PS6101 Pastoral Theology: Pentecostal Perspectives

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Introduction

“Pastoral Theology. Is it an oxymoron?” So asks Chris Simon (Alphacrucis College, Australia). Is it possible to have ‘practice’ without ‘theology’ or theology without practice? The tension between theory and practice is not new in the Church. Simon adds,

Pastoral Theology presents, in many ways, the most important continuing challenge to the church! For it is the integration of theory and practice. Too much theory, and the church can become a sterile place marked by 'head knowledge'. Alternatively, too much practice and the church can become a pragmatic institution ruled by societal trends -if it works, it must be good. Pastoral Theology seeks to wed the two aspects of Christian ministry.

It may be argued that it is in the ‘practice’ of theology that theological ‘enquiry’ is validated. J. Rodman Williams, in *Renewal Theology*, divides theology into its four traditional formats: systematic, biblical, historical and practical. He defines ‘practical theology’ as the way Christian faith is practiced: through preaching, teaching, counseling, and the like.” Pentecostal ministry has great interest in the actual daily practice of the faith life. Earlier generations have even been ‘suspicious’ of too much ‘head knowledge’ as a deterrent to a full life in the Spirit.

Jurgen Moltmann affirms the need for a holistic Pentecostal perspective of the Christian life when he (from within a mainline theological tradition) addresses the heart of Pentecostalism. Moltmann speaks directly to the integration of theory and practice - Christians need to express ‘a theology of life’ based on their understanding of how the Cross and the Resurrection flow into Pentecost. He says,

Pentecost, as Christians call this event, is not an appendix nor a supplement to 'Good Friday’ and 'Easter’, but the objective of Jesus’ self-sacrifice in his death on the cross and the goal of his resurrection. . .The theological commitment that comes with the experience of Pentecost should make possible an integrated theology of life. . .The first Christian Pentecostal congregation (Acts 2.17-21) understood what occurred to them as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2.28-32. (“A Pentecostal Theology of Life”)
Some church analysts have described the diversity of church and denominational cultures as representing Father, Son and Holy Spirit churches respectively. The paradigm does not necessarily suggest that any one of the three emphases is barren of awareness and interest in the other two. However, ‘Father’ churches tend to be more liturgical and religiously global in nature, ‘Son’ churches highlight the Cross and elements of sacrifice and salvation, and ‘Spirit’ churches affirm various dimensions of the immanent (and imminent) presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Pentecostal pastors have the challenge of determining their church cultural emphasis (or combinations thereof) then addressing what it means to achieve effective pastoral ministry and add Spirit-empowered value to the Church.

This course is a study of pastoral ministry within the context of pastoral theology. To deal adequately with the ‘oxymoron’ question requires a closer look at the God-side (Theology) and the Church-side (Ecclesiology) of pastoral theology. As well, the pursuit of at least some answers to the question “What does it mean to be a ‘Pentecostal’ pastor?” calls for a consideration of how Pneumatology relates to Christology.

**Required Textbooks**


Students are responsible to acquire textbooks from a source of your choice.

**Additional Required Reading**

Select one book of your choice related to some aspect of pastoral theology and/or pastoral ministry. I will offer a list for your consideration but you may also select from elsewhere. Perhaps you have a relevant book that has been sitting unopened on your shelf for some time. Any selection outside the list that I offer must be approved in advance. (Note: In the Assignments section you have an option to replace this book with expanded readings from another textbook)

**Supplementary Materials**

For students who intend to pursue credentials with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC), the following denominational documents from the PAOC are available free of charge at
www.paoc.org:
  • General Constitution, By-laws and Essential Resolutions
  • Statement of Fundamental & Essential Truths
  • Local Church Constitution

You should purchase the following reference materials (or comparable titles) if you are planning for vocational ministry that includes conducting meetings and providing pastoral services:


**Course Objectives**

Learning outcomes for this course in Pastoral Theology, around which the course content is structured, include:

