

Course Syllabus

BBS Mission Emphases: Scholarship for your mind; passion for your heart; and ministry for your hands.

Professor's Ministry Passion: My ministry passion is to *influence* and *mobilize* others so that in their life service they glorify God. I desire this influence to occur in both structured and nonstructured environments wherein the student develops their *biblical content, character, and ministry/life skill competencies*

I. Course Description

This course is designed to emphasize the vital role of the Bible in all phases of the life of a local church. The biblical teaching on centrality will be considered from several vantage points such as the local church's relationship to the culture as seen in the debate about the "evangelical critique." Its proclamation task, behavior, and ministry will also be analyzed in light of the Centrality of the Bible. Then methods of application to all programs in the Church will be considered, especially in the student project after the seminar.

II. Course Objectives

Specific course objectives will be determined by the student for the particular application project that he chooses. General objectives for the in-class seminar hours include the student being able articulate practical ramifications for ministry by:

- A. Assessing some of the hostile & pluralistic tendencies affecting contemporary evangelicalism and Church ministry
- B. Identifying the various views of church ministry, church government, and church growth ideas
- C. Critiquing the pastor's role (and scriptural limitations), his wife's role and the ministerial life of the pastor in his local congregation or area of ministry
- D. Examining select areas of ministry to ensure biblical centrality such as pastoral counseling, youth ministry, Christian education, nursery ministry, proclamation, evangelization, etc.

III. Pre-Seminar Reading and Assignments:

A. Required reading.

The student is expected to read all required books in entirety prior to the first in-class session and he is to bring a signed reading report indicating how much of the reading he has accomplished as well as the required reading responses.

David Wells, *No Place for Truth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993 (300 pages)

Craig Carter, *Rethinking Christ and Culture: A Post-Christendom Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Bazo press, 2006 (210 pages)

Truth Decay by Douglas Groothuis. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2000. (290 pages)

Whatever Happened to Truth ed. by Andreas Kostenberger. Wheaton: Crossway Books: 2005. (150 pages)

Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times, eds. Millard Erickson, Paul Kjos Helseth, Justin Taylor. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004. (350 pages)

Francis Schaeffer, *He Is There and He Is Not Silent*. Chicago: Tyndale, 1972 (76 pages)

R. Scott Smith, *Truth and The New Kind of Christian*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2005; (190 pages)

John M. Frame, *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1997. One of the areas we will venture into is the “dangerous” territory of worship and the associated issue of music style, which is dividing so many of our churches.

Alfred Poirier, *The Peace Making Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Conflict in the Church* Grand Rapids, Baker, 2006 (300 pages). We will use both Poirier and Frame’s book as a case study to analyze how to approach an issue of ministry from a biblically central framework.

Not required though recommended:

Mark Thompson, *A Clear and Present Word: The Clarity of Scripture*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity press, 2006.

John Piper, *Contending for our All*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2006 (book is free on the “desiringgod.org” home page.

D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

John MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency in Christ*, Dallas: Word Books, 1991.

B. The Student will write a three page double-spaced critical review of the following four books (total assignment is 12 double-spaced pages or more): 1) *Rethinking Christ and Culture: A Post-Christendom Perspective*. 2) *Truth Decay* by Douglas Groothuis. 3) *Whatever Happened to Truth* ed. by Andreas Kostenberger. 4) *Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times*, eds. Millard Erickson, Paul Kjos Helseth,

Justin Taylor. These papers are not simply opinion papers but rather entail careful judgment and judicious evaluation of a book which will include both negative and positive aspects. Please do NOT quote portions of the book or Scripture in your paper—simply cite Scripture, the author and page number in your critical review. Maximum space in these papers should be reserved for critical review.

C. The student will write an in-depth two page single-spaced critical assessment of one chapter of his choice in each of the following books (total assignment is 8 single-spaced pages or more): 1) Craig Carter, *Rethinking Christ and Culture: A Post-Christendom Perspective*. 2) *Truth Decay* by Douglas Groothuis. 3) *Whatever Happened to Truth* ed. by Andreas Kostenberger. 4) *Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times*, eds. Millard Erickson, Paul Kjoss Helseth, Justin Taylor. Students will use their critical assessment papers to lead class discussions. Your critical assessment and class discussion should include: analyses of the concepts in the chapter, the use of Scripture in the chapter, and the students view of how the chapter and topic is (or should be) affecting contemporary Christianity (or perhaps the church you are currently pasturing)—this assignment is met to be serve as substantive and creative engagement of the material.

