

REGENT COLLEGE  
Distance Education

SPIR 648: "TELL IT SLANT":  
PARABLES AS SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Professor Emeritus Eugene Peterson

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2 Graduate Credit Hours

Main source for guidelines, resources, extra handouts;

[www.regent-college.edu/classesonline](http://www.regent-college.edu/classesonline)

**Your due date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(See the last page of your Student Handbook for setting your due date)**

600 level courses are usually more advanced and focused than 500 level courses and generally assume the completion of some theological studies.

**A course may be dropped within two weeks of the course start date for a 100% refund (less a \$25 drop fee). A course may be dropped between two and four weeks of the course start date for a 75% refund (less a \$25 drop fee). A course may be dropped between four and eight weeks of the course start date for no refund; after this time the student is committed to receiving a grade for the course. All course materials must be returned in original condition before a drop or refund will be approved.**

**Course Description**

As we become practised in sin, we develop excellent defenses against grace. God is out to penetrate our defences. How does he do it? By frontal assault? Sometimes. But sometimes indirection is called for, slipping past the defenses on "the slant". It was a favourite method of Jesus; his parables show him at work. By examining the Lukan parables we will train ourselves in discerning both the spiritual defenses that we build up against grace and the method of "indirection" that Jesus uses to get through to us.

**Course Outline**

CD 1, 2	iTunes A	DVD 1	Spiritual Direction; Introduction to the Parables
CD 3, 4	iTunes B	DVD 2, 3	The Spiritualities of Compassion, Poverty & Wealth. Pt.1 The Spiritualities of Compassion, Poverty & Wealth. Pt.2
CD 5, 6	iTunes C	DVD 4	Watchfulness, Hospitality and Lostness. Pt. 1 Watchfulness, Hospitality and Lostness. Pt. 2
CD 7, 8	iTunes D	DVD 5, 6	The Spiritualities of Prudence and Humility. Pt.1 The Spiritualities of Prudence and Humility. Pt.2
CD 9, 10	iTunes E	DVD 7, 8	The Spiritualities of Renunciation and Waiting. Pt. 1 The Spiritualities of Renunciation and Waiting. Pt. 2

## **Academic Requirements and Time Investment**

1. Lectures. (12.5 hours)
2. Choose a Biblical Parable and set it alongside some incident in your own life, then reflect on the interaction between the two stories, the biblical story and your story. What light does the biblical story illumine in your story? What light does your story reflect back into the biblical story? Strive for exegetical accuracy in each story. (2000 words/16 hours)
3. Write a Personal Parable of your own. Write it for a particular person who is blind or deaf, insensitive or uncaring in relation to something you consider basic in the Christian faith. You can fictionalize the person (or group), but use material that is actual, that you have had to deal with in some way or other, and that seems to be impervious to direct confrontation. (1000 words/8 hours)
4. Write a Reflective Review of Margaret Guenther's Holy Listening and The Practice of Prayer. For this assignment, students should ponder the manner in which their own experience intersects with the material in the book. If you were offered the opportunity to chat with the author, what areas of common interest would you engage with Margaret Guenther? (2500 words/20 hours)
5. Reading and Annotations. Read 700 pages from the "Required Reading" list. Your reading should include the two Guenther books. Write a brief one-page response to each book or portion of book. (33.5 hours) but you do not have to write an annotation for the Guenther books. These annotations should be double spaced and no more than one page in length. One paragraph for the review of the book and one paragraph for personal response.

Recommended exercise (not required and no academic credit given). Keep a parable journal. Take a parable each day and read it. Live into it imaginatively, meditate, and pray. Then write brief reflections out of your praying. Do this 1/2 hour a day for 30 days and see if it is a practice that you would like to continue in your scripture reading/praying.

NOTE: Assignments will only be graded once they are all handed in.

	<u>2 credit hrs.</u>
Lectures	12.5 hrs
Biblical Parable	16 hrs
Personal Parable	8 hrs
Reflective Review	20 hrs
Readings & Annotations	<u>33.5 hrs</u>
TOTAL	90 hrs

### **Evaluation**

Biblical Parable	30 %
Personal Parable	30 %
Reflective Review	30 %
Readings & Annotations	<u>10 %</u>
TOTAL	100 %

***NB: The Course Evaluation Form is to be returned by your due date***

**Late Policy and Extensions (please read carefully!)**

For every week that your course requirements are submitted late, there will be a deduction of a third of a letter grade per assignment accordingly. Only under circumstances that are both *unavoidable* **and** *unforeseeable* are extensions considered (please refer to your student handbook for specific details

<http://www.regent-college.edu/academics/cstudies/documents/StudentHandbook.pdf> ). Weddings and births do not count as *unavoidable* **and** *unforeseeable*. If you need to go beyond the six-month time limit, you must contact the Coordinator **first** for an extension. Contact information is provided in your **Student Handbook**. Please note that extensions are not automatically granted, and must be applied for before your original due date.

ACADEMIC HONOUR Regent College upholds the highest standards of academic responsibility as part of our commitment to Christ in all of life. Students are required to familiarize themselves especially with the discussion of “Academic Integrity” in the College Catalogue.

**Required Reading**

Guenther, Margaret. *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Practice of Prayer*.

Bailey, Kenneth. *Poet and Peasant*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Through Peasant Eyes*.

Peterson, Eugene. *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*.

**Recommended Reading on the Parables**

Capon, Robert Farrar. *The Parables of Grace*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Parables of Judgment*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Parables of the Kingdom*.

Crossan, John Dominic. *Cliffs of Fall*.

Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus*.

Jones, Peter Rhea. *The Teaching of the Parables*.

Scott, B.B. *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus*.

**Recommended Reading on Spiritual Direction**

May, Gerald. *Care of Mind/Care of Spirit: A Psychiatrist Explores Spiritual Direction*.

Neufelder and Coelho, eds. *Writings on Spiritual Direction by Great Christian Masters*.

Rutherford, Samuel. *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*.

Thornton, Martin. *Spiritual Direction*.

von Hugel, Frederick. *Letters From Baron Friedrich von Hugel to a Niece*.