

SUMMER TERM 2008
COURSE SYLLABUS
Department: Pastoral Theology
(TrinityOnline)
Course Number: PT 730
Course Title: Biblical Perspectives
on Conflict Management
Credit: 3 hours

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Course Duration: June 2-August 15, 2008

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Welcome

Chuck grew up in the church as a preacher's kid, so he knows something about church conflict. Chuck studied conflict management at Texas A&M for his Ph.D. research, at Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry for his D.Min. research, and he continues to study the subject. Zoe earned a Masters in Counseling at Asbury Seminary and pursued a course of post-graduate studies in the areas of spiritual direction, spiritual formation, and formative spirituality. As a certified spiritual director, Zoe sees many people who are conflicted and seeking God's guidance in the midst of their spiritual, emotional, and personal conflicts. Like you, Zoe continues to be a student. She currently is doing doctoral work in Curriculum & Instruction with a focus in Educational Technology.

Although we have studied conflict and worked with individuals and groups around the topic of conflict, we expect to learn more about it this term as we interact with one another. You will discover, if you do not already know it, that scripture is rife with strife. We'll develop a good biblical/theological foundation for conflict management. We'll also learn much about the psycho-social aspects of conflict management. We'll learn how to manage interpersonal conflict, how to avoid unnecessary conflict, and how to lead others to restoration and reconciliation. You will also learn much about yourself. We hope you enjoy the adventure!

Conflict is a normal function of relationship, and it is unavoidable. We will look at ways to avoid inappropriate behavior while in conflict and, hopefully, gain much good from the conflict. No less conflict occurs in the church than outside the church. Jesus did not avoid conflict, but he modeled appropriate behavior in the midst of conflict. We will use him as our chief model. This course will help you in any and every vocation that involves interpersonal relationships.

Course Objectives

This course offers skills for positively transforming conflict and improving interpersonal communication, especially during tough times. Participants in this course will be challenged to learn by the reflection-in-action process in reading, writing, and sharing in the classroom. While the focus will be on conflict management, much of the course content will relate to interpersonal communication in and with committees, boards, vestries, small groups, large groups, staff, and one-on-one relationships. Skills learned will be practiced during the semester.

- A. With regard to concepts and application, we intend to communicate a clear understanding of conflict and conflict management.
 - Concepts: We want you to understand the basic concepts of conflict and the abundance of it throughout Scripture.
 - Application: We believe it is important to also look at various aspects of conflict and how conflicts are handled, with the intent to strengthen your style of dealing with conflict or to allow the material of this course to challenge your style, whichever is needed. We pray you, too, will be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. How you deal with conflict impacts your sphere of influence. Yours is different from ours; your gifts are different from ours; yet, Jesus calls us all to be peacemakers. **“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.” Matthew 5:9**
- B. It is important to provide you with some practical experience in analyzing a conflict and working through a conflict. You will be required to write a case study evaluating a conflict of which you are a participant. You will loathe us now, but love us later. Trust us on this one.
- C. Growing in awareness of the conflicts around you and the way you and others respond to those conflicts is critical. We want you to be able to identify those opportunities in which you can serve as the peacemaker most effectively.
- D. We want to assist you in developing some specific tools for helping those with whom you are in personal relationship, those whom you will serve or are serving in parishes/churches, and yourself toward experiencing healthy, productive conflict.

- E. We want to help you develop resource materials for future reference when you are faced with conflicts of your own or within the parish/church you serve, as well as in the communities in which you live.
- F. The final project is designed to assist you in analyzing and evaluating all you've learned and experienced during this course in order for you to create your own teaching materials for use with a particular congregation or group.

Required Texts

Because this is only an eleven-week semester, be diligent in your reading. **You have much to read in only eleven weeks. We advise you to read as much as you can before the semester begins.**

Literature Review. Find one book or 3 articles that address one of the following topics: (1) Family Systems, (2) Systems Theory, or (3) Family Systems in the Church. The goal associated with this assignment is to help those of you who will be working/are working on thesis research or other types of research-based writing. Hopefully, this literature review will feed into your thesis research or future research and writing assignments. Please consult with Chuck or Zoe before choosing a book to be certain the book meets the objectives of this course. You will provide a short report on your research results.

