

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary
THEOLOGY FOR INTEGRATION

IS/TS-670 (3 Units)
Spring 2010
Monday 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Professor: Mark D. Baker, Ph.D.
452- 1768 (office); 255-5236 (home)
e-mail: mbaker@mbseminary.edu
Office Hours: Monday 2:00-4:00
Wed. 1:30-3:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A survey of Old Testament Theology, New Testament Theology to provide the biblical theological basis for the integration of psychology, counseling and theology.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To be able to describe and evaluate four approaches to integration of Christian theology and psychology
- To gain greater familiarity with the Bible
- To observe, learn from and evaluate an integrative work
- To critically and integratively analyze five theological themes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES ADDRESSED IN THIS COURSE

The student will be able to

- 1.5 Witness persuasively to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a postmodern secular context
- 2.1 Exegete biblical texts within a design that includes the descriptive, synthetic, hermeneutical, and pragmatic analytical tasks
 - o 2.1.1 Narrate the biblical story, integrating the major biblical theological themes of the Old and New Testaments and the relationship between the testaments
- 3.3.6 Write a paper that articulates a theological theme in a way that connects with and confronts a cultural context
- 4.1 Articulate integrative views of humanity, theology, and counseling
 - o 4.1.2 Discuss and compare a variety of theological and psychological perspectives on human nature in its fullness.

COURSE TEXTS

Alter, Margaret. *Resurrection Psychology*. Wipf & Stock, 2004 or Loyola, 1994.

Hays, Richard. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*. Harper, 1996.

Longenecker, Bruce W. *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*. Baker Academic, 2003.

Martens, Elmer. *God's Design: A Focus on OT Theology*, 3rd ed.. Bibal Press, 1998.

Stevenson, Eck & Hill. *Psychology & Christianity Integration: Seminal Works that Shaped the Movement*, CAPS, 2007

Young, William. *The Shack*. Windblown Media, 2007.

Texts are on reserve in the library.

COURSE OUTLINE

The reading load is heavier in the first half of the course. It is recommended that students begin the Stevenson, Eck & Hill book related written assignment before the semester starts.

Students taking the course for one unit should contact the professor for a syllabus for the one-unit version of the course.

1 - January 25
**Introduction:
Approaches to
Integration**

2 - February 1 **Old Testament Theology**
Before class read: Martens, 3-236

3 - February 8 **Old Testament Theology**
Before class read: Martens, 237-369

February 15 – No class, Presidents’ Day

4 - February 22 **Old Testament Theology**
Exegetical/hermeneutical paper, first draft due

5 - March 1 **Old Testament Theology**
Student presentations

Final version of exegetical/hermeneutical paper due on Thursday March 4

6 - March 8 **New Testament Theology**
Before class read: Longenecker, 9-180 and prepare for discussion on the book as described in the assignments section.

March 15 – No class, Module Week

7 - March 22 **New Testament Theology**
Before class read:
Hays, 13-157, 169-205
Stevenson, Eck & Hill, 155-175
Write: Hays book review

8 - March 29 **New Testament Theology**
Before class read: Hays, 291-310, 347-377

9 - April 5 **New Testament Theology and Psychology**
Before class read: Alter, ix-88 (see reflection questions in appendix)
Reading report on Stevenson, Eck & Hill due

10 - April 12 **New Testament Theology & Psychology**
Before class read: Alter, 89-170 (see reflection questions in appendix)

- 11 - April 19 **New Testament Theology: Atonement**
Write: Reflective essay on Alter and integration
- 12 - April 26 **New Testament Theology: Atonement & Salvation**
- 13 - May 3 **Theology and Life**
Before class read: Young, 7-248 and prepare for discussion on the book as described in the assignments section.
- 14 - May 10 **Conclusion**
Best draft of theological theme reflection paper due

Final draft of theological theme reflection paper due May 14

ASSIGNMENTS

Psychology & Christianity Integration: Seminal Works that Shaped the Movement Reading Log and Response Letters: This course is a biblical theology course that aims to give you theological tools for use in integration. Although it is not a course on either the theory or practice of integration, space will be given to begin to make integrative connections between the theological content and psychology/counseling. Therefore a basic understanding of integration will be of value for this course and especially in the future as you move toward actual integrative work. This book will introduce you to terminology and approaches to integration, introduce you to examples of integration and make you aware of issues under debate in regards to integration. Read the following: Pages 1-7; Chapters 9,13,17,18,20,21,22,26,27,28,29,32; it is also recommended that you read the short introductions to each section. Keep a reading log recording insights and questions produced by each chapter (brief). Choose two chapters that you found especially engaging and important. Write two letters, one for each chapter, to another counseling student or counselor explaining a few insights from the chapter and why you think they are important for you as a counselor (not a summary of the chapter). Each letter should be one-and-half to two pages (single-spaced). Give one copy to the person it is addressed to and give a copy to the professor (due at the beginning of the ninth class session).

