

**Note:**

**COURSE CONTENT MAY BE CHANGED, TERM TO TERM, WITHOUT NOTICE. THE INFORMATION BELOW IS PROVIDED AS A GUIDE FOR COURSE SELECTION AND IS NOT BINDING IN ANY FORM.**

## MOODY DISTANCE LEARNING

### Course Number, Name, and Credit Hours

PS-3310 The Church and Its Ministries

### Course Description

Students will study the nature of the church, its structure and purpose, and how these shape its approach to ministry. This course will survey historical approaches to church leadership and provide students with an opportunity to explore their own congregational heritage.

### Course Goals

In this course you will:

- Become familiar with foundational biblical teaching about the church and its ministries
- Examine various forms and functional expressions of the church and its ministries
- Give special attention to the vital role of church leadership
- Understand your own churches (and church traditions) in relation to biblical teaching and various expressions of the church and its ministries

### Course Objectives

By the completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Articulate a definition of “church” based on biblical evidence
2. Compare traditional and contemporary expressions of church according to a biblical definition
3. Identify the essence of ministry according to biblical teaching
4. Consider various traditional and contemporary expressions of ministry according to biblical teaching
5. Explain basic biblical teaching about church leadership
6. Examine traditional and contemporary expressions of church leadership
7. Analyze your own churches (and church traditions) in terms of the biblical meaning of church, its ministries, and church leadership
8. Analyze your own churches (and church traditions) in terms of various traditional and contemporary expressions of ministry

### Course Textbooks, Articles, and Chapters

#### **Books:**

Required textbooks for all Moody Online classes can be found on the [Required Textbooks](#) section of the Moody website.

#### **Articles and Chapters (provided as PDF documents in the online course):**

Allen, Roland. “Introduction,” Chapter 1, pages 1-5, “The Nature and Character of Spontaneous Expansion,” Chapter 2, pages 6-17, “Ecclesiastical Organization,” Chapter 8, pages 117-142, and “The Way of Spontaneous Expansion,” Chapter 9, pages 143-158 in *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church: And the Causes Which Hinder It*. Wipf & Stock, 1997. [Allen]

Dever, Mark. “What Are You Looking for in a Church?” Introduction, pages 13-17, “Your Christianity and Your Church,” Chapter 1, pages 21-31, and “What a Church Is . . . and Isn’t,” Chapter 2, pages 33-38 in *What is a Healthy Church?* Crossway, 2007. [Dever]

DeYoung, Kevin and Ted Kluck. “The Missiological,” Chapter 1, pages 27-54 and “The Theological,” Chapter 7, pages 159-186 in *Why We Love the Church: In Praise of Institutions and Organized Religion*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2009. [DeYoung]

Dulles, Avery. “The Use of Models in Ecclesiology,” Chapter 1, pages 7-25, “The Evaluation of Models,” Chapter 12, pages 181-194, and “The Church: Community of Disciples,” Chapter 13, pages 195-217 in *Models of the Church*, Expanded Edition. Doubleday, 2002. [Dulles]

Enns, Paul. “Ecclesiology: Doctrine of the Church,” Chapter 25, pages 359-382 and “The Emerging Church,” Chapter 48, pages 689-699 in *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, revised edition. Moody, 2008. [Enns]

Erickson, Millard J. “The Nature of the Church,” Chapter 50, pages 1035-1059, “The Role of the Church,” Chapter 51, pages 1060-1078, and “The Government of the Church,” Chapter 52, pages 1079-1097 in *Christian Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Baker, 1998. [Erickson]

Grudem, Wayne. “The Church: Its Nature, Its Marks, and Its Purposes,” Chapter 44, pages 853-872, “Church Government,” Chapter 47, pages 887-903, and “Historic Confessions of the Faith,” Appendix 1, pages 1168-1207 in *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Zondervan, 1994. [Grudem]

