GORDON CONWELL
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Foundations for Ministry (MC503)
Foundations for Leadership (CL503)

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary - Jacksonville
Summer 2015 (June 12-13, July 10-11, and Aug 7-8)
Fridays 6:30pm to 9:30pm and Saturdays 8:30am to 4:30pm
Instructor: Justin S. Holcomb
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will be a study of the nature and work of the Christian minister and leader from a biblical, theological, and historical perspective. This course provides participants the opportunity to discuss contemporary challenges to leadership and ministry, to interact regarding theology and philosophy of ministry, and to develop a variety of ways for assessing recent cultural developments.

This course will be a study of the biblical and theological view of integrating theology into ministry in a way that results in the transformation of lives and culture. Students will be taught how to use ministry as a means to integrate their studies in exegesis, systematic theology, church history, and the social sciences. Students will also be taught how to develop a working theology of ministry in order to apply the practical results to the practice of ministry and to evaluate their ministries in which they are now engaged.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

For the students to be able to formulate a theology of ministry that will guide their practice.

For the students to be able to review the history of the development of the theology of ministry and to isolate issues that inform their practice of ministry and to show how these issues can enlighten their practice.

For students to be able to relate major themes of Christian theology to the practice of ministry.

For students to be able to formulate exegetical arguments for their theology of ministry.

For students to able to evaluate their own ministry in light of the theology of ministry they develop.

For students to be able to recognize the role of the social sciences in the practice of ministry and to compare the relative value of those disciplines with the direction they get from the exegetical and theological sciences.
For students to be able to embrace their roles in the church, broadly considered, and to set an example for those to whom they minister and their colleagues that reflects the Bible’s teaching about the role of leaders and those in ministry.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Journal

Each chapter in *Resilient Ministry* has a number of “Questions to Ponder.” Please journal your responses to some of these questions (your choice) or questions that emerge for you personally as you read — at least 250 words of reflection per chapter (15 chapters).

2. Personal Theology of Ministry Essay

Students are required to write a 10 pages (2,500 words, double–spaced, 12- point font) paper. The paper should include Works Cited at the end of the paper (bibliography does not count toward the word count). Students do not need to do research or reading out side of the course readings for this essay. Please do incorporate clearly the course readings in your paper.

This paper will demonstrate how the course readings, lectures, and discussions can be integrated and applied to the student’s life and ministry. The focus of the paper will be on three areas:

a. A personal “philosophy and theology of ministry” that reflects engagement with lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. Ministry is somewhat context dependent, but it is wise to have a self-assessment and convictions about biblical norms for ministry in order to faithfully carry out one’s ministry in any particular context. How specific your PToM should be to a particular context depends on many factors.

b. An analysis of your present personal ministry health based on the areas covered in *Resilient Ministry*.

c. A personal plan for life long ministry fruitfulness. The paper should include a specific plan for the student’s continued application of the course concepts to his/her future personal life and ministry.

Consideration will also be given to the extent that the paper: reflects the reading done by the student, integrates material from class discussions and lectures, and reflects serious thought about how theology of ministry can and should guide your practice of ministry.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Class attendance and participation are a central part of this course. If you should miss a class, you are expected to contact another student regarding the information covered.

Late papers will be graded down 33% for each 24 hours late.
All written assignments should be submitted in either Word or PDF format. Assignments should be double spaced with 1” margins on all sides of each page, and should be printed in Times New Roman 12 point type. Assignments must be submitted electronically.

Plagiarism is considered a serious breach of personal and academic integrity. It involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures.

REQUIRED READING

1-2 Timothy and Titus

Beeley, Christopher, Leading God’s People: Wisdom from the Early Church for Today (128 pages)

Burns, Bob, and Tasha Chapman, Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving (290 pages)

DeGroat, Chuck, Toughest People to Love: How to Understand, Lead, and Love the Difficult People in Your Life…Including Yourself (160 pages)

Forde, Gerhard, On Being a Theologian of the Cross (117 pages)

Pick one of these to read

Holcomb, Justin, On the Grace of God (98 pages)

Kapic, Kelly, God So Loved He Gave (185 pages)

Pick one of these to read


Stott, John, Basic Christian Leadership: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel and Ministry (106 pages)
Made available on Sakai (329 pages)

Allender, Dan, excerpts from Leading With a Limp (Intro, 11, 12, 14) (52 pages)

Chapell, Bryan, “Obligations of the Sermon” in Christ-Centered Preaching (13 pages)

Chapell, Bryan, “Preaching the Power of Grace” (6 pages)

Chapell, Bryan, “Redemptive Approach to Preaching” in Christ-Centered Preaching (24 pages)

Cloud Henry, excerpt from Boundaries for Leaders (chapter 4) (24 pages)

Cottrell, Stephen, “What Kind of Growth?” (9 pages)

DeGroat, Chuck, “Shame and Grace in a Pastor’s Life” (4 pages)

Greene, Robert, and Joost Elffers, “48 Laws of Power” (10 pages)

Holcomb, Justin, “Theological and Philosophical Foundations for Leadership” (9 pages)

Horton, Michael, “Renewing the Great Commission” (16 pages)

Keller, Tim, “The Missional Church” (3 pages)

Myatt, Mike, “The #1 Reason Leadership Development Fails” (2 pages)

Null, Ashley, “Pastoral Care in the Olympic Village” (18 pages)

Padilla, Art, Robert Hogan, and Robert Kaiser, “The Toxic Triangle: Destructive leaders, susceptible followers, and conducive environments” (19 pages)


Ridderbos, Herman, “Indicative and Imperative” in Paul: An Outline of His Theology (5 pages).

Smith, Christian, “God, Religion, Whatever” in Soul Searching (51 pages)

Trueman, Carl, “Luther’s Theology of the Cross”, “The Forgotten Insight”, and God of the Cross” (8 pages)

Volf, Mirslav, “Soft Difference: Theological Reflections on the Relation Between Church and Culture in 1 Peter” (18 pages)

SOURCE SCHEDULE
To help you schedule your readings, here is the projected flow of the course. The specific reading list below will be covered or discussed as scheduled. The other readings are required for the entire course in general and are expected to be included in your papers and course discussions.

Week 1 (June 12-13)

Lecture—Leadership and Ministry
  • Be sure to read: Forde book, Trueman articles, and Greene excerpt

Lecture—Biblical Theology of Leadership

Leadership Discussion—leadership development
  • Be sure to read: Myatt article and Holcomb article

Leadership Discussion—preaching and teaching
  • Be sure to read: Chapell readings

Week 2 (July 10-11)

Lecture—Paul and Ministry
  • Be sure to read: Ridderbos (both excerpts) and 1-2 Timothy and Titus

Leadership Discussion—naming and dealing with failures as leader
  • Be sure to read: Allender

Week 3 (Aug 7-8)

Lecture—Understanding Culture and Mission
  • Be sure to read: Smith excerpt, Horton article, Keller, article, Cottrell article

Leadership Discussion—Reformation Pastoral Questions
  • Apply Null article to ministry and not sports

Leadership Discussion--toxic “leadership”
  • Be sure to read: Cloud excerpt and Padilla article

GRADING SCALE

Listed below are the assignments that will determine your final course grade.

Journal 50%
Personal Theology of Ministry Paper 50%

A (97-100), A- (94-96), B+ (91-93), B (88-90), B- (86-87), C+ (83-85), C (80-82), C- (78-79), D+ (75-77), D (72-74), D- (70-71), F (below 70)