

Moral Leaders: Case Studies

CHR 346

3 hours credit

MWF 8 a.m; Jennings 212

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I. Course Description

An exploration of the character and actions of a number of significant moral leaders in world history, for the purpose of developing and enhancing gifts, commitments, and skills in Christian moral leadership.

II. Course Objectives

- A. To develop a deeper understanding of the academic discipline of Christian ethics.
- B. To become familiar with some of history's most significant moral leaders.
- C. To improve in the ability to interact morally with historical figures in all their complexity.
- D. To nurture the growth of a constructive Christian ethical perspective and methodology.
- E. To develop intellectual flexibility and openness to diverse perspectives and the persons who embody them, within the context of appropriate confessional and biblical boundaries.
- F. To gain clarity concerning the nature and elements of authentic moral leadership.
- G. To achieve personal moral growth.

III. Textbooks and Assigned Reading

A. The required texts are the following:

Aikman, David. *Great Souls: Six Who Changed the Century*. Word, 1998.
Fischer, Louis. *Gandhi: His Life and Message for the World*. Mentor, 1954.
Guelzo, Allen. *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President*. Eerdmans, 1999.
Lean, Garth. *God's Politician: William Wilberforce's Struggle*. Helmers & Howard, 1987.
Oates, Stephen B. *Let the Trumpet Sound*. HarperPerennial, 1994.
Webb, Val. *Florence Nightingale*. Chalice Press, 2002.
Wind, Renate. *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: A Spoke in the Wheel*. Eerdmans, 1992.

B. Suggestions for further reading will be given throughout the semester.

IV. Method of Instruction

A. Class time will primarily consist of student-led discussion of the moral leader under consideration, rooted in the common reading. All students will need to be well-prepared for class conversation. This is a reading-based class, and we will follow the reading very closely all term.

V. Course Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

A. Your grade for the term will be determined as follows:

Group class presentations/leadership.....	200 points
Midterm Exams.....	200 points
Final Exam.....	100 points
Participation/Attendance.....	+/-25 points
Extra Credit.....	up to 25 points

The official Union University grading scale will be used in the course. Translated into point values for this course, it runs as follows:

- 475-500 A
- 425-474 B
- 375-424 C
- 325-374 D

B. Here is a description of each course requirement:

1. *Group class presentations/leadership*. At the beginning of class, you will volunteer/be assigned to a 2-3 person group that will specialize in one of our eleven moral leaders. **Your goal as a group is to learn everything you can about that leader during the semester, and use that learning to teach the rest of us.** Each group will be responsible for leading class for 25-30

minutes of each class period devoted to that leader. Your *basic* task on those days is to offer a solid treatment of the reading assigned for the day, but beyond that you are expected to have done extra research and creative planning to make your time of class leadership a more valuable contribution to student learning. Presentation time should include some combination of your own original written text/s that you share with the class, stimulating discussion questions to involve other students, and perhaps other elements such as brief video clips or handouts. Groups will be graded *as groups* for the overall quality of their leadership during these class sessions, though provision will be made to deal with laggards who do not pull their weight. *You will need to make a copy of your written work for me to read and grade on the day it is presented.* At least one document of your group should include a bibliography of resources employed to prepare for leading the class.

Get inside your leader's mind, heart, faith, and life. Specifically, here are some dimensions that I want to see take place in our consideration of every leader:

- A. Historical context--discussion of the times in which the moral leader lived.
- B. Personal background--examination of the personal background of the leader and how it contributed or failed to contribute to his/her later work.
- C. Religious convictions--consideration of personal and corporate religious involvements, theological and moral convictions, and their impact on the person as a leader.
- D. Leadership gifts, skills, moral commitments--exploration of the central character qualities and traits that helped make this person a key moral leader.
- E. Biographical highlights--the highlights of the leader's life and work.
- F. Major controversies and/or disappointments--discussion of major controversies, criticisms, and disappointments faced by the moral leader and how he/she dealt with such difficulties.
- G. Lasting legacy--exploration of the abiding impact of the leader on some area of life, thought, government, literature, etc.
- H. Critical engagement--fair-minded consideration of omissions, flaws, mistakes, bad decisions, or moral blind spots in the moral leader, in appropriate historical context.
- I. Leadership lessons--gleaning of relevant lessons for Christian moral leadership, through a dialogue between A-H and biblical materials.

