

**Ligonier Academy
Lake Mary, Florida**

The Doctor of Ministry Degree Program

Course Syllabus

DM 808–Pastoral Care

July 2010

Catalog Description

An in-depth examination of the minister's role as a shepherd and servant and the many facets of pastoral care involved in this calling. This examination will include discussion of topics such as counseling, home and hospital visitation, dealing with death and grief, and many others. Particular focus will be placed on problems and pitfalls such as counseling of members of the opposite sex. The purpose of this course is to provide the student with practical knowledge and wisdom in order that he may more effectively care for the flock God has entrusted to him.

Course Overview

Lectures. This course will begin with an overview of pastoral care, its nature, role, parameters and implications in the context of the Old and New Testaments. We will consider the implications of theology – in its systematic and historical forms – on pastoral care. Special attention will be given to particular loci (including the issues of election, assurance, discerning preaching and the problems associated with pain and suffering). The course will attempt therefore to integrate theology and practice. In particular, we will attempt to discuss how much pastoral care is to be done in preaching/teaching as opposed to the more specialized roles of contemporary Christian counseling.

Workshops. Within this context the class time will be punctuated by a series of “hands-on” workshops in which class members will participate and share, examining and discussing how biblical thinking shapes and informs pastoral ministry in the church.

Required Reading:

The following works should be considered required reading:

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| Andrew Purves | <i>Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition</i> , Westminster John Knox, 2001. |
| Andrew Purves | <i>Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Foundation</i> , Westminster John Knox, 2004. |
| Richard Baxter | <i>A Christian Directory</i> (available from two sources: Banner of Truth – as Volume 1 of a four volume set of the complete works of Baxter; and, from Reformation Heritage as a single volume). You are asked to read EITHER section 1 – Christian Ethics OR section3 – Christian Ecclesiastics. |

- John H. Armstrong *Reforming Pastoral Ministry: Challenges for Ministry in Postmodern Times*, Crossway, 2001
- Michael Lawrence *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church*, Crossway, 2010
- John Angell James *An Earnest Ministry*, Banner of Truth, 1996 OR Diggory Press, 2007
- Martin Bucer *Concerning the True Care of Souls*, Banner of Truth 2009

Assignments

1. **Response Papers.** The following papers should be written—maximum length two pages single spacing, responding to the following questions, and written specifically with another pastor in view. These must be written prior to the class and brought to the class for discussion.

Paper 1: Reflect on the relationship of preaching to pastoral counseling. Provide a summary of your own position in regard to what you understand by “biblical counseling.”

Paper 2: Reflect on your present series of sermons (say, the last 15-20) and highlight in bullet form areas of pastoral ministry you have specifically addressed.

Paper 3: From the reading material, consider and assess the different style of approach in one of the books from your current practice of pastoral care.

Paper 4: Write a brief tract on ONE of the following topics (this should be one that you haven’t already written on!): Cancer *with* Jesus; Divorce and Church Membership; I think I may be Gay; My Baby has Down’s Syndrome;

Paper 5: Write a brief letter to, or tract for your congregation entitled: *The church and pastoral care*.

2. **Term Paper.** This paper is to apply what has been learned from the assigned readings, the lectures, and class discussions of this course to the local situation in which the student serves. Some description of the ministry situation in which you serve should be included. The paper should develop a biblical philosophy of pastoral care fine-tuned by way of application and implications to your specific local context. In particular this should reflect on three questions:

- 1: Where are we now in our congregation in relation to the topic
- 2: In what ways, do we need to develop, grow, and if need be reform in this/these areas?
- 3: What, if any are the obstacles to, and means of development involved in this?

The paper should be grounded in a biblical theology of pastoral care, and informed by a sensitivity to the lessons of history and ecclesiology. The paper should be between fifteen

and twenty pages in length, including footnotes or endnotes. Note that the length is itself part of the exercise. The final date for submission is **September 30, 2010**.