



Seminar Offerings 2008

A Framework for Understanding the Apocalypse (6 sessions)

The aim of this seminar-workshop is to provide a biblical framework for individuals to use in their study of the Book of Revelation. Each session will use a bible-based approach designed to give students relevant information that will enable them to derive an individually-sensible and personally-applicable interpretation. The one-day seminar can be extended to include a Sunday School session and exhortation. Here's the outline for Saturday and Sunday (optional):

- What the book is all about—a visually-supported review of the contents from chapter 1 to 22
- Connection to OT and Mt. Olivet prophecy—a survey of key Old Testament prophecies and how they provide a requisite background for understanding the Apocalypse + a review of the clear connection between the earlier prophecy of Jesus (e.g., Matt 24) and the Revelation.
- The structure of the book—a consideration of how the chapters are presented and aligned, and how the text interprets itself
- Scripture profiles of “who’s who”—an examination of the characteristics and actions of the key people and entities in the book
- Making sense of symbols and time periods—a discussion on how to bring scripture facts and clues together to provide sensible explanations
- Making use of the framework—a discussion on how the message of the book is applicable to us today, in light of how the initial recipients would have understood Christ’s message to them.
- Ezekiel: backbone of the Apocalypse—how both the prophet and his prophecy provide an excellent backdrop to the entire book of Revelation (Sunday School)
- More Than Conquerors—taking the message to the seven ecclesias to heart and applying it to our own lives and circumstances (Exhortation)

Facilitator: Norm Fadelle (217-586-7592)

Coping and Caring in Times of Crisis (4-5 sessions)

A personal crisis, such as the loss of a spouse, a severe accident, or medical emergency can take us to the brink of our faith and coping ability. As caregivers, these situations often create the most difficult times, and lead to great confusion and ill ease. Whether as givers or recipients of help in times of crisis, loss, and grief, these situations can drain us to the utmost spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally.

This seminar certainly can't teach any magic words to fix life's worst times. It can help you learn some strategies to ease pain, find appropriate support, and start on the road back. Above all, the seminar will

teach what NOT to say and do, as it is in these situations where unskilled attempts can greatly exacerbate the suffering.

Facilitator: David Levin (717-898-3535)

The Dynamics of Marriage and Family Life (5-9 sessions)

This seminar on family issues comes from a direct application of Gen. 2:24. We take a detailed view on the dynamics of two people, each leaving the family in which they grew up, to form a new family. They in turn will raise children who will leave them and form new families of their own. How do we do this in accord with God's principles? What are the predictable and major trouble spots along the way? This seminar focuses primarily on the attitudinal and behavioral interactions of husbands, wives, and children in a nuclear family in the Lord. It is specifically designed for attendance by couples together, and it provides a profitable weekend retreat.

Facilitator: David Levin (717-898-3535)

Biblical Leadership Workshop (6 sessions)

If you put these instructions before the brethren, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished on the words of the faith and of the good doctrine which you have followed. ... Train yourself in godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, training in godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. (1Tim 4:6-8)

Objectives

To consider the subject of Leadership in light of the Bible, i.e., to understand what "Biblical Leadership" is, and then determine to put it into action.

This consideration will be accomplished in three steps

1. Establish what are the relevant Bible principles regarding Leadership
2. Examine how these principles were illustrated and implemented in the lives of the men and women in Scripture
3. Discuss how we can apply the Bible teaching to real-life, modern day situations.

Intended audience

This workshop is designed to go beyond a discussion of ecclesial roles and responsibilities. The subject of leadership readily goes into the areas of family, school and the workplace. Therefore the subject is relevant to anyone who is in a position to take on a leadership role.

"Biblical Leadership" is an important and practical matter for Brothers, Sisters, and young people to learn about and pursue.

General Outline

There are six interactive sessions:

1. Kinds of Leadership
2. Leadership Qualities and Skills
3. Leadership Challenges
4. Leadership Pitfalls
5. Leadership Training - Part I
6. Leadership Training - Part II

There will be both large group discussion and small-group breakout sessions, with a focus on information exchange (e.g., what works, what doesn't work) between the participants. Exercises will be based on determining specific applications of Bible principles and developing possible solutions and action plans for real-life scenarios.

