

**PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY
DM9342
JanTerm 2012
Evangelism and Modern Culture**

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Course Description

A critical exploration of some of the major challenges posed by contemporary culture to healthy and effective evangelistic practices.

Aims

1. To provide a critical overview of significant texts dealing with the relation between culture and evangelism.
2. To enable students to develop their responses to some of the challenges posed in contemporary culture for evangelism.

Pre-class Readings

Abraham, William J. *Aldesgate and Athens: John Wesley and the Foundations of Christian Belief* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2010). (1)

_____ "The Bible." pdf document. (2)

_____ "Civil Religion: Problem, Prescription, or Pufferfish" pdf document (3)

_____ "Is the God of Christianity the same God as the God of Islam?" pdf document (4)

_____ *Ring of Fire* (unpublished) pdf file. (5)

Bauckham, Richard. *Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003).

Bellah, Robert. "Civil Religion in America" available at http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm

George, Sam. "TerrorCulture: Worth Living for or Worth Dying for," in Richard Tiplady, ed., *One World or Many: The Impact of Globalization on Mission* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2003), 55-69. pdf document.

Higgins, Kevin. "Encountering Muslim Resistance," in J. Dudley Woodberry, ed., *Reaching the Resistant, Barriers and Bridges for Mission*. (Pasadena: Evangelical Missionary Society, 1998), 107-116. pdf document.

Hyatt, Eddie. *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity*. (Lake Mary, Florida: Charisma House, 2002).

Malek, Sobhi. "Overcoming Resistance through the Paranormal," in J. Dudley Woodberry, ed., *Reaching the Resistant, Barriers and Bridges for Mission*. (Pasadena: Evangelical Missionary Society, 1998). 197-208. pdf document.

Mitchell, Basil. "Contemporary Challenges to Christian Apologetics," Basil Mitchell, *How to Play Theological Ping-Pong and Other Essays on Faith and Reason* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990). pdf document.

Newbigin, Lesslie. *Foolishness to the Greeks*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

Qutb, Sayyid. *Milestones*. (Kazi Publicaitons. 2007).

Swinburne, Richard. *The Existence of God*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Wood, Ralph C. *Contending for the Faith: The Church's Engagement with Culture*. (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2003). Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 10.

Walls, Andrew. *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000). Read Parts I and II.

Read the texts in this order:

Bauckham,

Walls (Parts I and II),

Newbigin,

Mitchell, Swinburne, Abraham (1&2),

Wood, 9 (chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 10.)

Bellah and Abraham (3),

Qutb, Higgins, George, Abraham (4),

Hyatt, Malek.

Abraham (5)

[Note that this order is replicated in the schedule for the seminar below.]

Pre-Class Assignments

In preparation for the course students will develop a series of four critical reviews of the texts identified above, roughly 8 pages, double-spaced, in length. Total written work should be no more than 32 pages. Students are free to combine more than one reading in their reviews. Note that it is not essential that students write on every author, although *all authors are to be read prior to class time*, so that all students are ready to discuss all of the readings in the seminar session. Check the schedule below and pick two readings from the first week below and two readings from the second week below. Where there are several readings for one day, papers dealing with all these readings in one paper are especially welcome. [The groups are given in the list above as well.]

In each case students will provide: 1) an accurate, comprehensive summary of the chosen text(s), and 2) a critical evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the material presented. Within the critical evaluation, students should feel free to focus on a particular aspect of the work in question. At least one half of the review should be devoted to critical evaluation. **All reviews must be completed and in hand for the first session of the class.**

Assignments During Seminar

During the formal class sessions we shall work as a single group, proceeding thorough the texts and the written reviews. Students will bring with them a single-spaced copy of their papers for copying and distribution to the group as a whole. These papers can (if necessary) be copied on site in Dallas.

Post-Seminar Assignment

Students shall meet with a selected group in their local church and present from 1 to 3 presentation(s) on the challenges facing the contemporary evangelistic church. They shall draw on the readings and discussions of the course as a whole and shall make pertinent judgments of the topics to be covered. Students shall provide: a) a summary analysis of their presentation(s); and b) identify the fresh insights that have emerged from the response of the group during or after their presentation(s).

Grades

Grades are numerical with an 80 required to meet the requirements of this course. The essays will be graded as one whole and will be counted toward 50% of the total grade. The quality of your participation in the group will count for 20% of your grade. The post-seminar project, due within 90 days after the end of the seminar, will count for 30%.

Class Schedule

Jan 3, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Bauckham
Jan 4, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Walls (Parts I and II)
Jan 5, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Newbiggin
Jan 6, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Mitchell, Swinburne , Abraham (1&2)
Jan 9, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Wood (chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 10.)
Jan 10, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Bellah, Abraham (3)
Jan 11, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Qutb, Higgins, George, Abraham (4)
Jan 12, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Hyatt and Malek
Jan 13, 2012	8.00 to 11.00 a.m.	Abraham (5)