the Bible tells the story in a way that focuses its primary attention on the main issues of the lives of all people of all time, ancient and modern.
 - a. It connects directly and dynamically to each of our personal stories.
 - b. One of the features of postmodern culture is its “incredulity toward meta-narrative.”
 - i. Pluralism rules the day.
 - ii. Personal local stories overrule everything else so that, for example, what is true for you might not be true for me.
 - c. The biblical story, however, can explain local stories of persons and communities so well that their incredulity toward meta-narrative can actually be overcome by the sheer force of the meta-narrative itself.
 - i. The way the Bible explains the experience of individuals, families, and communities.
 - ii. The way the Bible provides a profoundly meaningful way forward for them in the midst of that experience.
 - d. Those with ears to hear and eyes to see are invited to:
 - i. A new personal life that is continually renewed.
 - ii. A new community life in fellowship with God’s kingdom people here and now.



Plan to Listen

- iii. A new mission in life in which we stand out as light in the midst of a world that lives in profound darkness.
- iv. When we read the Bible from this place, the Holy Spirit uses it to “enlighten” our human spirit (individually and in community) in transforming ways.¹

B. God, People, and the Bible – the overall perspective outlined above has led me to the following general conclusions about the flow of the Bible theologically and implicationally.

1. Although the world was created to be a place of “rest” (i.e., peace and purpose) for us, **it** is now a “mess” and so are **we**. We have lost our “rest,” and this loss manifests itself in the way we handle life (Genesis 1-11).
2. Even though we are in this disastrous situation and continue to make it worse because of the many ways we reject God and His design for us and our world, still, He has stayed involved and there **is** a redemptive “rest” to be found amid the “mess” (Genesis 12-Revelation 22),
3. In spiritual formation the goal is to work that “rest” down into the hearts and lives of people so that they love God and love people well in spite of the “mess” which we are, and in which we live (Salvation and Sanctification). The Gospel is always “good news” to everyone.²

II. “Noticings” about Spiritual Formation in Ministry

A. Your life **is** your ministry—living and sharing your personal story well (your journey).

¹ See Richard E. Averbeck, “God, People, and the Bible: A Spiritually Formative Approach to biblical Scholarship,” in Daniel B. Wallace and M. James Sawyer, editors, *Who’s Afraid of the Holy Spirit? An Investigation into the Ministry of the Spirit of God Today* (Dallas, Texas: biblical Studies Press, 2005), 137-165.

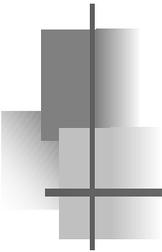
² See Richard E. Averbeck, “Creation and Corruption, Redemption and Wisdom: A biblical Theology Foundation for Counseling Psychology,” in *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 25:2 (2006): 111-126.



Plan to Listen

- B. Spiritual formation becomes what the ministry is all about, from the top down. The ministry leadership team must do spiritual formation together first, before even attempting to take the ministry in that direction. *You do not just teach it; you do it **with** people.*
- C. Spiritual formation ministry must be missional, or it will lose its vitality and direction. This is about becoming a community that invites people to another life—a switching of kingdoms:
- “For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13-14).
- D. “Poorology” – the least, the last, and the lost





Pause to Reflect

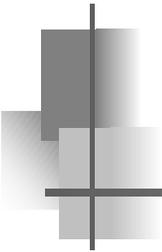
Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

1. Summarize the overall biblical story as it is presented in the lecture (see I, B). Then, summarize your personal “story” or “journey.” Show how your story fits into and gets its meaning/purpose from the biblical story.

Application for Life:

2. Reflect on the statement, “Your life *is* your ministry.” Where in your life can you see ministry happening (i.e. work, children, etc.)? What (if anything) needs to change for you to be faithful?
3. What is the significance of this statement for ministry: “You do not just teach spiritual formation, you do it with people.” What might it mean for *pastoral* ministry?
4. What (if anything) in light of this lesson do you need to consider changing in your approach to evangelism? Why is this important?