D. The student will write a two-page single-spaced analytical summary on one of the following two books and prepare a one page single-spaced response of how either one of these books have affected your thinking in specific ministry areas (total assignment is 3 single-spaced pages or more). 1) John M. Frame, *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense*. 2) Alfred Poirier, *The Peace Making Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Conflict in the Church*

E. Students should bring a sampling of program literature from the church your place of ministry (church you pastor or attend, school or para-church ministry you minister) during the in-class sessions. Bring hard copies of such items as the purpose/ vision statement, various handbooks (nursery youth, CE, board leadership info), discipleship program material, some CE curricula, etc. This material and its associated programs will be briefly critiqued and evaluated as to how it reflects the centrality of Scripture. Substantive critique with revision will occur the post-seminar assignment.

IV. In-Class Seminar Instruction (One Week)

The student must do the following during the actual class week:

1. Bring an English translation of the Bible to each class (A copy of the Hebrew OT and Greek NT are OK, but not required);
2. Each evening of the in-class seminar read and interact with the articles and class notes distributed in class in preparation for discussion the following day
3. Interact in a meaningful way in class discussion (there are to be no spectators in class!);

4) Students should bring a sampling packet of program literature from the church your place of ministry (church you pastor or attend, school or para-church ministry you minister) during the in-class sessions. Bring hard copies of such items as the purpose/ vision statement, various handbooks (nursery youth, CE, board leadership info), discipleship program material, some CE curricula, etc. This material and its associated programs will be briefly critiqued and evaluated as to how it reflects the centrality of Scripture. Substantive critique with revision will occur the post-seminar assignment.

5. Complete a ***Learning Contract Proposal*** for the course application project that is to be completed during the 6 weeks after the seminar week (see below). The ***Learning Contract Learning Contract*** will be finalized in consultation with the class instructor during the week.

Learning Contract:

The learning contract will be further explained in class though it is designed to help enable the student to critique and further develop current ministry programming from a Scriptural perspective. During the in-class session all students will prepare a list of each organized program currently operative in the church or ministry to which he belongs (including nursery, youth, worship services, etc.) and those under consideration for beginning in the future. This will constitute a working philosophy for the over-all ministry, demonstrating how the various programs differ from and complement each other. A later form for “programs analysis” will be provided in class to help the student evaluate ministry programs.

All Ph.D. students must select one of the following additional options for his learning contract for this course:

1. If he is a teacher in a formal school setting (post-secondary), he may analyze his notes and teaching from one of his courses to see how central the Bible is to his teaching of that particular subject matter. He must revamp his notes to demonstrate the shift to a more central role of the Bible for the class. The student will turn in three items:

- a. A copy of the old notes for the course in its entirety
- b. A copy of the new notes for the course in its entirety
- c. A five to ten page self-analysis of the centrality of the Bible in the old and new courses; that is, this document walks through the conclusions found in analyzing the old notes and the main changes that were made as a result of the analysis.

2. If he is a pastor, he may choose from one of the following options:

- a. Pick one of the ministries analyzed in the “programs analysis” above that all students are to do for their churches. Design an implementation project to enhance the central role of the Bible in that particular ministry for the purpose of using in your church. The product turned into the instructor will consist of a design document outlining what is to be done in the church, the implementation schedule, and possible feedback from those in the church as the implementation process is begun or finished.

b. Design a sermon series to be preached in the church, which highlights the centrality of the Bible for all of life. The series must be at least ten sermons long. The student will give a detailed outline of each sermon with passages clearly laid out. The student will also turn in a full manuscript for at least two of those sermons. If he has a chance to implement the sermon series, he should also turn in a report of feedback from the congregation concerning the series. Other options are possible if the student has an interesting idea. The learning contract must be agreed upon during the one-week in-class seminar.

V. Course Grading

1000 total points for the course

The course requirements will figure into the final grade in the following way:

Reading w/ papers	30%
Class participation	10%
Program Analysis	20%
Learning Contracts	40%

The grading scale is as follows:

A	95-100
A-	94
B+	93
B	88-92
B-	87
C+	86
C	78-85
C-	77
D+	76
D	71-75
D-	70
F	Below 70