

The School of Theology
The University of the South, Sewanee TN
MNST 562 - Transforming Congregations & Communities: Building a People of Power
Thursday, 3:05-5:05 p.m., Location: 235

Instructor: The Rev. Kammy Young
Office Hours (HH108): Mondays 1-5 PM,
Tuesdays, 1-5 PM, and by appointment

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Rationale

Perhaps the most profound and comprehensive study of the nature and practice of power is found in the Bible – an analysis superior to any secular study today. This course will use the Bible as its primary textbook to understand how power works in the worlds of politics, business, education, social services and religion – both in its generative exercise to empower people and in its degenerative exercise to maintain the dominant establishments at the expense of people. Further, the scriptures will be examined to enable students to organize their congregations to use power relationally in order to bring about political, economic, social and spiritual transformation through their church and community. In addition the course will give students the opportunity to explore the historic roots within our own local context for movements building power for change and renewal.

Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Evaluate out of a biblical perspective the society in which she/he is working;
2. Critique the institutions of that society from that biblical perspective;
3. Grasp biblical principles of building and using relational power that can be carried out to bring about political and economic transformation within that society;

Strategies

1. Attend and participate fully in each class session.
2. Complete all reading assignments and prepare the appropriate reaction papers and individual meetings forms, and participate in class discussion about those readings.
3. Complete a paper on a biblically based social analysis of the organization of the student's choice.
4. Complete a final 10-12-page paper.
5. Bible study reflection in each class session.

Evaluation

Collaborative Learning-Reaction Paper: Due October 17, 2013 (20%)

Each student will write a reaction paper on one of the recommended readings. We will decide together about the book you will read in our meeting on 09/12/13 after you've had a chance to consider choices and we can discuss them. These will be posted to Blackboard to be read by your colleagues and presented/discussed in class. A reaction paper is 3-4 pages, typed and double spaced, which includes the following:

- Author, title and purpose of the book.
- What is the book about?
- What did you gain from reading this book?
- What is your reaction to what you learned? Was it valuable, informative, a waste of time? Why?
- What is the relevance of the book to the course?

Individual Meetings (3): Due November 7, 2013 (20%)

Linthicum maintains that relational power's most radical act is intentionally building relationships that engage people in public life. Each student will schedule, meet and record three of these relational meetings with people in the formal organization of their choice, based on their intentions for the social analysis paper below. A written record of the meeting will be submitted confidentially to Blackboard and discussed in class.

Social Analysis Presentation: Due November 21, 2013 (25%)

Develop a presentation, using the biblical social analysis given in class and in our readings so far to analyze a formal organization of your choice (for example, a church, community group, mission agency, regional judicatory or denomination, city government agency, state or federal agency, academic institution, etc.).

Final Paper: Due December 16, 2013 (35%)

Develop a 5-6-page paper on one of the following topics:

1. Using the biblical social analysis presented in this course to exegete a passage of scripture of your choice not covered in this course;
2. Exploring a person of the Bible not examined in this course to trace how he or she used relational power to further the coming of the shalom community or kingdom of God in his community, city or nation;
3. How you would address an issue or concern within your ministry, work or community context based upon what you have learned in class;
4. How power principles learned in this course would affect the way you would go about providing leadership to a church or Christian community;
5. Formulate and defend your own theology of power.

Plenary Class Sessions & Assignments

Section 1 - “The World As God Intended – and As It Really Is!”

1. 08/29/13 Responding to Your People’s Groans
The World As It Should Be: Forward & Intro, #1-2
2. 09/05/13 The Shalom Community: God’s Plan for Your City or Nation;
The Shalom Community Throughout the Scriptures
The World As It Should Be, #3-4
Building a People of Power, Introduction – Chapter 1, p.22
Truth Speaks to Power, Intro – Chapter 2, p. 1-79
3. 09/12/13 What Went Wrong? Evil Isn’t Solely Personal;
What Went Wrong? Tracing the Analysis Throughout Scripture
The World As It Should Be, #5-6
Building a People of Power, Chapter 1, p. 22 -- 29
Truth Speaks to Power, Chapter 3-5, p. 81-165
On Blackboard: “An Outline of a Biblical Theology of Power”

Section 2 - “What Did Jesus Really Come to Do?”

4. 9/19/13 Who Is This Man? The Powerful Jesus (according to Luke);
Who Is This Man? The Powerful Jesus (accd. to Matthew, Mark & John)
Building a People of Power, Chapter 2, p. 31-62
Book for your Reaction Paper
5. 09/26/13 God Redeems More Than People
A Doctrine of Salvation As Big as the City Itself
Building a People of Power, Chapter. 3, p. 63-83
Book for your Reaction Paper

Section 3 - “Building A Church of Power”

6. 10/03/13 Working for the Shalom of Your Society: The Purpose of the Church;
The Church’s Call to Mission & Power
Building a People of Power, Chapter. 4, p. 85-115
Reflecting with Scripture on Community Organizing
Book for your Reaction Paper
7. 10/10/13 Avoided Biblical Strategies for Bringing About Change;
Listening, Affirming, Challenging: Thinking Through: the Framework for
Building Relationships of Power;
Jesus on Building Relationships for Change
Book for your Reaction Paper
8. 10/17/13 Essential Principals for Empowering People for Change:
The Nehemiah Solution
Building a People of Power, Chapter. 6, p.147-174
Building a People of Power, Chapter. 5, p. 117-145
Book for your Reaction Paper

Collaborative Learning-Reaction Paper Due

[During the two weeks break for Reading Week & the Dubose Lectures, please have your scheduled Individual Meetings.]

