

**WESTERN SEMINARY  
Portland, Oregon 97215**

**PTS 737L -- LEADING A MISSIONAL CHURCH IN A POST-CHRISTIAN AGE**

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March 17-20, 2008

**SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

How do we accomplish the mission of Jesus in a post-Christian society which is increasingly individualistic, lonely, and depressed, where the primary goal is to fulfill every desire? Instead of preaching a mere personal relationship with God, Jesus followers need to engage the whole person in their whole context with the whole gospel. Reformissional churches combine solidly orthodox theology with culturally relevant methods and practice without succumbing to the twin pitfalls of syncretism (being so culturally irrelevant that you lose your message) and sectarianism (being so culturally irrelevant that you lose your mission). The goal is to renew churches so they combine attractational and incarnational, moving from seeking decisions to making disciples who minister the gospel of Jesus as missional communities.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Mark Driscoll, *Radical Reformation*  
James Herrick, *The Making of the New Spirituality*  
Stephen Prothero, *Religious Literacy*  
John Stott *The Living Church: Convictions of a Lifelong Pastor*

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Mark Driscoll, *Confessions of a Reformation Rev*  
Robert Webber, *Listening to the Beliefs of Emerging Churches*  
Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*  
Stuart Murray, *After Christendom*  
Michael Frost, *Exiles: Living Missionally in a Post-Christian Culture*  
Ed Stetzer, *Breaking the Missional Code*

**COURSE GOALS**

Upon completion of this course each class member will be better able to

- A. articulate a biblically based, wisely developed ecclesiology and from that basis assess the current methodologies of church practice.
- B. assess the spiritual climate of his/her city.
- C. design a useful strategy to make his/her church more effective in communicating the whole gospel to the whole city.
- D. understand the nature and work of God and in so doing deepen devotional life and ministry. Specifically you will learn the importance of developing and applying a theocentric world view.

**FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME:**

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**RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Quality of Work

This is a postgraduate, doctoral level program. You will be expected to perform at that level in all you do. This means that I expect you to discipline yourself to do quality work and to do it on time. You will be expected to have interacted carefully with all assigned readings for the topics. From this basis you will participate in the class discussions to form a learning community. Anytime you make a classroom presentation you will be expected to demonstrate expertise in both content and methodology. Anytime you hand in written material, it must reflect quality in logic, good methodology, clarity, succinctness, spelling and punctuation and grammar. It is assumed that you are able to assess the quality of your work before you hand it in or before you present it in class. You are encouraged to consult with me before you make oral or written presentations in order to make sure you understand the assignment and/or to go over the first draft of your material. Much of the value of D.Min. study flows out of the contributions the course members and instructor make to each other from their experiences in ministry and from the effort they put into the work of the course itself. Plan to give your best.

- B. Pre-class Preparation

- 1. Reading Assignments

Read the four class texts in their entirety prior to class. Then take a couple hours per book to extend the research in the topic. You may do this research in other readings, on the internet or in conversation with people who know more about the topic than you. Email a

list of readings, resources, and site URL's that were helpful to you. Note that you can get virtually any book or article through your local public library using interlibrary loan. The assigned reading totals about 1000 pages. Following Western's policy they are to be read at the mastery level, averaging about 25 pages per hour. It assumes careful interaction with the ideas, note taking and will lead to accountability in class discussion at a mastery level. (40 hours of reading plus 10 hours of extra research).

Choose one excellent book addressing either the post-Christian culture or the missional church. Since currency is important, you will select a book that has been published in the last two or three years. Write a two page review of the book, equally divided between summary, assessment and how it could shape your ministry. (20 hours)

## 2. Video/Audio Materials

a. Make time to listen carefully to at least three of Tim Keller's sermons: One is his talk at the Gospel Coalition entitled *Gospel-Centered Ministry*. You can see the video at <http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/plenary.php> or download the video or audio file at [http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/plenary\\_downloads.php](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/plenary_downloads.php). The other is his talk at the Resurgence Conference entitled, *Being the Church in Our Culture*. You can get it at [http://theresurgence.com/profile\\_timothy\\_keller](http://theresurgence.com/profile_timothy_keller) or both the audio and the .pdf notes at [http://www.stevekmccoy.com/reformissionary/2005/07/tim\\_keller\\_arti.html](http://www.stevekmccoy.com/reformissionary/2005/07/tim_keller_arti.html) (Scroll down to the Reform & Resurgence heading). Select a third sermon according to your interests.

b. Make time to listen carefully to at least two of Mark Driscoll's Sermons: One is his sermon on *Building a City Within the City* in his Nehemiah series. You can view or download the video or audio file at [http://www.marshallchurch.org/sermonseries/nehemiah/week\\_01.aspx](http://www.marshallchurch.org/sermonseries/nehemiah/week_01.aspx). Select a second sermon according to your interests. Write a two page personal response to each of the two messages. Summarize his points in half a page and then show how using what he is teaching would shape your own ministry context.

Write a two page personal response to each of the three required messages, (two by Keller, one by Driscoll) . Summarize the points in half a page and then show how using what he is teaching would shape your own ministry context. (8 hours)

c. Living Hope Church in Vancouver, WA invited all the people of Portland and Vancouver to their 2007 Easter Service. The result was astonishing. I will mail a DVD of the service to you. Make time to enjoy watching it.

d. After you read the Herrick book, watch at least two Oprah shows. After you watch the first one, read Al Mohler's article, *The Church of Oprah Winfrey* ([http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article\\_main\\_page/0,1703,A%253D161438%2526M%253D200373,00.html](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0,1703,A%253D161438%2526M%253D200373,00.html)). Then watch at least one more show. Write a two page personal

response to the shows, summarizing specifics of her spirituality as comes out in the show and then addressing how you would start a conversation about the gospel to someone who loves Oprah. (4 hours)

e. Have coffee with a twenty something high school teacher in your city who has taught for more than two years. Ask him/her to summarize the pop culture on the local school campus. Write out a summary of the conversation. (2 hours)

f. Be prepared to lead the discussion of one of these assigned video/audio topics. You may sign up on a first come, first served basis.

C. Post Class Application Project (due by May 1, 2008).

1. Prepare a set of lessons or sermons that address the topic of the missional church in a post-Christian environment. Send copies of your notes, lesson plans or sermon outline, handouts, etc. to me.
2. Develop a strategic plan that addresses how your church could become more missional. Define key terms, identify concrete goals and outline steps to achieve these goals with a beginning and an end point.

## **FINAL GRADE**

Grades for Doctor of Ministry courses are assigned on the standard A-F system. Accompanying the letter grade will be a written evaluation of your work in this course.

You will be asked to complete an evaluation of the course. Instructions will be provided by the D.Min. Director.