**PASTORAL MINISTRY**

**SPRING 2014, CHR 365**

# Dr. Ray Van Neste

**TR 9:25-10:40; Bowld 221**

I. THE PURPOSE OF THIS COURSE

It is my conviction that pastoral ministry is at a point of crisis in Western Christianity. As the church has begun taking her cues from the culture, the ideas governing pastoral ministry have become secularized resulting in significant damage to the church. If the church is to be revived and reformed, we must seek a return to biblical priorities in pastoral ministry. This class is intended as a small step towards that grand goal.

As always the path to reform begins with an earnest return to the Scriptures allowing them to challenge our presuppositions and to set our agenda. Then we must “return to the ancient paths” (Jer 6:16) listening to the church’s conversations about interpreting and applying scripture in reference to pastoral ministry across the ages. Listening only to our own age can serve simply to reinforce our presuppositions. Voices from the past are not correct simply because of their age, but they can challenge our basic assumptions and help us see past the illusion of our era. Thus, we will study together the key biblical texts wrestling with interpretive issues and concrete applications. We will also read key works on pastoral ministry ranging fro the close of the 6th century to the beginning of the 21st century. Our cry will be *ad fontes*, and our goal will be to grasp a thoroughly biblical view of pastoral ministry, that we might by God’s grace practice biblical pastoral ministry.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

* Study closely key biblical passages pertaining to pastoral ministry, asking how each passage should inform/shape the vision & practice of pastoral ministry
* Read seminal works on pastoral ministry from the history of the church
* Answer the fundamental question, “What is pastoral ministry?”
* Develop a thorough philosophy of ministry statement
* Grasp the value of reading for pastoral ministry and begin to develop good reading habits
* Gain a sound basis for the practice of pastoral ministry

III. TEXTBOOKS

Baxter, Richard. *The Reformed Pastor: A Pattern for Personal Growth and Ministry*. James M. Houston, ed. Portland: Multnomah, 1982; Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2001. [orig. pub. 1656]

Gregory the Great, St. *Pastoral Care*. Henry Davis, S.J., trans. New York:

Paulist Press, 1978. [orig. pub. 590]

James, John Angell. *An Earnest Ministry: The Want of the Times*. Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1993. [orig. pub. 1847]

Peterson, Eugene H. *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.

Piper, John. *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Class Attendance

Regular class attendance is mandatory for you to get as much as possible out of this course. Missing excessive class time will be penalized as follows:

Misses Deduction from Final Grade

*4 hours 1/2 letter grade*

*5‑6 hours 1 letter grade*

*7‑8 hours 2 letter grades*

Bring written excuses for absences due to sickness, emergencies, etc. It is your responsibility to notify Dr. Van Neste in advance or immediately upon your return of the reason for your absence. The professor reserves the right to determine the validity of all non‑college approved absences.

**If you are late to class your tardiness is recorded, and three times late to class will be counted as an absence from class.**

B. Reading

This will be a reading intensive class. As John Piper argues in one of the essays you will read, diligent reading is essential for serious pastoral ministry. You are encouraged to plan now for blocks of time devoted to reading for this class. According to typical scales of reading speed for close, slow reading, you should be able to complete the readings for this class by spending approximately 4 hours per week reading. Some will require less time; some may require more.

On certain dates as indicated in the class schedule, the student should have completed the required reading in a certain book. On that day the student should come to class with a 3 page book review of the assigned book. The review should indicate the following:

* Strengths/what specifically impacted you
* Weaknesses or disagreements
* Questions or challenges the book raises for pastoral ministry (what it is or how to do it)
* How this should shape pastoral ministry

The student should come prepared to engage in open discussion of the book.

C. Study of Texts

Most class periods will be devoted to the study of key texts. On such days the student should study the assigned passage before hand consulting commentaries and other resources. From the students pre-class study, he should bring a series of observations and questions arising from the passage in regard to pastoral ministry. These can range from technical interpretive issues to concrete questions on how to apply the text in our current situation. These observations must be typed (1 page) and will be turned in. The page submitted must indicate the sources used in studying the passage (commentaries, articles, etc.). On certain days there will also be assigned readings which relate to the passage in view.

E. Philosophy of Ministry

The final culmination of the class will be the production of a statement of philosophy of pastoral ministry rooted in the biblical texts and drawing on the readings. The philosophy of ministry should answer the following questions:

* What is the essence of pastoral ministry?
* What are the qualifications of a pastor?
* How is pastoral ministry to be carried out?
* Describe the essential work to be involved. What are the priorities?
* What is the ultimate aim of pastoral ministry?

Style will be discussed in class.

