

921.615 Theology of Suffering & Hope
Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

Campus: Auckland and Christchurch
Lecturer: Mark McConnell

Semester 1, 2015
NQF Level: 6, 15 credits

CONTENT OVERVIEW:

- The “problem” of suffering
- Suffering in Scripture
- Theological approaches to suffering
- The suffering of God
- The relevance of the incarnation and the vicarious humanity of Christ
- Suffering understood according to faith, hope and love
- Resurrection and hope

ASSESSMENT TASKS AND DUE DATES:

1. Critical Reflection

Auckland due date: end of week 5 (29th March 2015)

Christchurch due date: end of week 5 (29th March 2015)

Word count: 1750

Value: 30%

Learning Outcomes 2 & 3

Write a reflection on a psalm of lament, comparing and contrasting its themes to those of a movie and/or novel that feature similar themes. Use examples from each to illustrate your key reflections. Your reflection should also include a discussion of how the themes highlighted have been reflected in your own life.

2. Critical Essay

Auckland due date: end of week 9 (17th May 2015)

Christchurch due date: end of week 9 (17th May 2015)

Word count: 2000

Value: 50%

Learning Outcomes 1 & 4

Write a critical response to the question raised by Tom Wright in *Surprised by Hope*: “The church is called to a mission of implementing Jesus’ resurrection, and thereby anticipating the final new creation. What might that look like?” (p. 224).

Your essay should seek to answer Wright’s question with particular reference to the context of suffering. In other words, what would it look like to anticipate the final new creation given the realities of a suffering world? Your essay should critically engage with Wright’s theological perspective and also consider the connection between one’s theology of suffering and one’s understanding of hope. This will therefore require you to consider a range of theological approaches to suffering by both contemporary and classical theologians.

3. Group discussion and report

Auckland due date: end of week 11 (31st May 2015)

Christchurch due date: end of week 11 (31st May 2015)

Word count: 1000

Value: 20%

Learning Outcome 3

Tell your story to your reading group. Your story should highlight moments you experienced suffering and moments you experienced hope. Discuss the importance of human relationships in your story. Your story should draw analogies from film, television or literature.

Write a report of your group experience that includes the following:

- a summary of your story;
- a brief discussion of how you used analogies from film, television or literature;
- your reflections on the group's engagement with your story, and an evaluation of your own response;
- your reflections on your own engagement with other students' stories.

GRADING CRITERIA

Critical Reflection

- Evidence of sound engagement with the text of scripture, and with the movie and/or novel
- Ability to integrate a discussion of scripture with a discussion of film or literature
- Self-awareness and transparency, and a willingness to reflect honestly and openly
- Ability to integrate personal reflection with scriptural and literary themes
- Presents clear structure, logical arrangement of ideas and valid conclusions
- Exhibits appropriate communication and presentation: clarity, format, spelling, grammar, annotation and bibliography

Critical Essay

- Research that engages thoroughly with a broad range of theological approaches
- Evidence of engagement with the key text
- Understanding of the essay question
- Depth of treatment
- Presents clear structure, logical arrangement of ideas and valid conclusions
- Exhibits appropriate communication and presentation: clarity, format, spelling, grammar, annotation and bibliography

Group discussion and report

- Attendance at weekly group discussions
- The construction and telling of a personal story that highlights suffering and hope
- Thoughtful, informed and appropriate interaction with film, television and/or literature
- Evidence of engagement with others' stories
- Self-awareness and transparency in response to the group interaction
- Presents clear structure, logical arrangement of ideas and valid conclusions
- Exhibits appropriate communication and presentation: clarity, format, spelling, grammar, annotation and bibliography

EXPECTED ALLOCATION OF STUDY HOURS

Assessment overview	Time allocation (in hours)	% of total grade
Lectures	24	
Group discussion	12	
Group preparation/report	20	20%
Critical reflection	30	30%
Critical essay	38	50%
Reading and reflection	26	
Total for course	150	100%

MODE OF DELIVERY

The delivery of this course is by Mode 1 – weekly daytime or evening lectures over the course of a semester (12 weeks).

COURSE MATERIAL

Key Text

Wright, T. (2007). *Surprised By Hope*. London: SPCK.

In addition, all students will be provided with access to weekly readings on Moodle.

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