

Course Title

DM 9385, *Issues in Christian Stewardship*

Professor: Rev. Todd W. Rasberry, Ph.D.

Day and Time of Class: Daily 1:00-4:00pm January 3-6, 9-13, 2012

Location of Class: Prothro Hall, Room 221

Course Description

This course will allow students to examine a range of issues related to the theology and practice of stewardship and how theology informs church stewardship programs and fundraising. Students will develop a theological understanding of stewardship and critically reflect on matters of church finance, fundraising, and church stewardship programs within this broader theological framework.

Course Rationale

Stewardship is a way of life, an expression of one's faith and devotion to God. Biblical concepts of stewardship remind us that God is the origin of all that is, and the appropriate response to God is a life of stewardship. A theology of stewardship should embrace all God's creative activity and should challenge us to live as stewards.

Unfortunately, many church stewardship programs do not develop sound theological principles for physical, social, ecological, moral, psychological, political, technological, historical, intellectual, cultural, economic, and spiritual stewardship. Stewardship programs for churches narrowly relate to church budgets and raising money. Many church stewardship programs follow an outdated model of "harvest festivals" when members would bring their gifts to the church after harvesting crops.

The need to meet church budgets, to pay for missional ministries, and to fund capital projects are important issues for clergy leaders. Church leaders adopt methods of raising money without reflecting critically on whether such fundraising methods are theologically sound or effective. Church stewardship programs need to be framed in the context of a well-developed theology of stewardship that includes authentic ways to live as stewards of God's creation.

Clergy leaders must think holistically about church stewardship and how a life of stewardship specifically relates to philanthropy. A theology of stewardship should challenge us to live in relationship to physical, social, ecological, moral, psychological, political, technological, historical, intellectual, cultural, economic, and spiritual aspects of God's creation.

The Mission of Perkins School of Theology

This course is developed to support Perkins School of Theology's mission to *prepare women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry* through:

Higher Learning - critically reflecting on biblical principles of giving and the use of money.

Real Experience - practice fundraising principles to gain an understanding of philanthropy and its role in ministry.

Vital Ministry - developing a plan for integrating fundraising principles into the overall mission an organization or church

Course Objectives

The course is designed to assist students in developing a theology of stewardship and understanding how that theology should inform practice. Students will develop a theological understanding of the role of stewardship within the context of faith and within the life of the church. Students will learn to incorporate a theology of stewardship into the whole life of a congregation. Students will learn how stewardship both includes and transcends the financial ministry of the church. In addition, students will develop skills based on philanthropic principles employed in other nonprofit institutions for raising money within a congregation. Students will be able to distinguish between and identify the need for annual gifts, major gifts, capital gifts, and planned gifts. Finally, students will learn how to identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward potential donors in congregations and outside the church community.

By the end of the semester students will be able to:

- 1) Articulate and integrate a theological understanding of stewardship into their theology of ministry.
- 2) Theologically and contextually critique current church stewardship programs and their own leadership practices.
- 3) Plan a comprehensive and inclusive stewardship program that can be implemented into the full life of the church and spiritual life of members.
- 4) Engage in fundraising practices based on sound philanthropic principles.

Assignments

All students must complete the following course requirements (weighted accordingly). All assignments are intended to equip students with material that can be applied to their practice of ministry. However, the material will necessarily need to be revisited and contextualized for any particular given ministry situation.

- **Attendance and Active Class Participation: 10 percent of final grade.** Much of the learning will be the results of rigorous dialogue with the readings, the teacher, and other members of the course. All class members are expected to make informed contributions to class discussions. This means careful reading of the assignments and thoughtful statements on the topic of discussion.

Grades will be determined by the following:

Attendance and active participation at all class sessions. Please notify the instructor in advance if you anticipate missing class.

Demonstration that you have read the assigned readings and significantly reflected on them.

Contribute to discussions by making connecting or synthesizing comments.