Facilitators: Norm Zilmer (217-590-4108) and Norm Fadelle (217-586-7592)

Ecclesia Building - Two Hearts at a Time (5-6 sessions)

Relevance

Many, if not all, ecclesias are engaged in helping 'troubled' Brothers, Sisters or young people. Divorces are becoming more commonplace, and ecclesial members are not isolated from the myriad of problems in the world around us as well as those inherent in our flesh. Drugs and alcohol, domestic violence, sexual abuse and emotional problems must be addressed before Brothers, Sisters and young people can serve God successfully. It is vital that we devote time and resources towards meeting these unmet needs of ecclesial members. Scripture admonishes us to 'shepherd our sheep', 'help the weak among you', and to be mindful of the different needs of different parts of our body (cf. 1Pet 5:1-3, Rom 15:1-5, 1Cor 14:14-26).

"Ecclesia Building - one heart at a time" is a workshop that will provide adult education and practical skill building to address emotional and spiritual problems within the body.

Objectives

To consider the subject of Ecclesia Building from a Biblical perspective that focuses on personal and individual ecclesial growth and healing. This objective will be accomplished in these steps:

1. Establish the Biblical underpinnings of providing emotional and spiritual care to those in need within the body.
2. Focus the host ecclesia's attention on their own existing efforts to promote emotional healing and support to their members in need.
3. Identify areas of need for growth, in knowledge and/or skill. Engage Brothers and Sisters in relationship building and problem solving exercises.
4. Consider the role of professional counseling within the host ecclesia.
5. Increase the awareness of real life problems common to most if not all ecclesias.

6. Develop, through participation, practical approaches to aiding those among us most in need of our Biblically oriented care.
7. Facilitate the collective development of recommendations for the next step in ecclesial building for the host ecclesia.

Expectations

Facilitators expect:

1. To teach participants relationship skills building.
2. To challenge participants to increase their awareness of potential problems within the Brotherhood.
3. To learn about the participant's ecclesia(s), and help focus attention on areas for improvement.
4. To offer one-to-one consultation on actual problem issues if requested to do so.
5. To share experiences in knowledge in the counseling field.

Participants should expect to:

1. Complete a pre-workshop survey.
2. Be challenged, moved, refreshed, learn skills, practice relationship building and increase one's awareness of common discipleship problem areas.
3. Work as a team to brainstorm solutions to problems, and to develop a suggested ecclesial action plan.
4. To leave with a personal action plan and a commitment to aid in one's own ecclesial focus on emotional and spiritual difficulties.
5. To share and learn with other Brothers and Sisters.

Intended Audience

This workshop is intended for Brothers and Sisters who are interested in learning more about caring for other brethren, or who are concerned about emotional/spiritual problems that are experienced by brethren within and without the ecclesia. Participants need not be experienced, or be talented in the area of ministering to others with emotional or spiritual problems.

Overall Process

1. Work with an ecclesia that is interested in hosting the workshop. Establish target interest areas and ecclesial motivation for hosting this seminar.
2. Advertise and establish approximate participant list.
3. Solicit participant responses to a questionnaire designed to aid the facilitators in tailoring the workshop to the participants and host ecclesia's needs and stated interest areas.
4. Distribute homework prior to the workshop to ready participants to consider new ideas and their own 'counseling' experiences.
5. At the workshop:
 - a. Fellowship, introductions, icebreakers.

- b. Introduce key concepts - solicit relevant participant experiences.
- c. Examine scriptural guidance on ecclesia building, and relationship building.
- d. Case examples, group participation in problem solving.
- e. Address specific problem areas of interest to ecclesia members.
- f. Explore in small groups the role of professional counseling within the host ecclesia; establish recommendations, or ideas for follow-up.
- g. Consider conflict resolution skills.
- h. Sketch out host ecclesia and individual action plans.
- i. Solicit feedback regarding the effectiveness of the workshop.

