

Fire and Oxygen: The Good Work of Transforming DMin Students

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- The accidental academic
- *I've loved being a pastor, almost every minute of it. It's a difficult life because it's a demanding life. But, the rewards are enormous—the rewards of being on the front line of seeing the gospel worked out in people's lives. I remain convinced that if you are called to it, being a pastor is the best life there is.*
Eugene Peterson

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The Challenge of Pastoral Ministry

- “The best job there is...” But...
- A hazardous profession
- *The great ethical danger for clergy is not that we might “burn out,”...not that we might lose the energy required to do ministry. Our danger is that we might “black out,” that is lose consciousness of why we are here and who we are called to be for Christ, and his church.* William Willimon

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Four questions in pastoral ministry

- Lord, how might I serve?
- What am I doing?
- Do I want to do this for the rest of my life?
- How do I finish well?

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- *Wanted:* Person to fill position that involves important but undervalued work; exact job description unclear. Long hours; must work weekends and holidays. Low pay. Master's degree required; doctorate preferred. Must be accomplished at multitasking, including running an organization without clear authority to do so. The successful candidate will be skilled as a public speaker, manager, politician, and therapist, and will devote significant time each week to pastoral visits. The position reports to multiple bosses.

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- *Wanted:* Persons for a vocation that leads God's people in bearing witness to God's new creation revealed in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Work schedule is shaped by relationships, focusing on what is important in people's lives, and depends on regular rhythms of work, rest, and play. Compensation is shaped by a mutual discernment of what is necessary in order for the persons (and, where appropriate, their families) to have an appropriately well-lived life. The vocation involves cultivating holy dispositions, preaching and teaching, nurturing rigorous study, and shaping practices of faithful living in church and world. Lifelong education and formation is expected in order to enable others also to grow throughout their lives. The successful candidate will collaborate with others towards the same ends. The vocation reports to God.

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Low Grade Fever

- Rampant individualism, missing ecclesiology
- Rampant pragmatism, missing missiology
- Rampant rationality, and missing sense of wonder and mystery
- Rampant triumphalism and missing sense of generosity

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The Role of the DMin Program

- Fire for your ministry--Oxygen for your soul
- Ministry as a character profession
- *The congregation is the pastor's place for developing vocational holiness. It goes without saying that it is the place of ministry: we preach the word and administer the sacraments, we give pastoral care and administer the community life, we teach and we give spiritual direction. But it is also the place in which we develop virtue, learn to love, advance in hope—become what we preach. Eugene Peterson*

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Doctor of Ministry Education as Transformative

- What are the points of resistance?
 - The analytical nature of the academy
 - The professionalization of clergy
 - A lesson from the church in Ephesus-- Revelation 2

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What do we need?

- If education is formational rather than informational, then we need to move from people-as-thinkers and people-as-believers to people-as-lovers as our primary understanding of human beings. (James K.A. Smith)
- Amateurs
- Heretics

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How do we help people burn and breathe?

- Create liminal spaces and learning environments
 - thriving environment
 - liberating environment
 - welcoming environment
 - healing environment
 - learning environment
- Be intentional about learning and forming
- Advance adult learning models

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- We stress:
 - Theological reflection towards being reflective practitioners
 - Learning experiences
 - Spiritual formation
 - Developing community
 - Offer pastoral care
 - Continuing reassessment of faculty and courses
 - Explore new models and delivery systems
 - Missional engagement is our primary paradigm

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- *Disturb us, O Lord when we are too well-pleased with ourselves
when our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little,
because we sailed too close to the shore.*
- *Disturb us, O Lord when with the abundance of things we possess, we
have lost our thirst for the water of life, when, having fallen in love
with time, we have ceased to dream of eternity, and in our efforts to
build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of Heaven to grow dim.*
- *Stir us, O Lord to dare more boldly, to venture into wider seas
where storms show Thy mastery, where losing sight of land, we shall
find the stars.*
- *In the name of Him who pushed back the horizons of our hopes
and invited the brave to follow.
Amen. Desmond Tutu*

Fire and Oxygen: The Good Work of Transforming DMin Students Questions for Discussion

- What might transformation look like in the lives of our students?
- What type of DMin program develops this type of student?
- What are some of the challenges before us?