Your sensitivity to other class participants (i.e. participation in class discussions means you make your contributions and 1) allow other class members to voice their thoughts/ideas/opinions; 2) demonstrate active listening skills; 3) refer to class members by name when reacting to their comments; 4) show appreciation for the contributions of others).

- **A written critique of a current stewardship program (700-1000 words): 10 percent of final grade.** Each class member will critique an approved stewardship program and write a review that summarizes the findings. Students will present their case study to other class members and provide a verbal critical reflection of the material at that time.
- **Write a Theology of Stewardship paper (2500-4000 words): 40% of your final grade.** Class members will write a paper that reflects critically on a theological concept of stewardship. For students who have taken Systematic Theology, think of this assignment as an opportunity to develop the portion of your credo that deals with ecclesiology; in particular how the church has understood the nature and role of stewardship. For students who have taken introduction to theology, use this assignment as a opportunity to critically reflect upon the ecclesiology; how the church incorporates stewardship as ministry and mission, and how the church might better incorporate stewardship as ministry and mission. Both in class and outside sources should be used for gaining knowledge related to a theological concept of stewardship. Students will present to other class members an oral summary (approximately 15 minutes in length) of major findings/insights. Grades will be determined by the following criteria:
 - 1) How thoroughly the theological concept is covered.
 - 2) The writer's ability to address diverse theological positions and relationally justify her/his theological idea/concept/position.
 - 3) Style and clarity in writing.
 - 4) The clarity of the material presented to class members.
- **Design a Stewardship Plan & Rationale: 40% of your final grade.** Class members will develop a working stewardship plan accompanied by a detailed theological and practical rationale for each component of the plan. Students will present their stewardship plan and rationale in class (approximately 20 minutes in length). Students may use power point to assist classmates in understanding the material presented. Grades will be determined using the following criteria:
 - 1) How well designed and applicable the plan is to a particular ministry.
 - 2) The attention to detail in the rationale of the plan.
 - 3) How clearly the theological rationale of the plan is reflected.
 - 4) The clarity of the presentation and how well the presenter addresses questions from class members.

5) The clarity and effectiveness of the material presented to class members

Grading

Your grade is reflective of your performance in this class. I do not “give” you grades – your work earns them. Because we are a graduate school and theological education is an academic exercise, I will pay close attention to the mechanical aspects of your work (spelling, grammar, punctuation, overall appearance). Your work will be judged as being *excellent* (superior work), *good* (above average, useful), *adequate* (somewhat useful), *poor* (superficial, barely useful), or *unacceptable* (unsatisfactory, useless). Keep in mind that I will evaluate your work with those rankings in mind. My interpretations of these terms, and the way I associate them with the grades required in an academic setting, are as follows:

Excellent: Work in which the sense of purpose, audience awareness, content, development, arrangement, style, format, grammar, and mechanics are consistently outstanding. This is clearly superior work and deserves an **A**.

Good: Above-average work that shows a sense of purpose, audience awareness, and an understanding of organization, format, and mechanics. Content is substantive and developed, even though some aspects of style could be improved. There may be a few punctuation errors, but nothing seriously disturbs the reader, and all errors can be easily fixed. This useful work deserves a **B**.

Adequate: Work that is somewhat useful. The sense of purpose and audience awareness are recognizable, but weak. Content is unclear in places and needs more supporting evidence and development. Presentation of information and ideas is more confusing than coherent; style is leaden, often full of nominalizations. While the format itself may comply with academic standards, the grammar and mechanics need a great deal of editing. This work might be salvageable, however, and deserves a **C**.

Poor: This barely useful work is superficial and seems “thrown-together.” There is little, if any, sense of purpose, and virtually no sensitivity to audience needs. Content is undeveloped and vague; information and ideas are jumbled, insufficient, and sometimes inaccurate. Format, grammar, and mechanics are so poor as to be embarrassing. The work deserves a **D**.

Unacceptable: This work is a mess in all ways, serving no discernable rhetorical purpose. The useless work deserves an **F**.