Facilitators: Erik Sternad (916-686-8281) and Dolores Sleeper (650-341-03790)

Resolving Conflict (3 - 6 sessions)

Conflict is inevitable. It occurs everywhere, at every level, in every way. Conflict may be self-generated or stimulated by external factors. It can last for a short time or be prolonged for weeks, months, even years. Conflict can be good or bad, beneficial or destructive, intense or nominal, depending on the circumstances and one's viewpoint.

For a believer, the basic conflict is with the world, and starts within him/herself (Rom 7:13-25, 1Jn 2:16, Gal 6:14, 2:20, 5:16-17). That conflict carries over into daily life, and manifests itself in areas such as worker vs. boss, student vs. teacher, boy vs. girl, husband vs. wife, parent vs. child, ecclesia member vs. member. How can such inevitable conflict be resolved?

Using a proven six-step process, this workshop is designed to generate real-life solutions for the problems raised by those who attend. The topics are selected by the seminar requester, and the number of sessions is customized to fit the given schedule. Participant comments, ideas and suggestions are recorded on flip charts for group visibility, and at the option of the group, subsequently published for everyone's benefit. The setting is informal, the process is co-facilitated, and the resolution is Bible-based.

Facilitators: Jeff Maney (815-963-2840) and Bro. Norm Fadelle (217-586-7592)

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Believers (4 - 6 Sessions)

Effectiveness has been defined as balancing the production of desired results with the capacity to produce desired results. The ancient fable of the golden goose provides a simple illustration. When more and more eggs (the desired result) were produced with no regard for the health of the goose (the capacity to produce), what happened? The goose died, and with it the eggs. This definition of effectiveness is extremely useful to disciples of Jesus. We want to produce faithful works, yet by putting all our attention on those works, we can actually hurt our faith, the spiritual quality from which these works flow. The Pharisees had works, yet they had no faith. They had the golden eggs, if you will, but the goose was dead ("within they are full of dead men's bones").

Our challenge as disciples is to balance our production of works of faith with the need to develop a mind of faith. These two can work together in wonderful harmony, but they can also be at odds.

This seminar explores seven habits that help us increase our faith and our faithful works. The material draws on the seven habits for effective living developed by Stephen Covey. His book is remarkable to us, not because it has been one of the decade's best-selling books (more than 5 million copies), but because it is founded on biblical principles. These seven habits hold value for us for many good reasons: they are founded on character, not personality; they encourage putting the principles we value into action in all facets of our life; they help us understand our faith both as individuals and as members of the body of Christ; and they help us balance the many demands in our lives.

This exhortational seminar contains 4 to 6 sessions, depending on the schedule of the host ecclesia. In addition to presentations on the scriptural foundations for these seven habits, the seminar includes personal applications of each habit, a facilitated discussion on how our community can better apply these scriptural habits, and a few tales about a traveling economist.

Facilitator: Mark Drabenstott (816-746-9393)

God's Blueprint for Living (6 short sessions)

We live in an age of crises, the most important being a crisis of values. A majority of people in our society believe that there is no such thing as absolute truth. Personal convictions, personal views and judgments, are the basic standards. There is a truism that says, "You can't legislate morality." That used to mean, "Good laws don't make good people, because people don't change." Today it is taken to mean, "Who are you to force me to like what you do?"

The question is not whether there are values, but whose? And it turns out to be whatever people want at some point in time. The problem is not new: Jeremiah was aghast at the circumstance in his day (Jer. 5:31 — "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction; my people love to have it so....")

The challenge for believers is to maintain unchanging standards in a changing society. To that end, this seminar will review God's practical principles for living, using as our "blueprint" the Ten Commandments. The series is calculated to be in six sessions of under an hour each, but can be adapted to fit particular time requirements.

Facilitator: Norm Zilmer (217-590-4108)

Spouse Building (weekend workshop)

What is it?

"Spouse Building" is a two-day workshop for husband-wife couples who want to refresh and upbuild their marriage relationship. It is designed to take couples away from the demands of work and family and ecclesial responsibilities to focus on each other. It is a weekend "date" in the environment of other "dating" couples. It is an opportunity to be immersed in totally positive activity, to share issues and concerns and solutions with a sympathetic group, and to indulge in uninterrupted, intimate conversations with your spouse.

