

Human Personality

Summer 2021

July 19-23

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Office hours by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A core question of counseling that must be answered is what it means to be human. In this course we build a biblical understanding of the nature of man, both as a corporate group and as individuals. Special attention will be given to concepts such as covenant, redemption, and sanctification. This biblical anthropology will be then applied to particular counseling issues likely to be faced by students in their future ministries.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to articulate a biblical picture of anthropology.
2. Students will grow in their understanding of the role of conscience and emotions for human flourishing.
3. Students will increase in skill in addressing complex cases and cases involving trauma.
4. Students will grow in self-knowledge regarding their own personalities and the benefits and dangers they possess in their own lives and ministries.

COURSE MATERIALS

Emlet, Michael. *Sufferer, Sinner, Saint: Loving Others as God Loves Us*. Greensboro: New Growth, 2021.

Mike Emlet explores a helpful paradigm for understanding human beings – especially our regenerate counselees. This book helps us be balanced in how we engage those who seek care. They are sufferers, and how they have suffered informs their pain and struggle. They are sinners because of their nature and heart, and that sin needs to be turned from. They are saints who have new hearts and therefore have the hope of comfort and growth in righteousness.

Hoekema, Anthony. *Created in God's Image*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, repr. 1994.

Hoekema's classic work is a thorough anthropology. He helpfully walks through the Bible's teaching on who we are as human beings. This work is foundational to this course. Start with this book if you're early in your seminary career, as it will give you context for the other works you're reading.

Langberg, Diane. *Suffering and the Heart of God: How Trauma Destroys and Christ Restores*. New Growth, 2015.

Langberg’s work is a deep dive into suffering, trauma, and Christ’s aid for sufferers. This book is an excellent union of observational psychology, biblical truth, and wise practice. This kind of book is often ignored in biblical counseling, but we must wrestle with the deep psychological impact that trauma has on individuals if we are to care well.

Naselli, Andy and J. D. Crowley. *Conscience: What It Is, How to Train It, and Loving Those Who Differ*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016.

This little book is super helpful. It’s exactly what the subtitle says – what is the conscience, how do we train it, and how do we love those who differ with our conclusions that are less than “thus sayeth the Lord.” This book is also incredibly timely given our current cultural upheaval within our churches.

Pennington, Jonathan. *Jesus the Great Philosopher: Recovering the Wisdom Needed for the Good Life*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2020, pp 83-132.

You will only read the “engaging emotions” section from this book. Pennington’s survey of emotions is one of the clearest, most succinct treatments of emotions from a biblical perspective out there. He neither vilifies nor crowns our emotions, but rather treats them as an integral part of being human.

COURSE WORK

(1) Personal History & Ministry Assignment

You are to identify a significant trouble or hurt from your past history that has a continuing impact upon you. This could be a one-time event (fired from a ministry position) or something continual (growing up in a family with an unpredictably explosive parent). The goal of this assignment is for you to see and grow through some of the ways your personal history impacts you as a person and a servant of Jesus Christ. Each aspect of this assignment has a due date, so take care to follow the course schedule.

Note: For some of you, there may be a significant issue(s) that you do not want to discuss in an assignment like this. That is fine. You do not have to choose the most significant issue, just a significant issue.

(A) Identify the issue

(B) Personal Reflection / Journaling

You will have 4 one hour reflection/journaling sessions throughout the term. Each of these will be focused on a pair of questions. You will not turn in these journals – they are between you and the Lord. You will confirm that you have done each set on Canvas by their due date.

Set 1: View of the World

- How do you see these hurts impacting the way in which you view the world and other people?

- In what ways do your hurts make you vulnerable to hurting other people?

Set 2: Personal Traits

- What positive traits or tendencies have these hurts developed in you?
- What negative traits or tendencies have these hurts contributed to in you?

Set 3: God

- What aspects of God and his character have this issue caused you to treasure?
- What imbalances do these hurts tend to produce in you with your view of and interaction with God?

Set 4: Ministry

- What imbalances do these hurts tend to produce in you as you listen to others' stories?
- What imbalances does this tend to produce in your leadership?