Grading Values:

93-100	4.0	A
90-92	3.7	A-
87-89	3.3	B+
83-86	3.0	B
80-82	2.7	B-
77-79	2.3	C+
73-76	2.0	C

70-72	1.7	C-
67-69	1.3	D+
63-66	1.0	D
60-62	0.7	D-
50-59	0.0	F

Required Texts

Bassler, Jouette M. *God & Mammon: Asking for Money in the New Testament*. Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1991.

Hoge, Dean and Patrick McNamara and Charles Zech. *Plain Talk about Churches and Money*. An Alban Institute Publication: 1997.

McFague, Sallie. *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis, 2001.

O'Hurley-Pitts, Michael. *The Passionate Steward: Recovering Christian Stewardship from Secular Fundraising*. St. Bridgid Press: 2001.

Course Policies

ATTENDANCE: Class attendance is required. Excessive unexplained absences will reduce your final course grade.

ASSIGNMENTS: You must complete and turn in all required assignments to receive a passing grade in the course. Late papers are not accepted unless you make prior arrangements with me. **GRADE OF INCOMPLETE (I):** The grade of I (incomplete) indicates the failure to do some major portion of the required work in the course. The grade of I is granted by the Committee on Student Development, only on written request by the student. (For a complete discussion of I grade procedures, consult the Perkins School of Theology Catalog 2009-2011 page 49, Grades.)

PLAGIARISM AND ACCADEMIC DISHONESTY (Consult the Perkins Student Handbook 2009-2010 pg. 66 Appendix B): Do not turn in someone else's work as your own. All work must be done by you. Failing to adhere to these guidelines constitutes plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty.

Failure to document sources and/or correctly integrate material into your written assignments is also considered plagiarism. Whenever you incorporate material from an outside source, whether electronic or print, you must document the source of this material and you must quote, paraphrase, or summarize the material correctly.

Any form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in an automatic "0" for the assignment. At the instructor's discretion, it may also result in an "F" for the final course grade and punishment by the university.

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES: If at any time during the semester personal crises prevent you from performing to the best of your abilities in the course, please notify me as early as possible. Before making exceptions to any of the policies stated in this syllabus, I have the right to request appropriate documentation. This might include letters from physicians, counselors, and/or academic advisors.

DISABILITIES: Perkins and SMU are dedicated to giving all students the best educational experience possible. As part of this goal, SMU and Perkins welcome the opportunity to work with all students with disabilities to obtain the resources needed to maximize their learning. Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Dr. Rich Nelson, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Perkins (214-768-4334) or rnelson@smu.edu at the start of classes. A helpful resource at SMU is the Services for Students with Disabilities office located in 220 Memorial Health Center, under the direction of Rebecca Marin (214-768-4557 or rmarin@smu.edu). Guidelines for documentation of disability are posted at http://smu.edu/studentlife/ssd/ossd_eligibility.asp and should be completed two weeks prior to the beginning of course work to allow for processing.

MINORITY CONCERNS AND THE PERKINS CURRICULUM: In 1975 the Perkins Senate passed resolutions which bear on the relation of the Perkins curriculum to this school's common concern for the status of ethnic minority groups and of women both in education for ministry and in the ministry itself. The following statement summarizes these resolutions with respect to all courses except those in the area of ministry.

1. Instructors and students alike are urged to use inclusive language, images and metaphors that give full and positive value to both the past contributions and the future prospects of ethnic minorities and women in the church and in the society at large.
2. Instructors and students alike are urged to give sensitive consideration to the role of images from a predominately white and male culture in shaping both the language and concepts of Christian theology and the models and methods of Christian ministry that are widely current today.
3. Instructors are urged to make every effort to provide-in the syllabi, assignments and formats of their courses-opportunities (a) for women students and students from ethnic minority groups to pursue their study with special reference to their own status or tradition and (b) for all students to become acquainted with the special problems and conditions that affect women and ethnic minority groups in human society.

