

Birmingham Theological Seminary
2200 Briarwood Way
Birmingham, Alabama 35243

Fall Semester 2019
PT5621 Conflict Resolution in the Church
Instructor: Prof. Kuna Griggs
Course Credit Hours: 2

September 3 – December 6, 2019
Tuesdays, 5:30pm – 7:30pm
E-mail: kunagriggs@yahoo.com
Classroom: A201 / VC

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A course designed to guide leaders, and help leaders guide others, in biblical and practical strategies for resolving conflict within the context of the local church. Course content covers the significance of conflict resolution, basic contributing factors of church conflict, strategies for preventing conflict, the biblical process of church discipline, legal ramifications, and the Acts 15 model for conflict resolution.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

- Explain the significance of conflict resolution in the church.
- Recognize actual and potential contributing factors to church conflict.
- Develop and apply strategies for preventing or minimizing church conflict.
- Exegetically consider biblical passages concerning church discipline and their application.
- Discuss the legal ramifications of conflict resolution and church discipline.
- Use the Acts 15 model for conflict resolution in the context of their local church.
- Analyze church conflict situations (case studies) and offer biblically appropriate resolutions.

COURSE TEXTS

Required Texts: Sande, Ken. *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. ISBN-13: 978-0801064852.

Barthel, Tara Klena and David V. Edling. *Redeeming Church Conflicts: Turning Crisis into Compassion and Care*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. ISBN-13: 978-0801014284.

Recommended Texts: Poirier, Alfred. *The Peacemaking Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-0801065897.

Susek, Ron. *Firestorm: Preventing and Overcoming Church Conflicts*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999. ISBN-13: 978-0801090912.

COURSE METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Primary instruction will be class discussion and primary media will be the dry erase board. Students are expected to maintain notes. Each class will follow a general format: 1) prayer, 2) discussion of previous reading or audio assignment, 3) class discussion, and 4) questions and comments concerning the current class discussion and future assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Interaction Forms: Students will complete **2** Interaction Forms—**one** on Sande’s *The Peacemaker* and **one** on Malone’s *How Faith Resolves Conflict*. An Interaction Form outline is attached and entails summarizing the content, giving an overall rating of the content, noting insights you gained, and how those insights affect or will affect your personal life and Christian service. Interactions must be 3-5 pages in length. *The Peacemaker* Interaction is **Due October 8th** and the *How Faith Resolves Conflict* Interaction is **Due October 22nd**. An audio file of Malone can be accessed from the Thirdmill website at https://media.thirdmill.org/mp3-16/Malone_G36_Gen13_1to18.mp3. The Malone audio assignment and Interaction Form is **not required** for Certificate students.
- Quiz: Students will be quizzed on Sande’s *The Peacemaker* to assess comprehension of the book’s content. A Study Guide for the Quiz will be provided on September 24th. The date of the Quiz is **October 8th**. Students will have **35 minutes** to complete the Quiz.
- Book Critique: Students will critique Barthel and Edling’s *Redeeming Church Conflicts*. Critiques are to respond in written form to the following critical assessments:
 - a) Write a **brief summary** of the **main theme** and any **major secondary theme(s)** of the book. The summary should demonstrate your comprehension of the content.
 - b) **Analyze** the claims or arguments the authors set forth. Your analysis should focus primarily on how faithfully **you think** the authors have interpreted and applied Scripture.
 - c) **Evaluate** whether the content of the book takes into account all of Scripture (do the claims or arguments consider Scripture as a whole or are there instances of isolated proof-texting?). Cite instances from the book with page numbers to support your evaluation.
 - d) **Explain** why you agree or disagree with the conclusions set forth in the book, using Scripture to support your conclusions. Also discuss the book’s strengths and weaknesses.
 - e) **Conclude** with a paragraph stating what you have gained from reading the book.