Based on Bible principles concerning husband-wife roles and responsibilities, each workshop session fosters open and honest discussion of requested subjects, utilizes the facilitating skills of the participants,

and builds an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality. Each person gets involved, and each couple gets a chance to exploit the time of building each other up.

“Spouse Building” is not a marriage encounter weekend nor is its purpose to provide marriage counselling. Attendance does not mean or imply a troubled marriage. Coming does indicate that each person wants to further and continuously improve oneself and thus one’s marriage. As the name indicates, “Spouse Building” is an excellent opportunity to edify your God-given mate by better mutual understanding, support and encouragement.

Who are involved?

1. A host couple - This couple initiates the workshop request, co-determines the workshop subjects, solicits and registers the participant couples, provides the names/address/phone numbers of the registered couples to the facilitators, finds and books a suitable workshop location, handles all location logistics (e.g., payment, meals, mealtimes, snacks, sleeping quarters, bedding, discussion rooms, visual aid equipment, insurance, medical kit, post-workshop cleanup) and acts as the focal point for participant questions, travel arrangements etc. Of course, many of these tasks can be delegated. The host couple does not have to be a weekend participant, but the aforementioned responsibilities must be assigned and accomplished by someone who knows he/she has the job.

2. Participant couples - A minimum of 8 and a maximum of 16 couples need to agree to participate in the workshop activities. Agreement will require doing pre-workshop written and reading assignments by each person, performing host-couple assignments, doing written exercises during the workshop, contributing to the group discussions by means of comments and recording key points on flip charts, volunteering to serve as discussion leader or reporter, completion of an evaluation form and spending lots of quality time with one’s spouse. While there are plenty of breaks and scheduled free time, there is a planned program to be accomplished and the facilitators are charged to move things along accordingly.

3. Facilitating couple - This couple are participants as well as facilitators. They are responsible for customizing the workshop schedule and subjects per the host couple request, mailing out the appropriate pre-workshop assignments to registered couples, compiling and categorizing the mailed-in responses (for use in the workshop exercises), providing all necessary workshop material (folders, articles, forms, books, library etc.), soliciting volunteer discussion leaders and reporters, facilitating the entire workshop weekend, compiling evaluation feedback and reporting it to the host couple, and subsequently publishing/distributing information as developed and wanted by the participants.

What is the setting?

Ideally, the workshop setting will be a resort or retreat, in a geographically central area to those who are being invited. It needs to be relatively convenient to get to, and also affordable. The facilities should be self-contained, isolated from the public, and lend themselves to a relaxing atmosphere. Each couple should have a private room for themselves, since a number of the exercises are best done in the convenience and privacy of your room.

There needs to be an area for the full group to convene and have discussion. Ideally, this could be a large lounge area proximate to the sleeping quarters. There needs to be sufficient, comfortable chairs/couches for a plenary session. It is also helpful to have small areas/ alcoves/conference rooms for breakout sessions, although hallways can be pressed into service for this. In cold weather, having a big-room fireplace provides a nice, warm environment.

Time is optimized if meal services can be provided by the facility. However, meals could be handled by those attending, with 2 couples being responsible for one meal each. Access to a kitchen and/or refrigerator is helpful for providing hot & cold drinks and snacks which can be brought/provided by the couples. Fresh fruit and light snacks are preferable to anything heavy.

Access to a recreation area (e.g., playing field, game room, gym) is also advantageous to allow some kind of physical activity. Since taking walks with your spouse is particularly encouraged, having trails or sidewalks or quiet roads is a plus.

What is the cost?

Like any retreat weekend, couple transportation, room and meal expenses are to be borne by the attending spouses. If there is an extra cost for the facility lounge/kitchen/recreation area, that may be shared by those attending and folded into the percouple cost. The exact fee for the weekend will be determined by the host couple. A nominal registration fee is recommended, with the remainder to be paid upon arrival. Because a facility contract agreement often has minimum attendance requirements, last minute couple dropouts may still be obligated to pay the full fee. All facilitating couple costs are covered by WCF.