Sande, Ken. (1997). *The Peacemaker. Third Edition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 281 pp. ISBN: 10-0-8010-6485-6 (pbk); ISBN: 978-0-8010-6485-2 (pbk) [not sure why this book has two ISBN's]

Susek, Ron. (1999). *Firestorm: Preventing and Overcoming Church Conflicts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 253 pp. ISBN: 0-8010-9091-1

van Kaam, Adrian L. (1994). *Spirituality and the Gentle Life*. Pittsburgh, PA: Epiphany Association. 191 pp.

You may purchase this text from Epiphany Association by calling 877.EAHOUSE (877.324.6873). Also, we think a new version of this text has been released, so the publication date may not be correct.

Wilson, Earl & Sandy, Paul & Virginia Friesen, and Larry & Nancy Paulson. (1997). *Restoring the Fallen: A Team Approach to Caring, Confronting & Reconciling*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity. 201 pp. ISBN: 0-8308-1619-4

Optional Reading (not required)

The following articles from *Leadership*, Spring 1998:

- Ficken, Jock E, "Shielding Your Heart from Strife," 27-30.
 Hansen, David, "War of the Baseball Caps," 54-59.
 Henry, Jim, "Character Forged from Conflict," 20-26.
 Lauterbach, Mark, "How I Realized I was Hurting People and What I Did About It,"
 31-33.
 McBurney, "North American Guide to Church Dragons," 34-38.
 Preston, Gary D, "Resisting the Urge to Hit Back," 60-64.

Friedman, Edward H. (1985). *Generation to Generation*. New York: Guilford Press.
 ISBN: 0-89862-059-7

Friedman, E. H. (1990). *Friedman's Fables*. New York: Guilford Press.
 ISBN: 0-89862-440-1

Halstead, Kenneth A. (1998). *From stuck to unstuck: Overcoming congregational impasse*.
 The Alban Institute.

Haugk, Kenneth C. (1988). *Antagonists in the church: How to Identify and Deal with
 Destructive Conflict*. Minneapolis: Augsburg. ISBN: 0-8066-2310-1

Headley, Anthony J. (1999). *Achieving Balance in Ministry*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill.
 ISBN: 0-8341-1816-5

Lencioni, Patrick. (2002). *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
 ISBN 0-7879-6075-6.

Ortberg, John. (2003). *Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them*. Grand Rapids, MI:
 Zondervan. ISBN: 0-310-22864-6

Required Course Evaluation Pieces (These are the pieces you'll have to complete so
 you, Trinity personnel, and we will know if you benefited from this course.) Further
 direction regarding these assignments will be posted in the Course Documents.

- A. Actively participate in on-line sessions. Each of you will need to respond to
 questions that we may post for each module. You will need to reply to one another's
 responses. We will let you know when and how to do that as the course evolves.
 Our guidelines for word limits in exchanges are to help all of us to get through these
 courses without going blind. ☺ We, therefore, request that you please limit your
 questions to 25 words and your comments to 50 words, and limit your responses to
 one another's questions or comments to two 25-word responses. **This will be the limit
 for all posts in the Discussion Board throughout the semester.**

- B. Complete all required/assigned readings, including any materials posted throughout the course.
- C. Full participation in research, development, and presentation of a team-prepared Conflict-in-Scripture Reports.
- D. Annotated bibliography of each required text.
- E. Keep a journal of the conflicts you encounter.
- F. A case study from your own experience that will demonstrate the reflection-in-action methodology that is posted in Course Documents.
- G. An 8-10 page integrative paper (alternative means of completing this assignment may be available; we'll let you know after the course begins). Further direction regarding this project will be posted in the Course Documents.
- H. As a final application of your integrative papers, we hope to collaborate with all of you in compiling what we have learned and what you have learned into a well-crafted article that can be submitted for publication in a journal (theological or otherwise) or another published medium. Some of this work will take place after the course ends, is not required, and will not be graded. **Each of you, who chooses to collaborate with us, will be listed as a co-author of the article.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Learning Agreement

We promise to give this whole experience our best. If we make mistakes, we pray you will forgive us as long as we make an honest attempt to make things right – okay? In order to avoid too many mistakes and to demonstrate a good example of conflict management (that's proactively addressing things before the conflict begins), here are a few things for the record.