Further Reading

Resources on Spiritual Formation

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2005).

One of the best handbooks on spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines in the church

Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1998).

Probably the best book on systematic theology in relation to spiritual formation

Larry Crabb, *Soul Talk: The Language God Longs for us to Speak* (Nashville: Integrity Publishers, 2003).

One of the best books on spiritual direction and spiritual friendship.

Bruce Demarest, *Satisfy Your Soul: Restoring the Heart of Christian Spirituality* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1999).

Probably the best book on an evangelical analysis of spiritual formation traditions and a positive approach to spiritual formation in an evangelical context

Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Disciplines: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (third edition; New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998).

A classic book on the spiritual disciplines and their practice

Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2006).

A new important book on all the various aspects of discipleship and spiritual formation

Gary W. Moon and David G. Benner, *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

An important book on spiritual direction and the inner life of people

Gordon Mursell, General Editor, *The Story of Christian Spirituality: Two Thousand Years, from East to West* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001).

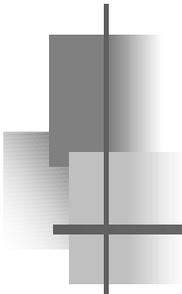
The best overall chronological summary of spirituality in the various historical traditions of the church through the centuries

Eugene H. Peterson, *Eat this Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006).

One of the best books on the theory and practice of *lectio divina*/spiritual reading of Scripture

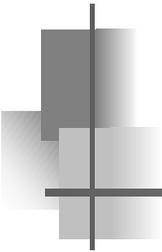
Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002).

One of the most important recent books on the subject of spiritual formation by one of the most important authors in the field



Lesson Eight

Introduction to Ethical (or Moral) Formation



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

What is the relationship between spiritual formation and ethics? In this lesson, Dr. James Grier begins a five-part reflection on how ethical (or moral) formation relates to and builds off of the biblical, theological foundation of spiritual formation. Both spiritual and ethical formation are dependent on the Spirit's work of regeneration but they have different focuses. Spiritual formation deals with the dynamic activity of the spirit in conjunction with the Word of God, and ethical formation deals with conduct and how the Spirit enables us to do the will of God. In all of this, our cultures and the philosophical assumptions behind them are incredibly important.

“When we talk then about spiritual formation, we are talking about having to have a radically new starting point in order for spiritual formation and moral formation to take place. Once sin came in the world, all of special revelation became redemptive in its orientation. And once sin was present, now this redemptive revelation would have to bring about a fundamental change in man for man to be renewed in the image of God and for man to be able to be spiritually formed.”

– James M. Grier, Th.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the relationship between spiritual and ethical formation.
- ◆ Trace the history of ethics from the 6th Century BC to today.
- ◆ Understand the significance of “image” at creation, the changes as a consequence of sin and the role of regeneration in renewing man in the image of God.
- ◆ Place a high value on being aware of postmodern culture and its implications for the task of gospel formation.
- ◆ Do initial evaluation of cultural motifs and their inroads into the Christian church.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline

I. Introductory Considerations

- A. The basis for continuity between spiritual and moral formation
- B. The biblical idea of image and its implications
- C. The implications of sin for the formation of Christ's moral likeness in us
- D. Regeneration and its implications for forming Christ's moral likeness in us

II. Historical Review of Moral Formation

A. Introduction to Ethics

1. "Ethics" comes from the Greek word *ethos*, which is translated in our Bibles as "custom" or "practice." The Latin translation is *more* from which we get our word "moral." In the New Testament the primary notion of ethics is conduct or pattern of conduct.
2. Three essential components of ethics:
 - a. *Theory of Obligation*: Deals with a standard by which we make judgments between right and wrong.
 - b. *Theory of Values*: Deals with what is good and bad. Values are the stuff out of which we make decisions that are not covered under our obligation.
 - c. *Theory of Motivation*: Deals with the internal disposition that inclines us to do what we do.

