



Theology 240 – Course Syllabus

Course Title: *Theology of Suffering (1 Credit)*

Course Description: This course examines the biblical theology of suffering with attention to themes developed across the New Testament. The course traces how Scripture presents suffering as a defining feature of the Christian life in the present age. Topics include suffering as a part of Christian identity, suffering and ministry, suffering and sanctification, divine providence in suffering, the role of suffering in the church's witness to the world, suffering and spiritual warfare, and the role of the church in bearing suffering together. Throughout, the course also considers the relationship between suffering and eschatological hope, showing how present affliction prepares believers for future glory and the consummation of God's kingdom. Assessments include quizzes, a final exam, weekly exercises designed to help students reflect upon and implement what they learn each week, and a final ministry/service project of the student's choice. Guidance for each assignment and options for the final assignment will be presented in class.

Prerequisites: None

Instructors:

- Professor: Michael R. Jones
 - Email: michael.jones@anchorbiblecollege.org
 - Phone: 313-405-0312

Course Materials:

- Bible (unless otherwise specified, you may use the translation of your choice)
 - Lecture notes and quiz blanks will use the ESV translation.
- Craig S. Keener. *Suffering: Its Meaning for the Spirit-Filled Life*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2025. ISBN: 9781540969439

Class Time: Class will meet once weekly on Fridays from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at Hope Community Church in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Room 105 from 05/08/2026 to 06/26/2026.

Assignments:

- **Reading Log** – Students must keep a log of their reading time. This reading log may take whatever form is most convenient for the student and will include what was read and during what week. At the end of the course, students will indicate how much of their reading was completed on time.
- **Quizzes** – There will be 6 quizzes over the course of the semester. These quizzes will generally take place at the beginning of class time each week and will cover the previous week’s lecture and reading. The quiz format will include true-false, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short-answer-style questions. Students may drop their lowest quiz score.
- **Formation/Implementation Exercises** – Each week, students will complete an exercise designed to facilitate their spiritual formation by guiding them in implementing what is covered in class that week and then compose a 500 word report on their exercise. Students have two options to choose from except for week 2. Formation/Implementation Exercises Reports will be submitted through Canvas.
- **Final Project** – The final project will involve an act of ministry and service. There are two options for the final project. Instructions for each will be given in class during Week 1 and students will indicate their choice by Week 2. Final Project report will be submitted through Canvas.
- **Final Presentation** – The Final Presentation will be done in association with the Final Project. Students will make brief presentations of the results of their Final Project on the last day of class (06/26/26) prior to the Final Exam.
- **Final Exam** – The final exam will be given in-class on the last day of class (06/26/26). The exam will be structured in the same format as the quizzes.

Canvas: Canvas is an online course management system for college courses. It will be used in this course for online submission of assignments and for posting grades, announcements, and access to relevant course documents. Further details on how to set up a Canvas account and access this course can be found in the appendix to this document.

Assessment: Assignments will have the following grade weights:

Assignment	Grade Weight	Due Dates
Quizzes	10%	Weekly; lowest quiz dropped
Reading Log	10%	06/26/26
Formation/Implementation Exercises	25%	Weekly, according to the class schedule
Final Project	25%	06/26/26
Final Presentation	10%	06/26/26
Final Exam	20%	06/26/26

We will use the following thresholds to convert raw scores in the course into letter grades:

A+: >= 98%	B+: >= 88%	C+: >= 78%	D+: >= 68%	F: < 60%
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A: >= 92%	B: >= 82%	C: >= 72%	D: >= 62%	
A-: >= 90%	B-: >= 80%	C-: >= 70%	D-: >= 60%	

Depending on the distribution of raw scores at the end of the semester, these thresholds may change; however the final thresholds will be no stricter than the current thresholds. For example, if you receive a raw score of 85% in the course, you will be guaranteed a letter grade of at least B; however it may happen that you receive a higher letter grade depending on the overall distribution of raw scores.

