

Course Syllabus
MB Biblical Seminary

**The Eye of the Storm:
Pastoral and Psychological Care in the Face of Terror and Catastrophe
MF790AT**

Dates: Unit I & II February 17 - 18 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 Unit III & IV March 24 - 25 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Instructors:

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Course Description: The 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing, September 11, 2001 attacks, the devastating Tsunami in 2004, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan each changed our world. We watched in amazement as we saw these events bring out the worst and the best in people and in many cases, the best efforts of the church seemed ineffective. This two-unit course will examine the theological and psychological factors involved in our response to terrorism and disaster. We will explore the most recent research regarding how our understanding of these events affects our responses. Spiritual and psychological resources available to help prevent, heal, and understand catastrophes will be studied, as well as ways to address the wider effects of these events on our church, culture, and society.

Course Objectives

After completing this course students will:

1. Be able to list similar and different effects of catastrophes: those that are unexpected natural disasters, those that are the result of human negligence, and those that are caused by terrorism.
2. Discuss the theological and psychological effects of different responses to terrorism and communicate an understanding of catastrophe in the context of Biblical Theology.
3. Develop plans to help victims, bystanders and witnesses of catastrophes. In addition, students will have resources to help care-givers and, as Christ called us to love our enemies, to reach perpetrators.
4. Identify and be able to address challenges that terrorism and related evil present to the Church, Culture, and professional care-givers.

Related Degree Objectives Include:

A. Biblical Formation:

Skilled in:

Biblical exegesis and bridging it to contemporary life.

Using the Bible/biblical materials to lead and teach others.

Integrating Biblical principles and faith with psychological theories and issues.

B. Ecclesial Formation:

1. Knowledge of:

A Biblical theology of the Kingdom of God and the Church, setting Christ as its norm, community as its context, mission, shalom, reconciliation, and peacemaking as its purpose, and mutual discipling as its responsibility.

2. Integration of theology and psychology.

C. Ministry/Mission Formation:

1. Knowledge of:

The shape and effects of culture, and characteristics and needs of people throughout the life span and the context of various life situations.

The broad range of issues that may arise within marriage and family relationships.

2. Characterized by:

Aggressive missionality, a service-mindset, support of unpopular causes, openness to cooperation with people whose theology, culture, or educational methods are different, knowledge, ability, and earnest working in behalf of minority and oppressed peoples, encouragement of women and others to assume leadership roles, a leading-caring manner, active employment of lay leadership, acceptance of denomination's directives and regulation while maintaining a collegial relationship with superiors and staff.

3. Skilled in:

Assisting troubled individuals and families from a holistic point of view: social, psychological, cultural, developmental, and spiritual.

Utilizing and creating structures and resources of care in churches, agencies, and organizations in community settings.

Adapting approaches and techniques to a variety of counselees and settings.

Presentation and speaking skills to facilitate engagement in advocacy and prevention.

Exploring the interface of personality and faith development theory with the practice of pastoral care and counseling.

Leading ceremonies, able to conduct the ceremonies of their receiving churches such as baptism, the Lord's Supper, Christian funerals,

weddings, and the dedication of infants.

Pastoral care, able to minister to the sick, able to give competent pastoral counseling within the context of the local church, able to reach out to persons under stress with perception, sensitivity, and a warmth that is feeling and supportive, using resources of faith, able to help persons discover individuality, community, meaning, and hope.

Social Justice Ministry, able to formulate new communities of reconciliation, wholeness, caring, and justice - in the name of Christ.

Resources:

Because of the concentrated nature of this course, students are STRONGLY encouraged to read the texts BEFORE the class session. Extra Credit will be awarded to students who demonstrate familiarity with the primary text books during class.

Primary texts for Unit I and Unit II:

Long, E. L. Jr. (2004). *Facing terrorism: Responding as Christians*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.

Moghaddam, F. M. & A. J. Marsella (Eds.), (2003). *Understanding terrorism: Psychosocial roots, consequences, and interventions*. Washington, DC.: APA.

Carr, C. (2002). *The lessons of terror: A history of warfare against civilians: Why it has always failed and why it will fail again*. New York: Random House.

Primary texts for Unit III & IV:

Pyzszczynski, T. & Solomon, S. (2003). *In the wake of 9/11: The psychology of terror*. Washington D.C.: APA.

Griffith, L.(2002). *The war on terrorism and the terror of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Koenig, H. G. (2006). *In the wake of disaster: Religious responses to terrorism and catastrophe*. Templeton.

Webber, J. Bass, D. D., & Yep, R. (2005). *Terrorism, trauma, and tragedies: A counselor's guide to preparing and responding, 2nd Ed.* ACA.