Course Schedule

All reading and assignments must be completed on time.

** Electronic Article Provided by Professor*

UNIT 1: Theological perspectives of stewardship

Day 1 (Jan 3, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Tuesday <i>(Meets course objective 1)</i>	Introductions Course Overview Explanation of the <i>Assignments</i> How do Faith, Stewardship, and Philanthropy fit together? What is a theology of stewardship? Discuss <i>A written critique of a stewardship program</i>	READING PRIOR TO FIRST CLASS: *Bishop Robert Morneau - <i>Theology of Stewardship</i> McFague - pgs ix - 70 (Part I) *Engdahl - <i>Religious Fundraising: The Theology of Stewardship</i> McFague - pgs 127- 180	

UNIT 2: Church Stewardship Programs and Pastoral Leadership

Day 2 (January 4, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Wednesday <i>(Meets course objective 1, 2)</i>		O'Hurley-Pitts 25-57 *Cooper-White - <i>Theology of Stewardship from the Cross</i> O'Hurley-Pitts 58- 67; 83-108	

Day 3 (January 5, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Thursday <i>(Meets course objective 2)</i>	Present Stewardship Critiques	Hoge - pgs 1-77	Critique of Stewardship Program Due

Day 4 (January 6, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Friday <i>(Meets course objective 1, 2)</i>		Hoge - 78-132 *Lowe - <i>Stewardship and Worship</i>	

Day 5 (January 9, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Monday (Meets course objective 2, 4)		Bassler - pgs 7-62	

Day 6 (January 10, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Tuesday (Meets course objective 1, 2, 3, 4)	GUEST Summaries of Theology of Stewardship papers		THEOLOGY OF STEWARDSHIP PAPER DUE

UNIT 3: Professional fundraising principles, philosophies, and myths

Day 7 (January 11, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Wednesday (Meets course objective 1, 2)		* Perry - <i>Pay it Forward and Back</i> * Goins/McDonald - <i>Reclaiming a Heritage of Women as Fundraisers</i>	

Day 8 (January 12, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Thursday (Meets course objective 4)	GUEST SPEAKER:	* Chaves - <i>Funding American Religion</i> * Conway - <i>Faith vs Money: Conflicting Views of Stewardship and Fundraising in the Church</i>	

Day 9 (January 13, 2012) LAST DAY OF CLASS			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Friday (Meets course objective 2, 4)	Final Project Presentations (If Prepared)	* Pudelek - <i>The Dance of Giving and Receiving Spirituality and the Development Officer</i>	

<u>FINAL PROJECT DUE</u> (Friday, January 19, 2012)			
	Topic	Readings	Due
Friday (Meets course objective 3, 4)			FINAL PROJECT DUE by 5:00 pm on January 19, 2012

Contacting the Professor

E-mail is the preferred and most effective way to communicate with me regarding issues related to this course. If you do not receive a reply from me within 24 hours, assume I did not receive the e-mail and resend. If you do not receive a reply to your second attempt within an additional 24 hour period, call my office phone and leave a voice message.

NOTE: All e-mail correspondence to me must be in the following format (any e-mail not following the stated format will not be read or answered).

e-mailed to trasberr@smu.edu

Subject line of the e-mail must read: DM 9385 (in parenthesis put the content of your e-mail to me).

For example:

DM 9385 (1st Critical Book Review Assignment);

DM 9385 (Requesting a meeting to discuss the Stewardship Plan assignment);

DM 9385 (Follow-up question from our class discussion).

Contact Information

Rev. Todd W. Rasberry, Ph.D.

Director of Development

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214-768-2026 Office

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Office Hours

Office hours are by appointment only.

My office is located in Selecman Hall, Croft Development Suite, Room 305.

Rev. Todd Rasberry, Ph.D.

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Notes: See CONTACTING THE PROFESSOR for how to contact the professor and when and how to schedule time with the Professor.