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CD 702

Dr. Sanders and Prof. Park

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## Required Reading

### I: Required reading

1: Burnett, Bill and Evans, Dave. *Designing Your Life: How to Build a Well-Lived, Joyful Life*. Knopf, 2016. (273 pages)... The language and layout of this book are also highly relatable, perhaps because I'm a tech guy. Key takeaways include, "Start where you are. We all have different mixes of health, work, play, and love in our lives at different times" (18), Which encourages me even more, to find my balance on the dashboard. Additionally, Team building was a nice reminder to integrate my life design with the designs of others around me, "If you are the sole architect of your bright future, then you think the whole thing up, and you heroically bring it into being - it's all about you. Life design is about your life, but it's not about you - it's about us" (200). That is the section I can apply to my life and ministry most, by learning to delegate more and not do so many things alone, just because I can.

2: Sayers, Mark. *The Road Trip That Changed The World: The Unlikely Theory that will Change How You View Culture, the Church, and, Most Importantly, Yourself*. Moody Publishers, 2012. (288 pages)... Woah, I did not see this coming! Chapter one unknowingly threw us into the gross memory of 9/11. By chapter two, I was face to face with a topic that I still do my best to balance today, "How worship became entertainment." This section served as a reminder not to become what Qutb encountered while visiting an American Church, "The Western Church has shifted from a devotion to

entertainment, from discipleship to self-actualization" (25-25). Although Qutb's views are biased, I can apply this to my ministry and personally, as a Christian currently serving in the entertainment field.

3: Stone, Douglas and Patton, Bruce. *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*. Penguin Books, 2010. (352 pages)... It sure took a lot of people to produce this book. From celebrity editors like Rick Kot, to Harvard's Law School, to the Family Institute of Cambridge. With all the rich insight, my biggest takeaway was, "Don't make statements disguised as questions." As someone considered by Western society to be an African American male, racism has labeled us as "confrontational," to say the least. To mitigate that stereotype, I often ask questions instead of making statements, hoping that others would not get defensive and come to self-realization. However, the authors declare, "Making statements disguised as questions creates confusion and resentment because such questions are inevitably heard as sarcastic and sometimes mean-spirited" (172). Yikes! That's the polar opposite of my intentions. So, I can apply this to my ministry by being a bit more direct. The last thing I would want is to fall into the "People like you" category.

4: Tyson, Jon & Grizzle, Heather. *Creative Minority: Influencing Culture Through Redemptive Participation*. Amazon Digital Services LLC, 2016. (64 pages). This book is my 2nd favorite book for this class. So many of my pages have rabbit ears, but two passages that meant the most to me were, "John Wesley bumped into the Moravians in the middle of a storm, and they brought Spiritual awakening" (24). I have read of this encounter in the Journals of John Wesley, but seeing it restated here motivates me to research the denomination of the Moravians further. However, my biggest takeaway is that of Christian relevance, scattered throughout the book but summed up in one epic mic drop, "Far too often, Christians spend time working on the answers for a question people are simply not asking" (36). I complimented a quote I read from a Rwandan priest in his book *Mirror to the Church* -

Concerning Christian forms of communication, "Interestingly, we rarely have anything new to say. We just want to be sure that our voices are heard" (125). What a true but sad dose of reality to swallow. I will apply relevance to my ministry and life by being more intentional about how and when I enter a conversation. Like they say on social media, "Speak when people are listening."

## II: Optional Reading

5: Thompson, Curt. *The Soul of Shame*. InterVarsity Press. 2015. (187 Pages). I chose this book because Rob Reimer said, "Your pride comes from shame. So deal with your shame, and you will cut off your pride at the root." So, been working on that ever since. When I saw this book on the list, I believed it to be helpful towards the progressive cultivation of my soul's shame. This book is a super geek fest, and I love it. It reminds me of Ray Comfort's book, *Scientific Facts in the Bible*<sup>1</sup>. When Christianity and science meet, it creates a perfect academic storm for the soul. One part that resonated with me was when Dr. Thompson started unpacking brain development and the Integrated Mind, with its vertical, horizontal, narrative, temporal, interpersonal, etc. details." (41-49). I can apply this knowledge to my ministry and life the most, as I felt my brain rearranging to adjust to this new information. Showing this to others will be exciting. The writing is boring to follow at times and not as colorful as Ray Comfort or the other books suggested in this class, but if you can adjust to this style, it's well worth the read.