• To increase personal understanding of biblical foundations for ‘Pentecostal’ ministry
• To examine the diversity of models available and being practiced for pastoral leadership in Pentecostal/charismatic contexts
• To enhance the God-honoring and congregational experiential value of each of the elements of a ‘Pentecostal Worship Service’
• To articulate significant theological and ecclesial relationships between the Cross, the Spirit, and the Church
• To incorporate lessons into personal ministry from the models of Jesus as pastor to his disciples and the apostle Paul as pastor to the early Church
• To comprehend essential elements of pastoral ministry and congregational life within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
• To expand personal capability to give ministry leadership in the church ordinances within a Pentecostal context
• To establish effective perspectives and methodologies for the diverse functions of pastoral care and counseling
• To broaden awareness and ability in what it means to pastor a ‘pentecostal’ church

**Course Content**

Topics which have priority for attention during this course include:

1. Biblical foundations for ‘Pentecostal’ ministry
   • Pentecostal theology, philosophy and practices
   • Pastoral roles as God’s prophet and the people’s priest
• The ‘call’ and the ‘anointing’

2. Models for leadership and administration in Pentecostal/charismatic contexts
   • Pastor as apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor-teacher (Ephesians 4.11)
   • Modes of church government (e.g., Presbyterian/congregational, ‘Moses’ model, G12, Pastor’s Council, rule by apostle)

3. Elements of a ‘Worship Service’
   • The Pentecostal pastor and ‘liturgy’
   • Revitalizing (‘repracticing’) the traditional elements of church services
   • The meaning of ‘order’ of service –order versus spontaneity in Pentecostal worship

4. The Cross, the Spirit, and the Church
   • Essential relationships between elements of Christology, Pneumatology and Ecclesiology that impact pastoral ministry
   • Father, Son and Spirit churches: the diversity of focus in local churches (and denominations) and implications for liturgical practices

5. Jesus and Paul as models for pastoral ministry
   • Jesus the pastor in John 14-17
   • Paul the pastor to the early Church

6. Pastoral ministry within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
   • The PAOC credentialing process
   • PAOC constitutions/bylaws, relationship of local church to national organization
   • Ministerial code of ethics
   • Denominational polity regarding local church administration, finances, budget processes, business meetings, pastor-board relationships, etc.

7. Pentecostal perspectives on the sacraments (ordinances)
   • Ministering the ‘real presence’ of Christ in the Lord’s Supper
   • Alternate modes for administering communion
   • Elevating the significance of water baptism
   • The potential role of ‘confirmation’ in Pentecostal practices

8. Pastoral care and counseling
   • Models for ‘pastoral visitation’ in the 21st century
   • Pastoral involvement in life-cycle functions and events (e.g., baby dedication, water baptism, weddings, funerals)
   • Praying for the sick and believing for miracles
   • The role of forgiveness and ‘absolution’ in Pentecostal pastoral practices
   • Diverse perspectives on the pastor’s role as ‘counselor’
   • Pastoral conversation: The art of effective one-on-one ministry
   • Personal life management
9. Pastoring a ‘pentecostal’ church
   • The pastor and ‘worship’ (where the battlefield is often “not large enough to bury the dead” -Hamlet)
   • Pentecostal preaching
   • Ministering in ‘the power of the Spirit’ (e.g., spiritual gifts, Baptism of Holy Spirit)
   • Altar calls, altar ministry and ‘tarrying’ services

Course Requirements

1. Fisher book  (Written= 20%; Oral= 15%)
   • Due Date:  TBA
   a. A critical review of Part 1: Four Crucial Questions for Pastors
      • Length:  4-5 pages
      • Include in your report two or three questions for each of the four chapters, questions that you could use for class discussion of the material
   b. A reflective response to Part 2: A Portrait of a Pastor
      • Length:  7-8 pages
      • Include in your report two or three questions for each of seven pastoral images described by Fisher, questions that you could use for class discussion of the material
   c. A segment of time with the entire class and/or a small group where you will lead discussion on assigned portions of Fisher’s material

2. Nouwen book  (10%)
   • Written personal response to the material in Nouwen’s book
   • Due Date:  TBA
   • Length:  However much you can write in about an hour
   • Your written response will address the following statement:

     In his book, In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership, Henri Nouwen sets out three temptations that may arise in the life of a pastor and/or leader. Discuss Nouwen’s temptations in such a way to demonstrate your understanding of the principles that Nouwen is trying to share in this book and the value of what he says for becoming a more effective pastor.

