

Module I I: Christianity **Jan 29-Feb 5, 2018**

Welcome to Module I I!

In the U.S., the top three most practiced religions include Evangelical Christianity, Roman Catholic Christianity, and Mormonism. It is no surprise to any of us how conflicting some of the “Christian” messages are in our cultural and political milieu today.

In this module, we begin to explore what practicing spiritual guidance with Christians looks like, as well as what Christian spiritual guidance looks like. We will be introduced to a range of Christian denominations and become aware of our responses as we interact with the various voices.

And, as we consider practicing spiritual guidance with Christians, we recognize that you may have a history that includes some hurt from Christians. We also acknowledge that you may have grief and anger that come from people and/or experiences labeled Christian. Please give yourself some space to grieve and heal any self/judgment or spiritual abuse that you may have experienced in your life.

In our listening practices, we’ll explore the process of asking “good questions” within the SG session. Our webinar on Jan. 30 will be invaluable for this!

Passage Meditation:

Try passage meditation on these or other quotes by Christians or other Christian sacred texts.

And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites;
for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners,
so that they may be seen by others.

Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.

But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door
and pray to your Father who is in secret;
and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

-Matthew 6: 5-6

We need to have three kinds of knowledge:

knowledge of God;

knowledge of self;

and knowledge of where we are susceptible to fault and flaw.

-Julian of Norwich

I am the fiery life of the essence of God;

I am the flame above the beauty in the fields;

I shine in the waters;

I burn in the sun, the moon, and the stars.

And with the airy wind,

I quicken all things vitally by an unseen, all-sustaining life.

-Hildegard of Bingen

The eye through which I see God

is the same eye through which God sees me;
my eye and God's eye are one eye,
one seeing, one knowing, one love.
-Meister Eckhart

I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial "outside agitator" idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere in this country.
-Martin Luther King, Jr.

To be alive is to be vulnerable.
To be faithful is to resist
the temptation of security.
-Dorothee Solle

I. Theory and Deepening Understanding

Read:

- Chapter 8, pp. 317-364 in *The World's Religions*
- Choose 3 of the 5 chapters on Christian Denominations, pp. 247-326 in *Spiritual Guidance Across Religions*
- Choose 2 of the 4 chapters on Christian Spiritual Traditions (Chs. 5, 6, 7, 8), pp. 61-128 in *Tending the Holy*

Reflection Questions:

- How is your understanding of Christianity enhanced by the perspective presented by Huston Smith?
- What did you notice interiorly as you read the articles in Mabry's and Vest's text?
- What role does SG play in the life of a Christian? Does it seem different than the role it plays in other spiritual/religious/ethical traditions?

Read:

The following articles from pluralism.org.

Choose 2 or more articles from here:

<http://pluralism.org/religions/christianity/christianity-in-america/>

Choose 2 or more articles from here:

<http://pluralism.org/religions/christianity/issues-for-christians-in-america/>

Reflective Questions:

1. What are some of the issues that face Christians today?
2. What are some of the key concepts that spiritual guides working with Christians ought to know?

Watch:

2 short videos from pluralism.org

“American Christians” (3 mins)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=qhxrolQImOE

“The Church” (2 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVKhj2SIuco>

Reflective Question:

- How might you practice spiritual guidance differently depending on the unique individuality of each Christian? What are some things to keep in mind?

Read:

Choose 1 of the 3 articles to read:

“How the Wisdom of Millennial Nones Can Revitalize the Christian Church”

<https://onbeing.org/blog/elizabeth-welliver-how-the-wisdom-of-millennial-nones-can-revitalize-the-christian-church/>

“A New Monasticism”

<https://www.the-american-interest.com/2014/10/01/a-new-monasticism/>

“Christianity: Origins and Beliefs”

<https://parliamentofreligions.org/content/christianity-origins-and-beliefs>

Reflective Question:

- Considering the articles and videos thus far, as well as your personal experiences and prior knowledge, what are some questions you could ask Christian seekers at the beginning of a relationship?

Listen: (51 mins.)

“How to Be a Christian Citizen: 3 Evangelicals Debate”

<https://onbeing.org/programs/chuck-colson-greg-boyd-and-shane-claiborne-how-to-be-a-christian-citizen-three-evangelicals-debate-feb2017/>

Reflective Question:

- What did you notice interiorly as you listened to the dialogue? Were you drawn toward any particular person, and/or repelled by another? How would you handle a situation in a SG session where you found yourself resisting some of the ideas of your seeker?
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II. Pure Presence/Listening Skills (Practice!)

Read:

- #6, 34 in *Noble Listening*
 - pp. 168-189 in *The Wisdom of Listening*.
1. Do the practices associated with #6 and 34 in Brady. Notice any growth in your listening as you do them.
 2. Considering our conversation with Judy Hahn and the chapter on asking strategic questions in *Wisdom of Listening*, create a brainstormed list of questions you could ask a seeker in a session.
 3. Reflect on the idea that SG is a subversive (or rebellious) act that has the potential to facilitate internal and external change.

Pure Presence Practice:

Use what you learned from the webinar with Judy Hahn to dip deeper into the practice of asking questions. Notice what arises in yourself when you do. Notice how the seeker reacts/responds to “good questions” as well.

III. Reflective Expression (RE)

What are the key take-aways from Module 11 for you as a spiritual guide? What do you believe Christians have to say to the world at large? What might a relationship with a Christian seeker invite you to? What are some of the listening skills (from our entire curriculum) that may help you the most as you are in relationship with people from the Christian tradition? Why do you think they are so important?

Due Monday, February 12, 3:00 p.m. ET.

Please send your RE to our e-mail address:

spiritualguidancetraining@gmail.com