Spiritual Formation
The Corporate Dimensions of Spirituality

Study Guide

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SPIRITUAL FORMATION
Corporate Dimensions of Spirituality

Lecture I

SPIRITUALITY: WHAT IS IT?

I. Spirituality: A Problem in Definition

A. Everyone Is Spiritual

1. Mikhail Gorbachev (Council of Europe, July 1989)
   Europeans need to build a new world worthy of “their spiritual potential” and . . . “the material foundation of life is changing drastically, as are its spiritual parameters.”

2. Much is being said today in a decidedly nonbiblical way concerning the whole matter of spirituality.

B. Disagreement in the Church

1. In addition, there is not a little disagreement among Christians concerning what we mean by spirituality and spiritual formation.
2. Need to carefully determine what we mean by the basic concepts.

II. Secular Spirituality

A. Examples of Secular Usage

1. The word *spiritual* is being drained of the meaning it once had for our society.
2. European environmentalist: “I am not religious in a conventional way, but there is a strong spiritual dimension to my life.”
3. In “green politics” and the “new physics” spirituality is a key word.

   a. Fritjof Capra (The Turning Point): “an ecological and feminist perspective which is spiritual in its ultimate nature and will lead to profound changes in our social and political structures.”
b. Britain’s Green Party: need to recognize “the spiritual dimension of our lives”; give equal value to “spiritual needs” as to physical needs.

c. Naisbitt (Megatrends 2000): “reaffirming the spiritual in what has become a more balanced quest to better our lives and those of our neighbors.”

4. There is a wide diversity of New Age applications and usages representative of contemporary spirituality (USA Today, June 20, 1991).

5. In secular discourse, spiritual can refer to anything that cannot either be tested in a laboratory or bolted to the floor.

B. The Secular Sense or Meaning

1. This is a recognition that there is more to life than the material and that we need to give attention to the unquantifiable aspects of reality as well.

2. Porritt (Director of the “Friends of the Earth”): “that aspect of human nature that allows people to transcend the limitations of their material world, to seek meaning in that which cannot be defined materialistically or scientifically.”

3. The human problem, thus far, is not spiritual death, but rather is spiritual sloth.

C. Observations Relative to the Secular Usage

1. We may need to revise our vocabulary as we deal with those outside the Church.

2. We need to realize that the Bible uses the term spiritual in a specific, limited, restricted sense.

   “The evidence that Saint Paul had passed from spiritual death to spiritual life was not that he heard a voice, saw a light, and temporarily lost his sight, but that love replaced hatred, that patience replaced his testiness, and that meekness replaced his pride.” (Steve Turner, Christianity Today, Sept., 1990)

III. Biblical Spirituality

A. General Anthropological Usage of Terminology
1. We don’t want to deal here with the concept found throughout the Scripture dealing with the Holy Spirit.

2. We want to focus on the anthropological usage of the terminology.

3. In the OT, the primary intent of the word *ruach* with respect to human spirit deals with the Life Principle.
   a. Genesis 7:22
   b. Psalm 104:29
   c. Ezekiel 37:5-6

4. In the NT there are a few occurrences of the word *pneuma* which relate to the above mentioned OT uses.
   b. Insight, feeling, and will: Mark 2:8; Luke 1:47; Acts 17:16-17

**Lecture II**

**SPIRITUALITY: WHAT IS IT? (Continued)**

**III. Biblical Spirituality (Continued)**

A. General Anthropological Usage of Terminology (Lecture I)

B. Pauline Spirituality and Divine Relationships

1. More often, however, *pneuma* refers to that which differentiates God from everything that is not God.

2. Of all the NT writers, Paul most deserves the title, Theologian of the Spirit.

3. One of the primary senses for Paul is that *pneuma* almost exclusively represents the heavenly sphere, the divine realm of existence.
   a. Romans 1:3-4
   b. I Timothy 3:16

4. All of this, however, centers on the cross and the resurrection.

5. To come to Christ is to come into the sphere of the Spirit.
6. For Paul, the Christian is different from all other men because he possesses the divine *pneuma*.
   a. 1 Corinthians 2:6ff
   b. 2 Corinthians 4:13; Galatians 3:14; 5:5
   c. Galatians 3:2,5; Philippians 3:3
   d. Galatians 6:8

7. Paul does use *pneuma* in general anthropological sense.
   a. Psychological functions: 1 Corinthians 7:34; 2 Corinthians 7:1
   b. Parallel to psyche: Philippians 1:27
   c. Whole person: 2 Corinthians 2:13
   d. Equivalent to “you”; Galatians 6:18; Philippians 4:23

8. However, even in these anthropological usages, this *pneuma* for the Christian is something that is alien to us, something that is God-given.
   a. 1 Corinthians 14:14
   b. Romans 1:9
   c. 1 Corinthians 5:3ff
   d. Romans 8:15

9. Paul’s use of the word *pneumatikos* is very much in line with the rest of his theology of the Spirit.
   a. Pertaining to or corresponding to the divine spirit: (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 1:9; 3:16; 1 Peter 2:5; 1 Corinthians 15:44)
   b. 1 Corinthians 2:13-15
   c. The law: Romans 7:14,22,25

C. John’s View of Spirituality

1. John provides a good summary for the biblical view of spirit and spirituality in his usage of *pneuma* as a sphere or realm of existence in antithesis to *sarx*.
   a. John 3:6
   b. John 6:63
2. The eschatological encounter (the Day of the Lord) realized in the coming of the Christ is not an encounter of the substance of God with a similar substance in man.

3. To worship God in \textit{pneuma} is not to worship in one's own spirituality but to worship in the world of God and hence in true reality.

4. The true God has entered the world in Christ.
   
a. 1 John 5:20 
b. John 8:32; 17:3 

\textit{Lecture III} 

\textbf{SPIRITUALITY AND MATURITY} 

\textit{Excurses} 

Then how do we explain the “spiritual experiences” of those in the world, those experiences which do seem to transcend material realities?

1. Modes of Human Consciousness from Physiological Psychology, Arthur Deikman.
2. “Each person has a natural mystical faculty that may be activated naturally or by God.” (Corduan) 

\textbf{I. \textit{Teleios: A Lexical Study}} 

\textbf{A. Classical Usage of Terminology} 

1. Originally the culminating point at which one stage ends and another begins.
2. Can refer to maturity in the sense of whole, unblemished, full, perfect, actualized, efficacious, supreme.
3. In philosophy, sense of full humanity with an orientation to what is worthwhile and ethically good.

\textbf{B. Septuagint and New Testament} 

1. Septuagint usage predominantly in the sense of unblemished or undivided.
2. New Testament usage, especially Paul, seems to follow more the Septuagint than classical usage.
3. Generally refers, however, to that which is “whole” or “entire” with some passages having a sense of “mature” in certain Pauline passages.
4. Ethical usage of the word never seems to point to a goal of ethical perfection which is to be gradually realized by degree.
5. Seems to refer to the anticipation in time of eschatological wholeness and how this anticipation should impact actual present-day living.

II. Biblical Concepts of Maturity and Growth

A. Spiritual Maturity

1. Having seen the lexical development, we shall now observe how the concept of whole, complete, or perfect is developed in the New Testament with respect to spiritual formation.
2. Used in a general sense of having reached the end or purpose which is intended.
   a. James 1:4
   b. Romans 12:2
   c. Hebrew 9:11
3. Often refers to people in the sense of being of age, full-grown, and mature.
   a. 1 Corinthians 14:20
   b. Hebrews 5:14
4. Used specifically for the Christian to speak of maturity in the sense of completeness and wholeness that we have in Christ.
   a. Colossians 1:28
   b. Colossians 4:12
5. Thus, with respect to spirituality, \textit{teleios} refers to a state of spiritual completeness, wholeness, and/or maturity that we somehow obtain through our relationship with Christ.