General philosophy

1. The primary purpose of the weekend is to reinforce the marriage relationship by means of encouraging open, frequent, and in-depth dialogue between husband and wife. The specific subject matter is not all that important, as long as it is relevant to their relationship and that they are in fact talking to each other for several, uninterrupted periods. All too often, the pressures of family and making a living and serving the ecclesia eat up the precious time available to couples, and they rarely take/make time just to talk to each other about their life together. This workshop weekend is one way to take/make time with one's spouse.
2. The retreat context will allow couples to unwind, relax, converse etc. without having any responsibilities other than focusing on their spouse. The goal is developing/improving one's relationship with one's spouse.
3. Topics for the weekend could include many things ranging from budgeting to intimacy. The most often cited, top 3 problem areas in marriage are money, sex, and religion, with an underlying cause of poor communication. Since these are the most likely primary areas for improvement, topics which are thought to best serve the participants will be co-determined by the host and facilitating couples. (The hosting couple usually surveys the prospective participants regarding the most helpful topics). Consideration of the Bible principles concerning the husband-wife relationship will always be one of the foundation topics.
4. Individual participation will be key to the success of the weekend. Adults learn best by doing, and the exercises will be geared to let them do just that. Group and individual exercises will aim at getting effective communication going. Doing the exercises serve as priming the dialogue pump. Researching and completing pre-workshop assignments will begin to fill the mind with relevant principles and discussion material.

Facilitators: Norm and Deb Fadelle (217-586-7592)

The Judaizers: An Historical Perspective and Today (5 sessions)

The series of five classes are broadly broken down into two sections: (1) The Judaizers - An Historical Perspective, and (2) Judaizing Today.

The intent of the study is to understand the tremendous role and influence that the Judaizers played in the first century ecclesia. This will be done by investigation primarily into the works of the apostle Paul to see what the Judaizers taught and why they needed to be so vehemently opposed. After laying a good foundation on the implications of the first century, we will take the same teachings and move them two thousand years forward into the modern-day ecclesias. No attempt will be made to identify or label anyone or any group as Judaizers in the latter-day ecclesia, but to understand how there are strong relationships between the issues of the first century and today.

At the end of the study, participants should understand the following:

1. Who the Judaizers were, their influence on the first century ecclesias, and their influence on the writings of the NT.
2. Identify Paul's arguments in his letters against the Judaizers and relate them to specific false teachings.
3. Understand the vital differences between the true Gospel of Christ and "another gospel" as taught by the Judaizers.
4. Have a good grasp of how these Judaizing teachings come down to us today and in what forms.
5. Possess a reasoned and Biblical response should you encounter these teachings in our walk in God's truth.

Facilitator: Kyle Tucker (804-378-3537)

Adventures in Family Living (5 sessions)

God had his whole redemptive plan in view when he instituted marriage. In creating this most personal relationship, he was providing for the continuation of the human race, for physical and social well-being, and at the same time drawing a picture of his glorious purpose to prepare a perfected people to continue in eternal life in union with his Son, as a bride adorned for her husband.

Our relationship to Almighty God and to his Christ is unchangeable, and it is fitting that he has selected as the model of that relationship as the closest approximation of it this symbol of family life, with all its opportunities to develop the godly virtues of companionship, understanding, enduring love, forgiveness and faithfulness, built upon the rocklike foundation of faith in him. We are to carry out in our small lives together the preparation and practice of character-building which will best portray the eternal picture. What we experience now in a limited way will finally be replaced by fellowship in God's greater family in his Kingdom.

Sample Outline:

1. Family Foundations
2. Discipleship in the Family

3. Communication Workshop
4. Working Together
5. God's Family

Facilitator: Norm Zilmer (217-590-4108)

What Can I Say? (6 sessions)

(A seminar-workshop concerning Personal Witnessing)

Definition of Terms:

Personal => you, the individual; the talking will include your understanding and experience as the basis of sharing the gospel of God; more than one person can be involved (cf. pair, team) but the focus will be on the individual alone

Witnessing => talking about what you believe God has revealed in Scripture (both OT & NT); while consistent personal behavior is important, the focus will be on what is actually said.