Another dimension of your role as "leader specialists" involves interacting with other presentations and groups from the perspective of your specific moral leader. You will listen to all other presentations in light of the leader with whom you are working. Individuals and groups will be evaluated in part on the basis of their contribution to class discussions when other leaders are being discussed.

DO NOT HESITATE. PLEASE GET STARTED ON STUDYING YOUR MORAL LEADER IMMEDIATELY, AND ON PLANNING YOUR DAYS OF CLASS LEADERSHIP.

2. *Exams* (10/10, 11/18). These will be objective exams covering the moral leaders discussed in the prior section of the class.

3. *Final Exam.* This comprehensive exam will contain objective and essay components, and will cover material presented both in the readings and in class.

4. *Participation/Attendance.* In a class of this type, exemplary attendance and participation are expected. Notice that the group dimension of this class means that others are counting on you as well. I assume you will be here unless an emergency prevents your attendance, and that you will inform me if such occasions arise. Attendance and participation can affect the grade up or down by 25 points (more, in extreme cases). See below for official statement of attendance policies.

5. *Extra Credit*--I will offer a "moral leader movie night" at the Gushee homestead sometime during the course. There will be other extra credit opportunities during the term. You may do one extra credit project only, with a value of up to 25 points. All extra credit papers must be received by December 9, the last day of class, at 5 p.m. As usual, Gushee extra credit papers are to be 3-4 pages in length, offering a summary of the event's content, major issues raised and new learning experienced, and if possible, critical interaction with the material. Other than this final deadline, there is no deadline for extra credit papers.

ACADEMIC POLICY STATEMENTS

Note: Apply all items below that are relevant to this course. Notice that group papers cannot be accepted late because they must be ready for class presentation on the date assigned.

On Papers and Their Presentation: I prefer to receive papers in 12-point Times New Roman font, printed on a well-functioning printer, stapled in the upper left-hand corner, no plastic covers needed. Term papers should be double-spaced, follow the Chicago Manual of Style (Turabian), with a full bibliography including all works cited. While small variations in referencing style are common, be consistent with whatever form you employ throughout the paper. Paper grades include consideration of both literary/presentation quality and substantive content. Use inclusive language with reference to human beings.

On Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft in which a writer passes off someone else's words as his or her own, either intentionally or unintentionally (through inadequate quotation use and footnoting). While intention is sometimes hard to judge, intentional plagiarism is expressly forbidden and will result in automatic failure, as discussed in the Union catalog. All other forms of cheating are, of course, forbidden as well.

On Late Work: All papers and assignments are due at the start of class on the date assigned. Papers lose 5 points credit for every day that they are late, excluding Sundays. Papers turned in after the start of class are treated as if turned in the next day. If you turn in a late paper, be sure to note on the paper the date and time it was turned in. The *only* exceptions to this policy include family emergencies and bereavement. Absence from class due to official college functions does not constitute grounds for a no-penalty extension on a paper, nor do computer problems, relationship hassles, or other common stresses of university life. Remember that insight papers cannot be turned in later than 5 p.m. on the day they are due.

On Lost Papers: Students are wise to keep both a hard copy and a computer version of every paper they write. If a paper turns up missing in this class, you are responsible for turning in a replacement version as soon as we discover the paper is missing.

On Attendance and Participation:

A. Regular class attendance is required for the successful completion of this course. The student is expected to attend classes regularly in accordance with Union's attendance policies. See catalog for official policy statement.

B. Class absences will be considered in two categories: excused and unexcused.

C. Excused absences include the following: emergencies, bereavement, documented illness, or official college functions approved by the Academic Affairs Office. The professor reserves the right to determine the validity of all absences.

