

DM 102: Rock Not Sand: Deconstructing the False Narratives that Bind Us While Welcoming Creative Disillusionment

CHRIST, CULTURE, CHURCH, COSTS, CONQUESTS

D. Min. Intensive

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. EST

January, 25-29, 2021 and February, 1-5, 2021

Rev. William D. Watley, PhD, Instructor

OVERVIEW

The insights of Dr. H. Richard Niebuhr's classic work, Christ and Culture, will be applied to the microcosm of vision casting in the local congregation. The course will focus on such dynamics as

The impact of the larger ever-changing cultural context

The power of local church culture

The role and assumption of clergy leadership

The silent, but ever-present money or stewardship factor

The successful/nebulous examples of biblical vision casting and implementation.

The course is designed to be a five-day, two-week intensive directive study consisting of ten sessions from Monday-Friday, 9:00am-12:00 non. The suggested time frame is January 25-29 and February 1-5, 2021

The following texts will be used in the exploration of the subject matter

CHRIST

H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture.

Focus: How does Dr. Niebuhr's analysis of the various perceptions of the role of Christ and Culture, fit the self-identity of certain congregations? How does Dr. Niebuhr's of the various perceptions of the role of Christ and culture, fit your own self-perception and vision for ministry?

CULTURE

Tod Bolsinger, Canoeing the Mountains and

Cynthia Hale, A Piece of Work: Sisters Shaped by God

Dr. Cynthia Hale, Founder and Pastor, Ray of Hope Christian Church; Atlanta, Ga.

(Guest) Focus: How contemporary or antiquated is a congregation's, denomination's, or our own perception or understanding of the church's mission and vision in terms of present cultural, political, technological, and economic realities? How can H. Niebuhr's analysis of Christ and Culture help us in wrestling with and working through this question?

CHURCH

Sam Chand, Culture Catalyst

Leadership Pain

Pastor Debra John Murray, Pastor, First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto, Ca.
(Guest)

Focus: What is the impact of a congregation's culture, brand, traditions, history, and leadership cadre on vision casting and implementation? Where does congregational cultural life fit into H. Richard Niebuhr's examination of Christ and Culture?

COSTS

J. Clif Christopher, Rich Church, Poor Church

Focus: Does vision drive money or does money drive vision?

True or False: Whoever controls the money, controls the church and its vision?
What are the personal and political implications of the pastor's personal stewardship habits for the assumption of congregational leadership and the implementation of vision?

CONQUESTS

The Bible (NRSV or NIV): Books of Exodus, Numbers, Luke and Acts

Raquel St. Clair Lettsome, "Womanist Biblical Interpretation," pp.54-62 in True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary,

"Womanist Criticism" in New Interpreter's Bible Handbook on Preaching

Focus: What leadership and vision casting lessons do we learn from Moses, the Lord Jesus Christ, Mary Magdalene, Lydia, Peter and Paul?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Virtual attendance and participation in discussions based upon reading assignments.
- A ten-page paper (1.5), using the scriptures, and other resources on one of the major subdivisions of the course---CHRIST; CULTURE; CHURCH; COSTS; or CONQUESTS

REQUIRED TEXTS:

H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture

Tod Bolsinger, Canoeing the Mountains

Sam Chand, Culture Catalyst

Sam Chand, Leadership Pain

J. Clif Christopher, Rich Church, Poor Church

Raquel St. Clair Lettsome, True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary, "Womanist Biblical Interpretation. *Chapter will be available in pdf format*
New Interpreter's Bible Handbook on Preaching, "Womanist Criticism". *Chapter will be available in pdf format.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SUPPLEMENTAL READING:

The Holy Bible

Ted Bolsinger, Canoeing the Mountains

Sam Chand, Culture Catalyst
Leadership Pain

J. Clif Christopher, Rich Church, Poor Church
Not Your Parents Offering Plate
Whose Offering Plate Is It?

Scott Galloway, The Four

Malcolm Gladwell, The Tipping Point
Talking to Strangers
Outliers

Robert Greene, The Laws of Human Nature
The 48 Laws of Power

Cynthia Hale, A Piece of Work: Sisters Shaped by God

Barbara Kellerman, The End of Leadership

Raquel St. Clair Lettsome, Call and Consequences: A Womanist Reading of the Gospel of Mark, "Womanist Biblical Interpretation," pp.54-62 in True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary

"Womanist Criticism" in New Interpreter's Bible Handbook of Preaching

So What Does the Bible Say About This...? Context, Questions, and Correspondence as a Means of Refracting a Cultural Lens for African American Biblical Interpretation." In Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology 65 (3): 276-284 (2011)

H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture

Reinhold Niebuhr, Moral Man and Immoral Society

William Watley, Breaking Financial Barriers That Block Vision
Bring the Full Tithe
Less Than Tipping: Twenty-Five Reasons to Tithe
Less Than Tipping: Questions and Answers About Tithing
Ten Steps to Financial Freedom

(edited) Doing Church: By Those Who Do It, Volume 1
Doing Church: By Those Who Do it, Volume 2

Specific Student Learning Outcomes For The Risking Faithfully Cohort:

The learning outcomes of the Risking Faithfully Cohort correspond to students' engagement (thinking), spiritual and professional formation (being), and integration of practice in the context of ministry (doing).

