



Course Syllabus

Spring/Summer 2013

**GOSPEL, CHURCH AND CULTURE:
MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE POSTMODERN WORLD
MISS 0782W**

April 29 – July 19, 2013

**ONLINE WEB-BASED INTERACTIVE COURSE
THERE ARE NO SPECIFIED CLASS TIMES**

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Preparing missional leaders in the postmodern world requires serious examination of the ideologies and cultural milieu of contemporary society and postmodernism. This course examines the main features of the postmodern culture, the meaning of faithfulness to the gospel, the good news of God's salvation, and the nature and mission of the Church. Church's witness and service to the world is studied and presented not as one of the functions of the church but as its essential nature. Missionary congregations are perceived as hermeneutic of the gospel and models of Kingdom communities. Missional leadership takes seriously the calling of all God's people to minister in every sphere of life as faithful witnesses to the gospel of salvation.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, students should:

- A. Have an in-depth biblical-theological understanding of the Gospel.
- B. Be able to articulate theologically the relationship between the Gospel, the Kingdom of God and the Church.
- C. Understand the nature and mission of the people of God as a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.
- D. Understand how culture shapes our understanding of Gospel, Church and ministry.
- E. Have developed categories and concepts for cultural-social analysis of specific ministry context.
- F. Recognize major dynamics of Canadian culture, including an exploration of the meaning and implications of late/post-modernity for the church's witness and service.
- G. Understand how the Gospel and the Church can address a multiethnic, pluralistic culture, using Toronto as a case study.
- H. Demonstrate an ability to integrate theological insights with cultural-social analysis in developing a theology to inform the Church's response to its local context.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Newbigin, Lesslie. *Foolishness to the Greeks*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986. (ISBN 0-8028-0176-5)
2. van Gelder, Craig. *The Essence of the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000. (ISBN 0-8010-9096-2)
3. Sider, Ronald J. *Good News and Good Works*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999. (ISBN 0-8010-5845-7)
4. Selected Articles to be posted at the course web page or accessed through the internet.

B. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Careful completion of the assigned readings **in advance**, in conjunction with reflecting on their relation to the ideas presented in the lectures. It is expected that students will read all of the assigned reading prior to the scheduled lecture of the week.

1. **Reflection Paper:** Due on Friday, June 7, 2013; 25% of final grade.

1000 word reflection paper on the culture of modernity and its impact on the life and ministry of the church based on Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*.

2. Discussion Comments: Dates vary; 25% of final grade.

Discussion forums are a key aspect of this course. They are your opportunity to relate and reflect on major themes being studied, to share your ideas with your peers, and benefit from the ideas presented by your colleagues in the group. The purpose of this activity is to allow you to experience how our community's cross cultural and denominational backgrounds can help to broaden your perspective on areas where the gospel needs to challenge us, the church, and the society we live in. The aim is to make this a collaborative learning experience that functions as a prototype of how the church as body of Christ is intended to operate.

3. Integrative Term Paper: Due on Friday, July 19, 2013; 50% of final mark.

A 12-page integrative term paper which applies central ideas from the readings and class discussions to your own ministry.

The integrative paper should:

- Focus on the main thesis "what is the role of the church in communicating the message of the gospel in the postmodern context of North America."
- Draw on course material, including all assigned readings and lectures.
- Interact with key ideas about the nature of Gospel and its relation to culture.
- Provide your own personal reflections and constructive suggestions related to specific implications of a missional paradigm for holistic ministry.
- Suggest possible obstacles or assets in embracing such a paradigm.

C. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

For proper citation style, consult the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections 10.46 to 10.51 and 14.253 to 14.254.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Reflection Paper	25%
Discussion Comments	25%
Integrative Term Paper	50%
Total Grade	100%

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week One

Introduction: What is Culture?

Week Two

***The Culture of the Early Church
Church & Mission after Christendom***

Readings:

Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*, Chapters 1&2

Week Three

Modernity I

Readings:

Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*, Chapters 3&4

Week Four

Modernity II

Readings:

Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*, Chapters 5&6

Week Five

Postmodernity I

Readings:

Selected Articles

Week Six

Postmodernity II

Readings:

Selected Articles

Week Seven

The Gospel and the Kingdom of God

Readings:

Sider, *Good News*, Chapters 1-4.

Week Eight

The Nature of the Church

Readings:

Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church*, Chapters 1-4

Week Nine

The Ministry of the Church

Readings:

Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church*, Chapters 5-7

Week Ten

A Missional Understanding of the Church

Readings:

Sider, *Good News*, Chapters 5-8

Week Eleven

Reconciling the World to God

Readings:

Selected Articles

Week Twelve

Vocation and Ministry in Daily Life

Readings:

Sider, *Good News*, Chapters 9-11.

Selected Articles

The Church's Responsibility in Communicating the Gospel in Contemporary Canadian Context

Readings:

Selected Articles

Assigned readings for each week are to be done prior to the class.

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Braaten, Carl E. *The Flaming Center: A Theology of the Christian Mission* (Fortress, 1977).

Brownson, James V. [Speaking the Truth in Love: New Testament Resources for a Missional Hermeneutic](#) (Trinity Press International, 1998).

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Hammond, Pete, R. Paul Stevens & Todd Svanoe. [The Marketplace Annotated Bibliography: A Christian Guide to Books on Work, Business and Vocation](#) (IVP, 2002).

Harvey, Barry. [Another City: An Ecclesiological Primer for a Post-Christian World](#) (Trinity Press International, 1999).

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* Hunsberger, George R. & Craig van Gelder, eds. *Church Between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America* (Eerdmans, 1996).

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*** An asterisk marks books of major importance for the topic.**