(C) Reflection Paper

You will write a 5 page reflection paper, highlighting what the Lord has taught you and what you have learned during your time reflecting on your personal history. Use the four categories above as your guide. Your assignment will be graded on the quality and depth of your reflections and your presentation of them.

(2) Reading Report

Students are to fill out the reading report available under “Files” in Canvas.

(3) Conscience Paper

Students are to write a 12 page paper deeply analyzing a position that they hold that is a point of conscience. This position must be something there is significant disagreement about among Christians. This cannot be a straight-up doctrinal issue (i.e. Are LGBTQ+ lifestyles acceptable for a Christian?), but will naturally connect with doctrine (i.e. What pronouns should Christians use for a transgender individual?). As a helpful guide, ask the question, “Are there multiple perspectives on this in my church?” If the answer is no, don’t write about that. If the answer is yes, you have yourself a topic. Your paper will be improved by choosing a topic that has impacted or impacts you personally. You have broad discretion in your topic, but it might be wise to clear with your professor first.

This paper will have three sections.

- A) What is your position. This will be one or two sentences in length.
- B) How did you come to hold this position?
 - a. Doctrinally – what’s your scriptural justification for holding your position?
 - b. Personally -
- C) How do you live in love with those who disagree with your position?
 - a. What does this look like within your own heart?
 - b. What does this look like in terms of community?

Your paper will be graded not by the position that you hold (unless you advocate something clearly against Christian doctrine or lifestyle), but by the quality of your writing and reasoning. Stream of consciousness papers, or papers with minimal effort or poorly reflected points will be significantly marked down.

COURSE GRADING

Conscience Paper	35%
Reading	35%
Personal History Project	30%

NUTS AND BOLTS

Classroom Policies

1. Please follow all RTS classroom policies, including policies for internet use (appended below).
2. Papers should be formatted according to Chicago/Turabian standards.
3. Students are required to cite all sources consulted for a written assignment. Students who plagiarize or cheat in any other manner are guilty of academic misconduct and will be reported to the Dean of Students. This will result in disciplinary action up to and including failure of the course and academic dismissal.
4. Laptops are welcome in class for note taking only. Only word processing programs may be open during class; no browsers, email programs, social media feeds, or any other program is to be used. Please silence cell phones and do not text, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, or whatever else desperately beckons for your attention.
5. The professor reserves the right to modify any student’s grade who is absent for a significant portion of the class.

Assignment Schedule

This course meets July 19-23. ***Students are highly recommended to have completed the reading before the course begins.*** You may turn in your reading and conscience paper earlier than indicated on the below schedule; however, *your Personal History Project must be completed after the class meets.*

Personal History Topic Selected	July 26
Reading Group 1 - Hoekema - Pennington	August 2
Journal/Reflection 1	August 2
Journal/Reflection 2	August 9
Reading Group 2 - Langberg	August 9
Journal/Reflection 3	August 16
- Naselli - Emlet	August 16
Journal Reflection 4	August 23
Personal History Paper	August 23
Conscience Paper	August 30

Course Objectives Related to MACC Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Human Personality
 Professor: Dr. Nathanael J. Brooks
 Campus: Charlotte
 Date: Summer 2021

<u>MACC Student Learning Outcomes</u> <i>In order to measure the success of the MACC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.</i>	<u>Rubric</u> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<u>COUNSELING KNOWLEDGE</u> Demonstrate knowledge of counseling theories and modern anthropology.	Strong	Course covers anthropology, power dynamics, and trauma care.
<u>COUNSELING SKILL</u> Ability to apply biblical truths and common-grace insights in a variety of counseling settings.	Moderate	Students will receive training on caring for individuals with traumatic and complex histories.
<u>SCRIPTURE</u> Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture and ability to apply to modern counseling circumstances.	Moderate	This course will mine Scripture for a biblically-derived anthropology.
<u>REFORMED THEOLOGY</u> Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice and ability to apply to modern counseling circumstances.	Moderate	The anthropological focus of this course will emphasize reformed distinctives such as covenant theology.
<u>SANCTIFICATION</u> Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	The homework for this course will largely focus on the personal development and sanctification of students.
<u>WINSOMELY REFORMED</u> Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos.	Strong	Course seeks to build a winsome, humble students as they engage in counseling complex and befuddling situations.