Additional articles may be assigned during class.

Course Outline:

- I. What is Terrorism and What Keeps it Going?
 - A. Definitions
 - B. History
 - C. Possible Causes
 - D. Current Risks for Terrorism or Disaster

- II. Responses to Terror - Strengths and Weaknesses
 - A. If we define terrorism as war
 1. Crusade
 2. Just war theory applied to terrorism
 3. Limited war vs. total war
 - B. If we define terrorism as criminal
 1. Law enforcement
 - C. Alternative responses
 1. Peacemaking
 2. Nonviolence

- III. Mitigating the Effects of Terrorism
 - A. Caring for direct Victims
 1. Caring for Survivors
 - a. The psychology of traumatic stress
 - b. The theology of traumatic stress and the effect of traumatic stress on faith
 2. Funerals and Memorial Services and Death Notification
 - B. Caring for Bystanders, Witnesses, and the Broader Culture
 1. Secondary Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
 2. Children in an age of mass media
 3. The Voice of the Church
 - C. Treating care-givers
 1. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
 - D. Treating perpetrators
 1. Pastoral Care and Counseling for Prisoners
 2. Missions to Polarized and Disenfranchised Communities

- IV. The Butterfly Effect: Challenges Presented by Terror and Catastrophe to the Church, Community, and Culture
 - A. The Problems of Evil and Suffering
 - B. Postmodern Fear of “True Believers”
 - C. Evangelism in an Age of Fear
 - D. Direct Threats to the Church and Missions

- E. Loss of Civil Liberty
- F. Identification with the Aggressor
- G. Vicarious Traumatization
- H. Compassion fatigue
- I. Polarization
- J. Dehumanization of the other
- K. Resilience

Learning Activities and Assignments:

Class Participation: The course is designed with the expectation that students will learn from their peers. Therefore, it is expected that students will attend all class sessions.

Assignments for Units I & II

1. **Take Home Examination** based on class presentations and readings (40% of Grade). Due March 6.

2. **Project:** (60% of grade) Students will complete a project relating to the topics covered in Unit I and Unit II and their own ministry. Students must have their project approved by one of the instructors. Students may work in groups for their projects. However, it is expected that the projects will increase in scope and complexity to reflect the number of people involved. Projects must include an annotated bibliography listing works read in preparing the project. Works are to be cited in APA format followed by a brief (one paragraph) summary of the work. Projects are due March 27.

Possible projects include: (1) a research paper on the biblical ethics of one response to Terror, (2) an adult (or teen) Sunday School course (more than two weeks long) on causes of and Christian responses to terrorism, (3) a literature review of social psychological factors that contribute to people choosing one response to terrorism over others (4) a literature review on psychological contributions to terrorist behavior, (5) a discussion of the biblical theology of peacemaking, nonviolence, and just war theory as they apply to terrorism, (6) a collection of worship services, specific for your church community, for funerals, memorials, and community prayer services in response to disaster or terrorist attack, including services for specific losses and for the larger community. These services should reflect an understanding of the theological and psychological issues involved in disaster and terrorism.

Assignments for Unit III & IV

1. **Take Home Examination** based on class presentations and readings (40% of Grade). Due March 27.

2. **Project:** (60% of grade) Students will complete a project relating to the topics covered in

Unit III and Unit IV and their own ministry. Students must have their project approved by one of the instructors. Students may work in groups for their projects. However, it is expected that the projects will increase in scope and complexity to reflect the number of people involved. Projects must include an annotated bibliography listing works read in preparing the project. Works are to be cited in APA format followed by a brief (one paragraph) summary of the work. Projects are due April 17.

Possible projects could include: a written disaster response plan for a particular church, agency, or organization; a review of the literature regarding treatment and prevention of posttraumatic stress disorder, a proposal for ministry to trauma survivors, or church school lessons across ages appropriate for the Sunday following the next terrorist attack, a series of reviews of popular media (films, books, television shows, and/or music) discussing implications for the understanding of the theological and psychological issues raised by terrorism and disaster or a church school series using that media to explore those issues.

Format of Assignments: Papers will normally be presented in APA format. Papers may be submitted by email to **both** instructors in either Word or Word Perfect format. Projects that are not an academic paper should be presented in a format that is professional and appropriate to the project.

Academic Policies:

MBBS academic policies are described in the *Academic Handbook*, which is updated annually. The *Handbook* includes policies on extensions for incomplete course work, academic integrity, non-discriminatory language, academic appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with MBBS academic policies and to follow them. Copies of the *Academic Handbook* are available on the MBBS website: www.mbseminary.edu. If necessary, hard copies are available through the administrative receptionist, Nancy Williams (251-8628).

Bibliography
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