



**Doctor of Ministry (DMin)
in Gospel Renewal and Pastoral
Leadership
2021-2022**

Revised August 4, 2021

Dear prospective doctoral student,

When tires are out of alignment on a car, the tread wears more quickly and other elements on the vehicle are affected. Not just ride and comfort but steering and control. Everything's affected. And not in a good way. The same dynamic is true for pastors and vocational ministry leaders. We continually need realignment—or we'll begin feeling the wear.

Tim Keller understands renewal is an ongoing process rather than a one-time fix. He also shows us the path, saying, "The key to renewal is a continual rediscovery of the gospel."

- What if a DMin program were designed to help you walk that path by consciously living all of life tethered to the cross of Jesus?
- What if such a course of renewal included a plan for increasing your leadership capacity with practical tools for effective ministry?
- What if the curriculum was built upon a cohort-based, life-on-life discipleship approach where each candidate experiences pastoral camaraderie and receives personal mentoring?
- What if the program not only was designed for the good of the pastoral leader but also crafted to bring revitalization and renewed purpose to local churches and ministries?

That is the *MAS Doctor of Ministry in Gospel Renewal and Pastoral Leadership*—an intentional realignment program aimed at equipping you for a lifetime of cross-tethered ministry, facilitating congregational renewal, and empowering kingdom mission into the wider community.

Courses meet in a full-day seminar format once a quarter, with required reading completed before seminar presentations and an integration paper due afterward. The one-day in-class format makes the program uniquely doable, allowing for unhurried reflection and processing of the course material outside of class as well as bandwidth for students to meet as cohorts and with mentors—an educational philosophy that cultivates a healthy rhythm of learning and growing in a doctoral context.

By the end of the program, students will have a solid grasp on the nature and dynamics of spiritual renewal, will be affected by the renewal process, and will possess the capacity to lead renewal in the local church and community.

If you think this program could benefit your life and ministry and are interested in learning more about a Metro Atlanta Seminary DMin, I would be honored to help you navigate any questions you may have.

Yours, by grace alone,

Dr. McKay Caston

Metro Atlanta Seminary | Dean of Doctoral Studies |
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Program Overview

The MAS DMin is designed to foster spiritual, gospel renewal in and develop practical leadership skills for people who have been in vocational ministry for at least five years. As a program requiring extensive reading and writing, each DMin course centers two half-day seminars each quarter where students share personal experiences concerning the topic, discuss the primary texts for the course, and receive practical instruction. In addition to the academic aspects of the program, each student meets monthly with a coaching cohort to process course material as well as with a personal mentor.

“We want the message of the cross to loom large in every course in the DMin program.”

At the conclusion of the program, the candidate produces a written Cornerstone Summary Research Paper which integrates what they have learned in the program into a foundational document intended to guide them into a life of ongoing gospel renewal and leadership.

MAS DMIN in GOSPEL RENEWAL & PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

YEAR A	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Dynamics of Spiritual Renewal: the Gospel, the Spirit, and Prayer	Organizational Leadership: Aligning Ministry Structures for Mission, Vision, Values, Upreach, Outreach, and Inreach	Pastoral Care: Nurturing the Pastor’s Personal Identity, Marriage, and Family	Implementing Team Ministry: Recruiting, Developing, and Deploying Leaders
YEAR B	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	New Hope: Revitalizing Troubled Organizations	Leading with a Limp: the Counterintuitive Nature of Biblical, Emotionally Healthy Leadership	Koinonia: Designing Small Groups for Outreach, Assimilation, and Care	The Grace of Giving: Cultivating a Culture of Generosity
YEAR C	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Leading from the Front: Preaching & Worship	The Bigger Story: Recovering a Theology of the Kingdom	From Here to There: Navigating Organizational Change without Destroying the Movement	Seeking Justice: Redemptive Engagement in the City

Functional Cross-Tethered Leadership

While academic degrees focus primarily on what the student *knows*, professional degrees focus on what the student is equipped to *do*. We call it "functional knowledge." Knowledge is a critical component, but knowledge alone is insufficient to grow spiritual leaders. This is why the MAS DMin combines academic study with real-life application and mentored cohorts, as the objective of this degree program is to help the student grow as a *functional* cross-tethered leader. This objective begs the question: how to people grow and change? Best practices in the field of adult learning suggest there are five dimensions to this process.