Redeeming Church Conflicts Book Critiques are **Due November 19th**. **Certificate** students **are required** to read the book, but **are not required** to submit a Critique.
- Reading Completion Record (attached): a Record will be used to verify and give credit for reading assignment completion. The Reading Completion Record is **Due November 19th**.
- Case Study & Presentation: Students will submit a written case of an actual conflict situation they have experienced or are experiencing and present their Case Study to the class. Pseudonyms for people and churches should be used for discretion. The written portion must be 8-10 pages in length (**6-10 pages for certificate students**) and entail the following elements:
 - a) A brief overview of the case/situation.
 - b) The background of the case/situation.
 - c) A biblical/theological, interpersonal, church/social, and legal analysis of the case/situation.
 - d) A review and evaluation of potentially appropriate ways of approaching the case/situation.
 - e) An assessment of whether the church discipline process of Matthew 18:15-20 is warranted.
 - f) Your recommendation for resolving the case/situation.
 - g) A concluding paragraph which includes strategies that might prevent similar future conflicts. Presentations are **Due November 26th** and **December 3rd**. Written Case Studies are due on the student’s Presentation day. An Oral Presentation Rubric is attached.

- Interaction Forms, the Book Critique, and the written Case Study should be submitted as PDF files or MS Word documents to kunagriggs@yahoo.com no later than 11:59pm on the due date.

GRADING WEIGHT

Interaction Forms:	13% of final grade	Reading Record:	13% of final grade
Peacemaker Quiz:	24% of final grade	Case Study Paper:	24% of final grade
Book Critique:	13% of final grade	Case Study Presentation:	13% of final grade

COURSE ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Below is the course assignment schedule by date. Reading and audio assignments are to be completed by the very next class date in preparation for discussion. Due course requirements are in **bold**.

Sep 03 Read <i>The Peacemaker</i> : Preface and Part 1 – Glorify God	Oct 22 Read <i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Intro (pp. 11-21) and Section 1 – Perspective Due: <i>How Faith Resolves Conflict</i> Interaction Form
Sep 10 Read <i>The Peacemaker</i> : Part 2 – Get the Log Out of Your Eye	Oct 29 Read <i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Section 2 – Discernment
Sep 17 Read <i>The Peacemaker</i> : Part 3 – Gently Restore	Nov 05 Read <i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Section 3 – Leadership
Sep 24 Read <i>The Peacemaker</i> : Part 4 – Go and Be Reconciled and Conclusion: The Peacemaker’s Pledge Study Guide Provided for <i>The Peacemaker</i> Quiz	Nov 12 Read <i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Section 4 – Biblical Response and Conclusion – The End of Church Conflict is Never the End
Oct 01 Read <i>The Peacemaker</i> : Appendix A – F Prepare for <i>The Peacemaker</i> Quiz	Nov 19 Due: <i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> Book Critique Due: Reading Completion Record
Oct 08 Listen to Thirdmill audio: <i>How Faith Resolves Conflict</i> by Rev. Mike Malone Due: <i>The Peacemaker</i> Interaction Form Due: <i>The Peacemaker</i> Quiz	Nov 26 Due: Case Study & Presentation* * Masters students will precede Certificate students in Case Study & Presentations and the order will be alphabetically by first name

Oct 15 No Class – Fall Break

Dec 03 Due: Case Study & Presentation*

INTERACTION FORM OUTLINE

Name:

Date:

Course Title:

Title of Book/Audio:

Author/Speaker:

Your Rating of the Book/Teaching (1 lowest – 10 highest):

Book/Audio Summary:

What new insights have you gained?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How will these new insights affect or be applied in your personal life and Christian service?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

5.

