

Syllabus

RSSP4568

Dorsey Blake

Dr. Howard Thurman: The Search for Common Ground in the 21st Century

Considered a 20th Century prophet by historian, Lerone Bennett, Howard Thurman created a body of spiritual insights exploring the relation between mysticism and social action. He was among the first African Americans to meet with Mahatma Gandhi, 1936, and was a mentor to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He was co-founding minister of the nation's first avowedly interracial, interfaith congregation, The Church for The Fellowship of All Peoples. This course will focus on comprehending the ideal of community as expressed through the thought and ministry of Dr. Howard Thurman. Essential to the journey together will be the discernment of evidence of oneness across racial, sexual, gender orientation, cultural, religious and national boundaries.

Learning objectives:

1. Comprehend the dynamism between mysticism and social action.
2. Analyze historical and contemporary barriers to unity.
3. Explore the destructive nature of exclusion for both the oppressor and the oppressed.
4. Develop lines along which the barriers can be overcome.
5. Facilitate the development of ways of living that affirm the oneness of humanity and our environment.

Learning Activities:

1. lecture, discussion
2. experiential
3. audio/visual presentations

Requirements:

* Attendance is very important. Two excused absences are allowed. A conference with the instructor is required after the second absence.

Weekly reflection paper (2-3 pages)

Weekly news article dealing with common ground or the lack of common ground

Participation in class discussions

A working paper (5-7 pages) dealing with how the student proposes to address a barrier that is preventing common ground will be due the last week of the semester.

Required Texts, ISBN, Price:

Thurman, Howard, *The Creative Encounter* (Friends United Press)

ISBN-10: 0913408077

- ISBN-13: 978-0913408070

14.00

Thurman, Howard, Deep River/The Negro Spiritual Speaks of Life and Death (Friends United Press)

- ISBN-10: 0913408204
- ISBN-13: 978-0913408209
- 14.00

Thurman, Howard, Disciplines of the Spirit (Friends United Press)

- ISBN-10: 0913408352
- ISBN-13: 978-0913408353

13.00

Thurman, Howard, Jesus And the Disinherited (Beacon Press)

- ISBN-10: 0807010294
- ISBN-13: 978-0807010297
- 15.00

Thurman, Howard, The Luminous Darkness (Friends United Press)

- ISBN-10: 0944350070
- ISBN-13: 978-0944350072

13.00

Thurman, Howard, The Search for Common Ground (Friends United Press)

- ISBN-10: 0913408948
- ISBN-13: 978-0913408940

13.00

Thurman, Howard, With Head and Heart (Mariner Press, 1981)

ISBN-10: 015697648X

- ISBN-13: 978-0156976480

15.95

Recommended reading:

Thurman, Howard, Meditations of the Heart (Beacon Press)

- ISBN-10: 0807010235

- ISBN-13: 978-0807010235

18.00

Fluker, Walter, They Looked for A City

ISBN-10: 0819172634

- ISBN-13: 978-0819172631

52.50

Fluker, Walter and Tumber, Catherine, A Strange Freedom (Beacon Press)

- ISBN-10: 080701057X
- ISBN-13: 978-0807010570

25.00

Pollard, Alton, Mysticism and Social Change: The Social Witness of Howard Thurman

- ISBN-10: 0820416126
- ISBN-13: 978-0820416120
- 31.95 (out of print)

Smith, Luther, Howard Thurman: The Mystic As Prophet

- ISBN-10: 0944350240

ISBN-13: 978-0944350249

25.00

Class Schedule

September 7

Brief Introduction – The landscape of the class

In-depth introduction: What brought students to ministry and this particular class. What are the hopes and expectations?

September 14

Cassette Tape/CD Deep River

Lecture: The Spirituals as Anchor in the Life of Thurman

Reading Assignment: *Deep River/The Negro Spiritual Speaks of Life and Death*

Discussion: Weekly reflection paper and news article

September 21

Videocassette/DVD -- *Conversations with Howard Thurman*

Discussion

Reading assignment: *With Head and Heart*, pp.3-99

September 28

Dynamics of oppression

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *The Luminous Darkness*, pp. 1-59

October 5

Discussion: Anatomy of In-Group and Out-group

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *The Luminous Darkness*, pp. 59-113

October 12

Crossing the Great Divide – India; The Bold Adventure San Francisco; The Weaving of a Single Tapestry

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *With Head and Heart*, pp. 101-212

October 19

Discussion: Jesus: An Interpretation; Fear

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *Jesus And the Disinherited*, pp. - 57

October 26

Reading Week -- No Class

November 2

Discussion: Deception; Hate, Love

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *Jesus And the Disinherited*, pp. 58-89; *Mysticism and the Experience of Love* (photocopy)

November 9

Discussion: Commitment; Growing in Wisdom and Stature

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Audio Tape: In Favor with God

Reading Assignment: *Disciplines of the Spirit*, pp. 9- 63

November 16

Discussion: Suffering; Prayer; Reconciliation

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *Disciplines of the Spirit, pp.64-127*

November 23

Discussion: The Inwardness of Religion, The Outwardness of Religion

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *The Creative Encounter, pp. 19-91*

November 30

Discussion: The Inner Need for Love; The Outer Necessity for Love

Concerning the Search; The Search into Beginnings

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *The Creative Encounter, pp. 92-153*

December 7

Discussion: Concerning the Search; The Search into Beginnings; The Search into Living Structure; The Search in the Prophet's Dream

Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *The Search for Common Ground, pp. 1-55*

December 14

Discussion: The Search in The Common Consciousness; The Search in Identity

No week reflection paper or news article due. Prepare working paper. Weekly reflection paper and news article

Reading Assignment: *The Search for Common Ground, pp. 56-104*