

TH/MS 3XA3/6XA6 EVANGELICAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE¹

McMaster Divinity College

Winter Semester 2015

Wednesday 1:30-3:20pm

Instructor: Gordon L. Heath

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will trace the development of evangelicalism from its early appearance in the Church of England to its present day varieties. In doing so, it will examine how evangelicals have thought about and practiced ministry since the eighteenth century. Attention will be placed on the diversity of ministry structures, theologies, and dominant personalities, as well as on having students develop their own vocational objectives in the light of previous evangelical people and patterns.

SPECILIZATIONS: Church and Culture, Christian Thought & History, Christian Worldview, and Pastoral Studies

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Knowing

- to provide an understanding of how the evangelical ministry has grown and developed in a variety of countries and continents
- to understand the various forms of ministry practiced by evangelicals over the centuries
- to provide an understanding of how the evangelicalism has grown and developed in a variety of countries and continents
- to place the contemporary issues evangelicalism faces within a broader historical context

Being

- to explore (and ultimately appreciate) the different expressions of spirituality and models of ministry as practiced by various evangelicals
- to provide a sense of “place” within the many evangelical traditions, as well as a sense of direction for one’s own ministry

Doing

- to develop a pattern for one’s own vocational direction
- to develop in each student an ability to assess documents and situations from an historical perspective
- to develop in each student an ability to assess documents and situations from an historical, theological, and pastoral perspective

¹ This class does not fulfil the TS interdisciplinary requirement for research degree students.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Mark Noll. *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys*. IVP, 2003.
- John Wolffe. *The Expansion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Wilberforce, More, Chalmers and Finney*. IVP, 2004?
- David Bebbington. *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody*. IVP, 2005.
- John Wesley. *The Journal of John Wesley*. (see professor or book store about edition)
- Gordon L. Heath. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9B 6E2: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Research Paper:** Each student will write a ten-page paper on a particular issue related to contemporary evangelical ministry, as well as a subject that fits his/her area of specialization.
- **Biographical Presentation:** Each student is to present a ten-minute presentation on the life and impact of a prominent evangelical.
- **Reflection Paper:** Each student will submit a ten-page reflection on John Wesley's *Journal*.

Research degree students are expected to fulfill all assignments at an research degree level. They will also be required to prepare an annotated bibliography of ten books and ten articles in the area of their research paper, as well as write an additional 7500 words for the research paper.

GRADING:

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| Research Paper | 40% |
| Biographical Presentation | 20% |
| Reflection Paper | 35% |
| Participation | 5% |

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>
- McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.
- Essays must be handed in at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. All other essays will be considered to be late. Students may be exempted from the late penalty of 3% per day (not including weekends) if they attach to their essay a letter explaining the genuine emergency that delayed them. Late assignments (even ones with an extension) will not receive comments and constructive criticism from the professor.
- The essay should be handed directly to the instructor. To avoid any potential problems, students are advised to keep their working notes and a copy of their paper until a final mark has been received. Papers will be kept for a few months after the class – after that they get recycled.
- Unless noted otherwise, all written work must conform to the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*.
- Please turn off your cell phone and/or pager before the class begins.
- Please do not attend class if you are ill and contagious (e.g. the flu).

COMMENTS ON ASSIGNMENTS

- **Research Paper**

This ten-page paper deals with a particular issue related to contemporary evangelical ministry, as well as a subject that fits with your area of specialization. Please discuss with the professor your intended subject. Near the end of the semester all students will have an opportunity to share the results of their research with the entire class.

- **Biographical Presentation**

All students will present on an important evangelical, answering questions such as who was the person, where did he/she live, what did he/she do, what is the person's legacy, and what - if any - are the major interpretations of the person's life? Please keep the following in mind as you prepare for your presentation.

1. You do not need to pass in your notes to the professor. However, please have a handout for the class that includes a bibliography, outline and key information (maximum one sheet of paper for handout).
2. You will be given 10 MINUTES (8 minutes minimum) to give your presentation. You will be expected to finish at the 10 minute mark. If you are not finished at that time the instructor will give you a 1 minute notice. If you are not finished at the end of that minute you will be cut off. If you prepare and practise ahead of time ending at the 10 minute mark will not be a problem.
3. Please be expecting to answer some questions from the class and instructor (as time permits).
4. Feel free to use a variety of creative ways to present your material. Let the instructor know ahead of time if you need anything like an overhead projector, Powerpoint projector, etc.
5. Remember it is wise to have an (1) introduction; (2) main body; and (3) conclusion.
6. See *Doing Church History* for further instructions.

- **Reflection Paper**

Students are expected to write and submit a ten-page reflection paper on Wesley's *Journal*. This ten-page reflection should note what the journal tells you about Wesley and early evangelicalism. It should also highlight "lessons for ministry" - in other words, what can you draw from his experience for your own vocational direction. See *Doing Church History* for further instructions.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

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| Jan 7 | Introduction to Course |
| Jan 14 | The Birth of Evangelicalism 1 (18th century) Readings: Noll |
| Jan 21 | The Birth of Evangelicalism 2 (18th century) Readings: Noll |
| Jan 28 | Evangelicalism in Britain (19th century) Readings: Wolffe <i>*Reflection Paper Due*</i> |
| Feb 4 | Evangelicalism in North America (19th century) Readings: Bebbington |
| Feb 11 | Themes: Life of the Mind, Theological Issues Readings: Bebbington |
| Feb 18 | <i>Reading Week</i> |
| Feb 25 | Themes: New Evangelicalism, Politics |

- Mar 4 **Themes: Social Reform & Justice, Women**
- Mar 11 **Themes: Post-Christendom, Radical Communities**
- Mar 18 **(TBD): Themes: Global Evangelicalism, The Future *OR* Research
Paper Presentations**
Research Papers Due
- Mar 25 **Research Paper Presentations**
- Apr 3 **Research Paper Presentations**

Please Note: This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.