The letters will be graded on clarity of thought and communication, depth of analysis, and level of personal engagement. Grading standards: B for clearly communicating content, displaying some analysis, but with little or no personal engagement; B+ for adequately meeting the above criteria; B- or lower for failing to meet the stated criteria; A- or A for excellent depth of insight and analysis, a high level of personal engagement and a high quality of writing.

Presentation on an Old Testament Book: Students will introduce the rest of the class to an Old Testament book, including the historical setting, theology, and potential issues relating to psychology and counseling. If you desire, you may partner with another student. Your preparation should include reading the text a number of times, reading dictionary articles on your book and related topics (cross-listed articles), reflecting on your book through the lens of the Martens text, and reading about your book in an Old Testament theology book (such as: *An*

Introduction to Old Testament by W. Brueggemann, or *Old Testament Theology* by P. House, both on 2 hour reserve). Creativity in communicating your central points is encouraged, the ultimate goal, however, is communication of and appropriation of the content. Presentations will be about 15 minutes. You will be told the exact time allowance the second class session.

Grading standards: B for clearly communicating the information listed above; B- or lower for lack of clarity or failing to cover one of the required areas; B+ for communicating the information in an engaging manner or displaying depth of insight; A- and A will display both communicate in an engaging manner and display exceptional depth of insight.

Exegetical/Hermeneutical Paper: Choose a text from the O. T. book you are doing your presentation on, and use the methods you learned in BI-505 to do an exegetical/hermeneutical study of that textual unit. In both the selection of the text and in the hermeneutical work on the text students are encouraged to keep integrative issues in mind. Just as the work you do preparing for your presentation will contribute to this project, so your work on a portion of the text will contribute to your presentation. Follow instructions (assignment #6) and template (Appendix B) from the syllabus for BI-505 (except for length 7 to 9 pages, double-spaced). A first draft is due on Feb. 22, class four. After receiving input from the professor you will write a final draft, due no later than Thursday March 4.

In-class Reflections on Reading: Rather than writing responses to two of the books you will be asked to share reflections on your reading in class, and will be graded by the depth of engagement with the reading that your comments display, your effort to relate the reading to themes of the course, the clarity of your comments, and the degree to which you interact with others' comments.

***The Lost Letters of Pergamum* Reflection Questions:** Come to class prepared to share three to four insights from the book that you found most significant and potentially beneficial as you read and interpret the New Testament and for your life and your ministry as a therapist.

***The Shack* Reflection Questions:** This assignment will be a mix of oral sharing (1, 4, 5) and written work you will hand in (2 and 3). You are encouraged to read the book at three levels: a. personal, in relation to your life, b. as a theologian, and c. as a therapist.

1. Come to class ready to share a brief personal response to the book: what did it lead you to think and feel? New insights?
2. Choose two of the following themes and track them through the book (Trinity, Christology [humanity/divinity], image of God, sin, judgment). Hand in (handwritten or typed) a list of references, significant quotes related to your topic (with page numbers), and a three or four sentence statement summarizing his position and comparing it what we have discussed in class. Also list points of disagreement or questions you have on his position. Be prepared to share your summary and questions in class.
3. Write a few sentence summary of Young's thinking on God and evil/human suffering. Then briefly state how it differs from ways others commonly think about this topic. Do you agree with Young, why or why not? (Or you can state points of agreement and disagreement.)
4. Come to class ready to share: What are critiques, areas of disagreement or places where you think the book falls short?

5. Please also track insights and implications for counseling that come to mind as you read.

Moral Vision Book Review: Based on what you read, describe the theological emphasis of Paul, the Pauline tradition, Mark, Matthew, Luke, John and the author of Revelation. What integration insights do you gain and what integration questions are raised by the text? What are the three common themes that Hays proposes to synthesize the diversity found in the New Testament? How does he propose we use these images? Two to Three pages, single-spaced, due at the beginning of the seventh class session.

