Hermeneutics and Communication

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**Introduction:**

The course is intended to put me on a path toward embracing a process leading to the completion of the DSL program. Furthermore, the course was able to broaden my horizons via hermeneutics. My horizons were expanded by learning to view hermeneutics beyond a theological standpoint. Interpreting things through a myopic lens can be limiting, and based on my experiences before taking this course, I believed hermeneutics was a method to interpret scripture accurately, nothing more and nothing less.

Communication and hermeneutics go hand in hand. When I saw the course title, it was a little fuzzy because my understanding of hermeneutics was only from a theological perspective. After learning more about hermeneutics, it became apparent that hermeneutics and communication are joined at the hip. Rightly interpreting what is being communicated is essential to building a bridge of understanding between the author and reader, professor and student, husband and wife, Pastor and congregation, boss and subordinate, and so on. With clear, consistent, fair, and effective communication, people are more apt to understand the message.

Starting with this course is perfect, as it will set the tone for all those that follow. Being able to communicate via scholarly writing and growing as an orator appears to be two central pillars of this program. The key word in the above statement is communication; this course allowed me to assess my communication (primarily written) style and start improving it.

Furthermore, becoming familiar with Gadamer’s “fusion of horizons” concept helped me self-reflect when presenting and/or reviewing information that may contradict my beliefs or interpretation. I firmly believe this course is well-positioned in the curriculum sequence.

**Personal Growth:**

The course challenged me in various ways. There is always a learning curve when starting a new program, which is uncomfortable yet stretching in and of itself. Adjusting to the rhythm of the program (coursework submittal dates), figuring out how to best communicate with the faculty, and learning how to interpret the syllabus correctly takes time and effort. Also, I learned how to research more effectively simply by doing more of it; experience is the best teacher! Lastly, the developmental/supplemental reading was enlightening – I learned so much by reading about my chosen topics and others similar to them.

As I told my wife. “My personal growth was seeded during core, watered during a lecture on hermeneutics, and rooted with periodic check-ins from the faculty (offering opportunities to attend sessions to review certain aspects of the syllabus). The growth began to sprout by doing the work and receiving feedback from the professors!”

**Reflectively Entry:**

Learning can always be relevant and applicable if viewed and embraced accordingly. A few things resonated with me regarding applying what I gathered during the course regarding my professional field—starting with communication.

From my viewpoint, hermeneutics speaks directly to communication, which made me assess how I communicate with my team, how they communicate with me, and how they communicate with each other. I’m unsure we communicate as effectively as possible because the message is often misinterpreted.

After researching hermeneutics (which gave way to further learning opportunities associated with communication), I concluded how we will communicate in our organization. Communication will be (C.C.C.F.E.) Consistent, Concise, Clear, Fair and Effective:

**Consistent** (all team members) will utilize the same methods when communicating:

1. Send an introductory email

2. Follow up with a phone call

3. Conclude with a second email

**Concise** (we will stick to the subject to minimize misunderstandings)

**Clear** (we will ask questions and encourage feedback)

**Fair** (everyone has a voice and has the right to use it, with the understanding that word choice matters)

**Effective** (communication is effective when all participants are on the same page, seamlessly moving in the same direction towards obtaining the same outcome)

We had a few unnecessary glitches in one of our major fundraisers, which wouldn’t have happened had we utilized the C.C.C.F.E. method.

The question about communicating as an organization surfaced while taking this course. Moreover, noticing a need to improve our method and putting something in place has already made a difference.

**Conclusion:**

In working through the curriculum, the experience met my professional and educational goals. As far as religious goals are concerned, I’m not sure I had any; nonetheless, a significant part of why I selected OGS was the warmth of the faculty (which has a Christian foundation). Their set of values and willingness to partner with the scholars to help us obtain our academic and professional goals resonated with me. Overall, the curriculum is fair, stretching, and putting me on a path to becoming a better scholar, which is the primary goal.

In closing, the course was well-assembled, containing tons of great information. The developmental readings assignment was challenging in terms of the volume of the work, but the experience and knowledge gained made it well worth the effort. Overall, the course met all my expectations, starting with the knowledgeable “Christ-centered” faculty being available and supportive, followed by the challenging but manageable work. Finally, the course has inspired me to become an avid researcher, which will definitely broaden my horizons!

WORKS CITED