Objectives:

To remind you that “he who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself” (1 Jn 5:10); this conviction is the basis of personal witnessing

To convince you that any and every Brother and Sister in Christ is readily and easily able to speak up and for the truth of God in every-day situations

To encourage you to look for more occasions and circumstances to share the good news of Christ “with every creature under heaven” (Col 1:23)

Attendees: Brothers, Sisters and young people who want to participate in an application-oriented workshop designed to determine, discuss and apply the Bible teaching concerning Personal Witnessing.

Setting: The setting will be informal, the sessions will be facilitated, and the case studies will reflect real-life situations. Since a full day is required to cover the subject matter and to include several group exercises, lunch and supper will be served.

Sample Outline (customizable):

Session #1—Introduction: Principles for Preaching

Session #2—Bible examples for Witnessing: Practicing Personal Witnessing—Part I

Session #3—Preparation of the Preacher—Part I: Practicing Personal Witnessing—Part 2

Session #4—Preparation of the Preacher—Part 2: Practicing Personal Witnessing—Part 3

Session #5—Techniques for the Preacher—Part 1: Practicing Personal Witnessing—Part 4

Session #6—Techniques for the Preacher—Part 2: Practicing Personal Witnessing—Part 5

Facilitators: Norm Fadelle (217-586-7592) and Norm Zilmer (217-590-4108)

What Is Diabolos?—5 sessions

In the Garden of Eden, everything was “very good”. Adam and Eve were innocent, and thought nothing of standing before their creator “uncovered”. No shame. No guilt. No fear. No wavering. Just trust, love, confidence and understanding. The serpent introduced a false belief system: acting according to the desires of sensation will make us wiser -- that we should make decisions based on what we see, and what we have experienced. So now, we feel guilt, we are ashamed, we fear, and at times we hide from God. We get confused -- so many conflicting beliefs.

Some beliefs are true. Many beliefs are false and based on what others have told us in their words, or actions toward us. It is these false beliefs about ourselves, others and God that are at the core of compulsive, sinful behavior. These false beliefs hold us back, and keep us from trusting, loving and serving God to the potential that he has given us. We need to spy out the land (examine ourselves, find the giants, i.e., false beliefs about ourselves, others and God) and have faith that God has given us the Promised Land (a fruitful and abundant life in Christ now, and in the Kingdom to come).

There are 5 sessions, each with sub-topics as follows:

1. What does Diabolos mean? How we slander God, when our beliefs are scattered.
2. Shame vs. Faith. The lesson of the weeds. Beliefs, true or false, direct our actions (part 1).
3. Beliefs (part 2). How we gauge the strength of our beliefs, and identify whether beliefs are God-driven or diabolos-driven.
4. The Cycle of Shame, and the Cycle of Forgiveness. Accepting where you have been, understanding where you are, and having faith about where you are going.
5. Diabolos in the Ecclesia. How our false beliefs, doubts and fears enter into the “issues” we face in our home ecclesias.

Facilitator: David Estey (973-697-1479)

Love Is a Verb (5 Sessions)

(Sisters for Sisters)

A discussion of the spiritual and practical applications derived from an in-depth consideration of the relationships of the family in Bethany with each other and with Jesus. We will be following a study guide that provides structure and focus to assist us in discovering the spiritual lessons and practical applications.

The session topics are:

1. The family in Bethany - Simon
2. The family in Bethany - Martha and Mary
3. The family in Bethany—others
4. Practical applications
5. Spiritual applications

Facilitators: Linda Reding (508-769-9003) & Beth MacAdams (978-758-4642)

Stresspoints in Marriage (1 day workshop)

Using a generalized life timeline of marriage as a framework, this workshop identifies and discusses potential stress points and events impacting marriage. Starting with relevant Bible principles and using their own life experiences (what works, what does not), participants are led to consider how stress factors such as poor communication, money shortage, different life goals, lack of trust, little time spent together, ill health etc. may negatively affect marriage. Facilitated breakout groups select and then talk about the stress points that are evident in their various lives, families and ecclesias. The resultant suggested solutions are compiled and given to all who attended as a workshop takeaway.

Facilitators: Norm and Deb Fadelle (217-586-7592)

Marriage Counseling (1 day workshop)

A modified version of The Dynamics of Marriage seminar channeled to apply to married couples in a particular ecclesia, with participants by invitation only.

Facilitator: David Levin (717-898-3535)