

ME 670: Ministry of Evangelism: Theology & Practice
Methodist Theological School in Ohio
Spring 2014

Tuesdays 8:30 – 11:30 AM
L-200
3 Semester Hours

Dr. Joon-Sik Park, Instructor
Office: 740-362-3367
jpark@mtso.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course intends to help students construct their own theology of evangelism based on biblical and theological foundations, and develop a program of evangelism appropriate to their own ministry contexts. Attention will be given to a Wesleyan understanding of evangelism as well as to the place of evangelism within the whole mission of the church. Contemporary models and strategies of evangelism will be theologically and contextually examined. The students will be encouraged to develop a style of faith-sharing that reflects their own theology and personality, and to have some hands-on experience in witnessing. The course will consist of lectures, class discussions, case studies, and student presentations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To construct a theology of evangelism based both on biblical and theological foundations and on the understanding of contemporary culture.
2. To develop and practice a lifestyle of personal evangelism **with a clear understanding of the gospel** with regard to its content and communication.
3. To critically examine and evaluate contemporary models of evangelism.
4. To have hands-on experience of presenting the gospel and to reflect on one's style, integrity, and effectiveness of faith-sharing.
5. To develop a viable program of evangelism appropriate to a ministry context in order to educate and motivate a local church or a faith community for an integral and effective evangelistic outreach.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Fox, H. Eddie and George E. Morris. *Faith-Sharing: Dynamic Christian Witnessing by Invitation*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1996.
- Jones, E. Stanley. *The Christ of the Indian Road*. New York, NY: Grosset & Dunlap, 1925.
- Logan, James C. *How Great a Flame: The Wesleyan Revival Then and Now*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2005.
- Murray, Stuart. *Church Planting: Laying Foundations*. Scottdale, PA: Herald, 2001.
- Newbigin, Lesslie. *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Peace, Richard. *Holy Conversation: Talking about God in Everyday Life*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006.
- Reese, Martha Grace. *Unbinding the Gospel*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2006.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

- Crandall, Ronald K. *Witness: Exploring and Sharing Your Christian Faith*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2001.
- Guder, Darrell L. *The Incarnation and the Church's Witness*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999.
- Hooker, Morna D. *Not Ashamed of the Gospel: New Testament Interpretations of the Death of Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Hybels, Bill and Mark Mittelberg. *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994.
- Swanson, Roger K. and Shirley F. Clement. *The Faith-Sharing Congregation: Developing a Strategy for the Congregation as Evangelist*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1996.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**(1) Class Attendance and Participation:**

Attendance at all sessions is expected. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. *Unexcused absences will adversely affect the grade.* In most cases, a student will not be allowed credit for a course if he or she is absent for 20% of the class sessions.

Much of the value of this course will come from interaction among the participants. Students are thus to prepare for each class session by carefully reading the assigned texts, and to take an active part in the discussions.

(2) Critical Book Reviews:

Students are required to complete **three book reviews**, critically reflecting on the text for implications for theology and practice of evangelism. (Some of the books did not use gender-inclusive language as theirs was an age not yet sensitive to the issue.) Each review is to be two pages in length (1.5-spaced), with parenthetical citations rather than footnotes, if necessary. Save your review as: Review1 (Last Name).

The following is a quote from "How to Write a Book Review" by Joel Green, which I believe provides excellent guidelines:

"First, the review should indicate a thorough knowledge of the book as a whole, read on its own terms. . . . with an eye to several important questions, including: What is the book's fundamental aim? Central theme(s)? Presuppositions? Method(s)? Second, the review should engage the book critically and personally. . . . Is its argument cogent? How has the reading of this book shaped you? . . . Whenever possible, you should situate your critique of the book within the larger discussion of the subject [that is, for us, the ministry of evangelism]."

Given the limited length of your review, it is to be **succinct** and **to the point**. You would thus need to be very **selective** of the themes and topics to critically reflect on. What I would hope to see are indications of **your thorough reading of the text** and of **your critical engagement with it**. Also you are to briefly share how the text has shaped and affected **your own understanding and practice of evangelism**.

(3) Integrative Research Paper:

A carefully integrated and researched paper of around **2,750 words** (1.5-spaced) **plus** appropriate footnotes and bibliography is **due on Tuesday noon, May 20**.

The focus of the paper is to be on constructing *one's own understanding of evangelism, which is biblically and theologically grounded*. Students are to wrestle with the understanding of the gospel and with the issues of motivation and substance of evangelism, reflecting on how their own view of the gospel might shape the way it is communicated. They are also to provide observations and interpretations of the current state of the church and the cultural characteristics of North America today. **The paper should reflect a working knowledge of resources currently available.** In addition to **careful research**, students are to engage various aspects of the course learning, including the readings, in an integrative way.

(4) *Holy Conversation on Christian Faith:*

Students are to find a conversation partner who is not a Christian as explained in Richard Peace, *Holy Conversation* (see Introduction). Throughout the semester they are to engage in holy, evangelistic conversation with the person (at least three times), sharing their faith with him or her in a gentle and respectful way; and to write a reflection (1 single-spaced page). It is **due on April 22**.

(5) *Reflection on a Biblical Understanding of the Gospel and Evangelism:*

Each student will choose and study one or two books in the New Testament with an eye for understanding the biblical meaning of the gospel and evangelism, and will provide **a single-spaced 1 page reflection**. The reflections are **due either on March 11 or 18** and will be presented in class (20 minutes). Morna Hooker's *Not Ashamed of the Gospel* would be a good resource to refer to.

(6) *Group Presentation on a Contemporary Evangelism Model:*

Small groups (of 2 to 3) would work together to prepare a 25-minute presentation on a "Contemporary Evangelism Model." They are to choose a congregation that demonstrates an integral and effective practice of evangelism, and to examine its central model of evangelism, providing a comprehensive theological reflection on the content and strategy of the model as well as its strengths and weaknesses. If feasible, a site-visit is strongly encouraged.

PowerPoint or equivalent technology is to be used for **in-class presentation on May 6 (Groups 1–2) and May 13 (Groups 3–5)**. The more inventive, coherent, and insightful your presentation, the more likely the class will be interested and responsive. A grade will be given for each group.

WRITTEN WORK:

All written work must be typed with 12-point font. It will be evaluated on the basis of (1) clarity of the writing, (2) critical interaction with the text, and (3) the student's own integrative reflection. There will be a penalty for late papers commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE:

In accordance with MTSO's policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

PLAGIARISM:

Plagiarism is a serious matter of academic, professional, and personal integrity. All students at the masters level are expected to understand the requirement to provide attribution when the work of others is used. Students are also expected to be familiar with and understand the

school's policy on Academic Misconduct found in the Student Handbook. If a student has questions about attribution, citation, and how to avoid plagiarism they should consult the course instructor, the school's writing instructor, or library staff. When in doubt it is better to provide attribution even if one is uncertain about the proper citation form. Please note that **plagiarism includes self-plagiarism**—that is, students may not utilize work submitted for one class in another class. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that results in disciplinary actions per the Student Handbook that may range from failing an assignment or course to expulsion.

EVALUATION:

- 10% Class Attendance and Contribution
- 10% Completion of the Reading Assignments (based on discussion questions [posted on Sakai], quizzes, and participation in class discussions)
- 25% Integrative Paper
- 30% Three Critical Book Reviews (10x3)
- 10% Reflection on a Biblical Understanding of Evangelism
- 5% Reflection on Holy Conversation
- 10% Group Presentation on a Contemporary Evangelism Model

GRADING STANDARDS:

- A (94%), A- (90%):
Superlative work that demonstrates a profound commitment to the course material, and excellence in thinking and performance as well as depth of insight.
- B+ (87%), B (84%), B- (80%):
Very good work that completely fulfills all the requirements of the course in a conscientious and dedicated manner, and that demonstrates good mastery of the course content.
- C+ to C-:
Satisfactory work that fulfills all the requirements of the course in an acceptable manner, but that falls short of demonstrating rigor and mastery.
- D+ to D-:
Unsatisfactory work that reflects poor thinking and performance as well as lack of clear comprehension and understanding of the subject.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

- **February 4** (Week 1)
 - Overview of the Course**
 - Definitions of Evangelism:**
“What Is Your Understanding/Definition of Evangelism?”
- **February 11** (Week 2)
 - Assignments:**
 - Reading** of Jones, *The Christ of the Indian Road* (Discussion Questions)
 - Reading** of Mortimer Arias, “That the World May Believe,” *International Review of Mission* 65 (1976)

- Life of a Witness: Theology and Ministry of E. Stanley Jones
- Discussion of Arias, “That the World May Believe”
- Sharing of “Conversion” Stories (1)

➤ **February 18** (Week 3)

Assignments:

- Critical Book Review** of Newbigin, *Proper Confidence*
- Proper Confidence in the Gospel for Evangelism
- What Is the Gospel?
- What Is Conversion?
- Place of Evangelism within the Mission of the Church
- Sharing of “Conversion” Stories (2)

➤ **February 25** (Week 4)

Assignments:

- Reading** of Joon-Sik Park, “Evangelism and the Practice of Hospitality” (in *Considering the Great Commission: Evangelism and Mission in the Wesleyan Spirit*, ed. Stephen Gunter [Nashville: Abingdon, 2005])
- Reading** of Peace, *Holy Conversation* (Intro. & Chs. 1–3)
- Theological Foundations for Evangelism
- Evangelism and the Practice of Hospitality
- Evangelism as Holy Conversation
- Sharing of “Conversion” Stories (3)

Recommended Reading:

- Abraham, William J. *The Logic of Evangelism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989.
- Costas, Orlando E. *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.
- Green, Michael. *Evangelism in the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970.
- Logan, James C., ed. *Theology and Evangelism in the Wesleyan Heritage*. Nashville: Kingswood, 1994.
- Morris, Leon. *The Cross of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Paul, John II. *On the Permanent Validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate: Redemptoris Missio*. Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1990.
- Sider, Ronald J. *Good News and Good Works*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1999.

➤ **March 4** (Week 5)

Assignments:

- Reading** of Peace, *Holy Conversation* (Ch. 4)
- Biblical Foundations for Evangelism (1)
- Guest Speaker:
Dr. Sergei V. Nikolaev, President and E. Stanley Jones Professor of Evangelism at Moscow Theological Seminary of the UMC
- Practice of “Holy Conversation” (1)

➤ **March 11** (Week 6)

Assignments:

- **Reflection Paper** on a **Biblical Understanding of the Gospel & Evangelism**
- **Reading** of Peace, *Holy Conversation* (Ch. 6)
- **Biblical Foundations for Evangelism** (2)
- **Presentations on Biblical Understanding of the Gospel & Evangelism** (1)
- **Practice of “Holy Conversation”** (2)

Recommended Reading:

Brueggemann, Walter. *Biblical Perspectives on Evangelism: Living in a Three-Storeyed Universe*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1993.
 Klaiber, Walter. *Call and Response: Biblical Foundations of a Theology of Evangelism*. Trans. Howard Perry-Trauthig and James A. Dwyer. Nashville: Abingdon, 1997.

➤ **March 18** (Week 7)

Assignments:

- **Reflection Paper** on a **Biblical Understanding of the Gospel & Evangelism**
- **Reading** of Peace, *Holy Conversation* (Ch. 8)
- **Biblical Foundations for Evangelism** (3)
- **Presentations on Biblical Understanding of the Gospel & Evangelism** (3)
- **Practice of “Holy Conversation”** (3)

➤ **March 25** (Week 8)

Assignments:

- **Reading** of Logan, *How Great a Flame* (Discussion Questions)
- **Reading** of Fox and Morris, *Faith-Sharing* (Quiz)
- **Reading** of Peace, *Holy Conversation* (Ch. 10)
- **Wesleyan Evangelism**
- **Discussion of *Faith-Sharing***
- **The Language of the Gospel for Faith-Sharing**
- **Practice of “Holy Conversation”** (4)

Recommended Reading:

Escamilla, Roberto. *Come to the Feast: Invitational Evangelism*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1998.
 Johnson, Ben Campbell. *Speaking of God: Evangelism as Initial Spiritual Guide*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991.
 Jones, E. Stanley. *Conversion*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1957; rpt., 1992.
 Wesley, John. “Salvation by Faith (Sermon 1–1738); “Original Sin (Sermon 44–1759); “The New Birth (Sermon 45–1760).

➤ **April 1** (Week 9)

Assignments:

- **Critical Review** of Murray, *Church Planting*
- **Reading** of *Fresh Expressions in the Mission of the Church* (Ch. 1)
- **Reading** of Peace, *Holy Conversation* (Ch. 11)

- Church Planting
- Fresh Expressions of the Church
- Practice of “Holy Conversation” (5)

➤ **April 8** (Mid-Term Recess)

➤ **April 15** (Holy Week Break)

➤ **April 22** (Week 10)

Assignments:

- Reflection paper** on “Holy Conversation”

—Reflective Sharing about “Holy Conversation”

—**Guest Speaker:**

Rev. Kevin Koske, Church in the Mall, Heath, Ohio

➤ **April 29** (Week 11)

Assignments:

- Critical Book Review** of Reese, *Unbinding the Gospel*
- Reading** of “The Call to Action Steering Team Report”
- Reading** of W. Willimon, “*Evangelism in the Twenty-First Century: Mainliners at the Margins*”

—Discussion of *Unbinding the Gospel*

—The Current State of the Mainline Church

—Evangelism and the Renewal of the Church

➤ **May 6** (Week 12)

Assignments:

- Reading** of “Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World”

—Inter-religious Dialogue

—Group Presentations on a *Contemporary Evangelism Model* (Groups 1–2)

Recommended Reading:

Hunt, Stephen. *The Alpha Enterprise: Evangelism in a Post-Christian Era*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004.

Ramachandra, Vinoth. *Faiths in Conflict?: Christian Integrity in a Multicultural World*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000.

Richardson, Rick. *Evangelism Outside the Box: New Ways to Help People Experience the Good News*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000.

➤ **May 13** (Week 13)

Assignments:

- Final Integrative Research Paper Due for Graduating Seniors**

—Group Presentations on a *Contemporary Evangelism Model* (Groups 3–5)

—Conclusion

—Evaluation

- **Monday, May 20** (Week 14)
Assignments:
–**Final Integrative Research Paper**

Please See Student Handbook for Sections Providing Policy Details on the Following:

ADA—MTSO seeks to remove barriers to inclusion in its learning communities. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs at the beginning of the semester. Please contact the Director of Student Services to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any accommodation must be agreed upon prior to the due date of the affected course requirement.

Electronic Devices—Turn mobile devices off or “vibrate only” during class. Browsing the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class is discouraged. Instructors have the right to impose grading penalties for disruptions due to electronic devices.

Human Subjects Research—Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.

Incompletes—To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must submit the petition form from the Registrar with all signatures to the Dean’s Office before the last day of regularly scheduled classes. See Student Handbook for intensive term deadlines. Any petition submitted without a due date for outstanding work will be denied. If work is not complete by the due date the Registrar will record the grade of F for the course.

Pass/Fail—The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course by completing the appropriate form available through the Registrar. To receive a grade of "pass" the student must do at least the equivalent of C minus work in the course.