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IS 501 Kingdom, Church, and World

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Asbury Theological Seminary-Orlando Campus
IS501 Christian Formation: Kingdom, Church, and World
Spring 2002 Tuesday 2:00 p.m. – 4:40 p.m.

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Office Tu. 11:00 – 12:30 & by appointment

Introduction

What is the mission of the church? Behind this question is a cluster of related questions, the most important focused on the nature of God's creative and redemptive purpose, its ongoing expression in the world, and its consummation in the eschaton. Participants in this course will explore how the church might discern, embrace, and participate in God's own mission.

Course Objectives

Having successfully completed this course, students should be able to:

1. Articulate their understanding of the biblical metanarrative that comes to focus for us best in Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God;
2. Identify the particular contribution of the Wesleyan tradition to our understanding of this metanarrative;
3. Draw out major theological, moral, and philosophical implications of this metanarrative, especially as these are related to the nature and mission of the people of God;
4. Evaluate cultural products (e.g., literature, television, movies, advertisements, print media, music) in light of major theological, moral, and philosophical implications of this metanarrative;
5. Exercise criticism with respect to one's own cultural context and discernment with respect to the context of others vis-à-vis major theological, moral, and philosophical implications of this metanarrative;
6. Articulate the ecclesial and missional implications of this metanarrative – specifically for one's own context and generally for our shared global context; and
7. Exhibit a heightened sense of commitment to serving the kingdom of God in mission in the world.

Required Reading:

Clapp, Rodney. *Border Crossings*. Brazos Press, 2000.
Crandall, Ron. *Witness*. Discipleship, 2001.
Hauerwas, Stanley and William Willimon. *Resident Aliens*. Abingdon
McClaren, Brian D. *A New Kind of Christian*. Jossey-Bass, 2001.
Snyder, Howard. *A Kingdom Manifesto*. Wipf and Stock, 1997
Wright, Tom. *The Challenge of Jesus*. InterVarsity, 1999.

Recommended Reading:

Hauerwas, Stanley. *A Community of Character*. University of Notre Dame
Newbigin, Leslie. *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*.
Eerdmans
Stackhouse, Max. *The Church in a Global Era*. Eerdmans

Evaluation:

- Active and Substantive Participation in Small Groups. (10 %)
The small group will meet every Tuesday from 3:50 p.m. to 4:40 p.m. to reflect, discuss, and fulfill assignments from *Witness*. Each person in the group is expected to lead the group's work at least once during the semester.
- Active and Substantive Participation in On-Line Conferences. (10%)
In order to participate in the On-Line Conferences it is IMPERATIVE to have full access and basic knowledge of Asbury's First Class e-mail system (the On-Line Conferences will be conducted using this system). Each person in the class will have an IS501 icon in their First Class e-mail, and each small group (same as above) will have an icon for their On-Line Conferences which you will find questions and other items for discussion and group interaction posted by the professor.
- Kingdom Project (a small group project) and Presentation (15 %)
Each student in each group is required to spend 12 hours of personal work/involvement in a "Kingdom Project." Since this is a group project every member is expected to actively participate in the group's choice, however each member may participate (12 hrs) at a different time and date than the rest of the group. In order to facilitate this project, a list of local ministries and resources will provided. However, due to the nature and composition of ATS-Florida's student body, the group is encourage to find other suitable (in consultation with professor) churches, para-church organizations, social service agencies, and community related organizations closer and/more accessible to most members in the group. After completion of Kingdom Project, each group will share its experience with the class on Tuesday, May 7. Thus Kingdom Project, group and individual participation, should be completed beforehand.
- Personal reflection (written): Kingdom Project (5%)
Each member of each group will write a personal reflection of his/her experience in the project in the light of class readings and lectures. Please write no less than 3 (three) and no more than 5 (five) pages and the reflection must be typed or printed with 12 point type, one inch margins on all four sides, and true double spacing.
- Mid-Term: Take-home, open-book exam; Students will receive it on 3/26 due on 4/9 (30%)
- Final-Exam: This exam will include objective and short-essay questions (30 %)

Grade Range: Work for IS501 will be evaluated at a graduate/professional school level.

A = 93-100% Unusually high quality, exceptional work *D+ = 64-67% Minimal work*
A- = 88-90% Far above average, fine work *D = 61-63% barely acceptable*
B+ = 84-87% Above average for graduate work *D- = 60% for specific assignment*
B = 81-83% Very good, average for graduate work *F = - 60% Failure.*
B- = 78-80% Slightly below average for graduate work
C+ = 74-77% Meets requirements, but noticeable inadequacies for graduate work
C = 71-73% Meets requirements, but with significant gaps for graduate work
C- = 68-70% Meets requirements, but serious gaps

Incomplete Work: “A grade of ‘I’ denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an *unavoidable emergency*, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment. If the work of the course is incomplete at the end of a term without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as ‘F.’ “ From ATS 2001-03 Catalog pag. 29 (emphasis added)

Course Schedule:

Introduction

Week 1 – Feb. 12 Introductions and Organization of the Course

- Introductions and General Overview
- Course Objectives
- Course Procedures
- Small Groups: Selection, Process, Leadership, and Expectations
- Conferences: Selection, Process and Expectations