B. Greek Dualistic Tradition in Ethics

1. Greek Dualism and Moral Absolutes
 - a. The influence of Plato and Aristotle
 - b. Greek thought in the Church (Augustine via Platinus)



Plan to Listen

2. Idealism through Modernity (Descartes, Fichte, Schelling, Kant)

C. Empirical Tradition through Modernity

1. Naturalism and empiricism
2. Implications for morality

D. Postmodernism and Its Moral Implications

1. Contrast of modernity with postmodernity
2. Three basic tenets of postmodernity: social relativism, pluralism and suspicion of truth

III. Contemporary Approaches to Moral Obligation

- A. Virtue Based Ethics
- B. Consequential Based Ethics
- C. Deontological Based Ethics

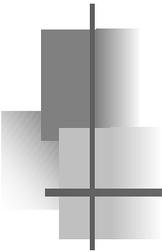
IV. Summary and Conclusion

Formation by the Spirit into the image of Christ is essentially related to the Spirit's work in regeneration, in writing the law on the fleshly tables of the heart, on the development of the human will to will the moral will of God with joy and spontaneity.

God's commands reveal aspects of his character, and our will and obedience to them transcribes his glory in the created earth as well as forms us into the moral likeness of Jesus Christ. To use our will to reconstruct God's moral will is enabled by the work of the Spirit who forms us from one stage of glory to the next stage of glory.

Concurrent with the development of our will to will God's will with joy and spontaneity is the development of a virtuous disposition and a value set that reveals the Kingdom.





Pause to Reflect

Reflection Questions

Understand the Content:

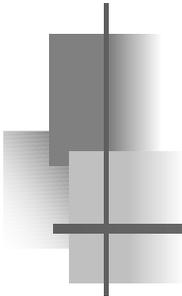
1. In your own words, describe the relationship between spiritual and moral formation.

2. Summarize Greek dualism in your own words. Can you identify ways this philosophy has affected your own thinking and life?

Application for Life:

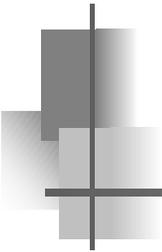
3. Which way of thinking do you relate to most: modernity or postmodernity? What significance does this have for your spiritual formation?

4. How has this lesson challenged your thinking?



Lesson Nine

Ethical Formation & The Old Testament Redemptive Standard



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

What is the biblical standard that should guide our ethical formation? In other words, how should Christians evaluate what is right and wrong (theory of obligation)? In this and the next lesson, Dr. Grier addresses these questions by summarizing the Old and New Testament Redemptive Standards. In the Old Testament we learn that the first humans were created perfect yet still needed commands to guide their moral formation. We learn that God redeemed the nation of Israel and presented his moral will from Mount Sinai in the Ten Commandments. These declarations of the Creator's will for humanity are foundational for all Christian ethical thought.

“We never think about this, but it is perfectly true to say to you that before sin came, when Adam was in a state of creaturely perfection, God still gave him moral commands for the direction of his life.”

– James M. Grier, Th.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the content of a Christian theory of obligation.
- ◆ Understand the role of commandment and obedience for ethical formation.
- ◆ Apply commandments to their lives in the community of the redeemed.
- ◆ Place a high value on Scripture as the means the Spirit uses in every aspect of formation.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline

I. Introductory Considerations

- A. What do we mean by the “will of God”?
 - 1. *God’s will as his eternal purpose or decree:* This is not addressed to us and is not the standard we are held accountable to in life.
 - 2. *God’s will as moral precept (his moral will):* This is addressed to us and is the standard that we are accountable to in life. *This is the focus of these lectures.*
- B. What is the relationship between love and law?¹
 - 1. Commandment is the channel through which genuine love is expressed.
 - 2. Love *is* command.
- C. The relationship between Genesis and Revelation
 - 1. They form bookends around Scripture.
 - a. Creation perfection (Gen. 1-2)
 - Sin destroyed this perfection (Gen. 3ff)
 - b. Restoration of perfection (Rev. 21-22)
 - 2. Two primary redemptive events that bring this restoration
 - a. The Exodus from Egypt (OT)
 - b. The person and work of Jesus Christ (NT)
- D. A Christian Theory of Obligation
 - 1. Perpetually binding moral commands: These are addressed to all people, at all times, in all places.



