

“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 1A
Date and Delivery Format	JANUARY 13 – APRIL 11, 2025 ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Instructor	WAFIK WAHBA, PhD Telephone: (416) 226-6620 ext. 2132 Email: wwahba@tyndale.ca
Class Information	This course is designed to be asynchronous. Lectures are posted online so students can learn based on their own schedule; the same flexibility is built into the weekly forum discussions. The professor plays an active role in moderating discussion, guiding research, and introducing topics and resources. 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:

1. Apply an in-depth biblical-theological interpretation of the Gospel.
2. Examine theologically the relationship between the Gospel, the Kingdom of God and the Church.
3. Demonstrate the nature and mission of the people of God as a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.
4. Analyze how culture shapes our understanding of Gospel, Church and ministry.
5. Formulate categories and concepts for cultural-social analysis of specific ministry context.
6. 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.
7. Evaluate how the Gospel and the Church can address a multiethnic, pluralistic culture, using Toronto as a case study.
8. Integrate theological insights with cultural-social 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: Gospel, Church, and Mission in a Fragmented World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2018. (ISBN Paper: 9780801095627/ ISBN E-book: 9781493415526)
3. Van Gelder, Craig. *The Essence of the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000. (ISBN 0-8010-9096-2)
4. Selected articles to be posted on the course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca or accessed through the internet.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

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

Careful completion of the assigned readings **in advance**, in conjunction with reflecting on their relation to the ideas presented in the lectures. It is expected that students will read all of the assigned reading prior to the scheduled lecture of the week.

More information regarding the assignments is posted on the course webpage.

1. Reflection Paper: Due on Friday, February 14, 2025; 25% of final grade.

1000-word reflection paper on the culture of modernity and its impact on the life and ministry of the church.

2. Discussion Comments: Dates vary; 25% of final grade.

Attendance in this course is demonstrated by regular logins and up-to-date participation in forums.

Discussion forums are a key aspect of this course. They are your opportunity to relate and reflect on major themes being studied, to share your ideas with your peers, and benefit from the ideas presented by your colleagues in the group. The purpose of this activity 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. The aim is to make this a collaborative learning experience that functions as a prototype of how the church as body of Christ is intended to operate.

3. Integrative Term Paper: Due on Friday, April 4, 2025; 50% of final grade.

A 3000-word integrative term paper which applies central ideas from the readings and class discussions to your own ministry.

The integrative paper should:

- Focus on the main thesis: “what is the role of the church in communicating the message of the gospel in the postmodern context of North America.”
- Draw on course material, including all assigned readings and lectures.
- Interact with key ideas about the nature of Gospel and its relation to culture.
- Provide your own personal reflections and constructive suggestions related to specific implications of a missional paradigm for holistic ministry.
- Suggest possible obstacles or assets in embracing such a paradigm.

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:

Reflection Paper	25%
Discussion Comments	25%
Integrative Term Paper	50%
Total Grade	100%

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, “Citing 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 polices 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 (aa@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

H. 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

Pre-reading is expected prior to start of class. Late registrants are responsible for the consequences of partial preparation.

Week 1: Introduction: What is Culture?

Readings:

Al Tizon, *Whole and Reconciled*, Chapter 1.

Week 2: The Culture of the Early Church Church & Mission after Christendom

Readings:

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

Week 3: Modernity I

Readings:

Newbigin, [Foolishness to the Greeks](#), Chapters 3 & 4.

Week 4: Modernity II

Readings:

Newbigin, [Foolishness to the Greeks](#), Chapters 5 & 6.

Week 5: Postmodernity I

Readings:

Al Tizon, *Whole and Reconciled*, Chapter 2.
Selected Articles

Feb 17 – 21 Reading Break (No Class Work)

Week 6: Postmodernity II

Readings:

Al Tizon, *Whole and Reconciled*, Chapter 3.
Selected Articles

Week 7: The Gospel and the Kingdom of God

Readings:

Al 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: A Missional Understanding of the Church

Readings:

Al Tizon, *Whole and Reconciled*, Chapters 8 & 9.

Week 11: Reconciling the World to God

Readings:

Al Tizon, *Whole and Reconciled*, Chapters 6 & 7.
Selected Articles

Week 12: Vocation and Ministry in Daily Life

Reading:

Al Tizon, *Whole and Reconciled*, Chapters 10 & 11.

Selected Articles

The Church's Responsibility in Communicating the Gospel in Contemporary Canadian Context

Readings:

Selected Articles

Assigned readings for each week are to be done prior to the class.

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](#)).

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