6: Hislop, Bev. *Shepherding Women in Pain*. Moody Publishers, 2010 (371 Pages). I chose this book because I was intrigued by the title and thought, "I'm not sure if I know how to do that or even have a ground-level understanding of it." I am delighted; it was easily my favorite book of this class. I

1 [https://www.christianbook.com/scientific-facts-bible-100-reasons-believe/ray-comfort/9780882708799/pd/08790?en=google&event=SHOP&kw=academic-0-20%7C08790&p=1179710&utm\\_source=google&dv=c&cb\\_src=google&cb\\_typ=shopping&cb\\_cmp=1082223975&cb\\_adg=52020606159&cb\\_kyw=&gclid=EA1a1QobChM11vrazpfd\\_QIV-ciUCR0fxgViEAQYASABEgJ5iPD\\_BwE](https://www.christianbook.com/scientific-facts-bible-100-reasons-believe/ray-comfort/9780882708799/pd/08790?en=google&event=SHOP&kw=academic-0-20%7C08790&p=1179710&utm_source=google&dv=c&cb_src=google&cb_typ=shopping&cb_cmp=1082223975&cb_adg=52020606159&cb_kyw=&gclid=EA1a1QobChM11vrazpfd_QIV-ciUCR0fxgViEAQYASABEgJ5iPD_BwE)

learned so many applicable techniques for both shepherding women and shepherding myself. There are way too many applicable passages to choose just one. However, one line I believe could be useful in many scenarios came in a chapter entitled Wounded Healers Reflect God's Power, where Hislop writes, "Forgive them for what you think they did to you" (336). That was very liberating. I enjoyed this book so much that I lent it to a co-worker. The feedback she has given me thus far is fantastic.

7: Devine, Megan. *It's OK That You're Not OK – Meeting Grief and Loss In A Culture That Doesn't Understand*. Sounds True, Inc. 2017 (235 Pages). I chose this book because I want to know how NOT to be OK. The section I found most helpful was The Tribe of After, when the writer states, "We all need a place where we can tell the truth about how hard this is. We all need a place to share what's going on without feeling corrected or talked out of anything. While some friends and family can do this well, I've found that the community of fellow griever understands this best" (215). Wow! This passage is most applicable to my life and ministry because I always thought, "The blind can't lead the blind. However, between this passage and my time in the AA meetings, I see how the blind can definitely help each other - Flipped my thinking!

8: Coverly, Steven M.R. *The Speed of Trust - The One Thing that Changes Everything*. Free Press. 2006. (322 Pages). When Dr. Sanders stated, "You have to be someone of integrity. Someone people can trust. Someone people can count on," this book jumped into my mind. I have an executive coach for my role as a CTO, and he recommended this book when I first started. I am happy that I finally had an opportunity to read it. It's helped me tremendously in almost every aspect of my personal and professional life. It has a plethora of applicable wisdom. Many of which are easy to apply immediately. Choosing one line from this book is impossible, but a section I found pretty applicable was "Behavior #9: Clarify Expectations." Coverly states, "Clarify Expectations - is to create shared

vision and agreement about what is to be done upfront. This is one of those behaviors that people rarely pay enough attention to. I call it the behavior of prevention because if you focus on this one up front, you will avoid heartache and headache later on. In contrast, if you don't pay the price with this behavior up front, you will have trust issues later, and they will affect speed and cost" (193). I absolutely loved this book. Side story, One of the leaders at my workplace saw me post this book on social media and came to my office to reminisce about this book and to congratulate me on my academic journey. I was very encouraged.

### III: Past reads

I also read a few books from this list for other classes but wanted to learn something different, not just double-dip.

1: Reimer, Rob. Soul Care. Carpenter's Son Publishing, 2016.

2: Sanders, Martin. The Power of Mentoring: Shaping People Who Will Shape the World. Moody Publishers, 2004.

### IV: Conclusion

In an effort to "NOT make a statement disguised as a question" (Stone, Patton, Heen 172-173), I will humbly state the following observation. Although this was a beautiful set of books, one aspect of the reading options that I do hope to see evolve in the near future is a wider selection of minority authors, especially of the African American sort (Although I am from the Caribbean, I do spend much time with African Americans and I am often lumped into groups with them via government, academic, and other census forms). While going through the pages of these books, my mind sometimes thought,

"This could not be the experience of a black man." Then my mind went on to play out alternative and more realistic endings. For example, traveling across America on a road trip (Sayers). Even in the 21st century, there remain towns where African-Americans can only be caught DEAD after sundown. "The methods for enforcing such racial segregation ranged from episodes of collective violence such as public lynchings to ongoing housing discrimination enacted via exclusionary covenants that prevented Black people from owning property" (Gosner)<sup>2</sup>. I hope this class and Alliance University offer the voices of other races a chance to enter the various conversations surrounding academics and faith, equivalently.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/racism>