

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

MSS 639/PTH 640 A Theology of Power in Ecclesial and Missional Structures

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The challenge of this course is to develop a biblical vision of redeemed power that transforms personal relationships and social organizations. In this globalized world, multi-national communities, churches, and mission partnerships are the contexts in which diverse cultural views on the legitimate use of power can quickly create divisions. Students will investigate scripture and critique various applications of power found in church and missions structures using sociological and anthropological tools.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Articulate and defend a biblical understanding of divine power and human power.
2. Construct a hermeneutic based on the understanding of divine power that critiques one's choice of social theories and ecclesial social structures.
3. Articulate Hofstede and Douglas's social theories of culture and critique the patterns of power found in differing cultural contexts.
4. Evaluate power usage in typical cultural contexts such as postmodernism, totalitarianism, Islam and socialism. Propose a missiology in light of that evaluation.
5. Examine and assess organizations and relationships found in Christian communities of faith through the lens of a biblical understanding of power.
6. Integrate the knowledge of redeemed power with continually recurring missional themes, such as partnerships, church plants, and indigenous church principles.
7. Become leaders and followers in communities of faith with a renewed commitment to engage in organization and community life as power-giving members, better capable of avoiding the pitfalls inherent in power.

TEXTBOOKS

Required Textbooks

Hofstede, Geert, Gert Jan Hofstede, and Michael Minkov. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2010. (ISBN 10: 0071664181) pp. 39-70. (Due October 15)

Lingenfelter, Sherwood. *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 2008. (ISBN 978 0-8010-3605-7) 170 pgs. (Due November 12)

Lingenfelter, Sherwood. *Transforming Culture: A Challenge for Christian Mission*. 2nd. ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998. (ISBN 0-8010-2178-2) 176 pgs. (Due October 15)

Volf, Miroslav. *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity Sacra* Doctrina: Christian Theology for a Postmodern Age, ed. Alan G. Padgett. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998. (ISBN 0-8028-4440-5) pp. 191-257. (Due September 17)

Required Reading on Reserve in the Library

Rasmussen, Larry L. "Power Analysis: A Neglected Agenda in Christian Ethics." In *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics*, ed. D.M. Yaeger, 3-17. Washington D.C.: The Society of Christian Ethics, 1991. (Due September 17)

Shuster, Marguerite. *Power, Pathology, Paradox: The Dynamics of Evil and Good*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1987. (ISBN 0-310-39750-2) ~pp. 100-270. (Due October 15)

Select **one** of the following (Due October 15): (on reserve in the library)

Adams, Richard Newbold. 1975. *Energy and Structure: A Theory of Social Power*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975. (ISBN 0-292-72012-2) pgs 100-173.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. 2001. pgs

Beck, Ulrich, and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and Its Social and Political Consequences*. Translated by Patrick Camiller Theory, Culture & Society, ed. Mike Featherstone. London: Sage, 2002. (ISBN 0-7619-6112-7) 221 pgs.

Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980. (ISBN 0-394-51357-6) 270 pgs.

Giddens, Anthony. *The Constitution of Society*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1984. (ISBN-13: 978-0520057289) pp. 1-40.

Havel, Vaclav, ed. *The Power of the Powerless*. London: Hutchinson, 1985. pp. 23-96. or <http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/index.php?sec=2&id=1>

Lassman, Peter. "The Rule of Man over Man: Politics, Power and Legitimation." In *The Cambridge Companion to Weber*, ed. Stephen Turner, 83-98. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000. pp 83-98

Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield. 2nd ed. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1998. or <http://www.constitution.org/mac/prince00.htm>

Recommended Resource Readings

Arnold, Clinton E. *Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1989. (ISBN 1-57910-835-0) 244 pgs.

Douglas, Mary. "Cultural Bias." In *In the Active Voice*, 183-254. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982. 70 pgs.

Havel, Václav. "It Always Makes Sense to Tell the Truth", In *Open Letters: Selected Writings 1965-1990*, ed. Paul Wilson. New York: Vintage Books, 1991. (ISBN 0-679-73811-8) pp. 94-95.

Hofstede, Geert. "Culture Dimensions", Itim International <http://www.geert-hofstede.com> (accessed January 5, 2010).

Jones, Larry B. "The Problem of Power in Ministry Relationships." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (2009): 404-410.

Linthicum, Robert. *Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference in Your Community*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003. (ISBN 0-8308-3228-9) 216 pgs.

Wink, Walter. *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*. Vol. 3. 3 vols. Powers. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1992. (ISBN 0-800-62646-X) 324 pgs.

NOTE: IF PARTICIPANT HAS READ ANY OF THE REQUIRED TEXTS FOR CREDIT IN ANOTHER CLASS, PLEASE SUBSTITUTE ANOTHER BOOK FROM THE BIBLIOGRAPHY BELOW.

BASIC OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Redeemed power
 - a. Biblical survey of power
 - b. Redeemed power and organizational structures and relationships
3. Foundational knowledge
 - a. Definitions of power: Social theories of power, authority, and structures
 - b. Understanding power in cultural perspective
 - i. Cultural Theories
 - ii. Islam, Socialism, Postmodernism and Totalitarianism
4. Application to church and mission
 - a. Church and missions in hierarchical, egalitarian, and totalitarian contexts.
 - b. Power relationships in partnerships
 - c. Implications of power for indigenous church principles
 - d. Leadership and followership in community life
5. Integration of redeemed power into everyday life.

