Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary  
(Center for Urban Ministerial Education)  

SE 700: SEEK THE PEACE OF THE CITY:  
THEOLOGY AND ETHICS FOR URBAN MINISTRY  

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“Seek the peace of the city…and pray unto the Lord  
for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.”  
Jeremiah 29:7  

I. Course Objectives: The Student:  

A. Develops his or her biblical, theological, ethical, and socio-ecclesiological  
reflection on the city and urban ministry.  

B. Develops proper appreciation and understanding of the problems and promises of  
urban ministry.  

C. Develops an understanding of types of action which the Christian and Church can  
take for ministry in the city.  

II. Textbooks  

A. Required:  

Robert C. Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan: A Biblical Theology of the Urban Church*  
(Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991)  
ASIN: B004M18LW2  Amazon price: $22.48.  

Seong Hyun Park, Aída Besançon Spencer, and William David Spencer, Editors,  
*Reaching for the New Jerusalem: A Biblical and Theological Framework for the City*  
(Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stork, 2013)  

Stephen T. Um & Justin Buzzard, *Why Cities Matter: To God, the Culture, and the Church*  
(Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013)  
ASIN: B008DXFN08  Amazon price: $12.21.  

Eldin Villafañe, *Seek the Peace of the City: Reflections on Urban Ministry*  
ISBN-10: 8028072191  CBD price: $15.75  
B. Recommended:

Harvie M. Conn & Manuel Ortiz, *Urban Ministry: The Kingdom, the City and the People of God* (Downers Grove, ILL.: InterVarsity, 2001)

ASIN: B003885B461  Amazon price: $19.87


ASIN: B000J14UXS   Amazon price: $2.67

III. Course Requirements

A. Critical Analysis and Reflection of Required Text:

For each of the required reading textbooks, provide a two page analysis of the book. Include a brief synopsis of the book’s content. Select one key theme/idea in each book that will be helpful to your ministry, explaining why and how you would utilize it.

Papers due as follows:
Um & Buzzard, *Why Cities Matter* - March 13  
Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan* - March 27  
Villafañe, *Seek the Peace of the City* - April 3  
Park, et al., *Reaching for the New Jerusalem* - April 10

B. Integrative Paper:

Based on class lectures, course required readings, bibliographical resources, and your knowledge of themes/issues, develop a brief Theology of Urban Ministry. Elements to be included are: a theology of place (context), a theology of peace (mission/ministry), and a theology of prayer (spirituality), as it relates to your present ministry.

Paper should be 10 pages long, due April 24, 2014.

IV. Grade Evaluation

Your class grade will be evaluated as follows:

- Critical Analysis and Reflection  = 40%
- Integrative Paper  = 60%

Minus any penalty for unfulfilled requirements (e.g., regular attendance, late papers)

V. Office hours – Faculty Advisement:

January 30; February 13, 20, 27; March 6, 20, 27; and April 3, 10: from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Appointments should be made through Dr. Villafañe’s Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Naomi Wilshire’s office @ nwilshire@gcts.edu
Seek the Peace of the City: Theology and Ethics for Urban Ministry

Course Outline

Introduction

A. “Knowing Each Other”
B. Scope, Objectives, Method, and Requirements of Course

C. The Challenges of Urban Ministry at the Dawn of the New Millennium
D. The Jeremiah Paradigm for the City (Jeremiah 29: 4-7)

1. A Theology of Place – The City as Context of Ministry
2. A Theology of Peace – The City and Ministry
3. A Theology of Prayer – The City and Spirituality

I. A Theology of Place: The City as a Context of Ministry

A. The Theological Concept of Place
B. Two Theological Perspectives on the City: Jacques Ellul and Harvey Cox
C. A Biblical View of the City

II. A Theology of Peace: The City and Ministry

A. The Theological Concept of Peace (Shalom)
B. The Classical Missiological Categories of the Church’s Mission

III. A Theology of Prayer: The City and Spirituality

A. The Theological Concept of Prayer
B. The Public Testimony/Spirituality of the Church: Romero – (DVD/Discussion)
Selected Bibliography


__________. *A Theology As Big As the City.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997.


__________. *Empowering the Poor: Community Organizing Among the City’s “Rag, Tag, and Bobtail.”* Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1991.


