

All Faiths Seminary International



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The All Faiths Seminary International Year End Dialogue With Students The Accelerated Class - Three Day Retreat

These questions are taken from some of the basic topics covered in the reading and from questions prepared by the faculty of the All Faiths Seminary International. Be prepared to answer and discuss them during the Retreat. *This is official material and is not to be reproduced or shared with anyone except fellow students*

SECTION ONE

I. Major Religious Traditions/ Comparative Religion: .

1. Explain the "covenant" concept God made with Abraham.
2. What is the Torah? What does it teach? What is the "written" and "oral" Torah? How do the teachings affect you as an interfaith minister?
3. What prayer is considered to be the cornerstone of Judaism?
4. What is Kabbalah?
5. Aside from scripture, on what else do Roman Catholics base their belief?
6. What is the purpose of sacrament? Which sacrament is the one not actually performed by a priest?
7. What is the symbology and purpose of the Mass?
8. What is the difference in the way Catholics and Protestants view Communion / the Eucharist?
9. When did the Protestant Reformation occur? What were its causes? What were some of the consequences in terms of the church and Christianity?
10. Name five Protestant denominations.
11. What are some of the specific doctrines and beliefs of the Eastern Orthodox Church? What are some of the differences from Roman Catholicism?
12. Jesus said " I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) How do you, as an interfaith minister, understand this statement?
13. What do you believe is the relationship, if any between the Old Testament and The New Testament?

14. What is the nature of the authority of the Qur'an according to orthodox Islamic traditions?
15. What are the Five Pillars of Islam?
16. What are the major sects of Islam?
17. What is Sufism? What is ZikrR
18. What is Yoga? How is it practiced, according to the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali?
19. The Bhagavad-Gita delineates three paths of God: jnana yoga (Knowledge), bhakti yoga (devotion) and karma yoga (action). Explain these three paths and their relationship with one another, if any.
20. How is God conceived in Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and Hindu traditions?
21. What were the Four Noble Truths of Buddha?
22. What is the 8-fold Path?
23. Why did Buddha maintain his "Noble Silence"?
24. What is meant by a " Shamanic Journey"? What are its purposes? In his/her healing work, what is the Shaman's relationship to his/her community?
25. What is Yoruba (Santeria) ? How do you understand the practice of animal sacrifices in the tradition? What is the book given to people when they become initiated into the priesthood of this community?
26. Name three of the secret orders of mystery teachings. Do you consider these orders religious? Why or why not?
27. Where does the ultimate authoritative power lie in the Bahai faith? What is the relationship of the individual Bahaiian to this authority?
28. The Bible declares, " Thou shalt not make graven images." Yet, Catholic Churches are filled with images and statues of Saints, Hindus worship God in forms such as Shiva, Krishna, and Kali, Moslems and Buddhists and Jews build beautiful elaborate mosques and temples in which to worship God. How do you feel about the issue of God/worship with and/or without form?
29. In your own words, what is the meaning of the word "religion" and what is the purpose of religion?

II. Dimensions of Psychology:

30. Freud is generally considered to be the father of modern psychology and psychotherapy. Name some of the major contributions he made to the understanding of psychology.
31. Name a few of the important contributions that Jung made to psychology.
32. In psychological terms, what is meant by the "shadow"? As a minister, what impact does this concept have for you personally and for your work with other people?
33. What is an archetype? Give a few examples of archetypal images.
34. Why is humanistic psychology called "3rd force movement"?
35. If psychoanalysis is the study of the mind, behaviorism the study of behavior, and humanistic psychology the study of the person as a full human being, what is transpersonal psychology the study of? Briefly describe your understanding of the transpersonal perspective in psychology.
36. What are some of the major concepts or elements of spiritual therapy and the spiritual therapy relationship?
37. What is meant by a miracle in A COURSE IN MIRACLES? What is the goal of the Course? What is meant by forgiveness?
38. Who is the "author of A COURSE IN MIRACLES?"
39. Compare how the term "ego" is used in A COURSE IN MIRACLES (or other spiritual paths), with how it is used in Freudian or other traditional psychology. People on a spiritual often come to view the ego as an enemy, something undesirable to be stamped out or gotten rid of. Do you see problems / limitations in that way of thinking?
40. Discuss your understanding of alcoholism as a disease. As a dysfunction.
41. In alcohol use (and abuse), what is the first faculty to go? What is a black out?

