GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

EV/TH718: Theology of Evangelism
Spring Semester: February 13-14; March 13-14; April 10-11, 2009.
Fridays 6:30-9:30pm; Saturdays 8:30-12:00; 1:15-4:45 p.m.
Professor Robert E. Coleman
Byington Assistant, Rob Belton

NATURE OF THE COURSE:

The course examines the Gospel of Jesus Christ, focusing on the biblical and theological basis for world evangelism. While distinctive differences of interpretation are noted in Christian doctrine, emphasis is given to the unifying message of redemption flowing through all evangelical theology. Making Disciples of Christ is seen as the controlling mandate of Scripture. Attention centers on the practical aspects of relating what we believe to the way we fulfill the Great Commission. This is not a class in personal or group evangelism, which is covered in other courses. Students already fully confident of the practical application of systematic and biblical theology may want to take a different course in evangelism.

GOALS OF THE COURSE:

Students completing the course should be able to:

1. Ascertain the essential message of the saving Word of God;
2. See revealed truth from the standpoint of the heavenly vision and the fulfillment of the Great Commission;
3. Understand major differing perspectives of doctrine within the evangelical faith;
4. Recognize popular defamations of the Gospel; and
5. Above all, apply basic theology to the actual work of evangelism.

PROCEDURE OF THE COURSE:

The course consists of thirty (30) hours of class lectures, supplemented by reading and research in areas related to the course objectives. A final week is allowed for completing a reflection paper which is due April 18.

OUTLINE OF CLASS SESSIONS:

General lecture subjects follow the classical Trinitarian sequence. To assist students in organizing information, basic outlines of the lectures are made available in advance of the class. Interaction with the class is always encouraged.
February 13-14

Lecture I  The Character of God
Lecture II  Revelation and the Bible
Lecture III The Creation of God
Lecture IV  Sin and Judgement
Lecture V   The Son of God
Lecture VI  The Death of Christ

March 13-14

Lecture VII The Triumph of Christ
Lecture VIII The Holy Spirit
Lecture IX  The Grace of God
Lecture X   Coming to Christ – Repentance and Faith
Lecture XI  Justification and the Transformed Life

FIRST TEST

April 10-11

Lecture XII  Sanctification
Lecture XIII Perseverance of the Saints
Lecture XIV  The Church and the Ministry of Christ
Lecture XV  The Return of Christ
Lecture XVI  The Consummation of History
Lecture XVII The Coming Glory

FINAL TEST

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COURSE:

1. READING:

Students are expected to read a minimum of 900 pages during the course, including the full text of the following books:


Students are also to read at least twelve (12) sermons from representative spokesmen of faith. Ten of these should be by different persons. The content of Christian doctrine takes it's most practical and forceful application in the preaching of the Gospel so this is the best way to see theology applied. Listening to sermons and tapes can be counted as twenty-five (25) pages for each half hour.


A report of all completed readings is handed in with the sermon evaluation paper on April 18th.

2. CLASS TESTS:

Two forty (40) minute written tests covering the lectures and required readings are taken during the course.

First Test, March 14 – Lectures I-VI; Readings in David Larson: Part I-III; Reading in Robert Coleman (all); John Watson (all); and John Bunyan, up to “The Cross;” (about 50 pages).

Second Test, April 11 – Lectures VII-XVII; and John Bunyan, finish the book.

3. EVALUATION PAPER:

Students select five sermons from different preachers and evaluate them evangelistically. How did the sermon appeal to you? Was something missing which should have been said? From the standpoint of your own desire to communicate the Gospel, what have you learned from the sermons? The whole paper should be 8-10 pages in length. It is due by April 18th. The papers are handed in to Dr. Coleman’s Byington Assistant.

GRADE FOR THE COURSE:

All components of the course enter into the final grade:
Readings – 20% Less than 699 pages – C; 700-1199 pages – B; More than 1200 pages – A
Two written exams – 30% each
Evaluation paper – 20%

The first test will be returned in the next class session. The last test and evaluation paper will be returned through the SPO when graded.

LUNCH WITH THE PROFESSOR: Each Saturday during the class Dr. Coleman eats in the Dinning Hall, and students are invited to join him for fellowship around the table.