

**Birmingham Theological Seminary**  
**2200 Briarwood Way**  
**Birmingham, Alabama 35243**  
**205-776-5650**

**Spring 2012**

**(BC 7632) Advance Marriage and Family Counseling**

**Professor: Mr. Alonza Jones**

**Class Hours: 2**

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**COURSE PURPOSE**

To build upon the Marriage and Family Course with specific application to critical issues in the context of the sociology of the family, public policy, critical issues and appropriate application of biblical principles in relationship to these topics.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. The student will interact with contemporary theory and biblical methodology
2. The student will explore counseling approaches to critical issues
3. The student will compare and contrast other Christian approaches
4. The student will explore the role of the local church in these issue
5. The student will become familiar with the sociology and political policy issues regarding the family and biblical family counseling

**TEXTBOOKS**

Becvar, Dorothy Stroh and Raphael J. Becvar. *Systems Theory and Family Therapy*. [You can secure a used paperback copy through Amazon.com. Familiarize yourself with systems theory.]

Becnel, Moe and Paige. *God Breathes on Blended Families: A Testimony of the Becnel Family*. Healing Place Productions, Inc., 2000. ISBN: 0-9678680-0-9.

Christenson, Larry. *The Christian Family*. Bethany Fellowship (This classic is available at Amazon.com. Both editions are the same, but I recommend the green cover edition – 1974.)

Gushee, David P. *Getting Marriage Right*. Baker Books. ISBN: 0-8010-1262-7.

Kostenberger, Andreas J. *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation*. Wheaton, IL, Crossway, 2010.

**COLLATERAL READINGS**

Campbell, Ken M. (Editor). *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*. ISBN: 0-8308-2737-4.

Ford, James. *Seven Reasons Why God Created Marriage*. ISBN: 978-0-8024-2262-0

## ARTICLE READINGS

These will be distributed in class.

### CLASS SCHEDULE

- January 23 Sociology of the Contemporary Family  
Family  
Law and Social Policy  
Gushee pp. 12-56; 205-226; Kostenberger 15-50
- January 30 The Creation Purposes of Marriage  
Gushee pp. 87-104
- February 6 Primary Principles That Frame a Good Marriage  
Kostenberger pp. 51-98  
[One case from your experience due]
- February 13 Conceptualizing Marriage and Family Counseling Systems and Other Approaches  
Becvar [Scan this entire book before class]  
  
The Family as a System  
Biblical Examples of Family Systems  
Gushee pp. 105-146; Kostenberger pp. 99-116
- February 20 The Church as Marriage Counterculture  
Article #1  
Gushee pp. 183-204
- February 27 Cohabitation: The risk to family stability  
Article #2  
[Mid-Term Due]
- March 12 Spring Break—No Class**
- March 5 Divorce and Kingdom Possibilities  
Article #3  
Gushee pp. 147-182; Kostenberger pp. 223-248
- March 19 Divorce Counseling  
Gushee pp. 227-238; Kostenberger pp. 275-288  
“The Gospel and Divorce” (Article #4)
- March 26 Single Parent Families  
Live interview [Guest TBA]  
Counseling unwed parents toward marriage
- April 2 Blended Families  
[Read *God Breathes on Blended Families* and be prepared to discuss and defend  
biblically where you agree and/or disagree with the book.]
- April 9 Panel: The Role of the Church in Family Issues

[Guest panelist TBA]  
Kostenberger pp. 249-274

- April 16      Review of biblical counseling methodology  
                  Role Play
- April 23      Case Studies  
                  [Final Exam Due]

### ASSIGNMENTS

- 1. Come to class with the reading assignment of the day completed. It will be incorporated into class discussions.**
2. You will write up a case of marriage counseling that you have worked with or have observed in your experience. If you do not have a counseling case, describe a marriage that you have observed and lay out a counseling plan as if you were going to counsel them. This is due on February 6.
3. Mid-Term. Write a 1-3 page summary on each of the following chapters from *The Christian Family*: Chapters 3, 4, 7, and 8. (Page citations in parentheses will be sufficient.) Mid-Term is due on April 27.
4. Write a 12-15 page paper in which you address a contemporary family counseling issue as a Biblical Counselor. You must draw upon the textbooks for this course and at least seven other sources. Paper must be turned in no later than April 27; otherwise you will receive an incomplete and the loss of one letter grade. Use Turabian format.
5. Final exam. Drawing upon the textbooks, articles and the collateral reading books write a three page paper indicating how this class and texts enhanced your biblical counseling skill set. Be very specific. Use Turabian format. Final is due on April 23.

### GRADING

Class participation	25%
Mid-term	25%
Final Exam	25%
Paper	25%

### BTS FORMAT AND STYLE STANDARDS

NOTE: All papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page. You must use #12 Times New Roman font, double-spaced. Any paper not conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade.

### DUE DATES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

**All course materials must be submitted by the last day of class. Thereafter, course materials may be submitted for up to six (6) weeks after the end of the semester directly to the office of the Registrar with the permission of the professor. If a student submits course materials after the end of the semester but within the six (6) weeks grace period, the student's grade will be lowered by one letter grade. The course materials will not be accepted after the six (6) week grace period and a failing grade will be posted to the student's transcript.**

## Marriage and Family Bibliography

Alexander, James W. *Thoughts On Family Worship*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1847; reprint, bound with Benjamin M. Palmer's *The Family*. . . , Harrisonburg,VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1982.

Evans, Dr. Anthony T. *Guiding Your Family in a Misguided World: Preparing Your Kids to Live in a Secular Society*. Focus on the Family Pub.: Colorado Springs, Colorado. 1991.

Gilder, George F. *Men and Marriage*. Rev. ed. Gretna: Pelican Pub. Co., 1992.

Kelly, Douglas F. "Family Worship: Biblical, Reformed, and Viable for Today." In *Worship in the Presence of God*. Edited by David Lachman and Frank J. Smith. Greenville, SC: Greenville Seminary Press, 1992, pp. 103-129.

Knight, George W., III. *The Role Relationship of Men & Women. New Testament Teaching*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1985.

Mack, Wayne. *Strengthening Your Marriage*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1977.

Murray, John. "Creation Ordinances" and "Marriage Ordinance and Procreation." *Principles of Conduct. Aspects of Biblical Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971, pp. 27-44, 45-82.

Packer, J.I. "Marriage and Family in Puritan Thought." In *A Quest For Godliness. The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990, pp. 259-273.

Piper, John and Wayne Grudem, eds. *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood. A Response to Evangelical Feminism*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991.

Priolo, Lou. *Teach Them Diligently*. Timeless Texts: Woodruff, S.C. 2000.

Ryken, Leland. "Marriage and Sex." Chapter in *Worldly Saints. The Puritans As They Really Were*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986, pp. 39-56.

Sande, Ken. *The Peacemaker. A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991.

Smith, B.M. *Family Religion, or The Domestic Relations as Regulated by Christian Principles*. Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1859; reprint, Greenville, SC: GPTS Press, 1991.

Sproul, R.C. *Intimate Marriage. A Practical Guide to Building a Great Marriage*. Phillipsburg, NJ:P&R, 2003.

Tripp, Paul. *Age of Opportunity. A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1997.

Tripp, Tedd. *Shepherding a Child's Heart*. Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995.

Wheat, Ed and Gay Wheat. *Intended for Pleasure: New Approaches to Sexual Intimacy in Christian Marriage*. Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1981.