



**OT/NT/TH 645 *Biblical Theology of Suffering* (3)  
Fall 2006  
Instructor: Rick Love, Ph.D.**

**Contacting the Instructor**

**Office: Room 727  
Class Times: Tuesdays 6:30 p.m. – 9:45 p.m.  
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**Course Description**

How does the Word of God help us when life is full of pain and trouble? Is our suffering caused by sin? by Satan? Is it part of God's plan? How does God desire for us to respond when we suffer? In this course we will explore the teachings of Scripture to understand God's perspective on these and related questions.

**Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes**

Students will:

- A. Interpret and apply Biblical texts in reference to the theme of suffering (as evidenced in the worksheets, class discussion and paper).
- B. Grow in their knowledge of what the Bible as a whole says about suffering, including, but not limited to, such themes as: God's sovereignty, God's goodness, God's justice, the fall, sin, Satan, sickness and health, lament, death, grief, salvation, hell and heaven, retribution, pain, temptation and testing, comfort, poverty, oppression, rewards and punishment, and eschatological blessing (as evidenced in the worksheets, class discussion and paper).
- C. Apply the message of the Bible, especially as it relates to the theme of suffering, to contemporary church and society (as evidenced in the worksheets, class discussion and paper).

- D. Explain to others, in a variety of ways, what the Bible says about suffering.
- E. Demonstrate passion, zeal, and love for God, His Word, His Church, and the world.
- F. Evaluate our success in achieving the desired learning outcomes (during the last class session).

### Course Schedule

Sept	12	Introduction, syllabus
	19	Discuss worksheet # 1
	26	Community Day – No class
Oct	3	Discuss worksheet # 2
	10	Discuss worksheet # 3
	17	Discuss worksheet # 4
	24	Discuss worksheet # 5
	31	Discuss worksheet # 6
Nov	7	Discuss reading and worksheet # 7 * Reading report due
	14	Discuss worksheet # 8
	21	No class
	28	Discuss worksheet # 9
	Dec	5
12		Summary & conclusion (group concept mapping) * Paper due

### Course Requirements / Learning Activities

A. Reading and reading report (25%): Due November 7

Students will read:

1. D. A. Carson's How Long, O Lord

and either

2.a. Peter Kreeft's Making Sense Out of Suffering,

2.b. C. S. Lewis' The Problem of Pain, or

2.c. Philip Yancey's Where is God When it Hurts?

Students will record and rank the ten (10) most important ideas from each of the two books read (include page numbers). State the reasons why you view these ideas as most significant and discuss the significance of these ideas for your own

ministry. Conclude by stating five (5) questions which you think non-Christian readers of these books might ask the authors. Compose questions that the authors have not already addressed in the books read. The reading report should be approximately six (6) pages.

B. Worksheets to prepare for class discussion (10 x 5% each = 50%)

During the course of the semester students will receive 10 worksheets that will guide them in the study of what the Bible says about various aspects of suffering. Students will answer all of the questions on each worksheet and be ready to submit those at the beginning of the session in which that topic is discussed.

C. Paper (25%): Due December 12

In consultation with the professor, each student will write a 8-10 page biblical and theological analysis of a case study of an example of suffering. Conclude with a discussion of the significance of your case study for contemporary church and society.

### **Course Grade**

- A. Reading and reading report: 25%
- B. Worksheets: 10 x 5% each = 50%
- C. Paper: 25%

### **Important Notes**

Last day to enter course without permission / last day to withdraw from a course and receive tuition refund: September 15

Last day to voluntarily withdraw from course or change to audit without academic penalty: November 15

*Paper Format:* Seminary papers are to follow the guidelines of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian (6<sup>th</sup> edition) and/or *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Fourth edition). The instructor will indicate where these guidelines may be waived or substituted. Students will identify, on the first or cover page of all assignments, the course name, the instructor's name and their own name (student ID numbers are optional). Papers should be double-spaced with regular spacing between paragraphs.

*Late assignments:* Students may not turn in coursework after the date of the scheduled final examination for the course unless they have received permission for a “Course Extension.” Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office two weeks prior to examination week (noted as the “Last Day for Alternative Exam or Course Extension Requests” on the academic calendar). Course extensions are normally granted “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control.”

*Return of assignments:*

- a. Students who will be on-campus at the time that graded assignments are returned will have those assignments delivered via the on-campus mail system.
- b. Papers that are unclaimed and/or undeliverable will be held for one year from the due date, then destroyed.

*Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty Policy.* The seminary maintains a zero tolerance policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the seminary. Even unintentional plagiarism is to be avoided at all costs. Students are expected to be familiar with the policy statements in the current academic calendar and the student handbook that deal with plagiarism, academic dishonesty (cheating), and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean.

*Protection of Personal Information:* Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at [privacy@auc-nuc.ca](mailto:privacy@auc-nuc.ca).

## **Bibliography**

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