Late penalties:

*After class on the day due: ‑3 points*

### One day late: ‑10 points

### Two days late: ‑15 points

## Three days late: ‑20 points

*Four or more days late: score of "*0*"*

F. Exams

Due to the nature of this class, there will be no exams.

1. Final Grade

Your final grade for the term will be determined as follows:

Philosophy of ministry 50%

Book reviews 30% (5% each)

Daily assignments 15%

Participation 5%

H. Grading Scale ‑ letter grades will be given in accordance with Union's grading policy and as follows:

**A = 95‑100 B = 85‑94 C = 75‑84**

**D = 65‑74 F = below 65**

V. APPOINTMENTS WITH THE PROFESSOR

I am available to meet with you for any reason and want to help you in any way I can! If you need to meet with me, please make an appointment and pay attention to my weekly schedule posted on my door. My office is Jen. 326 and my office number is 661-5532. You can also reach me through e-mail at rvannest@uu.edu. If you have an emergency or an immediate prayer need feel free to come by my office or call me at 664-9803.

My prayer is that we will grow in our knowledge of God's Word this term with the end that we will grow in the *practice* of His Word. I am looking forward to the adventure with you. Let's work hard and have a great time!

**Course Schedule:**

**January**

30- Intro and rationale

**February**

4- 1 Tim 3; Titus 1- and Piper, chapt. 1; Don Carson, “Defining Elders” (<http://sites.silaspartners.com/partner/Article_Display_Page/0,,PTID314526_CHID598014_CIID2157886,00.html>)

6- cont., and David Wells, “The DMin-ization of Ministry” (provided)

11- Heb 13:17- Owen’s commentary (provided)

13- Col 1:25-29

18- Baxter, *Reformed Pastor*

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2008/04/student-responses-to-baxter-2.html>

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2007/07/packer-on-baxters-directory.html>

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2007/07/baxter-and-dangers-of-pride.html>

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2006/02/thoughts-from-baxter.html>

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2006/02/gravity-of-pastoral-ministry.html>

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2006/02/student-responses-to-baxter.html>

20- Devoted to the Word of God and Prayer- Acts 6; Ezra 7:9-10; 1 Tim 5:17

Peterson interview

“Pastoral Plagiarism,” <http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?id=23988>

25- TBA

27- In lieu of class on this day listen to these 3 addresses & write a one page response to each

“Pastoral Ministry: Shepherding God’s Flock” Conference – St. Louis, MO

* [Oversight of Souls: The Heart of Pastoral Ministry (Part 1)](http://rayvanneste.com/Audio/RVNOversightofSouls1.mp3)
* [Oversight of Souls: The Heart of Pastoral Ministry (Part 2)](http://rayvanneste.com/Audio/RVNOversightofSouls2.mp3)
* [Shepherding a Rebellious People](http://rayvanneste.com/Audio/RVNShepherdingaRebelliousPeople.mp3)

**March**

4- Peterson, *Contemplative Pastor*

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2006/01/peterson-and-priorities-of-pastorate.html>

6 - cont.; also read <http://barryjmaxwell.blogspot.com/2006/01/another-manic-monday.html>

11- Acts 20- Paul’s exhortation to elders

13- 2 Cor 2:14-4:6 (esp. 2:14-16 & 4:1-6)- the gravity of pastoral ministry

Scougal’s sermon, “The Importance and Difficulty of the Ministerial Function”

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2008/03/scougal-on-gravity-of-pastoral-ministry.html>

18- Gregory the Great, *Pastoral Care* **(ALL)**

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2006/03/pastoral-care-gregory-great.html>

20- Malachi 2:1-9

<http://touchstonemag.com/archives/article.php?id=19-09-020-v>

25-1 Peter 5:1-4/ 1 Thess 5:12-13

27- 1 Tim 4:6-16

<http://bit.ly/1nk1IIa>

**March 31-April 4- Spring Break**

**April**

8- James, *An Earnest Ministry* (**All but chaps 5-6)**

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2006/04/john-angell-james-passion-for-souls.html>

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2006/01/true-evangelism.html>

10- cont.

15- 2 Tim 2:14-26

17- 1 Thess 2- Jonathan Prime, “Pastoring Real People”

22- Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals* **(Chaps. 1, 4, 8-16, 19-20, 23-26))**

<http://rvanneste.blogspot.com/2006/04/brothers-we-are-not-professionals.html>

24- Speaking the Word of God- Jer 23; 2 Chron 18:13; 1 Pet 4:11

29- **Scholarship Symposium**

**May**

1- 2 Tim 4

6- Book of your choice from the bibliography (needs to be cleared by professor)

8- summary discussion; Philosophy of pastoral ministry due

I will frequently allude to my blog on pastoral ministry, “Oversight of Souls” which can be found at <http://www.rayvanneste.com/>