Section 4 - “Building Relational Power In Your Community”

9. 11/07/13 Building an Organization Around Powerful Relationships;
Organizing Your Church and Neighborhood for Power
The Power of Relational Action & Being Triggers Action
Building a People of Power, Chapter. 7, p. 175-197
Individual Meetings (3) Due by Class time

10. 11/14/13 Relational Meetings, Collaborative Reading & Tillich Discussions
All Colleague Reaction Papers Read
Love, Power and Justice, Chapter I-IV, p. 1-71

11. 11/21/13 **Social Analysis Presentation Due in class**

Section 5 - “Using Power to Turn Your City Upside Down”

12. 12/05/13 Jesus is Caesar: St. Paul’s Theology of Public Life;
Using Power to Bring About Change: St. Paul’s Example;
Jesus and Moses: Understanding the Importance of Confrontation
Building a People of Power, Chapter 8-9, p. 199-242; Chapter 11, p. 273-295
On Blackboard: “New Life Community Church”
Floods and Snow Jobs: Part I; Floods and Snow Jobs: Part II
On Blackboard: “Laodicea: Story of a Community on a Flood Plain”
“Wins and Builds”

Section 6 - “How to Develop Powerful Leaders and Build Values

13. 12/12/13 Developing Leaders: A Primary Task of Biblical Leaders in Building the
Shalom Community; We’re Here Because He Was There:
Nehemiah and the Transformation of Society
Building a People of Power, Chapter 10, p. 243-271
Final Tillich Discussion (*book review*)
14. 12/16/13 Birthing God’s Shalom Community:
The Spirituality of Community Organizing
Building a People of Power, Chapter 12, p. 297-317
Final Paper is Due

Corporate Reading: All Read Together: *These texts are all available in the University Bookstore*

- Brueggemann, Walter. *Truth Speaks to Power: The Countercultural Nature of Scripture*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013.
- Gecan, Michael. *Effective Organizing for Congregational Renewal*. Skokie, IL: ACTA Publications, 2008.
- Krehbiel, Jefferey K. *Reflecting with Scripture on Community Organizing*. Chicago: ACTA Publications, 2010.
- Linthicum, Robert. *Building A People of Power: Equipping Churches to Transform Their Communities*. Waynesboro, GA: Authentic/World Vision Press, 2006.
- Pierce, Gregory F. *The World as It Should Be: Living Authentically in the Here-and-Now Kingdom of God*. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 2011.
- Tillich, Paul. *Love, Power, and Justice; Ontological Analyses and Ethical Applications*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1954.

Collaborative Reading: Recommended Texts for Reaction Papers:

These texts are available at the University Bookstore and on Reserve at Dupont Library

1. Erlander, Daniel. *Manna and Mercy: The Brief Story of God's Unfolding Plan to Mend the Entire Universe*. Daniel Erlander Publications, 1992.
2. Gecan, Michael. *Going Public: An Organizer's Guide to Citizen Action*. 1 Anchor Books ed. New York: Anchor Books, 2004.
3. Horton, Myles. *The Long Haul: An Autobiography*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1998.
4. Palmer, Parker J. *The Company of Strangers: Christians and the Renewal of America's Public Life*. New York: Crossroad, 1981.

These texts are also all on Reserve at Dupont Library

5. Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.
6. Cowart, Courtney. *An American Awakening: From Ground Zero to Katrina : The People we are Free to be*. New York: Seabury Books, 2008.
7. Freedman, Samuel G. *Upon This Rock: The Miracles of a Black Church*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1994.
8. Ganz, Marshall. *Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
9. Horton, Myles, Brenda Bell, John Gaventa, and John Marshall Peters. *We make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.
10. Jacobsen, Dennis A. *Doing Justice: Congregations and Community Organizing*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.
11. Kahane, Adam. *Power and Love: A Theory and Practice of Social Change*. A BK Currents Book. 1st ed. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2010.
12. Migliore, Daniel L. *The Power of God and the Gods of Power*. 1st ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.
13. Palmer, Parker J. *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*. 1st ed. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011.
14. Pasewark, Kyle A. *A Theology of Power: Being Beyond Domination*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.

15. Poling, James N. *The Abuse of Power: A Theological Problem*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991.
16. Payne, Charles. *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*. University of California Press, 1995.
17. Stout, Jeffrey. *Blessed are the Organized: Grassroots Democracy in America*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010.
18. Wimberly, Edward P. *African American Pastoral Care and Counseling: The Politics of Oppression and Empowerment*. Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2006.
19. Wink, Walter. *The Powers that be: Theology for a New Millennium* [Powers.]. 1st ed. New York: Doubleday, 1998.
20. Winter, Bruce W. *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens*. First-Century Christians in the Graeco-Roman World. Grand Rapids, Mich.; Carlisle, Cumbria: Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1994.
21. Wood, Richard L. *Faith in Action: Religion, Race, and Democratic Organizing in America*. Morality and Society Series. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.