NOTE: Love and law have a very close tie. We have always been taught that law is coercive and love is spontaneous. *Not so!* Love has an antecedent in command.

NOTE: These two redemptive events established two redemptive standards on which proper Christian ethics and moral formation are based.

¹ It is important to note that love is the fulfillment of the law. See Matt. 22:37-40.

Plan to Listen

2. Temporary binding moral commands: These are addressed to specific people for specific times and places in order to apply perpetually binding commands appropriately.



II. Moral Formation in the State of Perfection - Genesis 1-2

- A. Man as *imago Dei*
- B. Man as Vice Regent under God
- C. Creation Ordinances
 1. Procreation – “Be fruitful, multiply” (Gen. 1:28)
 2. Geographical distribution – “fill the earth” (Gen. 1:28)
 3. Dominion and labor – “Rule over” (Gen. 1:28, 2:15)
 4. Marriage (Gen. 2:24)
 5. Sabbath? (Gen. 2:1-4)
 6. Abstain from that tree! (Gen. 2:17)
- D. Character Formation in the Garden

NOTE: Through obedience to the creation ordinances, man’s character would have been formed in righteousness. However, he did not obey, and his character was instead formed in unrighteousness.

III. Old Testament Redemptive Standard for Moral Formation

- A. Genesis 3 as a Prototypic Event and the the Breakdown of the Creation Ordinances
- B. Additions to the Creation Ordinances after the Flood
- C. The Ten Words
 1. Moral formation of the redeemed people
 2. These build upon the Creation Ordinances.

Prototypic event: An event that serves as a pattern for a continuing dynamic in life. Here this refers to how Satan continues to work in the same way today.

Plan to Listen

D. Overview of each Word (See Exodus 20): *All of these reveal the character/will of God.*

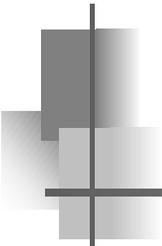
1. No God's before Me!
2. No Self-Make Images!
3. No Misuse of the Name!
4. Remember Sabbath...
5. Honor Father and Mother
6. No Killing!
7. No Adultery!
8. No Stealing!
9. No False Witness!
10. No Coveting!

IV. Summary and Conclusion

Man's will at creation had a significant place in the plan of God. He was to will the will of God for the entire created earth as God's Vice-Regent in history. In order to accomplish this God gave him the creation ordinances for the direction of his will and the formation of moral character.

Man rebelled and disobeyed God's will and thus brought ruin on himself and creation. For man to accomplish his goal in the program of God it would now take an act of redemptive grace on God's part to restore man. The Old Testament redemptive event was the exodus by blood and by power out of Egypt. To the redeemed people God gave the Ten Words to direct their life as the people of God and to use their will to will God's will for the creation.





Pause to Reflect

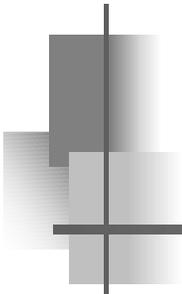
Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

1. Describe in your own words how love and law are related. How does this challenge or confirm your view prior to this lesson?
2. What role did the creation ordinances play in man's character formation in the garden? What does this mean for the moral formation process, and how is it significant for your life?

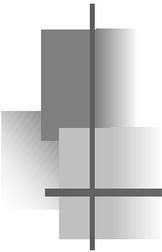
Application for Life:

3. As Dr. Grier overviewed the Ten Words, which one(s) seemed most significant for you? What would a proper response look like?
4. How has this lesson challenged your thinking or the way you approach life? What changes (if any) should take place?