What you can expect from us:

1. We covenant to pray for you daily. We covenant to pray per your request. If we are going to get through this thing without much unproductive conflict while retaining our sanity, peace, and joy, we will need to support one another. We really are a team.
2. We will have all of your materials on-line by 10 am (EDST) on the starting date for each of our five learning modules. When possible, we'll make the new module available to you a week in advance.

3. We will respond to all of your messages on a first come, first serve basis. We check Chuck's e-mail most weekdays and in case of an "urgent" message (simply write URGENT in caps in the subject line). We covenant with you to respond quickly. Be sure URGENT means URGENT, or a conflict might arise. ☺ Generally, you can count on us to respond to your email requests quickly.
4. While we might not participate in all of your discussions, we will monitor your group conversations and participate at various times.
5. We will assess your work and return those assessments to you in a timely fashion.
6. Once or twice during the semester, we will check in with you to see how you feel about this online experience, the course, and your progress. We will ask for your suggestions. Please be gentle.
7. In case of an emergency, you may need to call us at home. Our number is 928-213-1140. If we do not answer, please leave a message. We check our voicemail frequently, and we will get back with you as quickly as we can. **[P.S. Please remember we live in beautiful Flagstaff, AZ. "So what?" you may ask. That means we live in the General Mountain Time zone year-round. For those of you who find that you are time-zone challenged (especially when some of you change time twice a year, and we don't), it means we will most likely still be getting some zzzzzz's if you call us from the Eastern time zone at 8:00A.M (EDST), which translates to 5:00A.M. here. Thanks for keeping that in mind. ☺]**
8. If we need to be out of town, we will let you know in advance. We both will be doing some traveling this summer, but we have computers and WIFI will travel. Mostly, we want you to know because if we happen to be in your area, perhaps we can get together. Regarding the possible need to contact us via telephone, we frequently check our messages during our travels, so please feel free to leave a message letting us know the most convenient time to return your call.

What we can count on from you:

1. You will actively participate as a member of a learning community. This online course is not an independent study or self-directed learning experience. Our classroom may be electronic, but it is nonetheless real. We will be interacting with and learning from one another. Expectations (including participation) will be spelled out with each learning module.
2. You will invest the same amount of time in this class as if you were on campus, with the caveat that this is a 11-week course rather than a 14- or 15-week course. Plan on keeping up with your reading, reflecting, discussing, and writing each week.
3. We will appreciate all electronic messages pertinent to the class itself to be posted in the Discussion Board (more later on what is what and what goes where in Blackboard), so that all may benefit. If we were in a face-to-face class, all classroom questions and responses would be heard by all. (These are the types of messages and

postings to which we are referring.) If you have a private matter, we encourage you to contact us via email or telephone.

4. Send documents of several pages as "attached files," but shorter responses in e-mail messages. We will let you know where to post what. ☺
5. If you have responsibilities that take you away from our community for a few days, please let us know in advance. We may need to discuss how you plan to keep abreast of the course work.
6. We know unexpected things happen. If you find yourself in a crisis (other than self-induced, overextension; yes, we know who some of you are ☺), e-mail us as soon as possible so we can work with you through the crisis and pray for you.
7. We would appreciate it greatly if you would recruit one, two, or more friends to pray for us during this semester.

Your Class Peers and Team Members (folks you can work with along the way)

For the scripture reports you will work in teams. We will give each team specific areas of responsibility for interaction.

Required Course Evaluation Pieces (These are the pieces you'll have to complete so you and we will know if you benefited from this course.)