B. Characteristics of the Spiritually Complete, Perfect, or Mature
1. Knowledge and understanding of the significance of God’s will.
   a. Colossians 1:28
   b. Hebrews 5:11-14
   c. 1 Peter 2:2
   d. 2 Peter 3:18

2. Life which is consistent with God’s will.
   a. Romans 12:1-2
   b. Colossians 4:12
   c. James 3:2 (also James 1:4)

3. Loving as God loves.
   a. 1 John 4:12,18
   b. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3,10

4. Continued Growth
   a. Philippians 3:12-16
   b. 1 Corinthians 2:1-2,6; 3:1

Lecture IV

A PARADIGM FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Transition

1. Note the second person plurals in all the verses we’ve been discussing.
2. Is this referring to a group of independent individuals just because he’s writing to a bunch of people or is spiritual growth itself a collective, interdependent process?

I. Ephesians 4:11-16 (Corporate Spirituality)

A. The Mature

2. Life consistent with God’s Will: 4:12, 14
3. Loving as God loves: 4:15, 16
4. Growth: 4:16
5. Unity: 4:13
7. Note that all of these characteristics are defined and discussed in a plural, collective, and corporate sense.

B. Together or Not At All

1. The Body metaphor: an organism consisting of mutually supporting and interdependent members.
2. The role of love: this is why love is seen throughout the NT as so central, so essential, so basic, so foundational.
4. There is a lot being written and said about both spiritual formation and community these days.
5. The final goal is not our individual spirituality and relationship to God.
6. The final goal is the mutual and corporate growth of the Whole Body.
7. There is a divinely planned mechanism for all this.

II. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (Spirituality and Love)

A. Review

1. Dealing with Biblical concepts related to spiritual formation.
2. This in my mind is one of the most important, if we truly believe that spiritual formation involves a corporate aspect.

B. Immediate Context

1. Contained in section dealing with the use of spiritual gifts (Chapters 12-14).
2. Concerned with the proper use of these gifts in the context of the local church.
   a. 1 Corinthians 12:7
   b. 1 Corinthians 14:26
   c. 1 Corinthians 14:50

C. Larger context of the epistle
1. Written to the church in Corinth.
2. Largely dealing with problems of strife and division within the church.
3. This was a church whose members were abusing the spiritual gifts, using them for selfish reasons.
4. This church was focusing its attention on the wrong things with respect to ministry and the exercise of the spiritual gifts.

D. The “Most Excellent Way”

1. The chapter deals with the centrality and importance of love.
2. More specifically, the importance of love in relation to the life and growth of the church, which we have seen to this point is a very important aspect of spiritual formation.

*Lecture V*

**A PARADIGM FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION**
*(Continued)*

III. Christianity without Love (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

A. The “Up-Front” and “Flashy” Gifts (13:1)

1. The tongues of angels and men: talking of the highest possible manifestation or exhibition of the gift.
2. Noisy and brash: this would not meet the purpose of building up and strengthening the body.
3. Remember the Corinthians to whom Paul was writing.

B. The Miraculous Gifts (13:2)

1. Three gifts referred to in this verse.
   a. Prophesy and mystery
   b. Knowledge
   c. Faith

2. These are all some of the “higher” gifts as compared to tongues (see Chapter 12).
3. Paul speaks of these gifts in their highest sense, the greatest possible exercise of them which is possible.
4. To practice these without love means nothing.
5. Here Paul uses the highest gifts, the gifts which have provided the Scriptural foundation upon which the church has been built, to prove His point.
6. Even the foundations of the church, the apostles and the prophets, would have contributed nothing had they not had love.

C. Acts of sacrifice (13:3)

1. Paul now moves from the practice of spiritual gifts in a worship context to acts of Christianity done outside the church.
2. In both cases, Paul is thinking of the worst that could happen to either his body or his possessions on behalf of others.
3. To do so without love does nothing for the individual.

IV. Why? Love, the Essence of the Christian Experience

A. The Distinguishing Mark of Christians (John 13:34-35)

1. Note that it is not our eloquent preaching, our impressive singing, or our acts of charitable benevolence that will show the world that we are distinct, that we are the followers of Jesus.
2. The false religions of the world have all of these.
3. We are to be characterized by loving one another.

B. A New Testament emphasis

1. Ephesians 5:1
2. 1 John 4:7-8
3. 1 Timothy 1:3-5

C. The Nature of love

1. Love is action (John 3:16).
2. But love is to be action on behalf of others (John 15:13).
3. Love is to be selfless (Luke 6:31-35).
Lecture VI

THE CHURCH: DECISIVE CONTEXT FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

I. Introduction

A. Review

1. We have seen the importance and primacy of the corporate aspects of spiritual formation.
2. Questions now arise concerning the “how.”

B. Overview

1. The first and most important answer to all of these questions is by keeping company with God’s people.
2. We want to consider the various aspects of the church as these relate to spiritual formation.

II. The Church as the People of God

A. Images of the Church

2. One common term used to describe the church is ecclesia.
3. Peter describes this ecclesia as the “people of God” (see 1 Peter 2:9-10).

B. Ephesians

1. The book of Ephesians gives us one of the clearest and most concise pictures of the significance of the church as the context for spiritual formation.
2. Ideas which should be central to our understanding of the real purpose of the church and its impact in spiritual formation abound in the book.
3. Note especially Ephesians 2:11-14,19-22 which forms the theological heart of this epistle.

III. The Church as Event

A. Event Versus Entity
1. Passages that we have looked at discussing maturity and growth look at the church differently than we are commonly accustomed to.
2. We look at the church as a sociological entity, we focus on its makeup rather than what it does.
3. The church is not now fully what it is called out to be.

B. The Church and Growth

1. Ephesians gives us some interesting and new insight concerning growth and spiritual formation, especially with respect to the role of the church.
2. The spiritual growth of the whole community is what is important and not the growth of the individual.
3. Growth refers to the church’s capacity to love as God loves.
   a. Ephesians 3:17-19
   b. Ephesians 4:1-2
   c. Ephesians 4:15-16
   d. Ephesians 4:12-13
4. “The more authentic the experience of the church as church, the more authentic will be the experience of Christians who are shaped through initiation and involvement there.” (Johnson)
5. Whatever we think the church is in terms of a sociological entity, we must realize that the church is truly defined by what it does.

IV. The Church as Family

A. First Century Concept of Household

1. The first century concept of household is one of the most basic and crucial concepts necessary for the understanding of the New Testament.
   “Failure to understand the household concept will mean that a good deal of the New Testament will remain at least a closed book if not a complete mystery.” (Derek Tidball, The Social Context of the New Testament: A Sociological Analysis. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.)
2. The typical first century household was a large, social unit which functioned in a very real sense as a community.

3. There was a clear hierarchy of authority which culminated in the absolute power of the male head of the family.

4. In addition to family relatives, a household also consisted of a class of people known as “friends and clients.”

5. In this setting, friendship became more than simply a spontaneous relation of mutual affection.

6. The third element of the household included the slaves who were responsible for the day to day running of the household.

7. The household member’s whole life and existence centered in and focused on the household.

Lecture VII

THE CHURCH: DECISIVE CONTEXT FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION (Continued)

IV. The Church as Family (Continued)

A. First Century Concept of Household (Lecture VI)

B. The Household of God

1. The household exists with Jesus as the Eldest Son and Chief Heir (Hebrews 1:2,5; 3:6).

2. We have entered this household from the outside as freed slaves (Ephesians 2:11-13,19).

3. We have received the rights and privileges of adoption because we are “in Christ.”

   a. Ephesians 1:5-10
   b. Galatians 3:26, 4:5-7

4. We have familial responsibilities and duties to one another.

   a. Galatians 6:10
   b. Acts 2:44-45

C. Priorities for the Family
1. To become a Christian is to be reborn into a new, all-inclusive family, the family of God.
   a. Mark 3:33-35
   d. Luke 14:25-26

2. The high priority given to this “family” is due to who the members are.
   a. John 1:12
   b. Hebrews 2:11

3. This means accepting the family of God as the primary formative environment for one’s spiritual development.

4. The church is to be our fundamental social unit for living and our basic source of self-identity as persons.

5. The church must transform our experience of family and not visa versa.

6. To be a family means the church must provide an appropriate, interpersonal, relational environment so as to empower, nourish, and sustain formation of Christian character.

