**WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY**

**VIRTUAL CAMPUS**

**SCHOOL OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY**

Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement

Wayland Baptist University exists to education students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

### RLED/RLGN 5111 VC01

***PRACTICE OF THE INWARD SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES***

# Spring 2014 (February 24-May 17)

## Instructor: Dr. Gary Mitchell

## Instructor Information

* **Phone:** (575) 763-0535
* **Email:** mitchellg@wbu.edu
* **Office Hours:** 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
* **Office Location:** Clovis, NM

**Class Time and Location:** Asynchronous, Virtual Campus

**Catalog Description:** Introduction to one or more spiritual disciplines oriented toward the inner life of the Christian, practiced within a weekly spiritual formation small group of M.Div. students. ***To be taken in the second semester of enrollment in the Master of Divinity program.***

**Prerequisite:** RLED/RLGN 5354 Spiritual Disciplines and Christian Spirituality

**Required Textbooks and Resources**

* **Required Texts**
* *The Believer’s Prayer Manual* by Gary Mitchell, can be purchased online at: [www.cafepress.com/prayermanual](http://www.cafepress.com/prayermanual) for $25.00 or from the Wayland Baptist University Bookstore
* *The Holy Bible*

**Optional Text/Resource**

* *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard J. Foster, HarperCollins, ISBN-10: 0060628391; ISBN-13: 978-0060628390
* **Access to WBU Learning Resources:** Click on link at left entitled "Wayland Library"; Email Distance Librarian Sally Quiroz (lrcref@wbu.edu) about having books mailed to you.
* **Internet links:** See "Web Resources" tab.
* **Class message board:** See “Announcements” and "Discussion Board" tab.
* **Email:** All students will need to set up and use their Wayland student email account.

**Course Outcome Competencies:** Students will be able to

1. Describe the spiritual significance and benefits of the first two traditional inward spiritual disciplines (meditation and prayer) of the Christian faith.
2. Demonstrate an appreciation that Christianity is a way of life, not merely a set of beliefs or values, by the sharing of practical examples in daily life.
3. Reflect on how the inward disciplines of meditation and prayer impact their lives in their daily decisions and relationships.

###### Attendance Requirements

Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses. Online courses are no different in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a different manner. Student “attendance” in an online course is defined as active participation in the course as described in the course syllabus. Instructors in online courses are responsible for providing students with clear instructions for how they are required to participate in the course. Additionally, instructors are responsible for incorporating specific instructional activities within their course and will, at a minimum, have weekly mechanisms for documenting student participation. These mechanisms may include, but are not limited to, participating in a weekly discussion board, submitting/completing assignments in Blackboard, or communicating with the instructor. Students aware of necessary absences must inform the professor with as much advance notice as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements.

Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 3 or more weeks of an 11-week term, may receive an F for that course. Instructors may also file a Report of Unsatisfactory Progress for students with excessive non-participation. Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given term is considered a “no-show” and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus. Additional attendance and participation

policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the university’s attendance policy.

Disability Statement:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any education program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291-3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

#### Course Requirements:

1. The course will be composed of reading assignments and corresponding exercises/projects each week as well as interacting with fellow colleagues via discussion forums, involving the areas of prayer and meditation during the semester.
2. **Reading Assignments/ Discussion Board Forums**: Students will read chapters as listed in the schedule of readings and complete weekly assignments/projects at the end of the chapters or as assigned by the instructor. Assigned textbook readings and exercises as indicated in the schedule should be completed on a weekly basis in order for you to participate meaningfully in discussion board activities. Active participation in an online forum is measured by posting at least **five substantial comments** per forum (including the Prayer Requests & Praise forum). Comments may be replies to posted questions or to the responses of other students. Participation in discussion board forums will count for 100 points of the final grade.
3. Throughout the course, students will read the textbook, *The Believer’s Prayer Manual: A Bible Study on Prayer*, and will complete any exercises or projects corresponding to the assigned reading and then respond within two weeks to various Discussion Board items prompted by the textbook readings.
4. During the course of the assigned readings, students may be given a choice of doing a personal project at the end of a specific chapter or reading,involving the disciplines of meditation and prayer, such as: meditating on a specific Bible passage or God’s handiwork in nature; carrying out an extended time of prayer encompassing at least one hour in length; carrying out a one- or three-day fast for a specified purpose; developing and following a plan for meditating through a certain biblical passage; select one or more of the four forms of meditation (pages 29-32 in Foster’s book, *Celebration of Discipline*) and carrying out those during the semester; doing an inductive Bible study for personal meditation and prayer purposes; and establishing and maintaining a quiet time at least four times a week during the semester.

Projects may be reported on a form provided by the instructor or shared with the group through a Discussion Board forum.

 **Course Evaluation (Method of Determining Grade)**

Although this one-hour course is a credit/noncredit class, grading within the class will be based on the following scale: Students will have the opportunity to accumulate up to 100 points during the semester. This is how they can be earned:

 Discussion Board Forums = 100 points

Weekly Readings/Activities = 100 points

To receive credit for the class, the student must earn 140 points or higher (70%). No grades will be given except credit or noncredit.

