Making Missional Disciples
Course Overview For Registration

Jesus assigned the church one primary task: to make disciples. In the twenty-first century, how do we present the call to discipleship in a way that captures the hearts of believers, gives them a biblical understanding of their vocational calling, and keeps them self-motivated towards spiritual growth? The answer is to help them see that our calling to follow King Jesus is the call to join him in the establishment of wholeness and righteousness over every square inch of the planet. This practical course examines discipleship from the paradigm of biblical teaching about the kingdom of God, highlighting the contributions made to kingdom theology by Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck, and Herman Ridderbos. It will provide students with the tools to inspire their congregation about the significance of their “secular” work, with a practical, kingdom-based discipleship model, and with biblical strategies for shaping the local church to make effective kingdom disciples. Taught by Dr. Gary Yagel and Hugh Whelchel.

Gary Yagel began ministry as a volunteer Young Life leader both while attending Penn State and subsequently while working for the Labor Department in Washington, DC. After receiving his Master of Divinity from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, he served four years as a youth pastor, before beginning a 20 year career as a pastor and church planter in the PCA. In 2002, Gary and his wife, Sandy, launched Family Builders, Inc. and Gary became the Executive Director of the men’s division, Forging Bonds of Brotherhood. In this capacity Gary frequently speaks on men’s retreats or leads men’s seminars. He is a trained presenter of Man In the Mirror’s 20 hour course on men’s ministry, No Man Left Behind, has coached countless churches in men’s ministry, and has authored numerous resources for men, including Forging Bonds of Brotherhood. He received his Doctor of Ministry degree from RTS Orlando and wrote his dissertation on the topic “Discipling the Heart of a Man.”

Hugh Whelchel is currently the Executive Director of the Institute for Faith, Work & Economics where he brings a unique combination of senior executive responsibility, creative educational administration, and technical innovation from over thirty years of diverse business experience. Over eight years ago, Hugh stepped out of a successful business career to share his senior executive experience with Reformed Theological Seminary’s Washington DC campus, where he served as Executive Director and guest professor. Prior to RTS, he spent fifteen years in the IT industry, helping turn around several regional companies. In addition to his business acumen, Hugh has a unique passion and expertise in helping individuals integrate their faith and vocational calling. He is the author of How Then Should We Work? Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work, released May 2012. On the topic of faith and work, Hugh is frequently called upon to teach and speak on the radio, at conferences, churches, seminaries, business groups, and universities around the nation.

Course Reading


Course Syllabus: Making Missional Disciples (2 credits)

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

A. The relevance of our topic
B. The meaning of mathetes
C. To follow Jesus was to learn about the kingdom of God
D. The term missional
E. A holistic definition of disciple

THE ROOTS OF A KINGDOM/MISSIONAL WORLD VIEW

A. The Four Chapter Gospel
B. The Cultural Mandate
C. The Kingdom of God (overview)
D. Common Grace

KINGDOM THEOLOGY AS A FOUNDATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP

A. The Kingdom of God As The Paradigm for Understanding Discipleship
   1. Creation—Fall—Redemption/Restoration
   2. Creation: Adam’s Kingship Calling
   3. The Fall
   4. Redemption
      a. Christ’s Kingship
      b. The Kingdom of God Defined
      c. Wholeness Recovered, Righteousness Established
      d. The call to discipleship is rooted in our creation calling to exercise dominion
   5. Discipleship in the Already/Not Yet Era

B. Contributions to Kingdom Theology
   1. Abraham Kuyper
   2. Herman Bavinck
   3. Herman Ridderbos

KINGDOM/MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP IN THE WORKPLACE: OVERVIEW

A. A Discipleship Model That Affirms Our Vocational Calling
   1. The Biblical Meaning of Success
2. The Greek and Hebrew Views of Work
3. Early Christian and Medieval Views of Work
4. Reformed View of Work
5. Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Views of Work

B. The Challenge of the Twenty-first Century
   1. Calling and Work
   2. Primary and Secondary Callings
   3. A Shift In the Meaning of Calling

KINGDOM/MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICAL MODEL

A. Kingdom = Christ’s Agenda of Righteousness and Restoration
B. Model of Personal Discipleship and Spiritual Formation
   1. Called to Christ: surrender to Christ the King out of love for him
   2. Called to be like Christ: becoming like Christ in kingdom heart attitudes (Matt 5-7)
   3. Called to exercise dominion for Christ (shaping every sphere of life according to Christ’s agenda)
C. Overcoming the Driven Life Style to Live By Our Calling
D. How Jesus Stayed Focused On His Mission (Mark 1:32-39)

KINGDOM/MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP IN THE WORKPLACE: PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

A. The Future: Work, Calling, and Cultural Renewal
   1. Our Calling to Be Obedient Servants
   2. Our Calling to Reweave Shalom
   3. Our Calling to Restore Culture
B. How Then Should We Work?

HOW KINGDOM/MISSIONAL DISCIPLES ARE MADE

A. Popular myths about how disciples are made
B. Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus’ explanation of how to make disciples
C. Disciple-making as the portal priority for the church
D. The church makes disciples by functioning as an organization (Titus 1:5)
E. The church makes disciples by functioning as an organism (Eph 4:11-16)
   1. How to get meaningful connection in the body
   2. Equipping the saints for ministry
      Illustration: Men’s Ministry
F. Kingdom Discipleship Is a Challenge Big Enough to Capture the Heart
Course Grading

Class Participation: 30%
Reading Summaries for each of the 5 books 30%
Final Paper 40%

Final Paper: The final paper (10-12 pages total) consists of your answers to the following questions. In answering the questions, students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the course content, and reading. Your own opinions are welcomed even if they differ from the professors.

1. In what ways is an understanding of kingdom theology foundational for understanding Christ’s call to discipleship? (4-6 pages)

2. What is the biblical view of vocation and why is this view important to (3-4 pages)

3. In your view, a) what are the indispensable elements in a personal discipleship model and b) how is the church to go about “making disciples?” (3-4 pages)
Title of the Book:  

Your Name:  

Overview—Give a brief summary of the book, including its theme, approach, and perspective.  

Points you want to remember—Summarize three or four points from the book that you want to remember.  

Impact—What impact did this book have on your thinking about making disciples?