Lesson Ten

Ethical Formation, The New Testament Redemptive Standard & Christian Liberty



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

The Ten Commandments are more expansive and have more implications for our lives today than we tend to think. With both his words and his life, Jesus Christ showed us their true significance and also demonstrated full obedience to them. In this lesson, Dr. Grier draws out the implications of the Ten Words (and Jesus' interpretation of them) for life in the twenty-first century. Although obedience to Jesus' high standard may seem impossible, the work of the Holy Spirit to incline our hearts toward God makes joyful, spontaneous obedience a possibility. With God's laws written on our hearts, we can apply principles of Christian liberty to discern God's will in all areas of life.

“In point of fact, that whole conflating of the church on the individualistic model of personal piety and everything else, whereby we become sanctified because we do our devotions, we do our little disciplines of piety, we give our little tithe to Jesus—All of this takes place individually, and yet the lifestyle we live, the values that govern our choices, the kind of clothes we wear, the food we eat, the music we listen to, the entertainment that we watch—all of this fits the culture in which we live.”

— James M. Grier, Th.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the structure of the Ten Words.
- ◆ State the relationship of the Law to Christ.
- ◆ Trace the New Testament redemptive standard from the Sermon on the Mount through the final judgment in Revelation 19 and 20.
- ◆ Apply the principles of Christian Liberty to the appropriate decisions in life.
- ◆ Place a high value on identifying all the commands of the Bible that are addressed to you.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline

I. Review and Introduction

A. The Organizing Structure of the Ten Words (cf. Ex. 20)

God's Exclusive Claims

- No God's Before Me!
- No Self-Made Images!
- No Misuse of the Name!

God's Basic Institutions

- Remember Sabbath....
- Honor Father & Mother

Basic Human Obligation

- No Killing!
- No Adultery!

Basic Social Obligations

- No Stealing
- No False Witness!
- No Coveting!

- B. The Prophets take these words and bring them into the changed situation of Israel's urban life (Isaiah 1, 8th word).
- C. The Ten Words are built on the creation ordinances and thus show the continuity of the perpetually binding commands.
- D. The perpetually binding commands transcribe the attributes of the Living God.

II. The New Testament Redemptive Standard

- A. Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7)
 - 1. Relationship of the Law to Christ (5:17)
 - 2. Two commandments expanded
 - a. Sixth: No killing > No anger (5:21-26)
 - b. Seventh: No adultery > No lust (5:27-30)



Consider the following:

All the **negative** commands are categorical E form propositions: *You are to be totally excluded from the class of persons who...*

The two **positive** commands are categorical A form propositions: *You are to be totally included in the class of those who...*

The categorical E form propositions can be converted to categorical A form. For example: The 6th word would be, *You should be totally in the class of those who nurture and preserve life*. The 7th word would be, *Keep their marriage vows*, etc...

The A form propositions can be converted to E form. *You are to be totally excluded from the class of those you violate Sabbath or dishonor parents...*

Plan to Listen

- B. The Standard of the Epistles
- C. The Standard for Judgment at the Last Day

III. NT Temporary Binding Commands

- A. The Ordinances/Sacraments
- B. Other commands that will terminate in the future?

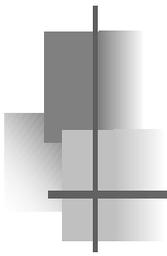
IV. Principles of Christian Liberty

- A. Is it fitting? (cf. 1 Cor. 6:10)
- B. Predict consequences of the action on the agent, weaker brother, and the unredeemed.
 - 1. Will it build up?
 - 2. Who will be in control?
- C. The role of conscience
- D. The purpose of Christian Liberty = the Glory of God

V. Summary and Conclusion

The NT Standard has continuity with the creation ordinances, the Ten Words, Sermon on the Mount and the teaching of the epistles. Christ embodied the OT Standard in his person and work. He has advanced the deposit of truth by showing the true significance of the commandments. Spontaneous and joyful obedience to the commands bring the law on the heart and the commands into fruitful relationship. There is significant advancement and development of the OT Standard in the NT. The Spirit uses the entire canon for our moral formation.





