

PERSECUTION & MARTYRDOM YESTERDAY & TODAY
HIST 6358/THEO 6358/MISS 6358
SPRING 2015
THURSDAY 2-4:50

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I. Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

II. Core Values Focus

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically in that the course is designed to prepare the student to grow in the understanding and interpreting of the Word of God. Characteristic Excellence is also addressed in that the student should be as prepared as possible to be ministers for Christ. Mission Focus is emphasized in that interpreting the Bible is a key element in presenting the Good News of the Gospel to the world. Proper interpretation is vital in fulfilling the Great Commission. This course addresses the competency of Biblical Exposition by preparing the student to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately. The Core Value for the academic year 2014-2015 is Spiritual Vitality.

III. Curriculum Competencies Addressed

The Seminary has seven key competencies in its academic program. They are: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Discipleship Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. The key competencies addressed in this course are Christian Theological Heritage and Disciple Making.

IV. Course Description:

This course examines persecution and martyrdom and the resulting theology of suffering in the early church and in the contemporary world in various global settings. The course follows a seminar-based and student-led format with intense reading, discussion, research, and writing. Can be taken as HIST6358, THEO 6358 or MISS6358.

V. Student Learning Objectives:

By the completion of this course, students should be able to:

- **Understand** early and contemporary Christian experiences of persecution and martyrdom
- Be able to **apply** knowledge of persecution and martyrdom in the early church and the contemporary world to the situation of the American church
- Be able to **communicate** principles learned about persecution and martyrdom in the early church and in the contemporary world

VI. Required Texts:

These are the required textbooks for this class:

Boyd-MacMillan, Ronald. *Faith that Endures: The Essential Guide to the Persecuted Church*. (Out of print, but used copies are available inexpensively)

Garrison, David. *Wind in the House of Islam: How God Is Drawing Muslims around the World to Faith in Jesus Christ*.

Litfin, Bryan. *Early Christian Martyr Stories*.

Ripken, Nik. *Insanity of Obedience*.

Recommended Texts

Ton, Iosef. *Suffering, Martyrdom, and Rewards in Heaven*. (On reserve in the library)

Ripken, Nik. "Servants in the Crucible." Unpublished text will be provided to the students.

There will be additional required reading from primary sources that are available on the Internet.

Also, each student will be encouraged to read *The Voice of the Martyrs* at <http://www.persecution.com/> and to pray for suffering Christians worldwide.

VII. Requirements:

A. Background Papers: These papers are intended to be prepared by students and presented in class as teaching tools. Each paper will be six to ten pages long and written according to standard guidelines (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins, etc.) and include a bibliography of at least six resources (textbooks, reference books, and the Internet are allowed, but you must consult a minimum of three monographs as well).

All papers are due on **February 12**. Presentation dates will be set later. Submit your background paper on the Discussion Board.

The topics for these papers will be assigned by the end of the first day of class:

- Imperial Persecution during the First Century after Christ
- The Martyrdom of Polycarp
- Justin: Apologist and Martyr
- The Martyrs of Lyons and Vienne
- Tertullian and Martyrdom
- Cyprian
- Voluntary Martyrdom
- The Great Persecution
- The Conversion of Constantine and the End of Persecution of Christians
- Relics, Pilgrimages and Other Superstitions Arising from Martyrdom
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- Elliot, Saint and the missionaries to the Aucas
- Richard Wurmbrand
- Bill Wallace of China
- Brother Andrew
- Martin & Gracia Burnham
- The Yemen Four SBC martyrs
- Communist state sponsored persecution of Christians in Cuba, China, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Vietnam, or name a state.
- The suppression of educational, financial and human rights as a form of persecution of Christians in (pick a world system).
- Cultural persecution as exemplified in treatment of Gypsies, Kurds, Berbers or others and how it intertwines with persecution of the Christian faithful.

Both the Background Paper and the Major Research Paper will be evaluated as follows:

1. Grammar and style: Spelling, sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; and conformity to the 6th or 7th edition of Turabian. (20 points)
2. Clarity and Coherence: Balance; thoroughness; organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper. (20 points)
3. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary, monographs, journal articles, websites, etc.); most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations. (20 points)
4. Historical Awareness and Insight: Factual accuracy; awareness of historical connections (continuity/discontinuity, cause/effect, contrasts/comparisons); sensitivity to historical context; awareness of the historical impact of a person. (20 points)
5. Analysis and Evaluation: Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of strengths and weakness of a person; demonstration that you have thought about the material that you have researched. Give strong and insightful introduction and conclusion. (20 points)

Safe Assignment: Blackboard offers a service known as “SafeAssignment.” Every written assignment will be submitted as a First Draft to Safe Assignment before the Final Copy is submitted for grading.