**Lecture VIII**

**THE CHURCH: DECISIVE CONTEXT FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION (Continued)**

**IV. The Church as Family (Continued)**

A. First Century Concept of Household (Lecture VI)

B. The Household of God (Lecture VII)

C. Priorities for the family (Lecture VII)

D. Strangers

1. The family of God welcomes strangers.
2. In this family we are to . . .

   a. Welcome the stranger (Matthew 25:35-36)
b. Love our neighbor (Mark 12:28-34; Romans 13:8)

3. Spirituality which fails to love neighbor or provide hospitality to the stranger is not valid. (1 John 4:20; James 2:14-17).

4. In our familial display of hospitality we create an environment in which the stranger is welcomed and received rather than treated as a threat, annoyance, or intruder.

5. We cannot concentrate totally on creating and enjoying intimacy with one another to the exclusion of creating space for the stranger to enter.

E. Consolidation

1. The Christian Life involves participation in the family of God.

2. The very nature of that family demands top priority in terms of our allegiance, loyalty, and commitment.

3. This “family” is not just another aspect of our already overcrowded lives, it is our life.

V. The Church and the Spirit

A. The Sociology of the Spirit

1. The church is by definition a charismatic community.

2. The church is where the Spirit distributes gifts for Christian vocation in the world.

3. NT is far more interested in the sociology of the Spirit than in the psychology of the Spirit.

4. When we lose the biblical sense and perspective of community, then spirituality implies only our private zones of existence and that’s a poverty-stricken view.

B. Spiritual Gifts: What Are They?

**Body Life**

1. It refers to the life that we as Christians are to live together (Ephesians 4:11-16).

2. Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 are the two major passages comparing the united function of the church of Jesus Christ to the functioning of the human body.
3. God has provided spiritual gifts to the Body of Christ in order for it to function successfully.

Definitions

4. We are talking about something which is spiritual, something which goes beyond our natural abilities, talents, and experience.

   a. 1 Corinthians 12:4
   b. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

5. The word translated gifts here is the Greek *charisma* which is directly related to the word *charis*, the Greek word for grace.

6. The context clearly demonstrates that these gifts refer to abilities or skills that people will be able to perform.

7. In light of all of this we can define a spiritual gift as an ability or skill given by God through the Holy Spirit to an individual Christian enabling him or her to perform a spiritual function in the Body of Christ with ease and effectiveness.

The Common Good

8. The exercise of spiritual gifts is not intended to bring glory or attention to the individual Christians.

9. Spiritual gifts are intended to be used for the benefit and good of the entire church.

Diversity of Gifts

10. The New Testament indicates that there were many different kinds of spiritual gifts.

   a. 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 29-30
   b. Romans 12:6-8
   c. Ephesians 4:11
   d. 1 Peter 4:11
11. The variety of gifts is necessary in order for the Church to function properly and effectively.
12. The fact of the diversity of spiritual gifts within the Body of Christ has some important practical implications for us as Christians.

**The Recipients of Spiritual Gifts**

13. Every born-again believer has been endowed by God with spiritual gift(s).
14. Every born-again believer has a responsibility to be using that gift for the “common good” of the Body of Christ.

*Lecture IX*

**THE CHURCH: DECISIVE CONTEXT FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION (Continued)**

V. The Church and the Spirit (Continued)

A. The Sociology of the Spirit (Lecture VIII)

B. Spiritual Gifts: What Are They? (Lecture VIII)

C. Spiritual Gifts: Their Purpose

**The Incarnation**

1. Jesus Christ has provided everything that the church, which is His Body, needs to successfully complete the mission he left for it.
2. All of this has been provided completely at the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Gifted Individuals**

3. The specific gifts/offices described in this particular passage are what we have called the “Support Gifts.”
4. It is clear that these gifted individuals are viewed as Christ’s gifts to the church.

   a. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13a
   b. 1 Timothy 5:17
   c. Hebrews 13:17
Specific and Immediate Purpose

5. The primary purpose of these particular individuals is to prepare or equip God’s people for service.
6. This equipping is to be accomplished through the teaching of the Word of God.
7. The saints are to be equipped in order that they may be able to do the works of the ministry.
8. As the members of the church do these works of ministry or service they are then using the gifts that God has given them.

The Ultimate Purpose

9. As the people of God exercise their service gifts, the Body of Christ (i.e., the church) is built up.
10. The purpose of this “building up” or this “growth” is that the church might achieve unity.
11. The end result of this growth of the Body is described as maturity.

D. Using Spiritual Gifts: Wrong Attitudes

1. Neither Paul nor any other writer in Scripture describes any method for determining what our spiritual gifts are.
   a. 1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1
   b. 1 Corinthians 12:7,27-30
   c. Romans 12:6-8
2. Our energy is not to be spent “discovering” our spiritual gifts, but rather using them for the common good to build up the church.
   a. Romans 12:1-2
   b. 1 Corinthians 15:58
3. “I’m not using my gift because God has not led me to do anything yet.”
4. “My gift is more important or less important than the others.” (Romans 12:3-5)
5. “I will only work and serve in the area of my spiritual gift.” (2 Timothy 4:5)
6. “People don’t appreciate me,” or “They disagree with me so I QUIT.” (2 Timothy 3:10-17)

Lecture X

THE CHURCH DECISIVE CONTEXT FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION (Continued)

V. The Church and the Spirit (Continued)

A. The Sociology of the Spirit (Lecture VIII)

B. Spiritual Gifts: What Are They? (Lecture VIII)

C. Spiritual Gifts: Their Purpose (Lecture IX)

D. Using Spiritual Gifts: Wrong Attitudes (Lecture IX)

E. Using Spiritual Gifts: Right Attitudes

1. The context for the exercise of spiritual gifts is love (1 Corinthians 13).
2. Do not neglect the spiritual gift which is within you (1 Timothy 4:14).
3. Check your own motives.
4. Seek confirmation concerning your own areas of usefulness from the rest of the Body.
5. Rejoice in the gifts that God has given others, realizing that these gifts are intended for your growth and edification.
6. Ask not what the church can do for you, rather ask what you can do for the church.

VI. The Church as Redemptive Community

A. Redeemed and Being Redeemed

1. The Christian’s experience in the corporate context of the church should have, indeed does have a profound effect on our spiritual formation.

a. 1 Corinthians
b. Philippians 2:3; 4:2
c. 2 Timothy 2:14
d. Galatians 5:13-15

2. Our picture of the church as the decisive context for the corporate spiritual formation of the people of God must include honest images and self-understandings.

B. Theological Realities

1. Craig Dykstra maintains that there are two basic theological realities which are central to a proper understanding of the church’s role in spiritual formation:
   a. Patterns of self-destruction
   b. Redemptive transformed

2. By patterns of self-destruction we are referring to the achievement-oriented and competitive lifestyles of prevalent in our modern culture.
3. Buying into this achievement motive and the lifestyle it creates means that we forfeit the one thing that we as human beings fundamentally need.
4. The achievement motive forces us to hide our true selves from one another.
5. These patterns are modified by the fact that the church is not another sociological group but is a faith community of the redeemed who are being redeemed and transformed by the powerful working of God in our midst (Romans 8:28-39).

