Jesus assigned the church one primary task: to make disciples. In the twenty-first century, how do we present the call to discipleship in a way that captures the hearts of believers, gives them a biblical understanding of their vocational calling, and keeps them self-motivated towards spiritual growth? The answer is to help them see that our calling to follow King Jesus is the call to join him in the establishment of wholeness and righteousness over every square inch of the planet. This practical course examines discipleship from the paradigm of biblical teaching about the kingdom of God, highlighting the contributions made to kingdom theology by Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck, and Herman Ridderbos. It will provide students with the tools to inspire their congregation about the significance of their “secular” work, with a practical, kingdom-based discipleship model, and with biblical strategies for shaping the local church to make effective kingdom disciples. Taught by Dr. Gary Yagel and Hugh Whelchel.

Gary Yagel Bio

In 1982 Gary began ministry at Penn State as a volunteer Young Life Leader, then served as a Youth Pastor for four years before beginning a twenty year career in the Presbyterian Church in America as a church planter and senior pastor. In 2002, he and his wife started Family Builders, Inc. and Gary began to lead the men’s division, Forging Bonds of Brotherhood, serving as its Executive Director. In this capacity, he frequently speaks on men’s retreats, or leads men’s seminars. He taught his discipleship course, “Called to Be Men” for many years at Quantico Marine Base in VA and is the author of various resources available on the website www.forgingbonds.org. He is on the speaking faculty of Man In the Mirror, and serves as the Men’s Ministry Coach of his denomination, the PCA. He has received his Doctor of Ministry degree from RTS Orlando where his dissertation was Discipling Men’s Hearts Through Kingdom Theology.

Hugh Whelchel Bio

As Executive Director of the Institute for Faith, Work & Economics, Hugh Whelchel brings a unique combination of senior executive responsibility, creative educational administration, and technical innovation from over thirty years of diverse business experience. Over nine years ago, Hugh stepped out of a successful business career to share his senior executive experience with Reformed Theological Seminary’s Washington DC campus, where he served as Executive Director and guest professor. Prior to RTS, he spent fifteen years in the IT industry, helping turn around several regional companies.

In addition to his business acumen, Hugh has a unique passion and expertise in helping individuals integrate their faith and vocational calling. He is the author of How Then Should We Work? Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work, released May 2012. He has served as both the executive director and board member of The Fellows Initiative (TFI), a coalition of Regional Fellows Programs (Post-Graduate Christian Leadership Development Programs) established in key communities around the nation. TFI is an umbrella organization that supports and helps establish new regional Fellows Programs. These comprehensive programs include 3-4 day
workplace internships, graduate level academic courses and other activities to help the fellows more fully understand God’s vocational calling on their lives as they enter their careers. On the topic of faith and work, Hugh is frequently called upon to teach and speak on the radio, at conferences, churches, seminaries, business groups, and universities around the nation. Hugh is a contributor to The Washington Post/On Faith “Local Leaders” website and has been published on The Gospel Coalition.org and ByFaith Online. He has also been a guest on Moody Radio Network’s “In the Market with Janet Parshall,” Salem Radio Network, IRN/USA Radio Network, and “Truth That Transforms” (Truth in Action Ministries), among other shows.

A native Floridian, Hugh graduated from the University of Florida and earned a master’s degree in theology from Reformed Theological Seminary. Hugh moved to Northern Virginia twelve years ago to run an IT training company and lives with his wife Leslie in Loudoun County, Virginia. As an ordained ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church in America, he serves in leadership at McLean Presbyterian Church in McLean, Virginia and also serves on the boards of several Christian non-profits organizations. In what little spare time he has, Hugh enjoys hiking, golf and restoring old sports cars. Hugh is on Twitter at @HughWhelchel.

Course Reading


Whelchel, Hugh. How Then Should We Work: Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work (145 pages)


Course Syllabus: Making Kingdom Disciples (2 credits)

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

A. The relevance of our topic
B. The meaning of mathetes
C. To follow Jesus was to learn about the kingdom of God
D. A holistic definition of disciple
THE ROOTS OF A KINGDOM WORLD VIEW

A. The Four Chapter Gospel
B. The Cultural Mandate
C. The Kingdom of God (overview)
D. Common Grace

KINGDOM THEOLOGY AS A FOUNDATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP

A. The Kingdom of God As The Paradigm for Understanding Discipleship
   1. Creation—Fall—Redemption/Restoration
   2. Creation: Adam’s Kingship Calling
   3. The Fall
   4. Redemption
      a. Christ’s Kingship
      b. The Kingdom of God Defined
      c. Wholeness Recovered, Righteousness Established
      d. The call to discipleship is rooted in our creation calling to exercise dominion
   5. Discipleship in the Already/Not Yet Era

B. Contributions to Kingdom Theology
   1. Abraham Kuyper
   2. Herman Bavinck
   3. Herman Ridderbos

C. Current Kingdom Controversies
   1. David VanDrunen
   2. Others

KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP IN THE WORKPLACE: OVERVIEW

A. A Discipleship Model That Affirms Our Vocational Calling
   1. The Biblical Meaning of Success
   2. The Greek and Hebrew Views of Work
   3. Early Christian and Medieval Views of Work
   4. Reformed View of Work
   5. Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Views of Work

B. The Challenge of the Twenty-first Century
   1. Calling and Work
   2. Primary and Secondary Callings
   3. A Shift In the Meaning of Calling

KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICAL MODEL

A. Kingdom = Christ’s Agenda of Righteousness and Restoration
B. Model of Personal Discipleship and Spiritual Formation
   1. Called to Christ: surrender to Christ the King out of love for him
   2. Called to be like Christ: becoming like Christ in kingdom heart attitudes (Matt 5-7)
3. Called to *exercise dominion for Christ* (shaping every sphere of life according to Christ’s agenda)
C. Overcoming the Driven Life Style to Live By Our Calling
D. How Jesus Stayed Focused On His Mission (Mark 1:32-39)

**KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP IN THE WORKPLACE: PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

A. The Future: Work, Calling, and Cultural Renewal
   1. Our Calling to Be Obedient Servants
   2. Our Calling to Reweave Shalom
   3. Our Calling to Restore Culture
B. How Then Should We Work?

**HOW KINGDOM DISCIPLES ARE MADE**

A. Popular myths about how disciples are made
B. Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus’ explanation of how to make disciples
C. Disciple-making as the portal priority for the church
D. The church makes disciples by functioning as an *organization* (Titus 1:5)
E. The church makes disciples by functioning as an *organism* (Eph 4:11-16)
   1. How to get meaningful connection in the body
   2. Equipping the saints for ministry
      Illustration: Men’s Ministry
F. Kingdom Discipleship Is a Challenge Big Enough to Capture the Heart

**Course Grading**

Class Participation: 30%
Reading Summaries: 30%
Final Paper 40%

Final Paper: The final paper (10-12 pages total) consists of your answers to the following questions. In answering the questions, students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the course content, and reading. Your own opinions are welcomed even if they differ from the professors.

1. **In what ways is an understanding of kingdom theology foundational for understanding Christ’s call to discipleship?** (4-6 pages)

2. **What is the biblical view of vocation and why is this view important to** (3-4 pages)

3. **In your view, a) what are the indispensable elements in a personal discipleship model and b) how is the church to go about “making disciples?”** (3-4 pages)
Title of the Book:

Overview—Give a brief summary of the book, including its theme, approach, and perspective.

Points you want to remember—Summarize three or four points from the book that you want to remember.

Impact—What impact did this book have on your thinking about making disciples?