Pause to Reflect

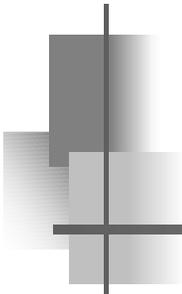
Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

1. Explain in your own words the relationship between the creation ordinances, the Ten Words, the Sermon on the Mount, and the epistles.
2. Explain briefly how spiritual formation and ethical/moral formation are “two sides of the same coin.” How does this help you better understand both?

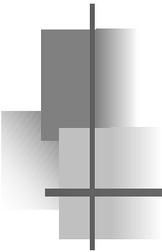
Application for Life:

3. How would you state your appropriate response to God’s commands? Do you sense that “internal inclination” to obey even if it is difficult? What might be holding you back from joyful and spontaneous obedience?
4. Apply the principles of Christian liberty discussed in the lesson to a current issue you are facing.



Lesson Eleven

Ethical Formation & Values



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

Values are the stuff out of which we make decisions. We may know all the moral commands from Scripture and we may apply the principles of Christian liberty, but there are often decisions we make (such as how we use our time and money) that are not covered by moral obligation. Furthermore, knowing the truth does not guarantee doing the truth. In this lesson, Dr. Grier explains how value theory fills that gap and shows us both *how* we make decisions and how we *should* make decisions. It all comes down to our values. Whatever we value will get priority over other things, so it is crucial to our ethical formation that our values match the values of God's Word.

“Whenever we make a decision and that decision is not covered by divine command or principles of Christian liberty, that decision is going to be the application of our values to the alternatives that are open to us.”

– James M. Grier, Th.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Identify the candidates for intrinsic value.
- ◆ Apply the definition and classification of values to life situations.
- ◆ Identify our intrinsic value and list the characteristics of that *Summum Bonum*.
- ◆ Evaluate cultural values in light of the normative values of Scripture.
- ◆ Evaluate your value set and correct it in light of the biblical teaching.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline



I. Introductory Considerations

- A. Review of perpetually binding, temporary binding and the principles of Christian Liberty.
- B. Relation of Love to Law
 - 1. Love is the fulfillment of the law. It is the motive and emotion that impels action that fulfills the law.
 - 2. Love is a canon or norm. It is commanded.
 - 3. Love and law are not the same thing.
 - 4. Love does not generate its own patterns or standards of behavior.
 - 5. Law on the heart is the same content as the law on tablets of stone (the commandments).

II. Moral Formation and Value Theory (Axiology)

- A. Introduction to Value Theory
- B. The use of values in everyday life
- C. What is a “value”?
 - 1. Value has to do with the worth we place upon people, objects and events.
 - 2. Values can be judged by a standard.
 - 3. Values are not relative.
- D. Is there more than one kind of value?
 - 1. Intrinsic values
 - a. Something that is good in itself
 - b. Conflicting values and the role of worship

Plan to Listen

2. Extrinsic values
 - a. Instrumental values: a means to an end
 - b. Beneficial values: a means to a good

E. Value Set

1. Intrinsic value(s)
2. Multiple instrumental and beneficial values

III. Biblical Intrinsic Value

- A. What is the *biblical* intrinsic value, the *Summum Bonum* (“highest good”)?

But seek first his **kingdom** and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matt. 6:33).