METHODOLOGY

The class will include lectures, class discussion, experiential learning activities, case studies, and presentations by students that are then critiqued by students. Library and field research will be required in order to accomplish a final project.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Regular attendance and participation in classroom discussions and group projects.
- 2) Paper 1: Develop a biblical understanding of power based on a portion of scripture. (DUE September 17 at the beginning of class: 6 pages) Choose a portion of scripture or a pericope that contains what you consider a significant display of inter-personal power. Describe why you chose this passage, the people involved, the power acts, God's approval or disapproval of the power act. What is this particular scripture telling you about God's use of power, how God expects humankind to use power in relationships. Be prepared to compare your passage with those of others during class on the 17th or 18th. Together we will work to develop a Theology of Power.
- 3) Read assigned literature one of the social theories of power (Giddens, Machiavelli, Foucault, Adams, Parsons) and in teams prepare a summary of the theory to be presented to the class as a skit/discussion/or case study. (Due October 15th)
- 4) Using the tools presented by Sherwood Lingenfelter (Transforming Culture), Geert Hofstede, and Mary Douglas, explore your own power bias. Write a summary and defend why you classified yourself as you did. (3pages) (Due October 15th)

- 5) Read assigned cultural literature concerning power. (Havel, Beck, Bauman) Using the theology of power that you gleaned from your biblical study of power, write a theological answer to the queries of Vaclav Havel or Bauman. (DUE: November 12: 6 pages)
- 6) Final project: In teams--Explore a ministry or church of your choice. Interview, observe, and examine the power relationships that exist. What titles are given, what roles and rules are part of the social game of the group. How are decisions made? In which direction does power flow? Write a report using the social theories of power to analyze the social organization and critique the structure with the theology of redeemed power. Or apply the sociological theory of power and the theology of power to a case study of a missions partnership or church board situation. (DUE December 10: 12 pages). Complete instructions will be given at the beginning of the course.
- 7) Keep a diary of thoughts, scriptures and power-giving acts of service throughout the semester. Further requirements will be given at the beginning of the course.

Chapel Attendance

All chapels are scheduled during class times. Academic time for each class has been over-budgeted to allow for two chapel sessions during the semester. Each student is encouraged to take advantage of this time. The chapels affecting this class are: _____

Policy on Sexual Harassment

Plagiarism Policy

GRADING PROCEDURE

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| 1. Reading Reports | 10 pts |
| a. Shuster | |
| b. Lingenfelter | |
| c. Volf | |
| d. Hofstede | |
| 2. Reading Report 1: Class presentation of a social theory of power | 5 pts |
| 3. Reading Report 2: Personal Power bias | 10 pts |
| 4. Theology of Power paper | 20 pts |
| 5. Biblical Response to Social Power theory | 20 pts |
| 6. Final project | 35 pts |

A class schedule with corresponding due dates will be distributed the first day of class. Late work is subject to penalty!

AGTS Grading Scale

Publishable = A+
100% - 94% = A
93% - 90% = A-
89% - 87% = B+
86% - 84% = B
83% - 80% = B-
79% - 77% = C+
76% - 74% = C
73% - 70% = C-
69% - 67% = D+
66% - 64% = D
63% - 60% = D-

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arnold, Clinton E. *Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1989.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity*. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2000.

_____. *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2001.

Beck, Ulrich, and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and Its Social and Political Consequences*. Translated by Patrick Camiller Theory, Culture & Society, ed. Mike Featherstone. London: Sage, 2002.

Douglas, Mary. *In the Active Voice*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.

Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980.

Guder, Darrell L. *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* The Gospel and Our Culture Series, ed. Craig Van Gelder. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2000.

Havel, Vaclav, ed. *The Power of the Powerless*. London: Hutchinson, 1985.

Havel, Václav. *Open Letters: Selected Writings 1965-1990*, ed. Paul Wilson. New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

Hofstede, Geert. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997.

- _____. *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2001.
- _____. "Geert Hofstede Cultural Dimensions." 2007. Velp, the Netherlands: Geert Hofstede BV. <http://www.geert-hofstede.com> (accessed 7-26-07) 2007.
- Jones, Larry B. "The Problem of Power in Ministry Relationships." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (2009): 404-410.
- Koeshall, Anita. "Power and Covenant: Ethics of Hierarchy and Egalitarianism." 37: Fuller Theological Seminary, 2005.
- Koeshall, John. "The Effects of the Marxist-Leninist Educational System on the Thinking Abilities of East German Students." Biola University, 2002.
- Lassman, Peter. "The Rule of Man over Man: Politics, Power and Legitimation." In *The Cambridge Companion to Weber*, ed. Stephen Turner, 83-98. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Lewis, C.S. *Present Concerns*, ed. Walter Hooper. San Diego, California: Harcourt, 1986.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood. "Power-Giving Leadership: Transformation for a Missional Church." Pasadena, California: Fuller Theological Seminary, 2006.
- _____. *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 2008.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood. *Transforming Culture: A Challenge for Christian Mission*. 2nd. ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998.
- Linthicum, Robert. *Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference in Your Community*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003.
- Machiavelli, Nicolo. "The Prince." c. 1515.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1993.
- Parenti, Michael. *Power and the Powerless*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978.
- Shuster, Marguerite. *Power, Pathology, Paradox: The Dynamics of Evil and Good*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1987.

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Volf, Miroslav. *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* Sacra Doctrina: Christian Theology for a Postmodern Age, ed. Alan G. Padgett. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998.

Wink, Walter. *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*. Vol. 3. 3 vols. Powers. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1992.

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by Anita Koeshall, May, 2010.