VOCABULARY for making it all happen (how the system works, or at least how we will work the system)

You learned the Blackboard (Bb) vocabulary in the Bb Overview. Building on that:

- We will post assignments and course schedules in the Course Documents.
- We will post all discussions in the Discussion Board.
- Team discussion will occur in the Team Folders (within the Discussion Board unless otherwise directed).
- When assignments are to be read and evaluated only by us, you will send those to us via Chuck's personal email at rezarchuck@gmail.com .
- As previously mentioned, you can also contact us via personal email or telephone regarding issues you view as private.
- If we decide to have live discussions, they will occur in the Virtual Classroom. Be assured this will not be arranged without everyone's ability to participate.
- If we need to move some old discussions out of the Discussion Board, they will be moved to the Discussion Board Archive where you can still read them but not alter them.

ASSIGNMENTS

Module One (6/2 - 6/15)

Post a personal profile in the Discussion Board (Personal Profile folder) by **midnight 6/5**.
(All times are Eastern Daylight Savings Time).

Complete reading parts one and two in *The Peacemaker* by **midnight 6/8**

Read Notes 1a (Module 1 - Course Documents) by **midnight 6/8**.

Read Notes 1b and Notes 1c (Module 1 - Course Documents) by **midnight 6/15**.

Complete reading part three to the end of the book in *The Peacemaker* and post the answer to Question 1 (posted in Course Documents) by **midnight 6/15**.

Begin reading *Spirituality and the Gentle Life*. To be completed by **7/20**.

Post questions and comments on the reading in the Discussion Board (Textbook Discussions Forum) by **midnight 6/15**. Please limit your questions to 25 words and your comments to 50 words, and limit your responses to questions or comments to two 25-word responses (**this will be the limit for all posts in the Discussion Board throughout the semester**).

Complete Team Conflict Scripture Report: Matthew due by **midnight 6/15**. (See instructions in Course Documents)

Module Two (6/16 - 6/29)

Continue reading *Spirituality and the Gentle Life*. To be completed by **midnight 7/20**.

Read Notes 2a, Notes 2b, and Notes 2c by **midnight 6/22**.

Complete reading chapters 1-6 of *Firestorm* by **midnight 6/22**.

Discussion Board (Textbook Discussion Forum) will be scheduled sometime during this module. Please limit your questions to 25 words and your comments to 50 words, and limit your responses to questions or comments to two 25-word responses (**this will be the limit for all posts in the Discussion Board throughout the semester**).

Complete reading chapter 7 to the end of *Firestorm* by **midnight 6/29**.

Annotated Bibliography on *The Peacemaker* due by **6/29**.
 Team Conflict Scripture Report: Acts due by **midnight 6/29**. (See instructions in Course Documents)

Module Three (6/30 - 7/13)

Begin working on the Literature Review. To be completed by **midnight 7/20**.

Read Notes 3a and Notes 3b by **midnight 7/6**.

Annotated Bibliography on *Firestorm* due by **midnight 7/6**.

Continue reading *Spirituality and the Gentle Life* by **midnight 7/20**.

Discussion Board (Textbook Discussions Forum) will be scheduled sometime during this module. Please limit your questions to 25 words and your comments to 50 words, and limit your responses to questions or comments to two 25-word responses (**this will be the limit for all posts in the Discussion Board throughout the semester**).

Team Conflict Scripture Report: 1 Corinthians due by **midnight 7/13**. (See instructions in Course Documents).

Module four (7/14 – 7/27)

Complete Literature Review by **midnight 7/20**.

Complete reading all of *Spirituality and the Gentle Life* by **midnight 7/20**.

Read Notes 4a and Notes 4b by **midnight 7/20**.

Begin reading *Restoring the Fallen*. To be completed by **midnight 8/3**.

Annotated Bibliography on *Spirituality and the Gentle Life* due by **midnight 7/27**.

Discussion Board (Textbook & Journal discussions) will be scheduled sometime during this module. Please limit your questions to 25 words and your comments to 50 words, and limit your responses to questions or comments to two 25-word responses (**this will be the limit for all posts in the Discussion Board throughout the semester**).