I. Thinking – Students will...

- Demonstrate knowledge of new questions and paradigms for ministry and generate questions about the paradigms assumed in their ministry settings.
- Identify assumptions about church and ministry that warrant deeper theological reflection and detail, through coursework and discussion, a thoughtful grappling with previously held assumptions.

II. Being – Students will...

- Demonstrate, through writing and reflection, an awareness of race, gender, and privilege in their lives and ministry settings.
- Reexamine issues of call and spiritual formation in light of their own strengths and aptitudes for ministry in a rapidly changing landscape.
- Narrate the ways in which mutually informative relationships among the cohort serve to ground/transform/support students and their ministry."

III. Doing – Students will...

- Exhibit preparedness to lead thoughtfully and faithfully during times of change and uncertainty.
- Analyze their capacity for risk and innovation in ministry and identify areas for future growth.

Each Course Should:

- Engage students in biblical and theological reflection.
- Challenge students to be attentive to the material and embodied life of faith.
- Attend to how the subject matter of the course is shaped by culture and context and takes diverse expressions.
- Expect students to engage their theological imaginations to better understand ministry in ecclesial settings in the Christian tradition and to risk imagining new possibilities for ministry.
- Provide opportunity for students to relate the subject matter of the course to their own ministry contexts.

Assessment

Each student will receive a grade in this class (Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory), based on performance in the following areas:

- Participation (attendance, completion of reading, classroom participation)
- Completion of post-class final paper

Policy Statement on Special Needs

For policy issues including special needs, plagiarism, etc., please refer to the D.Min. Student Handbook for clarification. If needed, please talk with me or with the Director of the D.Min. program.

Resources for Online Course Work

Our course shell on my.pts.edu: This will be our course “home” and the place where you’ll access our Zoom sessions as well as course and campus resources. After you log in to my.pts.edu, look in the left side menu for the “My Courses” link; this will display links to campus services (including Barbour Library and your PTS e-mail) as well as the courses you are registered for. Once you reach the course page, you’ll see an overview of the course, and the left side menu will display course-specific options. The Zoom link in that left side menu will bring you to your class’s Zoom sessions – no need to enter a meeting ID.

Online access to course readings: Because the physical resources of the PTS campus are mostly closed right now, PTS is providing digital access to as many readings as possible. Assigned articles and selected chapters, where possible, are being sent to students directly, and will also be accessible on your class’s course page in my.pts.edu. For full books that have been assigned as required readings, you’re encouraged to purchase them in hard copy or as e-books (such as Amazon Kindle).

If you are unable to obtain a course reading, please contact the D.Min. office and we will find a way to support your gaining access to what you need.

Technology support at PTS: There are many people and resources at PTS to support your participation in your courses through distance learning, but we need you to identify your needs. You’ll be receiving a technology survey to identify potential issues, but as soon as possible, check to see if you need help with any of the following:

Access issues: If you need assistance with accessing your my.pts.edu account, are unsure of your username, or need to reset your password, PTS’s IT staff can help. Contact Brian Fidell at bfidell@pts.edu or Dave Middleton at dmiddleton@pts.edu. (There’s also a list of PTS IT staff that can help with access and connection issues at the “Help!” link in our course site at my.pts.edu.) Students are also asked to check their PTS email account regularly for course and program updates.

Connection issues: Try a test session through Zoom at <https://zoom.us/test> . If you have limited or spotty access to broadband or other fast internet that can support audio and video conferencing, contact Dave Middleton, director of IT at PTS; there are mobile hotspot devices available for lending to students.

Equipment settings: During your Zoom test session, check your microphone and video settings to ensure that you can be seen and heard and that you can see and hear others. If there are problems, contact Dave Middleton to help troubleshoot the issue.

Preparing to use Zoom for learning: In your course page, click on the “Zoom session” link in the left menu, and scroll down to open a Zoom use guide to better understand how the controls appear and work on the device you will be using. One additional, helpful practice is to keep your microphone muted during lectures and presentations by others, to prevent audio feedback.