EM5301 A Biblical Theology
and Hermeneutic of Leadership

Course Syllabus
Module: May 21-25, 2018
HORIZON CAMPUS – SASKATOON

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3 credit hours

Introduction

‘A Biblical Theology and Hermeneutic of Leadership’ is a core course in the M.A. Leadership Track. An abundance of literature addresses leadership and offers a theology of leadership; some writers even offer ‘the’ theology of leadership, a claim which is perhaps less than modest. When I was pondering a direction for my Ph.D. in areas related to organizational theory and behavior, my advisor was firm that he would not supervise a dissertation on the subject of leadership. He viewed that topic as ‘a black hole that would swallow me alive.’ Since that time, the sea of leadership theory and practice, both Christian and secular, has become even more vast and unfathomable; however, it still beckons us to explore its depths.

In pursuing a biblical theology of leadership, it is important to note the Bible does not roll out a neat package that blends smoothly with all secular theory and practice about leaders and leadership. Yet both sources offer much awareness and direction for the godly leader who desires to be anchored in the Bible but also informed by the best models and methods available in secular literature. Approaching our study through the interpretive activity of hermeneutics yields key elements or building blocks towards an integrated biblical theology of leadership.

Learning Outcomes

Desired student learning outcomes for this course include:

1. To apply evangelical modes of hermeneutics to the biblical narrative and teaching regarding leaders and leadership but without the bias of ‘hero worship’

2. To interpret the landscape of secular management and leadership literature within the context and under the authority of biblical principles and practices
3. To grasp the depth of implications for leaders surrounding the truth that “we have this treasure in earthen vessels,” i.e., that issues of identity, vocation and credibility are pivotal to the understanding of godly leadership.

4. To perceive the critical role of culture in all matters related to how individuals, groups and organizations function in the time and space they share together, how leaders are the gatekeepers of culture, and the realities of community (or isolation) that flow from organizational culture.

5. To embrace the significance of ‘emotionally healthy spirituality’ as a core requirement for godly leaders and leadership; i.e., the role of emotional intelligence in the life and work of a leader.

6. To engage in a holistic exploration of a biblical theology of leadership that encompasses biblical models and teachings, appropriate theological paradigms, as well as matters of identity, vocation, credibility, culture, and community.

**Resources/Textbooks (required)**


**Reference (not required as textbooks)**


*An excellent resource if you want an exhaustive study of leaders and leadership in the Bible. Twenty Bible scholars and ministry professionals thoughtfully grapple with what the Scriptures, in their totality, actually have to teach us about the essence of true leadership. . . [they] examine and correlate the breadth of evidence in the Old and New Testaments. . . and bring it all together in a fresh and challenging theological understanding that may radically alter what we have thought leadership really is.” Another reviewer says this book is “currently the dominant scholarly study on leadership from a biblical perspective.”

The reigning comprehensive textbook on leadership in the academic world, “It has been adopted at more than 1600 institutions in 89 countries and translated into 13 different languages. This market-leading text successfully combines an academically robust account of the major theories and models of leadership with an accessible style and special emphasis on how leadership theory can inform leadership practice.”

Course Content

During the module days we will address the issues raised in the Learning Outcomes.

Requirements

Pre-Module

1. *The Power and the Glory* by Graham Greene  
   a) Read the novel and reflect on all the thoughts and feelings you have about ‘the whisky priest’ who is the central figure.  
   b) Write 3-4 pages (750-1000 words) to summarize how you relate this whisky priest to the Apostle Paul’s exclamation that ‘we have this treasure in earthen vessels’. Use specific references to events/instances in the novel to illustrate your points. You can also input other biblical material that is relevant to your discussion.  
   c) Hand in your response on the first day of class and be prepared to participate in a class discussion.

   **Due Date: Monday May 21, 2018**

   a) Read/Download the article from the course website on populi to familiarize yourself with the authors’ eight culture styles: Caring, Purpose, Learning, Enjoyment, Results, Authority, Safety and Order.  
   b) Complete the exercise, “What’s Your Organization’s Cultural Profile” (at end of the article).  
      Note: If you are not actively engaged with an organization at the moment then reach back to the most recent one you spent time with.  
   c) Write 3-4 pages (750-1000 words) to summarize: i) your response to the content of the article; ii) your response to the ‘organizational profile’ exercise; and iii) your reflections on the perceived gap you see between what ‘is’ in your organization’s culture and what you think ‘ought’ to be there.  
   d) Hand in your response on the first day of class and be prepared to participate in a class discussion.

   **Due Date: Monday May 21, 2018**

3. Self-Assessments, Inventories, etc.
a) Review your files and memory and make a list of every questionnaire, inventory, profile, etc. that you have taken over the years to get feedback on your temperament, personality, leadership styles, spiritual gifts, conflict management styles, team dynamics, etc.

b) Write 1-2 pages (250-500 words) to summarize: i) what all of these feedback systems have told you about yourself; ii) in what ways that information has made an impact on your self-perceptions; and iii) to what extent you function in your leadership with an active awareness of these inputs.

c) Hand in your summary on the first day of class and be prepared to participate in a class discussion.

Due Date: Monday May 21, 2018

During the Module

1. Prepare and present to the class a 20-minute review of a chapter assigned to you from the Credibility textbook or from another source.
   • These presentations occur later in the module week. I will make the chapters available prior to the module to reduce the pressure of your preparation during the first few days of the module week.
     Note: You may have some choice on the assigned chapter on a first-come first-served basis.
   • For distribution to class members, create a concise handout that summarizes the essence of your presentation. Length: Two sides of one sheet of paper. Font: No smaller than 10 points.
   • Include 3 to 5 questions in the handout that you will use to lead the class in 10 to 15 minutes of post-presentation discussion of essential features of the chapter.

Post-Module

1. Boers and Scazzero Textbooks
   a) Be attentive to the classroom presentations that review each of these books, read the two texts, and make notes of key points of new awareness and learning that are coming through to you from each author’s material.
   b) From each book, select 10 of the most significant points that you have noted and prepare for a telephone/skype discussion with me on the value of those points for your personal and professional growth as a leader.
   c) Contact me to schedule the discussion.

   Due Date: TBA

2. Profiles of Two Leaders
   a) Mentally review the people in your personal life history who were/are in leadership roles ‘over’ you.
   b) Select two of these leaders, one whom you put on the positive side of this leadership assessment exercise and one whom you place on the negative side.
From all the inputs in this course, select and apply a minimum of 6 key criteria to each of these leaders to show how and why you assess them the way you do. Be sure to illustrate your criteria with specific examples. [Note: You do not have to use the same criteria for each person.]

Length of each profile: 3 pages (about 750 words)

c) As a conclusion to this exercise, write a page or two to summarize: i) who you see now when you look in the mirror (i.e., as a leader); and ii) who you would like to see when you look in the mirror in five years.

Due Date: TBA

Evaluation

20% - Graham Greene novel
20% - Corporate culture article
20% - Class presentation
20% - Boers and Scazzero discussion
20% - Profiles of two leaders

Use the Horizon Format Guide (rev Sept 2017) for guidance in how to setup your assignments prior to submission. The guide is available on the Info Tab of this course’s website on populi.

Bibliography

A bibliography is available on the course website under the Info tab.