III. Spiritual Healing and Counseling:

42. As you understand it, what is the difference between prayer and meditation?
43. What is spiritual healing? In your opinion, what is the key to spiritual healing?
44. Can anyone do spiritual healing? What guidelines should a spiritual healer follow? Many healers describe themselves as "vehicles for healing", what is your understanding of this?
45. As you see it, what is the relationship between spiritual counseling and healing?

46. What are some of the common elements described by people who have had NED's (near - death experiences)?
47. According to Elizabeth Kubler - Ross, what are the five stages that a terminally ill person passes through? How would you, as a counselor, work with a person going through each of these stages?
48. What are some of the ways that you, as a minister, can facilitate the transition of a terminally ill person who is afraid to leave his/her body?
49. Clients often come to counseling looking for specific advice, answers, predictive information (e.g. psychic or astrological predictions) etc. What are your thoughts about offering advice, solutions, etc. in a counseling context?
50. What are some of the important qualities people need from a helping person in order to grow?
51. Why is it important to be able to "read" yourself first, i.e., be aware of your own issues, motivations, and feelings in a counseling or consulting relationship?

!V. Interfaith Ministry:

52. As an interfaith minister, how do you relate to the issues of birth control, abortion, and capital punishment?
53. How do you understand The All Faiths Seminary International's concept, " Never instead, always in addition"?
54. What is your understanding of The All Faith's Seminary International's awarding of the Title Interfaith Minister as our way of " confirming what you have affirmed"?
55. The various religious faiths of the world hold beliefs that are literally contradictory and mutually exclusive(e.g., the Jewish belief that the Messiah has yet to come, the Christian belief that Jesus Christ was/is the Son of God and the Savior of the world, the Moslem belief that Jesus was one of the prophets in a line in which Mohammed was the Seal of prophets). How do you as an interfaith minister, reconcile these contradictions? How do you minister to someone whose beliefs differ from your own?
56. State as briefly as possible, your personal belief in/concept of God.
57. Do you think the Messiah has come, is about to come, will ever come? What is your concept of what the coming of the Messiah would be?

Section Two

In this section you are required to examine your own feelings and beliefs as an interfaith minister. In addition you are expected to be familiar with the names you find listed, recognizing the contributions made by each.

Part I: Dimensions of Spiritual Growth/Living a Spiritual Life

1. Briefly describe the basic tenets of your own faith or belief system.
2. What do you see as the essence of religion?
3. Describe your own prayer life.
4. Whether or not you include the following in your own prayer life, what can you see as the value in the following types or forms of prayer:
 - Spontaneous, personal prayer
 - Collective, group, or community prayer
 - Saying traditional prayers (e.g., found in prayer books of organized religions)
 - Singing, chanting, dancing, etc.
5. How do you understand and deal with the times when prayer appears to go unanswered?
6. What is the purpose of meditation? What techniques or types of meditation have you found helpful?
7. What do you see as the place, importance, and purpose of service in spiritual growth?
8. Are there other kinds of practices that you consider important or helpful to spiritual growth and balance? (e.g., body work, physical practices such as hatha yoga, breathing exercises, ritual, shamanic journeying, journal writing, etc.) How do you understand the value or benefits of these particular practices?
9. As best you can, describe your concept/understanding of God and your relationship to God. How do you communicate with Him/Her/It? How do you experience God in your daily life?
10. What is your understanding of forgiveness? Why do you think forgiveness is seen as so important in the teachings of most religions and many healing practices?
11. What is your highest spiritual aspiration?