D. Request for an absence to be excused must be made *in writing* either in advance of the absence or at the next class attended after the absence. Verbal communication of the absence or its reasons is insufficient. Remember that even if an absence is excused due to illness, a pattern of absences will certainly be problematic for success in this class, or any class—or life.

E. If an exam is missed because of an excused absence, it may be made up. If the absence is unexcused, the student receives a 0 on that exam. This includes exams missed due to oversleeping. Whenever a student has advance knowledge that an exam must be missed due to an excused absence, the professor should be informed so that arrangements can be made.

F. Excessive absences by a student will be reported to the appropriate officials for counsel with the student.

G. Attendance and participation generally will be evaluated as follows:

0 absences -- +25 points

2 absences -- +5 points

4 absences -- -15 points

6 absences -- -35 points

1 absence -- +15 points

3 absences -- -5 points

5 absences -- -25 points

7+ absences - fail the class automatically

The professor reserves the right to adjust these attendance grades based on the quality of class participation.

Note: an absence for one of your own group presentation days is disastrous for the entire group and will be evaluated accordingly.

H. Tardiness--arrival in class at any point after it starts--will be counted against the attendance grade. *Three tardies=one absence.*

I. Participation--The criteria of quality participation include the following: obvious completion of reading prior to coming to class, intelligent and informed participation in classroom discussion and any assigned projects or tasks, evidence of note-taking and active listening, and general quality of demeanor, engagement, and enthusiasm for course activities.

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Tentative Course Schedule, Fall 2005

- 8/31 Course Organization and Requirements
- 9/2 Lecture: What is moral leadership? (Aikman, intro)
- 9/5 Labor Day—no classes
- 9/7-9 Research/organization days—meet in groups

William Wilberforce: "God's Politician"

Presenters/Leaders:

- 9/12 Lean, intro-ch. 6
- 9/14 Lean, ch. 7-13
- 9/16 Lean, ch. 14-epilogue

Florence Nightingale: From Privilege to Service

Presenters/Leaders:

- 9/19 Webb, ch. 1-5
- 9/21 Webb, ch. 6-9
- 9/23 Webb, ch. 10-epilogue

Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President

Presenters/Leaders:

- 9/26 Guelzo, intro-ch. 3
- 9/28 Guelzo, ch. 4-6
- 9/30 Guelzo, ch. 7-epilogue

Mahatma Gandhi: Nonviolent Liberator

Presenters/Leaders:

10/3 Fischer, part 1

10/5 Fischer, part 2

10/7 Fischer, part 3

10/10 **Midterm Exam 1**

Elie Wiesel: Messenger from the Dead

Presenters/Leaders:

10/12 Aikman, 309-338

10/14 Aikman, 338-366

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: A Spoke in the Wheel

Presenters/Leaders:

10/17 Wind, intro-88

10/19 Wind, 89-180

10/21 Fall Break

Alexander Solzhenitsyn: Truth-teller in a Land of Lies

Presenters/Leaders:

10/24 Aikman, 125-163

10/26 *class cancelled—professor at George Fox University*

10/28 Aikman, 163-189

Martin Luther King: Toward the Beloved Community

Presenters/Leaders (three presentations only):

10/31 Oates, pts. 1-2

- 11/2 Oates, pts. 3-4
11/4 Oates, pts. 5-6
11/7 Oates, parts 7-8
11/9 Day of Remembrance
11/11 Oates, parts 9-10

Nelson Mandela: Statesman-Reconciler in South Africa

Presenters/Leaders:

- 11/14 Aikman, 61-95
11/16 Aikman, 95-123
11/18 **Midterm Exam 2**
11/21 *class cancelled—AAR meetings*
11/23-25 Thanksgiving Break

John Paul II: Voice for Human Dignity

Presenters/Leaders:

- 11/28 Aikman, 251-274
11/30 Aikman, 274-292
12/2 Aikman, 292-307

Mother Teresa: Incarnating Compassion in Calcutta

Presenters/Leaders:

- 12/5 Aikman, 191-217
12/7 Aikman, 217-231

12/9 Aikman, 231-249

TBA **Final Exam**