Lecture XI

CONTEMPORARY FACTORS: THE “PSYCHO-CULTURE”

I. Introduction

A. The Rise of the Psycho-Culture

1. Psychology has become one of the primary sources to which modern Americans go in their quest for self-meaning and self-fulfillment.
2. Susanne Johnson maintains five distinctive “schools” of psychology have influenced the contemporary American context.
a. Traditional Behaviorism (Skinner)
b. Classical Psychoanalytical Thought (Freud)
c. Humanistic, Third Force Psychology (Maslow)
d. Transpersonal, Fourth Force Psychology (Wilber)
e. Structural-Developmental Theory (Piaget, Kohlberg)

3. These psychologies have begun to operate as overall world-views in western society.
4. Cultural values resulting from this make it difficult for believers to develop a distinctly biblical theology and understanding of Christian spirituality.

B. Overview

1. Ethical egoism
2. Psychotherapy
3. Individualism
4. Feminist ideology

II. The Triumph of Ethical Egoism

A. Basic Concepts

1. Dealing here with the theories associated with the more humanistic psychologies.
2. Implicit within the various self-actualization theories is the Greek notion of eudaimonism.
3. This usually becomes translated in the psycho-culture into a duty-to-self ethic.
4. We need to be aware that in this self-actualization theory a logical fallacy has been committed.

B. Ethical Egoism and Spirituality

1. At first glance, self-actualization psychology seems somewhat consistent with our traditional ideas of sanctification and transformation.
2. However, there are dangers facing a biblical concept of spiritual formation which have resulted from the influence of this perspective.
3. We must be aware that many of the things we have identified as spiritual self-actualization are indeed important and biblical.
Lecture XII

CONTEMPORARY FACTORS: THE “PSYCHO-CULTURE” (Continued)

I. Introduction (Lecture XI)

II. The Triumph of Ethical Egoism (Lecture XI)

III. The Triumph of the Therapeutic

A. Basic Concepts

2. Traditionally, in our society, people were assisted in their emotional and spiritual health through the efforts provided by intimate communities bonded by trust and care.
3. The psychoanalytic traditions evolving through more modern psychologies into the therapeutic motif has replaced the traditional forms of community.
4. This is very much related to the ethic of self-actualization.

B. Psychotherapy and Spirituality

1. Spirituality is often viewed as another means to mental health.
2. Within this model as manifested within Christendom, spiritual formation or spiritual discipline is “successful” when one has achieved an inner sense of warmth and well-being.
3. Self-therapy motif is also influencing spiritual formation.
4. It has impacted the pastoral office of the church significantly.
5. Since the church has allowed its community care function to collapse, Christians are turning more to this model which focuses on the psyche rather than the soul.

IV. The Triumph of Individualism

A. Basic Concepts
1. All of the strands of the psycho-culture tend to converge and contribute to this strand.
2. Individuals tend to think of their various obligations as means to individual fulfillment rather than as moral imperatives and spiritual commitments.
3. Emphasize the needs, wishes, and desires of the individual as individual rather than as an active member of a community of care.

B. Individualism and Spirituality

1. Spirituality becomes a solitary and private affair.
2. It is based on a very narrow view of the human self as autonomous, atomistic, and self-contained.
3. Spiritual formation is the domain of the individual with corporate aspects only important as they affect individual development.

V. The Triumph of Feminist Ideology

A. Basic Concepts

1. Carl Jung: human psyche is comprised of both a feminine and a masculine dimension.
2. Dealing here not with sexuality but with certain modalities of relating to the world and of internalizing reality.
3. Anything associated with the masculine is evil, corrupt, distorted, and unspiritual while everything associated with the feminine principle is viewed as harmonious, good, whole, and uncorrupted.

B. Feminist Ideology and Spirituality

1. The old dualism is converted to a new dualism that assigns goodness to feminine modalities and evil to masculine modalities.
2. True spirituality balances and integrates: the cognitive and the affective.
Lecture XIII

HISTORICAL FACTORS: MYSTICAL SPIRITUALITY

I. Introduction

A. Definitions

1. In the history of the church there have been two basic types of spirituality discernable.
2. Each of the types has been more characteristic of specific strains of Christianity than others through the history of the church.

B. Origins and Sources

1. The two principle sources of mystical Christianity are the Bible and Neo-Platonism.
2. Evangelical piety is biblical, being grounded in the New Testament and the Old Testament.

C. The Players

1. Well-known mystics include:
   a. The Eastern Church
      (1) Dionysius
      (2) John of Damascus
      (3) Gregory of Nyssa
      (4) Basil the Great
   b. The Medieval Church
      (1) Augustine
      (2) Thomas Aquinas
      (3) Meister Eckhart
      (4) Jan van Ruysbroeck
      (5) Henry Suso
      (6) Catherine of Genosa
      (7) Catherine of Sienna
      (8) Richard Rolle
      (9) Thomas a Kempis
      (10) Johann Tauler
c. Post-medieval/modern Roman Catholic

(1) Teresa of Avila  
(2) John of the Cross  
(3) Brother Lawrence  
(4) Fenelon  
(5) Garrigou-Lagrange  
(6) Thomas Merton

d. Noted Protestant Mystics have been:

(1) Jacob Boehme  
(2) William Law  
(3) Gerhard Tersteegan  
(4) Johann Arndt  
(5) Gerald Heard  
(6) Albert Day  
(7) Rufus Jones  
(8) Douglas Steere  
(9) Evelyn Underhill  
(10) Friedrich Schleiermacher  
(11) Paul Tillich

2. Those more characteristic of evangelical piety would include:

a. Classical

(1) Irenaeus  
(2) Luther  
(3) Calvin  
(4) Richard Baxter  
(5) John Bunyan  
(6) John Wesley  
(7) Jonathan Edwards

b. Contemporary Protestant

(1) Kierkegaard  
(2) General William Booth  
(3) Christoph Blumhardt  
(4) Dwight L. Moody  
(5) Karl Heim  
(6) P.T. Forsyth
3. There have been those thinkers and writers who have sought to combine mystical and evangelical piety.

a. Catholic writers

(1) Augustine
(2) Thomas Aquinas
(3) Bernard of Clairvaux
(4) Johann Tauler
(5) Thomas à Kempis
(6) John of the Cross
(7) Pascal
(8) Hugo Rahner
(9) Karl Rahner
(10) Thomas Merton
(11) Therese of Lisieux

b. Protestants

(1) Luther
(2) Calvin
(3) George Fox
(4) Richard Baxter
(5) Jonathan Edwards
(6) Philip Jacob Spencer
(7) August Francke
(8) Andrew Murray
(9) Hannah W. Smith
(10) Agnes Sanford
(11) Johann Arndt
(12) Gerhard Tersteegen
(13) Mother Basilea Schlink
(14) Max Thurian
(15) Friedrich Heiler
(16) Nathan Soderblom

II. Mystical Spirituality
A. Basic Concepts

1. A primary aspect of mystical piety is that it is centered in direct or immediate experience of ultimate reality.
2. A second characteristic of mysticism is that this experience is regarded as an encounter with mystery and is therefore ineffable (incapable of being expressed in words).

B. Theology of Mysticism

1. God is often depicted in mystical literature as being above and beyond being.
2. Faith is an ecstatic state of being grasped by mystery.
3. Grace is usually seen as an infused power by which our nature is transformed or divinized.
4. Authority is the spiritual or mystical experience.
5. Ascent to God is often pictured as three stages.
   a. Purgative Stage
   b. Illuminative Stage
   c. Unitive Stage

Lecture XIV

HISTORICAL FACTORS: MYSTICAL SPIRITUALITY (Continued)

II. Mystical Spirituality (Continued)

A. Basic Concepts (Lecture Thirteen)

B. Theology of Mysticism (Continued)

1. Five definitive statements of the theology of mysticism
2. Prayer is interpreted as meditation and contemplation rather than supplication.
   a. Aldous Huxley
   b. Teresa of Jesus (1515-1582; Catholic Reformation)
   c. John of the Cross (1542-1591); Contemporary of Teresa
   d. Poulain (1836-1919, The Graces of Interior Prayer)
   e. Four degrees of ordinary prayer
(1) Vocal Prayer
(2) Meditation
(3) Affective prayer
(4) Simple Regard

f. The mystic union involves four stages

(1) Prayer of quiet
(2) Full or semi-ecstatic union
(3) The ecstatic union
(4) The transforming union

g. The mystic union has two fundamental characteristics
h. Ten subsidiary features

3. Related to the concept of prayer is the stress on solitude and detachment from the things of the world.

Lecture XV

HISTORICAL FACTORS: MYSTICAL SPIRITUALITY
(Continued)

III. Evangelical Devotion

A. General Comments

1. The emphasis with respect to God is different in the evangelical perspective from that of mysticism.
2. The view of reality takes a different perspective in evangelical piety.