If you click on “Assignments” on the left menu, you will be directed to a link for each written assignment and, thereafter, to another link that says “View/Complete.” Follow the instructions there to submit a draft of each paper for review.

A paper submitted through this service will be compared to other papers in the database and checked for the percentage of copying from other sources. Your work will not be used for any purpose other than preventing plagiarism in the Seminary and other participating institutions. Ownership of the intellectual property contained in your written work will not be transferred to any third party.

Your paper will be assessed for the amount of material copied from other sources and returned to you. The highlighted passages do not indicate plagiarism necessarily, but they point out the percentage of your paper that can be found in other sources. You need to be sure that you properly quote and cite such passages, and you may need to put more of your paper in your own words.

By the way, you probably will find that your footnotes and bibliographical entries are highlighted. That should be expected, since the papers in the database also cite the same sources that you use.

B. *Major Research Paper*: Each student will consult with the professors to select a topic that relates to one or more of the emphases of this course. The topic *could be* a development and expansion of the student’s research in the background paper. Fifteen to twenty pages in length, the paper should demonstrate the student’s ability to think clearly and critically, engage in responsible research, dialogue objectively with differing viewpoints, reach defensible conclusions, and write in an acceptable style (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins, etc.). A selected bibliography should accompany the paper. **Due April 2.** Submit your major research paper on the Discussion Board.

C. *Book Review*: Each student will write a book review. Choose your book from the bibliography at the end of this syllabus. Submit 3-5 choices in order of preference, and send them by email to Dr. Butler. See above for the email address. He will assign your book to you so that there are no duplications.

The review should be between five to six double-spaced typewritten pages in length. Bibliographical information should appear at the top of the first page of the review. The review also should contain: 1) a brief summary [one to two pages] of the contents of the book, 2) a statement of the author’s purpose and the extent to which the purpose was realized, 3) a statement regarding the book’s uniqueness, 4) a description of the author’s style, 5) a description of the author’s biases, and 6) a concluding evaluation. **Due April 30.**

D. *Reflection Paper*: Each student will write a 3 page, double spaced reflection paper of the development on their thoughts of Christian suffering in the early church and contemporary world. The student will reflect carefully on thoughts and assumptions before the course on this subject, how those thoughts grew or changed during the course, and the influence the knowledge attained in the course will have on their

practice of ministry in the twenty-first century. Attention should be given to how the information in the course applies to ministry today. **Due May 7.**

E. *Assigned Reading & Class Discussion:* Students are expected to read the assigned pages listed for each class period as well as the others' papers. Our class meetings will be conducted seminar-style, and all students will participate in the discussions of the readings and students' papers.

F. *Prayer for Martyrs:* Each week, students will review stories of Christian suffering in the contemporary world printed in *The Voice of the Martyrs* at <http://www.persecution.com/>. You will examine these stories according to the Matrix of Persecution/Persecutors and come prepared to discuss them in class. You are encouraged to pray individually and corporately for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering for the advance of the Kingdom of God throughout world that is increasingly hostile to the Gospel.

G. *EXTRA POINT ASSIGNMENT:* Students may earn up from 2-5 points applied to the final grade by registering for, participating in, and documenting the 2015 Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum. Documentation will take the form of a reflection paper, which will consist of three parts: 1) A critical assessment of the two positions in light of your understanding of a Christian Worldview; 2) A summation of your position (as of now) on the issue; 3a) Your assessment of the future likelihood of persecution from various forces, which such a position as stated in part 2 might elicit in American society; and 3b) How would you respond to such persecution and such persecutors?

VIII. Penalties:

Attendance: No student who misses more than nine classroom hours – or the equivalent of three class meetings – can receive credit for this course. Three occasions of arriving late for class or leaving early will count as one absence. For more information, see the online Graduate Catalog: <http://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/GraduateCatalog.pdf>

Tardiness: A late project assignment will be assessed a **10 percent penalty if it is submitted after the deadline and a 20 percent penalty after five days. No assignment will be accepted after one week past the deadline.**

Plagiarism: New Orleans Baptist Seminary maintains high academic standards and is not tolerant of plagiarism. If you copy another author's work and present it as your own, you will be caught, and the penalty could be failure on that assignment or the course or expulsion from the Seminary. **See the Graduate Catalog for more information on the Definition of Plagiarism and Consequences for Violations of Plagiarism.**

IX. Grading:

Background Paper:	20%
Major Research Paper:	40%
Book Review:	20%
Reflection Paper	10%
Reading & Discussion:	<u>10%</u>
	100%

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