Resurrection Psychology Reflective Essay on Integration: What have you learned about integration from watching Alter do it? Does she match up with approaches described in *Psychology & Christianity Integration*? How will it help you as a therapist? What questions did this book answer for you? What new questions does it leave you with? Two to three pages, single spaced, due at the beginning of the eleventh class session.

Theological Theme Reflection Paper: Choose one of the five theological themes covered in class (God, Christology, judgment/wrath, sin, atonement, salvation,). Part I. Describe different misconceptions people have of this theme (ideally these will be concepts the student has actually encountered, and may include examples from Young) and, for each different conceptualization, analyze how the person's theology might impact their behavior and mental health. Part II. Describe any changes and new insights you have experienced in relation to this particular theme through this course, specifically, and through your seminary time in general. Briefly give a theological statement that reflects your current understanding of this theological theme. Part III. Now place yourself in a therapy setting with individuals described in part one. How might you use the understanding you described in part two to help these individuals? What are ways you could help them experience the healthier theology you describe in part two?

The paper should be eight to ten pages, double spaced. A "best draft" of this paper is due at the beginning of the 14th class session. You will receive peer feedback on the paper. Make improvements based on that feedback and turn in the final draft by May 15. Grading standards: B include all the elements listed above; B+ the paper will have coherence, not just listing the above elements, and display some elements of insightful analysis that go beyond the norm; A- or A will be clearly written and organized in a coherent fashion that displays exceptional insight and analysis in various elements of the paper.

Attendance and Cass participation: To get an "A" in this category you must have perfect attendance and make significant contributions to class discussion. An "A-" will be given to those with perfect attendance and good participation or to those with one absence and significant participation. Two absences will place a student in the "B" range; participation will determine whether it is a high or low "B." Three absences could move the student in to the "C" range. Four or more absences place the student at risk of receiving an "F" in class participation, but also at risk of having their course grade lowered a full letter grade or of automatically failing the class. Students may talk to the professor about ways to partially make up for absences. Note that "significant participation" refers to quality of participation not just quantity.

Academic Policies:

MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, accommodations for disability, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, grading templates, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to your professor or consult the Registrar. Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student's evaluation of the course is completed.

Assignment policies for this course:

1. Students are expected to submit assignments on time; if they are late they will be graded down one grade level (a B+ becomes a B).
2. All written work should have one inch margins and Times Roman 12pt font. Please number your pages. Any of the three standard citation styles is acceptable (Chicago, APA, MLA). Choose one and follow it consistently.
3. All assignments may be printed on scrap paper.
4. Confidentiality: If you wish to have your assignment results be more confidential you may submit the assignments in an envelope.
5. Students taking the course as "pass/not-pass" must complete all assignments in order to pass the course.

Grading Scheme

Psychology & Christianity Integration Reading log and letters 15%; Presentation 10%; Exegetical Paper 20%; *Lost Letters* class participation 5%; Book Review 5%; Alter Essay 10%; *The Shack* class participation 5%; Theological Theme Paper 20%; Attendance and class participation 10%.

As stated in the MBBS academic policies/grading a "B" is the baseline grade. A "B" means the student is doing satisfactory work. The "B+" or higher grade indicates that the student has exceeded the baseline performance standard. The "C" grade indicates that the student has not achieved the baseline level. I will write a letter grade on your assignments. In my grade book each letter grade will be given a numerical equivalent (B+ = 3.33; A- = 3.67). At the end of the semester your numerical average will determine your final letter grade based on the following scale:

- 4.00 to 3.83 = A
- 3.82 to 3.5 = A-
- 3.49 to 3.17 = B+
- 3.16 to 2.83 = B etc.

APPENDIX

Resurrection Psychology, Introduction, and chapters 1-5, Reflection questions:

1. What are some of Alter's fundamental concerns, her agendas?
2. What is Alter's anthropology, that is her concept of the human? Take note as you read different places she discusses this topic. Come to class prepared to state what her view is and ways it differs from views commonly held by some psychologists.
3. What does she mean by forgiveness?
4. What is her definition of shame?

Thought questions (answers not stated in the book):

5. How does her discussion of shame relate to our discussion of honor and shame and the New Testament world? Is she describing a different type of shame? If so how are they related?
6. How does her discussion of shame relate to the cross?

***Resurrection Psychology*, chapters 6-10, Reflection questions:**

Work at stating the thesis of each chapter in a sentence or two.

What are the implications for you in counseling from each chapter?