B. Theology of Evangelical Spirituality

1. God is viewed as a personal being.
2. The *imago Dei* (image of God) is primarily defined in terms of a relationship between God and man.
3. Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, not a deified or divine man, Who has provided a substitutionary atonement.
4. Faith represents a divine-human encounter, man being confronted by a living Savior.
5. Revelation represents a divine incursion into human history and is the primary source of authority.
6. Sin signifies a wicked corruption, a revolt of man against the will of God.
7. Salvation consists primarily in forgiveness resulting in acceptance by a merciful Father.
8. Grace refers to the favor of God bringing about man’s conversion.
10. Prayer consists primarily of supplication with adoration and thanksgiving seen as elements of it.

IV. The Mystical Elements of Biblical Faith

A. General Comments

1. We must not fall into the trap of saying that biblical faith is completely devoid of a mystical element.
2. Reality does involve more than what we can understand through sensory perception.
3. We must be on guard of lapsing into a stifling, rationalistic orthodoxy that is completely lifeless and powerless.

B. Mystical Elements in Biblical Piety

1. Faith consists not only in a personal relationship of trust and confidence in Christ, but also in a mystical participation in Christ.
   a. John 17:20-23
   b. John 15:1-6
   c. 2 Peter 1:4
   d. Galatians 2:20

2. There is a sense in which revelation does remain a mystery, even to the believer.
3. The Christian life involves more than just an intellectual assent to the creeds, but includes the experience of faith as well.
Lecture XVI

HISTORICAL FACTORS: MYSTICAL SPIRITUALITY
(Continued)

IV. The Mystical Elements of Biblical Faith (Continued)

A. General Comments (Lecture Fifteen)

B. Mystical Elements in Biblical Piety (Continued)

1. Review of mystical elements in biblical piety.
2. The Christian is to walk by faith and not by sight.
3. Salvation does involve more than just forgiveness; there is also a reconciliation and reunion with God.
4. Although grace is the undeserved favor of God and not a divine power or energy infused into man, grace does have a concrete effect in our lives.
5. There is also a place for meditation and contemplation in the biblical model of spirituality.
   a. Psalm 1:2
   b. Colossians 3:2
   c. Philippians 4:8

6. The proper orientation of biblical Christianity is both inward and outward.
   a. 2 Corinthians 5:19
   b. Colossians 1:27

7. Authority is not to be religious experience, but authority does have an experiential aspect (2 Timothy 2:1-7)

V. Areas of Tension

A. General Comments

1. Christian mysticism has diverged from biblical piety by making mystical experience the criterion and ground of Christian thinking.
2. Mystical experience has become the source and norm rather than the medium, fruit, and sign of Christian faith.
B. Points of Tension

1. Justification of the ungodly
2. Historical versus ahistorical orientation
3. A personal God
4. An immanent God versus a transcendent God
   a. 1 Kings 8:27
   b. Ephesians 4:6

C. Summary

1. What is needed is a rediscovery of the mystical elements already in the Bible rather than a synthesis of biblical faith with other ideas.
2. The Christian does not encounter the “mystical void” or the “wayless abyss” or the “nothingness” of existentialism but communion with the living Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Lecture XVII**

**SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**

I. Individual Disciplines

A. Rationale

1. Superficiality is the curse of our age.
2. The spiritual disciplines call us to move beyond surface-living into the depths.
3. Joy is the keynote of the spiritual disciplines.
4. In today’s world those that desire a deeper relationship with God face two difficulties:
   a. Scientific materialism
   b. A lack of knowledge

B. The Slavery of Ingrained Habits

1. Sin is more than individual acts of disobedience to God, it is a condition that plagues the human race.
   a. Romans 3:9-18
b. Romans 7:5ff

2. Ordinary method of dealing with sin is to launch a frontal attack.
3. The moment we feel that we can succeed and have victory over our sin by the strength of our will alone is the moment we are worshiping the will (Colossians 3:20-23).
4. The will has the same deficiency as the Law.

C. The Spiritual Disciplines and Freedom

1. What we must come to realize is that inner righteousness is a gift of God which is to be graciously received.
2. There is now a temptation to go too far in the other direction.
3. God has given us the spiritual disciplines as a means of receiving His grace (Galatians 6:8).
4. What we are speaking of is the way of disciplined grace.

D. The Way of Death

1. Our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees (Matthew 5:20).
2. It is easy for us in our zeal for the spiritual disciplines to turn them into the external righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees (Matthew 23:4).
3. When we genuinely believe that inner transformation is God's work and not ours, we put to rest our passion to set others straight (2 Corinthians 3:6).

E. Examples

1. Foster
2. Willard
3. Whitney

Lecture XVIII

THE “TOGETHER” LIFE: CORPORATE DISCIPLINES

I. Introduction
A. Review

1. Love is central to biblical Body Life and the New Testament paradigm of spiritual formation.
   a. Ephesians 3:16-19
   b. Ephesians 4:1-2
   c. Ephesians 4:13,16

2. Earlier in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 we have seen that the more excellent way, the principal which should govern our Christian life with one another, was love.

B. Overview

1. The question we must now ask is “What is this love?”

II. Love Is Long Suffering

A. Basic Lexical Meaning

1. Greek word makrothumeo or to be long-suffering, have patience, to be forbearing, to bear with someone.
2. Different words for patience in the New Testament: this word is different in implication than the others.

B. Old Testament Usage

1. In the Old Testament we see this word used primarily to describe God.
2. Some examples will illustrate this characteristic of love from God’s perspective.
   a. Exodus 34:5-7
   b. Psalm 103:8-13
3. As we move to the New Testament we see similar ideas concerning this concept of love and long-suffering.
   a. 2 Peter 3:4-9
   b. 2 Peter 3:15

C. New Testament Usage
3. We also see here the idea of forgiveness added to long-suffering.
4. In Paul's writing this “God-like” character is seen to be a result of the Holy Spirit's work in our life.
   a. Galatians 5:22
   b. Colossians 1:10-11
   c. Ephesians 4:1-3

D. Applications

1. In our relationships of ministry to those outside the church.
2. In our relations as co-laborers together in the Gospel.
3. In our everyday relations with one another as Christians.
4. In our relations within our families, How often in this setting we so easily say, “I love you.”

Lecture XIX

THE “TOGETHER” LIFE: CORPORATE DISCIPLINES (Continued)

III. Love is Kind

A. Basic Lexical Meaning

1. Of things—to be good, to be useful, to be beneficial (good for the purpose for which it was intended).
   a. Matthew 11:30
   b. Luke 5:39

2. Of people—to be kind, to be beneficial, to be good (goodness expressed in gracious, tender, compassionate acts).
3. This word is the “partner” word for the word we studied in the previous lesson.

B. Old Testament Usage
1. Like the word *makrothumeo*, the usage of this word in the New Testament is directly related to its usage in the Old Testament.