We are giving you the case study assignment now to provide you three (3) weeks in which to complete it, rather than just two weeks. ☺ Prepare a case study from your own experience that will demonstrate the reflection-in-action methodology that is posted in Course Documents. The event reported in the case can be in a pastoral care, counseling, administration, or personal issue setting that occurred within the previous six months. Follow the format provided in Course Documents. Post your case study in the Discussion Board (Case Study folder) as an attachment by **midnight 8/3**.

Module Five (7/28 - 8/15)

Post your case study in the Discussion Board (Case Study Questionnaire folder) as an attachment by **midnight 8/3**.

Read Notes 5a by **8/3**.

Complete reading *Restoring the Fallen* by **midnight 8/3**.

Read Notes 5b by **8/10**.

Annotated Bibliography on *Restoring the Fallen* due by **midnight 8/10**

Read the case studies posted by your colleagues and complete the questionnaire that is posted in the Course Documents (one questionnaire for each case study). Post these questionnaires as attachments to my personal email address by **midnight 8/10**.

Integrative project: Write an 8-10 page integrative paper (alternative forms for completing this project may be offered after the course begins) about the things you learned this semester from the readings, case studies, instructor's notes, and class discussions. Remember to use MLA style in Slade's Form and Style (another source is the web-site: <http://webster.comnet.edu/mla.htm>). Send it as an attachment to Chuck's personal email address by **midnight 8/15**.

Grading Policy

Three Scripture Reports (10 points each)	30 points
Interactions on the readings	100 points
Conflict journal	35 points
Conflict journal presentation & discussion	20 points

Case Study	80 points
Case study questionnaires	50 points
Annotated bibliographies	40 points
Literature Review	35 points
Integrative paper	<u>110 points</u>
Total	500 points

A	465 - 500 points
A-	449 - 464 points
B+	423 - 449 points
B	415 - 422 points
B-	398 - 414 points
C+	385 - 397 points
C	348 - 384 points
D	299 - 347 points
F	less than 298 points

IX. OTHER TRINITY *ONLINE* COURSE INFORMATION (Some good contacts, some great information about resources, and some stuff to keep us all out of trouble.)

Contacts (Folks of tremendous value!):

For **general questions and administrative assistance regarding Trinity *Online***, contact **Travis Hines**:

thines@tesm.edu

Toll-free: 800-874-8754

For **technical support**, contact :

support@tesm.edu

Toll-free: 800-874-8754

For **library research support and library loans**,

library@tesm.edu

Toll-free: 800-874-8754

Accessing Library resources (Great information!):

1. **Materials Requests:**

To search the library catalog for available materials, go to: <http://catalog.tesm.edu/>

You may request books from Trinity's Library by emailing the Library Director, **Susanah Hanson**, at library@tesm.edu . Please provide Susanah with your book request(s). The books, if available, will be gathered and mailed to you. Please contact Susanah for any questions you may have about the process.

Also, we encourage you to make use of library resources in your local area. You may have only a small public library. If so, ask about their inter-library services. [NOTE: Be sure to plan ahead if you think you will need to borrow books via inter-library loan. It can often take 2-4 weeks to get the book(s) you want. And, there is always that dreaded time when you can't get the book! Auuuggghhh! ☹]

2. Research Questions:

We encourage you to contact **Susanah Hanson** at library@tesm.edu for research assistance including determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

3. Online Databases:

You can access the Trinity library's online databases by going to <http://www.tesm.edu/learning/library/resources/journals> . Click on "Ebsco Theological Databases." You will need a user name and password to access this information. Once again, **Susanah Hanson** is your contact for the secure information you need. Just email her or call her.

X. Copyright Information (The stuff to keep us legal. It's the law!)

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) regulates the right to make photocopies of copyrighted material. Federal law permits libraries to provide a photocopy under certain conditions specified in the law. One condition is that the photocopy is not to be "used for any other purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." A person may be liable for copyright infringement if he or she makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy for purpose in excess of "fair use." The Trinity Library reserves the right to refuse an interlibrary loan order if in its judgment the order would violate copyright law.