3. Hunter book  (30%)
   • Written assignment:
     o to dissect the elements of a church service,
     o to reflect on the nature, purpose and modalities for each element, and
     o to propose effective approaches to each element within a Pentecostal order of service as well as a comprehensive model for pastoral leadership of the congregation in Sunday (or alternate) worship
   • Due Date:  TBA
Hunter deals with the following elements of church service practices:
  o Going to church
  o Quiet prelude
  o Singing the doxology
  o Scripture reading
  o Hearing the sermon
  o Following the liturgy (within a Pentecostal context this item would include what we call the ‘worship and praise’ elements of a service)
  o Giving an offering
  o Taking communion
  o Receiving the benediction

• Length: Negotiable; when you have read the book and thought about how you wish to frame your response, we can establish whether the assignment is totally written, partially oral and/or visually demonstrative (in an actual service), etc.
• This assignment is an opportunity to reflect on any elements of Pentecostal worship that may have changed for the better or worse (in your perspective) over succeeding generations; for example, Scott Ellington laments “The Costly Loss of Testimony” in his article of same title.

4. Trask book  (15%)

• Written assignment:
  o To ‘fill in the gaps’ of aspects of pastoral theology that you perceive would be valuable for your understanding and practice of Pentecostal pastoral ministry
  o Breadth: Read articles in 8 to 10 areas of Trask’s book
• Due Date: TBA
• Length: 1-2 pages of critical review for each area of reading
• The Trask book is an expansive book that covers many aspects of Pentecostal pastoring. If you are so inclined, you have an option to delete assignment 5. and expand the Trask reading accordingly

5. Book of personal choice  (10%)

• Written assignment:
  o Select a book (most likely from your own bookshelf) that relates to the course
  o Write a book review that draws the content and value of the book into your personal ministry landscape
• Due Date: TBA
• Length: 3-4 pages
• As stated above, this assignment may be collapsed into a larger reading of the Trask material

Bibliography


**Web Resources**

For ease of access to the web addresses, use the electronic version of this syllabus (available to you in Word and pdf formats). The electronic web links to all sites will save you the trouble of typing url addresses.

1. **Samples from Christianity Today and Leadership Journal**

To have access to the full text of journal articles, paid subscriptions are now available at http://www.ctlibrary.com.


For resource materials related to ‘Leadership and Pastoral Ministry’:
http://www.ctlibrary.com/topics/leadershippastoralministry
Reference material is organized under five headings: Leadership Development, Leadership Qualities, Pastoral Role, Preaching and Vision

2. **Other Resources**


Wagner online inventory for Spirit-empowered spiritual giftedness http://buildingchurch.net/g2s.htm
Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research  
http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/  

Encounter: Journal for Pentecostal Ministry  
http://www.agts.edu/encounter/previous.html  

“Paradigm for Pentecostal Preaching” by Steve Eutsler; addresses the question, “What are the marks of biblical and Spirit-filled preaching?  
http://www.pneumafoundation.org/resources/articles/SEutslerParadigmForPentecostalPreaching.pdf  

Enrich: A Journal for Pentecostal Ministry (Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada)  
http://www.enrichmag.ca/  

Enrichment Online (Assemblies of God periodical)  
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/  
This journal provides resource materials across many topics of interest to Pentecostal pastors. Several examples are given below.  

“Rekindling the Call to Pastoral Ministry.” Enrichment Journal (Winter 2003)  
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200301/200301_016_interviews.cfm  

“Worship in the Church.” Enrichment Journal (Summer 2003)  
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200303/index.cfm  

“Pastors are from Mars, Worship Leaders are from Venus” Enrichment Journal (Fall 2002)  
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200204/200204_144_mars.cfm  

“The Essence of Pentecostal Worship” Enrichment Journal (Summer 2003)  
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200303/200303_018_Essence.cfm