- B. Characteristics of the Kingdom as our intrinsic value

1. Not an instrumental value
2. Equivalent to the moral rule of God: *Our highest good is the same as our moral obligation. When we obey we are pursuing the highest good for all humanity.*

- C. OT Intrinsic Value

1. Absolute demand on us
2. Gift of grace: Evil must decrease.
3. Eschatological *summum bonum*: an ethic of hope

- D. NT Intrinsic Value

1. Absolute demand is intensified.
2. Gift of grace is clearer.
3. Still an ethic of hope



The Moral Rule of God:

1. Perpetually binding commands
2. Temporarily binding commands
3. Principles of Christian Liberty

Plan to Listen

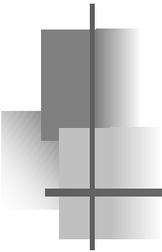
IV. Summary and Conclusion

The task of reading and interpreting the Bible does not end with making reasoned judgments about the meaning of the text. Because values are the stuff that drives decisions we must go from meaning to value in our reading, teaching and preaching.

One of the major contributory reasons that moral formation lags behind in the church is that we have assumed that if a person knows the truth they will automatically do the truth. This Greek notion dies hard in our churches.

When the Spirit acts on our Spirit and we behold the perfect moral image of Christ we are transformed in thought, volition, values and affections. Unless we are open to the full range of the transforming work of the Spirit we end up as a community of truth defenders for whom the moral likeness of Christ is not a present reality in our midst.





Pause to Reflect

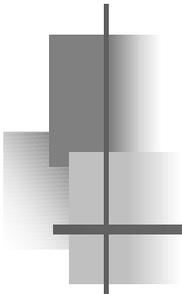
Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

1. Explain briefly how the biblical intrinsic value (highest good) is identical with the moral obligation of all humans? What does this mean for moral formation?
2. In what way can you aid and anticipate the work of the Spirit in moral formation when you assemble with the people of God for worship?

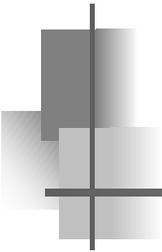
Application for Life:

3. What steps can you take to identify the values you hold and the order in which you hold them? Begin to list and evaluate these.
4. How would you evaluate your stated ultimate goal/purpose in life? Is it consistent with the biblical intrinsic value of the Kingdom of God?



Lesson Twelve

Ethical Formation & Decision Making



Prepare to Discover

Lesson Overview

The decisions we make (impulsive or calculated) are major indicators of our spiritual maturity, so as we pursue spiritual and ethical formation, the way we make decisions becomes a serious priority. In this last lesson, Dr. Grier concludes the series by discussing two practical areas where the entire framework of spiritual and ethical formation comes together to help guide our growth. First, we can institute a strategic plan for developing our wills so that we spontaneously, predictably and thoroughly do what God has commanded. Second, we can walk through a seven-step decision-making model that will guide us in difficult decisions.

“Frankly, the will is trainable, and this is the heart of understanding how this material on spiritual formation and moral formation comes to us in the practicality of everyday life.”

– James M. Grier, Th.D.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the process for developing the will.
- ◆ Apply the decision-making model to life choices.
- ◆ Synthesize our theory of obligation and our theory of values.
- ◆ Place a high value on the use of Scripture in decision-making characterized by a value or complex of values.

Plan to Listen

Lecture Outline

I. Review

- A. Theory of Obligation: perpetually binding moral commands, temporary binding moral commands and principles of Christian liberty
- B. Theory of Values

II. The Development of the Will in Moral Formation

- A. The spontaneity of the will – *How quickly does your will respond and initiate actions that are in harmony with God's moral will?*
- B. The backbone of the will – *How predictable is it that you will do the moral will of God? Or are you tossed to and fro with every situation?*
- C. The scope of the will – *How broad are the areas of life that you have brought into conformity with the moral will of God?*
- D. A plan for the development of the will: Select one area of failure to work on at a time and focus until you bend your will properly.

III. The Use of Commands and Values in Decision Making

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Romans 12:1-2).¹

- A. The Decision-Making Model: *Seven Steps*
 - 1. Define the problem as accurately as possible.
 - 2. Gather the appropriate information necessary to make a good decision.
 - 3. Build as many alternatives as possible.