2. Again we find this as a word that describes God more than man.

3. In the Old Testament there are certain categories in which God's kindness is applied.
   a. In nature (Psalms 104:27-28; 84:11; 85:12)
   b. God's instruction (Psalms 25:8; 119:39)
   c. Those in need (Nahum 1:7)

4. This Old Testament picture is significant in that those who are God's are to love as He loves.

C. New Testament Usage

1. In the New Testament the idea of kindness is developed further in terms of our kindness to one another.
   b. 1 Peter 2:1-3

2. Further insight is obtained through the comparison of what kindness is to what it is not.
   a. Ephesians 4:30-32; 5:1-2
   b. Colossians 3:12-14

D. Application

1. Towards unbelievers
2. Towards one another

IV. Love Does Not Envy

A. The Positive Sense

1. Zeal or to be zealous.
2. Desire to strive after some quality, ideal, talent, or ability which is admirable in another person.
3. Positive sense here—no sense of bitterness or jealousy because the other person has this thing that we are zealous for.
4. Examples:
   a. 1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1
   b. Psalm 69:9
   c. John 2:7

5. Basic sense of intensity, fervor
   a. Psalm 119:139
   b. Psalm 69:9

B. The Negative Sense
   1. How the good can become bad—jealousy and envy.
   2. Again see the idea of intensity or fervor in this connotation as well.
   3. This is an emotion which can lead to serious problems.
   4. Biblical examples:
      a. Job 5:2
      b. Proverbs 6:34
      c. Proverbs 27:4
      d. James 4:2

C. The Meaning in 1 Corinthians 13:4
   1. Evidently Paul has some negative sense here (13:4) but what exactly does it mean to say that love “does not have this emotion”?
   2. Consider some additional specific examples of the negative from the Old Testament
      a. Genesis 26:14
      b. Genesis 30:1
      c. Genesis 37:11

Lecture XX

THE “TOGETHER” LIFE: CORPORATE DISCIPLINES (Continued)

IV. Love Does Not Envy (Continued)

A. The Positive Sense (Lecture XIX)
B. The Negative Sense (Lecture XIX)

C. The Meaning in 1 Corinthians 13:4 (Continued)

1. See close of Lecture XIX
   a. Romans 13:13
   b. 2 Corinthians 12:20
   c. Galatians 5:20
   d. James 3:14-16

D. Application

1. An earnest desire for a good or honorable thing must not lead to bitter and envious resentment of a person having the desired thing.
2. We might have a zeal for our own status; we are zealous that we be raised to an important place in the eyes of others.
3. Sometimes people can even be doing that which appears to be a good thing for motives filled with envy (Philippians 1:15-18).
4. Also possible that Paul had some aspect of the positive meaning of the word in mind as well.

V. Love Does Not Boast nor Is Proud

A. To Boast

1. This is a special word used here by Paul.
2. The word that Paul is using here is not so obviously an unlovely act.
3. The emphasis in this word is on the actual words themselves.
4. There is a sense of intellectual pride in the person who is boasting in this manner.
5. This attitude is contrary to the basic attitude of love.

B. To Be Puffed-up or Proud

1. The root word φυλασσω and original meaning was “to fill with wind or to inflate.”
2. Metaphorical meaning and consequently the meaning here is “to be puffed up, proud, or arrogant over one’s own importance or self-worth.”

3. Again this attitude is obviously contrary to love as the NT defines it: the terrible pride at Corinth.

C. “Wise” Words

1. Look at a few examples:
   a. 1 Corinthians 2:1
   b. 1 Corinthians 2:4
   c. 1 Corinthians 2:13
   d. 1 Corinthians 4:19-20
   e. 1 Corinthians 8:1

2. We see here the type of boasting to which we earlier referred—putting others down with the way we say things, even spiritual things.

3. They actually wanted to make Christianity more of a philosophy to be discussed and debated rather than a way of life to be faithfully followed.

D. The Party Spirit (4:6-7)

1. The outward issue appeared to be the division over leadership.

2. The real issue however is simple pride.

3. Paul demonstrates this in verse 7.

E. An arrogant Defiance (4:19-20)

1. Certain individuals in the church opposed Paul.

2. Believed that because Paul was sending Timothy instead of coming himself he was afraid of them.

3. Puffed up about their own importance, their own leadership potential and position.

4. Leadership, authority, responsibility within the church of Jesus Christ has nothing to do with the methods of the world.

F. Love Does Not Boast nor Become Puffed-up.
1. Pride and boasting seek to build up and promote the proud boaster by indirectly tearing down others.

2. The biblical concept of love is to give sacrificially of oneself to promote and build up others.

Lecture XXI

THE “TOGETHER” LIFE: CORPORATE DISCIPLINES (Continued)

VI. Love Is Not Rude

A. Basic Lexical Meanings

1. Meanings or usages range from behavior which is shameful or disgraceful to that which is considered improper or rude.

2. The uncertainty caused by this is reflected in the various translations of the verse.

3. We could define the word in a general sense as follows:

“. . .to behave disgracefully, dishonorably, or indecently; to act in such a way or to have something happen that a person feels that he should be ashamed.”

B. Love Is Not Shameful or Indecent.

1. A frequent usage of the word in this category refers to shameful nakedness.

2. Illicit sexual behavior is also seen as shameful or indecent.
   a. Rape (Genesis 34:7)
   b. Adultery (Deuteronomy 24:1)
   c. Incest (Leviticus 18:6)
   d. Homosexuality (Romans 1:27)

C. Love Is Not Unseemly

1. Excessive punishment or discipline can fall into this category (Deuteronomy 25:3).

2. This could also refer to behavior which rebels or acts against authority so that the person in authority is disgraced (Ezra 4:14).
a. Romans 13:1  
b. 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13

D. Love Is Not Rude

1. One aspect of this deals with that which is considered ill-mannered in a crude sense (Deuteronomy 23:13,14).
2. Another aspect deals with rudeness or ill-mannered behavior in general.
   a. 1 Corinthians 11:2-16  
   b. 1 Corinthians 14:1ff

VII. Love Is Not Self-Seeking

A. Love Does Not Seek Its Own Advantage

1. The meaning of “to seek” in the Bible involves the whole man and his entire being.
2. Old Testament use of the word focuses on an active, earnest endeavor to do something.
   a. Exodus 2:15  
   b. Judges 18:1  
3. To live in love is not to live in a way where our main concern, our main focus, all our energy is devoted to ourselves.
4. Against the basic concept of love—to sacrifice ourselves for the benefit of others.

B. Seeking One’s Own Advantage

1. 1 Corinthians 10:23-24: The more knowledgeable wanted to continue in certain practices which they felt fell under Christian liberty.
2. 1 Corinthians 10:31-33: Paul so structured his life that he tried to please everybody.
VII. Love Is Not Self-Seeking (Continued)

A. Love Does Not Seek Its Own Advantage (Lecture XXI)

B. Seeking One’s Own Advantage (Continued)

1. 1 Corinthians 10:23-24 (Lecture XXI)
2. 1 Corinthians 10:31-33 (Lecture XXI)
3. 1 Corinthians 14:12: People who want to do things in the church to be seen rather than build up the church.
4. Philippians 2:19-21: Unlike so many others Timothy’s main focus, his main interest, was not himself, but the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. The Results of Self-Seeking

1. What does it mean today to seek our own advantage?
2. What can this unloving attitude produce?

D. Seeking God and Loving One Another

1. What (or Whom) is the Christian supposed to seek?
   a. Deuteronomy 4:29
   b. Matthew 6:33
   c. Colossians 3:1
   d. Galatians 2:17

2. How is “seeking God” related to 1 Corinthians 13:5?
   a. Compare Deuteronomy 4:29 to Deuteronomy 6:5
   b. John 14:23-24
   c. John 15:9-13

VIII. Love Is Not Provoked

A. Basic Meaning
1. Can have positive or negative connotations in New Testament although negative predominates
2. Here we have a passive usage so the idea is to be provoked or to be irritated.
3. Thus literally—love is not provoked.
4. In the Old Testament (LXX) the word is often used to describe great anger.
   a. Deuteronomy 29:28
   b. Jeremiah 32:37
5. Love does not allow itself to be drawn into anger no matter how irritating the person or situation.

