

6PT518/01 PASTORAL MINISTRY (2 credits)

Instructor: Rev. Bill Sutherland is pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church (ARP) in Olney, MD where he has served for 3 years. Prior to this, he served for 10 years as associate pastor of Wallace Presbyterian Church (PCA) in College Park, MD.

Class Meets: 6 Thursday afternoons from noon until 4 p.m.
September 4, September 25, October 16, November 16, December 4, and December 18.

For Thursday, September 4:

Required: Read Classical Pastoral Care: Becoming a Minister (volume 1) by Thomas C. Oden, Baker, 1987 (188 pages). This is the best book that I have read on the call to be a pastor and how this has been understood throughout the history of the church. Oden provides a treasury of quotations from pastors from the early church until 1700. Oden writes from a broad perspective and you may not agree with all of his conclusions, but I believe you will find his quotations from Chrysostom, Calvin, Luther, Baxter, and many others edifying and insightful.

Write a 5-page (double-spaced) paper highlighting what insights you gleaned about pastoral ministry to hand in on September 4 at the beginning of class. You can also write about what you found unhelpful or less than convincing in Oden's book. Some questions you may want to consider:

- What is the leading metaphor in the Bible regarding the task of the minister? What are the limits of this metaphor?
- What is the relation between pastoral care and apostolic ministry?
- What is the difference between inward and outward call? How are they related?
- What is the role of books and role models in the preparation to be a pastor?

Recommended:

The Call: Finding and Fulfilling The Central Purpose of Your Life by Os Guinness, Word, 1998 (247 pages). This is a wonderful book on the subject of calling. It does not deal as specifically with the call to be a pastor, or it would be required.

Run with the Bulls Without Getting Trampled: The Qualities You Need to Stay Out of Harm's Way and Thrive at Work by Tim Irwin. Thomas Nelson, 2007 (256 pages)

Topics: The Identity of the Pastor: Knowing the Shepherd of our Souls; The Calling of the Pastor (Inward Call and Outward Call); Counting the Cost; What is a Pastor? Biblical Considerations: Key texts: Psalm 23, John 10, Ezekiel 34

For Thursday, September 25:

Read Shepherding God's Flock: A Preacher's Handbook on Pastoral Ministry, Counseling, and Leadership by Jay E. Adams. Originally published by Presbyterian and Reformed in 1980, it has been reprinted by other publishers. Any edition will be fine. We will only read Part 1 Pastoral Life (156 pages) for this course, but you may find the other parts on Pastoral Counseling and Pastoral Leadership helpful also. Read pp. 1-58, and type out your answers to the exercises at the end of each of these chapters. Only do the exercises "For the Student." You may skip the exercises "For the Pastor."

Required:

Read "The Cure of Souls: The Pastor Serving the Flock" by Jim Elliff, chapter 8, pp. 147-166 in Reforming Pastoral Ministry: Challenges for Ministry in Postmodern Times, edited by John H. Armstrong, Crossway, 2001.

Read "Curing Souls: The Forgotten Art" pp.55-66 in The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction by Eugene H. Peterson. Eerdmans, 1989.

What is the task of the shepherd? What is the role of the pastor? How is caring for souls the task of the pastor? What does this look like and how does this happen in the 21st century?

In addition to completing the exercises in the back of Adam's book, write a 2-4 page (double spaced) paper on the topic of "caring for souls" interacting with the questions above.

Recommended:

Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity by Eugene H. Peterson. Eerdmans, 1987.

Topics: Self-Care of the Pastor, The Family Life of the Pastor, The Temptations and Challenges of the Pastor

For Thursday, October 16

Required:

Read Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work by Eugene H. Peterson. Eerdmans, 1980. (241 pages). Peterson examines the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and

Esther and discusses the pastoral work of prayer-directing, story-making, pain-sharing, nay-saying, and community building.

Write a reflective 5-page paper interacting with Peterson's book. What did you learn about these books of the Bible from Peterson? What did you learn about the work of a pastor? What did you find helpful? Were there any areas in which you take issue with Peterson?

Recommended: Reforming Pastoral Ministry: Challenges for Ministry in Postmodern Times, edited by John H. Armstrong. Crossway, 2001.

For Thursday, November 6:

Required: Read Shepherding God's Flock by Jay Adams pp.75-156 and type out your answers to the exercises "for the student" at the end of each chapter. Adams discusses the matters of visitation and counseling, and he requires you to do some visitations with a pastor or student to complete some of these exercises, so don't wait until the last minute to do these. Adams is writing in the 1970s. How has our culture changed since then? How is it very similar today?

Topics: Home visitation (Visitors, New Members, Inactive Members); Places of Need (hospital, nursing home, prison)

For Thursday, December 4

Required: Read The Peacemaker: a Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict (3rd edition) by Ken Sande. Baker, 1991, 1997, 2004. 305 pages.

Write a 5- page interaction about what you found helpful in this book, and how you might seek to apply it in your own life or ministry. If you found parts of it unhelpful or unrealistic, feel free to comment on this.

Peace-making is a needed skill for pastors in today world of broken relationships.

Recommended: Instruments in the Hands of the Redeemer: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change by Paul David Tripp. Presbyterian and Reformed, 2002.

For Thursday, December 18:

Write a 10-15 page paper discussing the aspect of your character, personality, and/or understanding that seems to be most problematic for a diligent and faithful ministry. Interact with biblical texts on this subject, the readings we have done in this course, or other readings you have done, as well as your own experiences before or after coming to faith in Christ. Make some recommendations for how you will try to address this area of concern.