¹The New King James Version. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982.

Plan to Listen

4. Predict the consequences of each alternative.
 5. Write your values in order given present providence.
 6. Apply the values to the alternatives and their consequences.
 7. Select the alternative that best matches your value set.
- B. Where to begin: *Become aware of your values by going back and looking at decisions you have made in the past.*
- C. The role of the commands in decision making
1. Never write an alternative in the decision-making process that violates any divine command.
 2. Commands have a negative control on our choices.

IV. Illustrations

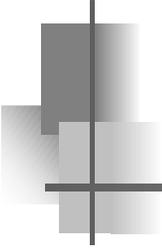
- A. Joseph and Potiphar's wife
- B. Decision of the church in Acts 6

V. Summary and Conclusion

Moral formation and spiritual formation have much in common. They are the product of the activity of the Spirit as he seeks to form Christ in us. Conformity to the image of his son is the goal of predestination and the Spirit is the agent of every aspect of salvation whereby we are united to Christ and sustained in Him. As usual, the Spirit uses the agency of the Word in his transforming activity.

The individual is to be formed into the moral image of Christ and the community of the redeemed in its corporate relationship is to be transformed as well. The church will then be a foretaste of the consummated kingdom.





Pause to Reflect

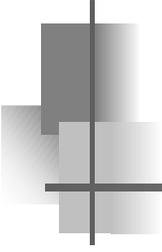
Reflection Questions

Understanding the Content:

1. Briefly describe the three areas in which we need to develop our wills. Describe the character of a person who has developed in all three areas.
2. What might it mean if a person, when presented with the clear will of God, still hesitates (even if briefly) to obey? Has this ever been true of you?

Application for Life:

3. Write down the areas of your life that you struggle most with sin. What values seem to be driving those habits?
4. Prioritize this list of sinful areas from most damaging (to you or others) to least damaging, and make a plan to address one area at a time. Pray for the Spirit of God to incline your heart toward obedience.



Further Reading

Resources on Ethical Formation

Lesson 8

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Lesson 10

Douma, J. *The Ten Commandments*. Phillisburg, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co., 1996.

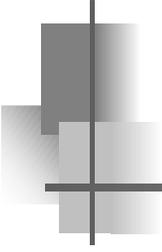
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Kaiser, Walter C. *Toward Old Testament Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993.



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MacArthur, John. *Found: God's Will*. Colorado Springs: SP Publishers, 1977.

Meadors, Gary. *Decision Making Gods Way: A New Model for Knowing Gods Will*. Grand Rapids: Baker Bookhouse, 2002.

Waltke, Bruce. *Finding the Will of God: A Pagan Notion?* Grand Rapid: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002.

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****To say thanks for making this extra effort, you will receive a 25% discount on your next purchase from ITS when you submit this form.¹**

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer each question by circling the number that best represents your answer.
(1= Strongly Disagree, 4=No Opinion, 7=Strongly Agree)

After working through the material in this series, I am better able to:

1. **Understand** the biblical foundations for spiritual and ethical formation and the relationship between them.

◆ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ◆

2. **Evaluate** my life for areas where I can become more intentional and open to the work of the Spirit (i.e. put my “sails” up to catch the wind of the Spirit).

◆ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ◆

3. **Analyze** the ways I make decisions in order to identify habits and values that are contrary to the moral will of God.

◆ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ◆

4. **Think critically** about my approach to life in light of the biblical foundations for spiritual and ethical formation.

◆ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ◆

5. **Apply** the three dimensions of Christian spiritual formation to my daily life of faith.

◆ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ◆

6. **Apply** a biblical model for decision-making that will enhance my moral and spiritual formation.

◆ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ◆

7. **Value** both spiritual and ethical formation as important aspects of the Christian life (both individual and corporate).

◆ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ◆

¹ Your purchase must be made at the time you submit the form in order to receive the 25% discount. Submit form to: