



AMBROSE

OT / NT 633 Biblical Theology of Suffering (3) (Winter 2012)

Course Description:

How does the Word of God help us when life is full of pain and trouble? Is our suffering caused by sin? by Satan? Is it part of God's plan? How does God desire for us to respond when we suffer? In this course we will explore the teachings of Scripture to understand God's perspective on these and related questions.

Class Schedule: Wednesdays 9:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Instructor: Rick Love, Ph.D
Office: L 2071
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Required Texts:

1. Carson, D. A. *How Long, O Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil*. Grand Rapids: Baker; Nottingham: InterVarsity, 1990, 2006.

Plus one of the following three books:

2.a. Kreeft, Peter. *Making Sense Out of Suffering*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Books, 1986.

2.b. Lewis, C. S. *The Problem of Pain*. New York: Macmillan, 1962; San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001.

2.c. Yancey, Philip. *Where is God When it Hurts?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977.

Attendance:

Students who miss more than three class sessions will need to see the instructor to obtain additional worksheets to make up for the fourth or any subsequent class absences. Each of these worksheets will be worth two-thirds of a letter grade.

Course Outline:

Jan	11	Introduction, syllabus	
	18	Discuss worksheet # 1	(w.s. # 1 due)
	25	Discuss worksheet # 2	(w.s. # 2 due)
Feb	1	No class (Seminary retreat)	(w.s. # 3 due)
	8	Discuss worksheet # 3	(w.s. # 4 due)
	15	Discuss worksheet # 4	(w.s. # 5 due)
	22	No class (Mid-semester break)	(w.s. # 6 due)
	29	Discuss worksheet # 5	(w.s. # 7 due)
Mar	7	No class (Ambrose Global Impact Day)	(w.s. # 8 due)
	14	Discuss worksheet # 6	(w.s. # 9 due)
	21	Discuss worksheet # 7	
	28	Discuss reading & Discuss worksheet # 8	(Reading report due)
Apr	4	Discuss worksheet # 9	(w.s. # 10 due)
	11	Last class - Discuss worksheet # 10	
	18	* Paper due	

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- A. Interpret and apply Biblical texts in reference to the theme of suffering (as evidenced in the worksheets, class discussion and paper).
- B. Grow in their knowledge of what the Bible as a whole says about suffering, including, but not limited to, such themes as: God's sovereignty, God's goodness, God's justice, the fall, sin, Satan, sickness and health, lament, death, grief, salvation, hell and heaven, retribution, pain, temptation and testing, comfort, poverty, oppression, rewards and punishment, and eschatological blessing (as evidenced in the worksheets, class discussion and paper).
- C. Apply the message of the Bible, especially as it relates to the theme of suffering, to contemporary church and society (as evidenced in the worksheets, class discussion and paper).
- D. Explain to others, in a variety of ways, what the Bible says about suffering.
- E. Demonstrate passion, zeal, and love for God, His Word, His Church, and the world.
- F. Evaluate our success in achieving the desired learning outcomes (during the last class session).

Course Requirements / Learning Activities & Course Grade:

A. Reading and reading report (25%): Due March 28

Students will read:

1. D. A. Carson's *How Long, O Lord*

and either:

2.a. Peter Kreeft's *Making Sense Out of Suffering*,

2.b. C. S. Lewis' *The Problem of Pain*, or

2.c. Philip Yancey's *Where is God When it Hurts?*

Students will record and rank the ten (10) most important ideas from each of the two books read (include page numbers). State the reasons why you view these ideas as most significant and discuss the significance of these ideas for your own ministry. Conclude by stating five (5) questions which you think informed non-Christian readers of these books might ask the authors. Compose questions that the authors have not already addressed in the books read. The reading report should be approximately eight to ten pages and is to be submitted electronically to the course web page.

B. Worksheets to prepare for class discussion (10 x 5% each = 50%)

On the moodle page for this course students will find ten (10) worksheets that will guide them in the study of what the Bible says about various aspects of suffering. Students will answer all of the questions on each worksheet and submit those on the appropriate due date for each worksheet (see above). It is preferred that these be submitted as hard copies, though if the student desires, electronic copies can be submitted to rlove@ambrose.edu for the worksheets due Feb 1, 22, and March 7 (i.e., worksheets 3, 6, and 8).

C. Paper (25%): Due April 18

In consultation with the professor, each student will write an 10-12 page biblical and theological analysis of a case study of an example of suffering. Analyze the case study in light of what you learn throughout the semester from your reading for the course, class discussion, and worksheets. Conclude with a discussion of the significance of your case study for contemporary church and society. Papers are to be submitted electronically to the course web page.

Grading:

A. Reading and reading report: 25%

B. Worksheets (10 x 5% each): 50%

C. Paper: 25%

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	
A	Excellent
A-	
B+	
B	Good
B-	
C+	
C	Satisfactory
C-	
D+	
D	Minimal Pass
F	Failure

Important Notes/Dates:

The last day to enter a course without permission and /or voluntary withdrawal from a course without financial penalty (**drop**) is Sunday, January 22, 2012. These courses will not appear on the student's transcript. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date.

Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit, or drop out of the "audit" up to the "drop" date indicated above. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. The last day to voluntarily withdraw from a course without academic penalty (**withdraw**) is Friday, March 23, 2012. A grade of "W" will appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar <http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar>). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Bibliography

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