B. The Situation in Corinth

1. The evidence from the words used to describe love indicates that there were people living and ministering within the church who themselves were not ministering in love.
2. What Paul is saying is that we are to respond to unlovely behavior with loving behavior.
3. To resist provocation does not mean that we ignore sin or “wink” at it (Galatians 5:22-6:1).

C. The Christian and Anger

1. Anger is a terribly destructive emotion.
2. Sinful anger is completely foreign to the life of faith which the child of God is to live.
   a. Colossians 3:5-14
   c. Ecclesiastes 7:9
   d. James 1:19

Lecture XXIII

THE “TOGETHER” LIFE: CORPORATE DISCIPLINES (Continued)

IX. Love Thinks No Evil

A. Basic Meaning
1. There is some confusion as to the meaning of these words.
2. The literal translation might be rendered “does not consider the evil.”
3. The confusion arises because of the various shades of meaning which the word came to have through the influence of the Old Testament as contrasted to the classical and koine Greek usage.
4. When there is no question that it has received an injury or been wronged, love plans no evil in return for the evil which it has received.

B. Application

1. Not only are we to resist immediate responses of anger but we must guard against the feelings of resentment, bitterness, and malice which can build up in our hearts when we have been wronged (Genesis 34).
2. When injured or wronged we must forgive and forget (Luke 23:32-39, especially v.34).
3. To fail in any of these in our relations with others is to fail to live in the love which should characterize those who are the Children of God and the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

X. Love Does Not Rejoice in Iniquity

A. Meaning of the Phrase

1. The iniquity: refers to unrighteousness in general with emphasis on the outward characteristics that define it.
2. Note that it is love that does not rejoice in the unrighteousness.
3. There are two possible perspectives that we can take in applying this aspect of love.

B. The Perspective of the “Doer”

1. This is from the perspective of the one who might be committing the iniquity.
2. To understand how a “rejoicing in iniquity” is a form of hate (“non-love”) towards other Christians we must understand the Old Testament concept of “community” and “unrighteousness.”
3. A related concept is found in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 12:12-22).
4. You are not loving the rest of us if you continue in a particular sin.

C. The Perspective of the “Observer”

1. This is the perspective of the Christian who sees his brother commit iniquity and then rejoices in it.
2. Rejoicing when a brother that we were jealous of or didn’t care much for anyway has fallen.
3. Failing to say anything to the brother who sins.
   a. Hebrews 12:5-11
   b. Galatians 6:1-3

Lecture XXIV

THE “TOGETHER” LIFE: CORPORATE DISCIPLINES (Continued)

X. Love Does Not Rejoice in Iniquity (Continued)

A. Meaning of the Phrase (Lecture XXIII)

B. The Perspective of the “Doer” (See Lecture XXIII)

C. The Perspective of the “Observer” (Review Lecture XXIII)

D. Rejoice Together with the Truth

1. Here the truth means more than just that which is not false.
2. In the contrast with adikia the emphasis is on righteousness or holy lifestyle.
   a. Romans 1:18
   b. Romans 2:8

3. Love and truth belong together.
4. Love that is involved in unrighteousness of any type is not biblical love. Love always rejoices with the truth (1 John 5:2).
E. Love Is Responsible

1. We are responsible to rejoice in righteousness and live in righteousness as individual believers.
2. We are responsible to lovingly guide one another from sin to a right relationship to God.

F. We Must Love in Truth

1. God’s love is always firmly based in the truth.
2. We are not truly loving someone if the action involves anything contrary to God’s word.

XI. Love Always...

A. Love Bears All Things

1. The word here can actually have two meanings which is why the translations all differ.
2. The idea is that love bears up patiently under annoyances and troubles that come its way from others.
3. The response of love is to quietly bear the injustice or the wrong.
   a. 1 Corinthians 9:1-12
   b. 1 Corinthians 6:7-8
4. Love bears all things or always patiently bears the wrong.

B. Love Believes All Things

1. The basic idea here is that of trust; trust or faith in other people.
2. It does not mean that we allow ourselves to be fooled by every rogue or rascal trying to take advantage of us, or pretend that black is white.
3. When love has no evidence it believes the best.
4. We must fight the temptation to distrust people or to believe the worst about their actions or motives.

C. Love Hopes All Things

1. Hope in the Bible is not blind optimism or wishful thinking, “I hope that it does not rain.”
2. Hope is a confident expectation that something will happen.
3. Hope is applicable to the future as well as the present so it is an appropriate follow-on to the previous word.
4. Love always has hope for a person because it knows that God works all things together for good for those whom He loves.
5. Example of Jesus and His disciples—He loved them and thus was hopeful for them (confident expectation).
6. As we love one another in Christ we must have confidence and expect that God's best will be done in each of our lives.

D. Love Endures All Things

1. This is a military term—generally appears in the secular literature with a background or idea of heroic deeds.
2. It has a future as well as present perspective and speaks of an enduring courage which, having done all stands firm to the end.
3. In the New Testament it speaks of the brave and noble patience with which the Christian contends against the various hindrances, persecutions, and temptations that befall him in his conflict with the inward and outward world.
4. We have the example of our Lord Jesus Christ and His love for us.
Study Questions

Lecture I

1. Explain how the term “spiritual” is losing the meaning it once had in our society.

2. Explain the significance of the secular concept of spirituality that is becoming prevalent in society.

3. What is the basic human problem from a spiritual perspective according to secular spirituality?

4. How can this problem be overcome?

5. Contrast this view of spirituality with the “specific, limited, restricted sense” found in the Bible.

6. In the Old Testament, what is the primary intent of the word נאש (spirit) with respect to the human spirit?

Lecture II

1. Why does Paul most deserve the title, Theologian of the Spirit.

2. Explain why Paul’s exclusive view of πνεῦμα (spirit) would cause him to reject contemporary, secular views of spirituality.

3. According to Paul, why is the Christian different from all other men because he possesses the divine πνεῦμα?

4. How would Paul distinguish the “spiritual” person from the “natural” person?

5. Explain John’s view of spirit and spirituality according to his usage of πνεῦμα as a sphere or realm of existence in antithesis to σαρξ.

Lecture III

1. Explain the basic sense of the word τελείως as it is used in the New Testament as compared to the Septuagint and classical Greek usage.

2. Explain the basic meaning of τελείως with respect to spirituality.

3. Describe the key characteristics of those who are spirituality mature according to the New Testament.
Study Questions

Lecture IV
1. What are at least two possible explanations for the second person plural forms of many of the imperative verbs in the New Testament?

2. Explain the significance of the human body metaphor with respect to spiritual formation as that metaphor is used in Ephesians 4:11-16.


4. Describe the relative importance and role of the individual in the process of spiritual formation.

Lecture V
1. Why would the manifestations of the various spiritual gifts described in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 be useless apart from love?

2. Explain the significance of love with respect to the Christian experience.

3. Describe the different aspects of love which should characterize Christians.

Lecture VI
1. Explain the meaning of the term ecclesia as it is used to describe the church as the “people of God.”

2. Explain the significance of Ephesians 2:11-14, 19-22 as it relates to spiritual formation.

3. What is meant by describing the “church as event?”

4. Using Ephesians 3 and 4 explain the process of spiritual growth in terms of “love.”

5. Why is a proper understanding of the first century concept of “household” so important to understanding New Testament spirituality?

6. Describe and explain the basic structure of the typical first century household.

7. Explain the significance of the “household” to the typical member’s life.

Lecture VII
1. Describe the different elements of the household of God in terms of the first century concept of household.
2. Describe the new set of priorities that one incurs as a member of the family of God especially as they are outlined in the Gospels.

3. What does it mean to accept the family of God as the primary formative environment for one’s spiritual development?

**Lecture VIII**

1. Explain Ephesians 2:13-14,19 in terms of the required treatment of strangers by the family of God.

2. Compare and contrast valid and invalid spirituality in terms of the “family’s” treatment of strangers (provide scriptural backing).

