

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centered graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigor and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Course	GOSPEL, CHURCH AND CULTURE: MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE POSTMODERN WORLD MISS 0782 1P
Date and Time	SEPTEMBER 12 – DECEMBER 5, 2024 THURSDAYS 11:15 AM – 2:05 PM IN-PERSON ONLY
Instructor	RYAN SEOW, PhD (cand.) Email: ryan.seow@tyndale.ca
Class Information	This course will be delivered in-person on Thursdays from 11:15 AM – 2:05 PM. Office Hours: By appointment via email
Course Material	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Preparing missional leaders requires careful examination of the ideologies and cultural milieu of contemporary society. This course examines the main features of the postmodern culture, the meaning of faithfulness to the gospel, the good news of God’s salvation, and the nature and mission of the church. The church’s witness and service to the world is studied not as one of the functions of the church but as its essential nature. Missional leadership takes seriously the calling of all God’s people to minister in every sphere of life as faithful witnesses to the gospel of salvation.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- A. Apply an in-depth biblical-theological interpretation of the gospel.
- B. Theologically examine the relationship between the gospel, the kingdom of God and the church.
- C. Articulate the nature of the people of God as a sign, instrument, and foretaste of the kingdom of God.
- D. Analyze how culture shapes our understanding of the gospel, church, and ministry.
- E. Develop categories and concepts for socio-cultural analysis of specific ministry and vocational contexts.
- F. Identify major dynamics of Canadian culture, including an exploration of the meaning and implications of late/post-modernity for the church's witness and service.
- G. Evaluate how the gospel and church can address a multiethnic, pluralistic culture.
- H. Integrate theological insights with socio-cultural analysis in developing a theology to inform the church's response to its local context.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

1. Newbigin, Lesslie. [*Foolishness to the Greeks*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986. (ISBN 0-8028-0176-5)
2. Tizon, Al. [*Whole and Reconciled*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018. (ISBN 978-0-8010-9562-7)
3. Van Gelder, Craig. [*The Essence of the Church*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000. (ISBN 0-8010-9096-2)
4. Selected articles posted on the course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca or accessed through the internet.

NOTE: The three main texts above are available as e-books through Tyndale's library and can be read online or downloaded to Adobe Digital Editions.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

1. Adler, Mortimer J., and Charles Van Doren. *How to Read a Book*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972. (ISBN 0-6712-1209-5)

Tyndale recommends www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

All assignments require careful completion of the readings in conjunction with consideration of their relationship to the ideas presented in the lectures. It is expected that students will complete the assigned reading **prior** to the scheduled lecture for the week.

Detailed information for each assignment including rubrics will be posted on the course resource page.

1. **Modernity Paper:** Due on Friday, **October 18, 2024**; 25% of final grade.

This is a 1250-word paper on the culture of modernity and its impact on the church. Papers will respond to the question, “What are the main features of modernity, and how do they impact the life and ministry of the church in your context?”

2. **Online Discussion Forums:** Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10; 20% of final grade.

Online discussions are opportunities to critically reflect on the lectures and readings, share ideas with your peers, and benefit from the ideas presented by your colleagues. The aim is to make this a collaborative learning experience that functions as a prototype of how the church as the body of Christ is intended to operate.

NOTE: Posting to forums on time is crucial for facilitating discussion and giving your peers enough time to read and respond to your work. Posts submitted late will only be eligible for half credit (i.e. “D” grade).

3. **Class Group Work Participation:** Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12; 10% of final grade.

On the weeks listed above, a portion of class time will be dedicated to work in groups. Group work provides an opportunity to engage the course material critically in collaboration with your colleagues. The purpose is to allow you to experience how our community’s cross-cultural and denominational backgrounds can help to broaden your perspective on areas where the gospel needs to challenge us, the church, and the society we live in.

4. Final Integration Paper: Due on Friday, **December 6, 2024**; 45% of final grade.

This is a 3000-word final paper that integrates central ideas from the readings and lectures with your own ministry context. Papers should respond to the question, “What is the role of the church in communicating the gospel faithfully in postmodern culture, within your context?” The paper should draw on the course material including all assigned readings.

Please refer to the course resource page for detailed information and the rubric for each assignment.

E. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

F. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Modernity Paper	25%
Online Discussion Forums	20%
Class Group Work Participation	10%
Final Integration Paper	45%
Total Grade	100%

Late Work

Grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from “A” to “B+,” or from “B” to “C+”). Online Discussion Forum work submitted late will only be eligible for half credit (i.e. “D” grade).

G. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

For proper citation style, consult the [tip sheet, “Documenting Chicago Style”](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially ch. 14. For citing scripture texts, refer to sections 10.44 to 10.48 and 14.238 to 14.241 from the *Chicago Manual of Style* or reference the [tip sheet, “How to Cite Sources in Theology”](#).

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details.

Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#). Citation and other [tip sheets](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (aau@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

I. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

*Assigned readings for each week are to be completed **before** class.*

Week 1: ***Introduction: What is Culture?***

Week 2: ***The Culture of the Early Church***
 The Christendom Era

Readings:
Newbigin, [Foolishness to the Greeks](#), Chapters 1&2

Week 3: ***Modernity I***

Readings:
Newbigin, [Foolishness to the Greeks](#), Chapters 3&4
Selected Articles

Week 4: ***Modernity II***

Readings:
Newbigin, [Foolishness to the Greeks](#), Chapters 5&6
Selected Articles

Week 5: ***Postmodernity I***

Readings:
Selected Articles

Week 6: ***Postmodernity II***

Readings:
Tizon, [Whole and Reconciled](#), Introduction & Chapters 1-3

OCTOBER 21-25 READING WEEK (NO CLASS MEETING)

Week 7: ***The Gospel and the Kingdom of God***

Readings:
Tizon, [Whole and Reconciled](#), Chapters 4-5

Week 8: ***The Nature of the Church***

Readings:
Van Gelder, [The Essence of the Church](#), Chapters 1-4

Week 9: ***The Ministry of the Church***

Readings:
Van Gelder, [The Essence of the Church](#), Chapters 5-7

Week 10: *Mission and the Church*

Readings:

Tizon, [Whole and Reconciled](#), Chapters 6-8

Week 11: *Reconciliation and Mission*

Readings:

Tizon, [Whole and Reconciled](#), Chapters 9-11 & Conclusion

**Week 12: *Vocation and Ministry in Daily Life*
*Communicating the Gospel in the Contemporary Canadian Context***

Readings:

Selected Articles

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

([Tyndale Library](#) supports this course with [e-journals](#), [e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#)).

Adams, Michael. *Sex in the Snow: Canadian Social Values at the End of the Millennium*. Toronto, ON: Penguin, 1998.

Adeney, Frances S. *Women and Christian Mission: Ways of Knowing and Doing Theology*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2015.

Bauckham, Richard. *Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003.

Bauman, Zygmunt. [Liquid Modernity](#). Cambridge: Polity, 2000.

Bevans, Stephen B. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1992.

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- Bolger, Ryan K. *The Gospel after Christendom: New Voices, New Cultures, New Expressions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012.
- *Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991.
- *Branson, Mark Lau, and Alan J. Roxburgh. *Leadership, God's Agency, and Disruptions: Confronting Modernity's Wager*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2021.
- Branson, Mark Lau, and Juan F. Martínez. *Churches, Cultures, and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011.
- Chilcote, Paul Wesley, and Lacey C. Warner. *The Study of Evangelism: Exploring a Missional Practice of the Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Clapp, Rodney. [*A Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society*](#). Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996.
- Cormode, Scott. *The Innovative Church: How Leaders and Their Congregations Can Adapt in an Ever-Changing World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020.
- Goheen, Michael W. *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.
- Goheen, Michael W., and Timothy M. Sheridan. *Becoming a Missionary Church: Lesslie Newbigin and Contemporary Church Movements*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2022.
- Grenz, Stanley J. [*A Primer on Postmodernism*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Guder, Darrell L. *Called to Witness: Doing Missional Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015.
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- Harvey, Barry. [*Another City: An Ecclesiological Primer for a Post-Christian World*](#). Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999.
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- Hunsberger, George R. *The Story That Chooses Us: A Tapestry of Missional Vision*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.
- Hunsberger, George R., and Craig van Gelder, eds. *Church Between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Iyer, Pico. *The Global Soul: Jet Lag, Shopping Malls, and the Search for Home*. Toronto, ON: Random House, 2000.
- *Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Kraemer, Hendrik. *A Theology of the Laity*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1958.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. [Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada](#). New York, NY: Routledge, 1990.
- Lyon, David. [Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in Postmodern Times](#). Oxford, UK: Polity, 2000.
- Myers, Bryant L. *Engaging Globalization: The Poor, Christian Mission, and Our Hyperconnected World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017.
- Nelson, Gary V. *Borderland Churches: A Congregation's Introduction to Missional Living*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2008.
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- * _____. [The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989.
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- Posterski, Don, and Gary Nelson. [Future Faith Churches: Reconnecting with the Power of the Gospel for the 21st Century](#). Kelowna, BC: Wood Lake Books, 1997.

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*** An asterisk marks books of major importance for the topic.**