Halter, Hugh and Matt Smay. “The Big AND: Gathered and Scattered in Perfect Harmony,” Chapter 5 in *AND: The Gathered and Scattered Church*. Zondervan, 2010. Pages 123-142. [Halter]

Reed, Jeff. “Church-Based Leadership Training: A Proposal Revisited,” pages 315-329. In *Mission Mandate II: Compendium Published on the Occasion of the Every Tribe and Tongue Festival*, Bishop Ezra Sargunam, General Editor. Mission Educational Books, 2006. [Reed CBLT]

---. *The Churches of the First Century: From Simple Churches to Complex Networks*. BILD International, 2009. [Reed COFC]

Winter, Ralph D. “The Two Witnesses of God’s Redemptive Mission,” Chapter 39, pages 244-253 in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., edited by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 2009. William Carey Library. [Winter]

## Assignments

All assignments are due according to the schedule listed on the Course Schedule.

### READING:

The completion of the course reading is an important part of the course. You are expected to complete the reading prior to class for discussion purposes. You will be required to submit a reading report at the end of each week.

The course reading is intended to give you information, perspective, and direction in your work. It is not intended to give you “the answers,” but to be points of reference that help you in the course. The use of any author is not an endorsement of what that author teaches in the course reading (or elsewhere). Thus, you don’t have to agree with everything that author writes. However, you should be able to understand and interact with the content provided by author in the course reading.

The Getz, MacArthur, and Stott textbooks provide the foundation for the course. Each provides a comprehensive view of the church and its ministries, even though each does so from a different perspective.

The Enns, Erickson, and Grudem readings provide well-respected, formal systematic theology treatments of the doctrine of the church. Grudem also provides a valuable collection of the “confessions of the faith” which gives a wonderful historical glimpse into the theological understanding of the church. Enns also provides an important theological consideration of the “emerging” and “emergent” church.

Dever gives a simple, yet provocative and helpful view into the essence of the church. . Dulles helps you to think in terms of models and doing evaluation of models. And DeYoung and Kluck give perspective from the midst of a contemporary controversy about how to do church.

Allen writes from the perspective of a missionary a century ago reacting against the rigid structures of the day and giving a fresh analysis of the biblical teaching about the essence of the church and its ministries.

Winter gives keen insight on biblical teaching of church leadership as it relates the missionary expression of the church. Halter provides an application to contemporary local churches. Reed contributes a more comprehensive analysis of the biblical teaching on church leadership and its local and global expressions in relation to the Great Commission as a church planting movement.

In addition to the required reading in the course, you should contact at least one leader of your denomination, church network, and/or local church in order to know what they consider to be the best resources (books, articles, doctrinal statements, manuals, websites, and church leaders) to understand the church and its ministries according to their tradition. You should treat these recommended resources like “required reading” in the course and make substantial use of them in your course assignments.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION IN THE DISCUSSION BOARD:**

Participation in the discussion board is expected. You should make an initial post in each forum (preferably early in the week), respond as instructed to the initial posts of others, and reply to those who respond to your initial posts.

The interaction that you have with other students and others should be one of the most valuable part of the course. The discussion board assignments encourage you to interact not just with the students and faculty in the class, but also those in your God-given learning community (family, church, neighbors, co-workers, friends, etc.). They help you to be “real” about the course and not let it be just an academic exercise. Further, they are the ones that God has put into your life to help you develop even after the course is completed.

There are two types of discussion board forums for each lesson in this course. One helps you interact with the main idea of the lesson. The other helps you interact with a particularly key idea in the course readings.

Please note that you are encouraged to interact with at least one of your church leaders (local church, church network, and/or denomination) in relation to the main idea of the lesson.

This is not absolutely required, but it will help you root your experience in the unique learning community that God has given to you in your real life situation, as well as participate more substantively in the learning community of the class. You may want to use email, social media, phone, or live conversation for this interaction with your church leaders.