- 1) **LEARNING.** Students will be exposed to the best available resources and be guided in best practices concerning topics related to gospel renewal and pastoral leadership.
- 2) **PRACTICING.** Since knowledge that isn't used isn't retained, students will be required to implement what they have learned within their church and context.
- 3) **EVALUATING.** Since change happens through evaluated experience, students will take three evaluations at the beginning and end of the program to provide them and their coach insights into their strengths, struggles, and progress.
- 4) **TEACHING.** Since you don't really understand something until you teach it to someone else, students will be required to walk with others through this transformation journey to share what they are learning.
- 5) **MENTORING.** Since change is never a solo enterprise, students will be assigned to a mentor and a mentoring triad during which monthly meetings will provide encouragement and accountability for the formative journey into cross-tethered leaders.

The Cornerstone Dissertation

The culmination of the *Doctor of Ministry in Gospel Renewal and Pastoral Leadership* is a Cornerstone Dissertation that integrates what the student has learned in the program into a foundational document intended to guide them into a life of ongoing gospel renewal and leadership. The purpose of this paper is to put into writing what students have learned, what they have tried, who they have become, and what they will do going forward.

Questions asked and answered in the cornerstone paper will revolve around issues of being, knowing, and doing:

- What did you learn during this program?
- What were the primary insights you gained during the program that have impacted you personally and/or professionally?
- How did you change during this program?
- What new beliefs or practices have you developed that have positively impacted your development as a spiritual leader?
- How did your ministry change during this program? What new people, processes, and/or philosophies have you incorporated that have positively impacted your ministry?
- What changes do you hope to see in yourself and in your ministry in the coming years? What are your personal growth areas and the growth areas for your ministry?
- Where do you plan to go from here? What is your plan to continue in the ways you have learned?

Objectives

The MAS Doctor of Ministry degree is designed to enable the graduate to become a healthy and effective, distinctively cross-centered leader. Upon completion of the degree the graduate will:

1. Be able to articulate a theology of gospel renewal and help others experience renewal through preaching, teaching, and discipleship as the gospel applies to a variety of personal contexts such as the family, the church, and the wider community.
2. Be able to clearly articulate the shared vision and mission for their organization as well as how it is being executed.
3. Possess the leadership skills necessary to facilitate the renewal process.
4. Be able to objectively analyze and measure the progress being made in personal renewal and church revitalization in their ministry context.

Application Requirements

Applicants must have an accredited, theological master's degree as well as significant ministry experience (typically five years) that enables them to engage as a ministry peer with other students pursuing an advanced, professional doctorate. The DMin application will look for applicants to express a biblical understanding of biblical interpretation, an understanding of your ministry identity and calling, and a readiness to engage in ongoing personal and spiritual formation.

Tuition and Fees

Application Fee: \$100

Tuition: \$6,000 per year / \$1,500 per term (4 terms = 8 courses/yr)

Cohort/Mentoring Fee: \$1,600 per year / \$400 per term

Graduation Fee: \$200

Reading Fee: \$250

Extensions for the Cornerstone Integration Paper must be approved by the Dean of Doctoral Studies.

Extension Fees:

- 1st Extension - 60 days \$150
- 2nd Extension – an additional 60 days - \$250
- 3rd and Final Extension - an additional eight months - \$500

Retaking an incomplete course requires that the candidate pay the prorated tuition and cohort fee (based on costs at the time).

See below for a sample course syllabus.

METRO
ATLANTA
SEMINARY

DMIN 810 – Developing a Cross-Tethered Philosophy of Leadership

Course Dates: July 29 through October 7, 2021

Seminar Date: September 2, 2021

Faculty: Dr. McKay Caston

Contact: mckayc@metroatlantaseminary.org

Credit Hours: 1

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help students recognize God’s counter-intuitive design for leaders in the church to lead out of weakness, dependency, and need instead of natural strength and self-sufficiency.

COURSE METHODOLOGY

This course will rely upon several instructional methods: preparatory reading/textbook assignments, seminar-style presentation by instructor, class discussion, and a final course paper that integrates what the student has learned in the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, the student will:

1. Grow in self-awareness concerning his personal limitations and true motives for pastoral ministry.
2. Develop an appreciation for rather than a resistance to weakness.
3. Learn to recognize specific pitfalls related to pastoral leadership.
4. Develop a plan to staff to his weakness and help others minister out of weakness, need, and dependency rather than natural strengths and self-sufficiency, thus seeking and relying upon the empowering grace of God for life and ministry.