Name: _____ Score: _____

Oral Presentation Rubric

	4—Excellent	3—Good	2—Fair	1—Needs Improvement
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holds attention of entire audience with the use of direct eye contact, seldom looking at notes Speaks with fluctuation in volume and inflection to maintain audience interest and emphasize key points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent use of direct eye contact with audience, but still returns to notes Speaks with satisfactory variation of volume and inflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays minimal eye contact with audience, while reading mostly from the notes Speaks in uneven volume with little or no inflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holds no eye contact with audience, as entire report is read from notes Speaks in low volume and/or monotonous tone, which causes audience to disengage
Content/ Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates full knowledge by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration Provides clear purpose and subject; pertinent examples, facts, and/or statistics; supports conclusions/ideas with evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is at ease with expected answers to all questions, without elaboration Has somewhat clear purpose and subject; some examples, facts, and/or statistics that support the subject; includes some data or evidence that supports conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer only rudimentary questions Attempts to define purpose and subject; provides weak examples, facts, and/or statistics, which do not adequately support the subject; includes very thin data or evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not have grasp of information and cannot answer questions about subject Does not clearly define subject and purpose; provides weak or no support of subject; gives insufficient support for ideas or conclusions
Enthusiasm/ Audience Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates strong enthusiasm about topic during entire presentation Significantly increases audience understanding and knowledge of topic; convinces an audience to recognize the validity and importance of the subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows some enthusiastic feelings about topic Raises audience understanding and awareness of most points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows little or mixed feelings about the topic being presented Raises audience understanding and knowledge of some points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows no interest in topic presented Fails to increase audience understanding of knowledge of topic
Comments				

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barthel, Tara K. and David V. Eding. *Redeeming Church Conflicts: Turning Crisis into Compassion and Care*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012.
- Benner, David G. and Peter C. Hill, eds. *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counseling*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999.
- Brand, Chad, Charles Draper, and Archie England, eds. *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Nashville: Holman Reference, 2003.
- Carson, Donald A. "On Abusing Matthew 18." *Themelios*, 36 no 1 May 2011, p 1-3.
- Cunningham, Thomas Frank. *Conflict Resolution Strategies and the Church: The Church's Role as an Agent of Social Change in the Political Conflict in South Africa*. Dissertation.
- Elwell, Walter A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996.
- Halverstadt, Hugh F. *Managing Church Conflict*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991.
- Ham, Ken and A. Charles Ware. *One Race One Blood*. Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2010.
- Hollenberg, Nathan. "Matthew 18: A Call for Communication Not Excommunication." *Brethren Life and Thought*, 61 no 2 Fall 2016, p 16-24.
- Laney, J Carl. "The Biblical Practice of Church Discipline." *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 143 no 572 Oct - Dec 1986, p 353-364.
- Poirier, Alfred. *The Peacemaking Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006.
- Robertson, C. K. "Courtroom Dramas: A Pauline Alternative for Conflict Management." *Anglican Theological Review*. Fall 2007, Vol. 89 Issue 4, p 589-610.
- Sande, Ken. *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004.
- Seow, Choon-Leong, ed. *Homosexuality and Christian Community*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.
- Susek, Ron. *Firestorm: Preventing and Overcoming Church Conflicts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.
- Taylor, Thomas F. "Will Your Church Be Sued? How to Anticipate and Avoid Lawsuits in an Age of Litigation Overkill." *Christianity Today*, 41 no 1 Jan 06 1997, p 42-45.

READING COMPLETION RECORD

Name (Please Print) _____

DUE DATE	READING ASSIGNMENT	% DONE
Sep 10	<i>The Peacemaker</i> : Preface and Part 1 – Glorify God	
Sep 17	<i>The Peacemaker</i> : Part 2 – Get the Log Out of Your Eye	
Sep 24	<i>The Peacemaker</i> : Part 3 –Gently Restore	
Oct 01	<i>The Peacemaker</i> : Part 4 – Go and Be Reconciled	
Oct 01	<i>The Peacemaker</i> : Conclusion: The Peacemaker’s Pledge	
Oct 08	<i>The Peacemaker</i> : Appendix A – F	
Oct 22	Thirdmill Audio: <i>How Faith Resolves Conflict</i> by Rev. Mike Malone	
Oct 29	<i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Intro (pp. 11-21)	
Oct 29	<i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Section 1 – Perspective	
Nov 05	<i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Section 2 – Discernment	
Nov 12	<i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Section 3 – Leadership	
Nov 19	<i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Section 4 – Biblical Response	
Nov 19	<i>Redeeming Church Conflicts</i> : Conclusion – The End of Church Conflict is Never the End	