Required Reading for next week: Clapp, pp. 7-43; Wright, pp. 13-33

Witness: Prepare for Session 3 "Biblical Images--God's Purpose for the world"

Read pp. 5-14, do Assignments on p. 14

Module One: Kingdom – Living the Biblical Story

Module Objectives

Having completed this module, students should be able to:

1. Articulate the importance of “story;”
2. Discern how cultural products participate in inviting us into certain stories;
3. Articulate the basis for the unity of Scripture in the overarching plan of God, from Creation to New Creation;
4. Articulate the hermeneutical importance of the incarnation for understanding the biblical story;
5. Articulate how Wesley’s understanding of the soteriological journey serves as a hermeneutical compass for reading the biblical story;

Week 2 – Feb 19 Narrative, Post Modernism, and the Biblical Story

Required Reading for next week: Wright, pp. 34-73; Snyder, pp. 9-76

Witness: Prepare for Session 5, “God as the Evangelist,” Read pp. 15-32, do assignments on p. 26

Week 3 – Feb 26 Old Testament

Required Reading for next week: Wright, pp. 74-149

Witness: Prepare for Session 8, “Jesus as Messiah, King and God,” Read pp. 33-50, do assignments on p. 44

Week 4 – Mar 5 New Testament

Required Reading for next week: Wright, pp. 150-197; Clapp, pp. 44-62

Witness: Prepare for Session 12, “Spirit of Amazing Grace,” Read pp. 51-74, Do Assignments of p. 68

Week 5 – Mar 12 Thematic integration of Scripture and Wesley's Order of Salvation

Required Reading for next week: McLaren, pp. 1-53; Clapp, pp. 63-74

Witness: Prepare for Session 15, “The Church as Evangelist,” Read pp. 75-92, Do Assignments on p. 86, Assignment is for LC.

Week 6 – Mar 19 Who are the People of God?

Required Reading for next week: McClaren, pp. 54-93; Clapp, pp. 75-102

Witness: Prepare for Session 16, “The Great Commission,” Read pp. 93-98, Do Assignments on p. 92.

Module Two: Kingdom and Church

Particular Objectives

Having completed this module, students should be able to:

1. Enumerate significant ways in which the ongoing life of the people of God participates in and extends the biblical story;
2. Articulate how kingdom-living relates to a community of believers;
3. Articulate an ecclesiology oriented around participation in the kingdom;

Articulate basic forms of ecclesial practice (e.g., hospitality, mission) that are a necessary outgrowth of an ecclesial commitment to performing the kingdom.

Week 7 – Mar 26 The People of God Through History

Required Reading for next week: McLaren, pp. 94-165

Witness: Prepare for Session 17, “A Disciple-Making Fellowship,” Read pp. 99-104, Do Assignments on p. 98

Assignment: Pass out Take Home Exam

Week 8 – Apr 2 – Reading Week

Week 9 – Apr 9 The People of God in Contemporary Context

Required Reading for next week: Clapp, pp. 105-168; Snyder, pp. 79-120

Witness: Prepare for Session 18, “Our Witness in Our Community,” Read pp. 105-110, Do Assignments on p. 104.

Assignment: Mid-Term Exam Due today, April 9, at the beginning of class

Module Three: Kingdom, Church, and World

Particular Objectives

Having completed this module, students should be able to:

1. Articulate the significance of the kingdom in terms of its cosmological and eschatological significance (rather than in individual and subjective terms);
2. Demonstrate that they have begun the process of thinking theologically – i.e., situating life within the interpretive and critical horizons of a theological vision of the purpose of God for creation that comes into focus best in Jesus’ proclamation of the kingdom;
3. Draw out inferences of this view of the kingdom with respect to a range of social-ethical issues (e.g., racial reconciliation, environmental ethics, gender issues);

Demonstrate the importance of understanding one’s world in performing the kingdom;

Week 10 – Apr 16 Listening to the World

Required Reading for next week: Clapp, pp. 171-208; Hauerwas & Willimon, pp. 1-48

Witness: Prepare for Session 19, “Our Witness in Today’s World,” Read pp. 111-116, Do Assignments on 110

Week 11—Apr 23 Acting in the World

Required Reading for next week: Hauerwas & Willimon, pp. 49-111

Witness: Prepare for Session 22, “My Witness as My Story,” Read pp. 118-134, do Assignments on p. 128

Assignment: Work on Kingdom Project Presentations

Week 12 – Apr 30 Speaking to the World: Witness & Worship

Required Reading for next week: NO READING

Witness: NO WITNESS

Assignment: Work on Kingdom Project Presentations

Week 13 – May 7 Kingdom Project Class Presentations

Required Reading for next week: Hauerwas & Willimon, pp. 112-172

Witness: Prepare for Session 25, “Partners with God,” Read pp. 135-151, Do Assignments on p. 146.

Week 14 – May 14 Thy Kingdom Come

Reading: Prepare for Final Exam

Witness: Prepare for Final Exam

Week 15 — Finals Week – Final Exam