##### University Grading System

 A 90-100 I INCOMPLETE\*\*

 B 80-89 Cr FOR CREDIT

 C 70-79 NCr NO CREDIT

 D 60-69 WP WITHDRAWAL PASSING

 F BELOW 60 WF WITHDRAWAL FAILING

 W WITHDRAWAL

\*\*A grade of incomplete is changed if the deficiency is made up by midterm of the next regular semester; otherwise, it becomes "F". This grade is given only if circumstances beyond the student's control prevented completion of work during the semester enrolled and attendance requirements have been met. A grade of "CR" indicates that credit in semester hours was granted but no grade or grade points were recorded.

**Course Outline and Calendar**

The student is responsible for reading the assignments before the class session. The instructor reserves the right to give quizzes over the reading assignments at his discretion.

**Week 1 (February 24 – March 2)**

 Introduction to Course/syllabus review

Welcome to the Practice of Inward Spiritual Disciplines/Share Prayer Requests via Discussion Board Forum

Begin reading Mitchell’s book: Introduction/The Supernatural Power of Prayer/Necessity of Prayer & the Sin of Prayerlessness (Mitchell, 5-31) and submit a personal definition of prayer via Discussion Board format and respond to one another’s definitions. Also, respond to what expectations you have to this study and practice of prayer. For the following week, respond to the assignment in the text about meditating on and memorizing some of the verses cited in the section on the unlimited potential of prayer.

**Week 2 (March 3 – 9)**

Read: Jesus: Man of Prayer (Mitchell, 32-50)

Continue operating and responding to Discussion Board items, such as the prayer requests, previous assignments, and the new forum about the sin of prayerlessness. Also, work through the study guide sheet at the end of Chapter 3, and reflect on the questions and charts at the end of Chapter 4 about the prayer life of Jesus.

 **SPRING BREAK (March 10 – 16)**

**Week 3 (March 17 – 23)**

Read: People of Prayer in the Bible (Mitchell, 51-74)

Continue with your responses on the Discussion Board Forums, including the new forum about Jacob wrestling with or clinging to God. Also, reflect on the questions and the matching exercise at the end of Chapter 5.

**Week 4 (March 24 – 30)**

Read: People of Prayer in History (Mitchell, 75-85)

After reading the material, respond or reflect on the questions and the matching exercise at the end of Chapter 6. Continue responding to the Discussion Board forums.

 **Week 5 (March 31 – April 6)**

Read: Prayer: Key to Spiritual Awakening (Mitchell, 86-106). Then respond or reflect on the charts at the end of Chapter 7.

Continue working on Discussion Board items.

**Week 6 (April 7 – 13)**

Read: Hindrances to Answered Prayer (Mitchell, 107-113). During a quiet time, work through the exercise at the end of Chapter 8 on “Heart-Searching for Prayer Preparation and Personal Revival” – it’s meant to be a time of getting alone with God, and letting His Spirit speak personally to you during this time.

Continue responding to Discussion Board forums.

**Week 7 (April 14 – 20)**

Read: Principles of Prayer (Mitchell, 114-131)

This week, select one or more principles of prayer discussed in the chapter, and do a related spiritual discipline project (such as, a meditation on a particular Scripture passage, or making time to conduct spiritual warfare during one of your personal prayer times, and so on.

Continue with your responses to Discussion Board items.

**Week 8 (April 21– 27)**

Read: Components of Effective Prayer (Mitchell, 132-146)

At the end of Chapter 10, there is an ACTS: Pattern of Prayer Bible study for you to do, and an assignment to try to incorporate these components or patterns of prayer during your quiet time. Also be thinking about a time of fasting (coming up in this study) as well as an extended time of prayer (utilizing the material in this chapter about “How to Have a Holy Hour”).

Continue working on your Discussion Board responses.

**Week 9 (April 28 – May 4)**

Read: Fasting & Prayer (Mitchell, 147-168)

After reading the material on fasting, try to schedule either a one- or a three-day fast sometime during the next week, and share your results or finding or discoveries with the group via the Discussion Board format.

**Week 10 (May 5 – 11)**

Read: Special Modes of Prayer/How to Put Prayer to Work (Mitchell, 169-192)

After reading these final two chapters, see if you can incorporate either an extended time in prayer during your quiet times or incorporate a time of meditation or in a more public setting, making use of conversational prayer principles – and reflect on your experience or discoveries in a Discussion Board forum.

**Week 11 (May 12 – 17)**

In lieu of a FINAL EXAM, share in a final Discussion Board forum, your evaluation of what you have learned or benefitted from either your study or experiences with prayer and meditation during the course of this study and practice.

**Academic Honesty (Plagiarism): University students are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with penalties associates with plagiarism stated in the catalog.**

**Course policies**:
***Respect*.** Because the university classroom is a place designed for the free exchange of ideas, we will frequently encounter the opinions of others which may seem novel and, occasionally, outlandish. We must show respect for one another in all circumstances. I will show respect for you by not belittling or ignoring you. You will show respect for me by giving attention to assignments. We will show respect for one another by exhibiting patience and courtesy in our exchanges.

***Student rights*.** Your rights as a student have been outlined in the current WBU catalogue. If you feel that your rights have been infringed upon in this class, please inform me. If you have a disability which will require particular attention on my part, you must inform me as soon as possible.