Part II: Practical Aspects of Ministry

12. Are there any licenses issued to clergy? How does one "legally" become a clergy person?
13. Does a clergy member have to register with local authorities before performing a wedding ceremony?
14. Does a clergy member have to pay income taxes? Does a church have to pay income taxes? What is a "letter of determination?"
15. Can an Interfaith Minister perform any services/rites of any religions?
16. Which parts of a wedding ceremony are required by law?
17. When you arrive at the agreed upon place to perform a wedding ceremony, the couple informs you that in their frantic rush to get ready, they left the marriage license at home, which is an hour away. What would you do in this situation?
18. What do you see as the function(s) of a minister in preparing and conducting a funeral or memorial service?
19. How do you understand the purpose and experience of worship?
20. What is your understanding of spiritual counseling?
21. What do you consider the most important elements of spiritual counseling?
22. What kinds of things interfere with our ability to listen?
23. It is not uncommon for people to misuse metaphysical teachings to blame or judge themselves for the so-called "negative" things that happen in their lives (or to unwittingly reinforce self-blame and guilt in others who are facing life challenges). In the same way, spiritual or metaphysical teachings are sometimes used to deny, circumvent or skip over human experiences like anger or grief. How would you address/work with these issues in someone who came to you for spiritual counseling or direction?
24. How would you handle feelings of sexual attraction toward and/or from someone who came to you for spiritual counseling or other ministerial services?
25. Discuss the importance of confidentiality and trust in the counseling and/or pastoral relationship.
26. Under what circumstances would it be better to refer a client to someone else rather than work with him or her yourself?
27. What are your views and feelings about charging for ministerial services? For spiritual counseling? For healing work?
28. What kinds of things contribute to "burnout?" What are some of the signs or indications of burnout? How would you deal with it if you noticed those signs in yourself?

Part III: Briefly Identify the Following People:

- 1 Aaron
- 2 Abraham
- 3 Rabbi Akiba
- 4 Thomas Aquinas
- 5 Aristotle
- 6 Arjuna
- 7 St. Augustine
- 8 Baal Shem Tov
- 9 Jacob Boehme
- 10 Martin Buber
- 11 John Calvin
- 12 Joseph Campbell
- 13 Confucius
- 14 Meister Eckhart
- 15 Mary Baker Eddy
- 16 Elijah
- 17 Epictetus
- 18 Ezra
- 19 Charles & Myrtle Fillmore
- 20 Emmet Fox
- 21 Matthew Fox
- 22 St. Francis of Assisi
- 23 Mohandas ("Mahatma") Gandhi
- 24 Siddhartha Gautama
- 25 Joel Goldsmith
- 26 Hildegard of Bingen
- 27 Rabbi Hillel
- 28 Ernest Holmes
- 29 St. Ignatius of Loyola
- 30 Ishmael
- 31 Jacob/Israel
- 32 St. John of the Cross
- 33 John the Baptist
- 34 Julian of Norwich
- 35 Kabir
- 36 Immanuel Kant
- 37 Khadija
- 38 Soren Kierkegaard
- 39 Krishna
- 40 J. Krishnamurti
- 41 Elisabeth Kubler-Ross
- 42 Lao Tzu
- 43 Martin Luther
- 44 Moses Maimonides
- 45 Balshem Tov V'RA J. H. G.

45 Abraham Maslow

46 Thomas Merton

47 Plato

48 Ramakrishna

49 Carl Rogers

50 Jelaluddin Rumi

51 Saul of Tarsas/Paul

52 Albert Schweitzer

53 Helen Schucman

54 Solomon

55 Baruch Spinoza

56 Rabindranath Tagore

57 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

58 St. Teresa of Avila

59 Mother Teresa of Calcutta

60 Thich Nhat Hanh

61 John Wesley

62 Bill Wilson (Bill W.)

63 John Wycliffe

Women of the Bible:

Deborah

Esther

The Mary's of the New Testament

Miriam

Ruth

Sarah

Tamar

Part IV: Briefly Explain the Following Concepts:

1 Anthropomorphism

2 Atonement

3 Divine Immanence/

Divine Transcendence

4 Enlightenment

5 Grace

6 Karma

7 "Ki Tov"

8 Messiah/ Messianic Age

9 "Metta" (Loving Kindness)

10 Mindfulness

11 Monotheism

12 Resurrection

13 Salvation

14 Soul Retrieval

15 "Tent" Ministry