**PAPERS:**

It is important to note that these assignments are intended to help you understand biblical teaching and your own church setting. However, they come with two operational hazards. First, you may have a tendency to be defensive about your church. Because no church is a perfect expression of the biblical teaching, be open to the possibility that you may find something in the Bible or in other expressions of church that is missing or better than yours. Second, although these assignments involve critique of your church and others, you must be careful of making inappropriate criticism. The critique is intended to help you understand both the biblical teaching and your church setting, not necessarily to fix what is “wrong” in yours. Again, there are no perfect churches, but it is quite likely that God has you where you are for a reason. Thus, use these assignments primarily to gain understanding and improve your contribution, not necessarily make negative judgments about your church. It is just one step in your development and participation in your traditional denomination, contemporary church network, and/or local church.

The course schedule has a rhythm that matches the assignments, namely the study of biblical teaching followed by the consideration of traditional, contemporary, and local expressions. Each of the first three written assignments and all of the Discussion Board assignments fit this pattern. The final written assignment culminates in an examination of your church setting in light of biblical teaching, traditional, contemporary, and local expressions.

Grading criteria for these assignments are:

- Substance, clarity, and accuracy in dealing with the items listed
- Meaningful and appropriate interaction with the course readings
- Evidence of thoughtful analysis and critical thinking

**ASSIGNMENT 1: BIBLICAL TEACHING ABOUT THE CHURCH.** Complete an assignment in which you present your understanding of the biblical teaching about the church.

Length is 3-6 pages (750-1,500 words). You are expected to make reference as appropriate to the required reading for the course.

**ASSIGNMENT 2: BIBLICAL TEACHING ABOUT CHURCH MINISTRIES.** Complete an assignment in which you present your understanding of the biblical teaching about church ministries.

Length: 3-6 pages (750-1,500 words). You are expected to make reference as appropriate to the required reading for the course.

**ASSIGNMENT 3: BIBLICAL TEACHING ABOUT CHURCH LEADERSHIP.** Complete an assignment in which you present your understanding of the biblical teaching about church leadership.

Length is 3-6 pages (750-1,500 words). You are expected to make reference as appropriate to the required reading for the course.

**ASSIGNMENT 4: BIBLICAL TEACHING AND YOUR CHURCH.** Complete an assignment in which you present your understanding of your own church in light of the biblical teaching about church, church ministries, and church leadership

Length is 4-8 pages (1,000-2,000 words). You are expected to make reference as appropriate to the required reading for the course.

**Assessment**

Your grade for this course will consist of:

Reading	10%
Class Participation/Discussion Board	10%
Assignment 1: Church	20%
Assignment 2: Church Ministries	20%
Assignment 3: Church Leadership	20%
Assignment 4: Your Church	20%
	100%

Letter grades are determined by the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent	Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent
A	96% or higher	C	73 - 76.9%
A-	90 - 95.9%	C-	70 - 72.9%
B+	87 - 89.9%	D+	67 - 69.9%
B	83 - 86.9%	D	63 - 66.9%
B-	80 - 82.9%	D-	60 - 62.9%
C+	77 - 79.9%	F	Below 60%

**Course Resources**

Online students have access to the Moody Library. Though students may wish to check out books via inter-library loan, the online database has a number of articles and reviews available for download. You can access the online database by logging into your account at [my.moody.edu](http://my.moody.edu). In addition to the resources available at the Moody Library, you may wish to visit <http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk> or [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org). These sites contain content on various topics written by competent biblical scholars. It is also suggested that you download a free version of the NET Bible at bible.org.

The final resource that deserves mention here is iTunes University. Apple has developed a platform for colleges and universities to post audio and video content. There are a number of lectures available on iTunes U, including some on the Old Testament historical and prophetic books. Various schools such as Dallas Theological Seminary, Seattle Pacific University, Duke, and Yale have posted content related to biblical and theological studies. In addition, Covenant Theological Seminary has an Old Testament podcast.

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