3. What does it mean to say that the New Testament is more interested in the sociology of the Spirit than in the psychology of the Spirit?

4. Explain the significance of the term “Body Life” in terms of spiritual formation and spiritual gifts.

5. Define and explain “spiritual gifts.”

6. How are spiritual gifts related to the “common good”?

7. Discuss the necessity of the breadth and diversity of spiritual gifts.

**Lecture IX**

1. Explain the “ascend/descend” motif in Ephesians 4:7-11 in terms of the role spiritual gifts play in spiritual formation.

2. Discuss the two aspects of the spiritual and immediate purpose of the spiritual gifts.

3. Discuss the two aspects of the ultimate purpose of the spiritual gifts.

4. Explain the error in spending one’s time and energy in trying to determine what one’s spiritual gift is.

5. List and explain some other wrong attitudes that are often demonstrated with respect to spiritual gifts.

**Lecture X**

1. Describe and discuss the right attitudes that should govern the use of spiritual gifts in the Body.
Study Questions

2. Why must our picture of the church as the decisive context for the corporate spiritual formation of the people of God include honest images and self-understandings?

3. Craig Dykstra maintains that there are two basic theological realities which are central to a proper understanding of the church’s role in spiritual formation. Explain these.

4. Describe the “mutually reinforced patterns of self destruction” in terms of contemporary cultural patterns.

5. What are the results of these “patterns” in terms of their impact on our life together as Christians?

Lecture XI

1. What specific factors have given rise to the Psycho-Culture as discussed by Susanne Johnson?

2. In general, how has the development of the “Psycho-Culture” world-view impacted the church and its thinking concerning spirituality?

3. Explain the relationship of “ethical egoism” to the Greek notion of “eudaimonism.”

4. What is “ethical egoism”?

5. What are some of the dangers facing a biblical concept of spiritual formation which have resulted from the influence of this perspective?

Lecture XII

1. Explain the relationship between the breakdown of “intimate communities” and the rise of the therapeutic motif.

2. How has this perspective influenced our concepts of spiritual formation?

3. Describe the impact that this model has had on the church and its ministry.

4. Distinguish “individualism” from “ethical egoism” and the “therapeutic motif.”

5. Describe the basic aspects of “individualism” as discussed in the lecture.

6. What has been the impact of this perspective on spirituality in the Church?

7. Explain how “feminist ideology” identifies Christian spirituality exclusively with the so-called feminine side of the human psyche.
Study Questions

Lecture XIII

1. Explain the two basic concepts underlying mysticism.

2. Describe the manner that God is often depicted in mystical literature.

3. Discuss the concepts of faith and grace as they are discussed in mystical literature.

4. List and briefly explain each of three stages of the Ascent to God as developed in Christian mysticism.

Lecture XIV

1. Describe each of the four degrees of ordinary prayer as discussed by Poulain in his treatise on mysticism.

2. Describe each of the four degrees of the mystic union as discussed by Poulain in his treatise on mysticism.

3. What are the two fundamental characteristics of the mystic union according to Poulain?

4. Discuss the relative degree of activity/passivity in the mystical ascent to God.

Lecture XV

1. Explain how the emphasis with respect to God is different in the evangelical perspective from that of mysticism.

2. How is the view of reality different in the perspective of evangelical piety from the mystical perspective?

3. Distinguish between the mystical concept of “image of God” and that of the evangelical perspective.

4. Compare the evangelical view of “faith” to that of the mystical perspective.

5. Compare the evangelical view of “grace” to that of the mystical perspective.

6. Explain the Biblical concept of the mystical participation in Christ true for all believers.

7. Explain how the Christian life involves more than just and intellectual assent to the creeds, but includes the experience of faith as well.
Study Questions

Lecture XVI

1. Describe the true mystical elements of the salvation we have in Christ.

2. Discuss the concrete effects that grace does have in the Christian’s life.

3. Explain how the proper orientation of biblical Christianity is both inward and outward.

4. Explain the point of tension between mysticism and evangelical piety concerning the justification of the ungodly.

5. Explain the point of tension between mysticism and evangelical piety concerning their relative ahistorical versus historical orientation.

6. Explain the difference between the mystic’s emphasis on the immanence of God and the emphasis of the transcendence of God in the evangelical perspective.

Lecture XVII

1. Describe the two difficulties facing those who desire a deeper relationship with God.

2. Discuss the idea of the spiritual disciplines as a means of receiving God’s grace.

3. Explain the danger of turning the disciplines into laws and how that can be avoided.

Lecture XVIII

1. Discuss the significance of the word makrothumeo (long-suffering) with respect to love as the word is used in the Old Testament.

2. How does the New Testament build upon the Old Testament foundation concerning love and long-suffering?

Lecture XIX

1. Discuss the significance of the word chresteuomai (kind) with respect to love as the word is used in the Old Testament.

2. How does the New Testament build upon the Old Testament foundation concerning love and kindness?

3. Explain and give examples of how this characteristic of love can be manifested by Christians towards both unbelievers as well as those in the church.
Study Questions

4. Explain the positive sense of the word \textit{zelos} (from “love does not envy”).

5. Explain the negative sense of the word \textit{zelos}.

\textbf{Lecture XX}

1. Describe different ways that the manifestation of \textit{zelos} (“love does not envy”) in a negative sense (envy) could hurt the corporate growth of the Body of Christ.

2. Describe different ways that the manifestation of \textit{zelos} (“love does not envy”) in a positive sense (zeal) could hurt the corporate growth of the Body of Christ.

3. Define the type of boasting to which Paul is referring in 1 Corinthians 13:4 (“love does not boast”).

4. What is meant by the pride (\textit{phusao}) that Paul says is not indicative of love in this passage.

5. Why are each of these attitudes contrary to the basic attitude of love?

\textbf{Lecture XXI}

1. List and briefly explain the three different aspects of meaning that the word \textit{aschemoneo} (“love is not rude”) can have.

2. Describe how each of these types or categories of behavior are antithetical to the love that should characterize those in the family of God.

3. What would it mean to “seek one’s own advantage”?

4. Compare and contrast the behavior of the Corinthians described in 1 Corinthians 10:23-24 with that of Paul as described in 10:31-33 in light of the admonition concerning love and self-seeking.

\textbf{Lecture XXII}

1. Describe the negative effects that self-seeking can have with respect to the corporate growth of the Body of Christ.

2. How is the “seeking of God and His righteousness” related to the fact that we are to love one another and that love is not self-seeking?

3. What is means by the expression “love is not provoked”?

4. Explain why Paul would make this exhortation in light of the particular situation in Corinth.

5. What is the loving response to behavior which is irritating or provoking?
Study Questions

6. How is “resisting provocation” related to our response to sin?

Lecture XXIII

1. Explain the significance of the phrase “love does not consider the evil” in terms of our lives together as Christians.

2. What does the account of Simeon and Levi contained in Genesis 34 (see also Genesis 49:5-7) as compared to their brother Joseph (Genesis 50:15-21) teach us about love and “not considering the evil”?

3. In light of the meaning of the phrase “love does not consider the evil,” what does it mean in a Biblical sense to “forgive and forget”?

4. Explain the phrase “love does not rejoice in the iniquity” from the perspective of the “doer” of the iniquity.

5. Explain the phrase “love does not rejoice in the iniquity” from the perspective of the “observer.”

6. Why is it not a loving act to ignore the sin of a brother or sister and say nothing to them about it?

Lecture XXIV

1. Explain the phrase “love rejoices with the truth.”

2. What does it mean to say that “love bears all things”?

3. What does it mean to say that “love believes all things”?

4. What does it mean to say that “love hopes all things”?

5. What does it mean to say that “love bears all things”? 
Historical Backgrounds


Mysticism/Contemplative Spirituality


**Anthropology**


**Cultural Predispositions and Spiritual Formation**


**Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology**


**Spiritual Disciplines**


Select Bibliography


**General Works**