REQUIRED READING

- *Leading with a Limp*, Dan Allender

- *Gentle and Lowly*, Dane Ortlund
- *The Imperfect Pastor*, Zach Eswine

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS 1. Pre-Seminar Assignments (30%)

Write a 2 to 3-page synopsis for each of the required texts that includes at least three practical takeaways that apply to your life and ministry. Upload each synopsis to Thinkwave before the course seminar on September 2, 2021.

Be prepared to discuss the required reading and your synopsis papers during the seminar.

2. Seminar Attendance and Participation / Contribution (20%)

Seminar attendance and participation is expected, benefits the student and the class as a whole, and is valued by the instructor. Seminar participation will be graded as a component for the computation of the final grade for the course. Each student can expect to be called upon individually during discussions and is encouraged to voluntarily participate.

3. Post-Seminar Integration Paper (50%)

Write a 15-page paper that integrates how the readings and seminar helped you fulfill the course objectives:

1. Objective 1: Describe how you grew in self-awareness concerning your personal limitations and true motives for pastoral ministry. What are your limitations? How does the gospel re-shape your motivation for ministry?
2. Objective 2: Explain how you have grown with an appreciation for rather than a resistance to weakness. Provide at least one personal example and describe why you should hire staff who are strong where you are weak.
3. Objective 3: What specific pitfalls related to pastoral leadership are you most likely to face? How has this course prepared you to face them? Describe at least one practical example.
4. Objective 4: Describe how you plan to help others minister out of weakness, need, and dependency rather than natural strengths and self-sufficiency, helping them to seek and rely upon the empowering grace of God for life and ministry. How might this be expressed in a preaching, teaching, discipleship, mentoring, or coaching context?

Your written assignment should provide at least three citations from each reading and the seminar for a minimum of twelve footnotes from course materials. See below for formatting guidelines.

Final paper is due uploaded in Thinkwave by the final day of the quarter, October 7, 2021.

Late assignments will be deducted a minimum of one letter grade.

FORMATTING

Use Turabian as a style guide for all formatting issues, including footnotes and bibliographies.

Papers must be Times New Roman, double spaced, 12-point font, and uploaded to Thinkwave as PDF documents (.pdf). Be sure to name the file: first name (dash) last name (dot) title of the assignment (.pdf). Example: mckay-caston.integrationpaper.pdf

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Grading

A (90-100)

- Work submitted on time
- Work meets the content expectation for the assignment
- Work communicates a thorough understanding of the subject matter
- Work creates interest, demonstrates keen analytical ability.
- Work is properly formatted and avoids typos, misspellings, and grammatical errors

B (80-89)

- Work submitted on time (or post-deadline with approved 30-day extension)
- Work meets the content expectation for the assignment
- Work communicates a solid grasp of the subject matter
- Work demonstrates not only the ability to accurately report, but also to analyze.
- Work may contain formatting issues, typos, misspellings, and/or grammatical errors.

C (70-79)

- Work submitted late (without approved extension)
- Work does not meet the content expectation for the assignment
- Work contains formatting issues, typos, misspellings, and/or grammatical errors

F

- Unacceptable doctoral work

I = Incomplete assignments or unsubmitted

** Meeting the content standard is to effectively answer the question the assignment poses or to meet the specific course objective the course seeks to fulfill.*

2. Accommodations

The student has the responsibility of informing the instructor of any medically documented disabling condition that will require modifications to avoid discrimination. Reasonable accommodations will be jointly developed between student and instructor. It is the student's responsibility to initiate any request for accommodations. Documentation may be required.

3. Extension Requests

Assignment extension permission must be submitted to the course instructor with the reasons for the request. Approved extension requests will be for 30 days past the final day of the specified term, incurring a late fee and a minimum of one letter grade deduction per assignment. If work is not complete by the extension deadline, a grade of "Incomplete" will be registered. The "Incomplete" may be removed and credit received by completing the course the next time it is offered.

4. Academic Integrity (Plagiarism)

If material for one course is being used for an assignment in another course or is from previous student writing (blog, sermon, article, etc.), it must be cited as a reference.

Plagiarism constitutes using others' ideas, words or images without properly giving credit to those sources. If a student submits work with their name affixed to it, the instructor assumes that work belongs to that student and that all sources are indicated and documented in the text (with quotations and citations).