Class Schedule:

Date	Area of Study	Reading	Assignments Due
Week 1 05/08/26	Suffering and Christian Identity	- Mark 10:35–45; Rom. 8:16–37; 2 Cor. 1:3–7; Phil. 1:19–29; 3:7–21; 2 Tim. 3:10–17; 1 Pet. 4:12–19. - Keener, chs. 1, 5	Nothing Due
Week 2 05/15/26	Suffering and Ministry	- 1 Kings 19:1–18; Jeremiah 15:15–18; 20:7–18; John 15:18–25; 1 Cor. 4:9–13; 2 Cor. 4:7–18; 6:3–10; 11:23–30; 12:1–13; 2 Tim. 2:1–10. - Keener, chs. 2, 3	<i>Quiz 1 Formation/Implementation Exercise Report 1 due</i>
Week 3 05/22/26	Suffering and Providence	- Job 1–2, 42:10–17; Rom. 5:3–5; 8:18–28; 2 Cor. 4:7–18; 1 Pet. 5:6–11. - Keener, chs. 9, 10	<i>Quiz 2 Formation/Implementation Exercise Report 2 due</i>
Week 4 05/29/26	Suffering and Sanctification	- Prov. 3:11–18; John 15:1–11; Heb. 12:3–11; James 1:2–20; 1 Pet. 1:6–12. - Keener, chs. 4, 11, 12	<i>Quiz 3 Formation/Implementation Exercise Report 3 due</i>
Week 5 06/05/26	Suffering and Spiritual Warfare	- Gen. 3:14–19; Job 1:6–12; 2:3–7; Daniel 10:12–14, 20–21; Zech. 3:1–2; Matt. 4:1–11; Luke 13:10–17; 22:31–32; Eph. 6:10–17; 1 Pet. 5:8–10; Rev. 12:10–11. - Keener, chs. 7, 8	<i>Quiz 4 Formation/Implementation Exercise Report 4 due</i>
Week 6 06/12/26	Suffering and the Church's Witness to the World	- Daniel 3:16–28; 6:10–27; Matt. 5:10–16; 10:16–20; Luke 21:12–15; Acts 4:18–21; 5:40–42; 16:25–34; Phil. 1:12–14; 2:14–16; 1 Thess. 1:6–8; 1 Pet. 3:14–16; 4:14–16; Rev. 12:10–11. - Keener, chs. 6, 9	<i>Quiz 5 Formation/Implementation Exercise Report 5 due</i>

<p>Week 7 06/19/26</p>	<p>The Role of the Church in Bearing Suffering Together</p>	<p>- Exod. 17:8–13; Lev. 19:17–18; Ruth 1:16–17; Eccl. 4:9–12; Isa. 58:6–10; Acts 2:42–47; 4:32–35; Rom. 12:10–15; 1 Cor. 12:25–26; 2 Cor. 1:3–7; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 4:11–16; Phil. 2:1–4; 1 Thess. 5:11–14; Heb. 10:32–34; 13:3; Jas. 5:13–16; 1 Pet. 4:8–10.</p>	<p>Quiz 6 <i>Formation/Implementation Exercise Report 6 due</i></p>
<p>Week 8 06/26/26</p>	<p>Presentations Final Exam</p>	<p>No reading</p>	<p><i>Formation/Implementation Exercise Report 7 due Final Project due Reading Report due Final Exam (in-class)</i></p>

Late Policy:

Assignments are expected to be submitted prior to the due date. If there are extraordinary circumstances outside of the student’s control, they may request an extension from the teaching staff.

Additionally, it is often the case that due to any number of other circumstances, a student finds that they are unable to adequately complete a given assignment. In such cases, the student is welcome to submit the assignment after the due date, up to the end of the semester; however, a late penalty will be given for such a late assignment. The standard late penalty is a 20% flat reduction in grade for the given assignment. This late penalty is meant to penalize late submissions and encourage timeliness, while still allowing the student to still finish the given assignment to the best of their ability even if they are unable to complete the assignment for some time due to any extended circumstances.

This late policy is subject to instructor discretion. The 20% late penalty policy is intended to allow for unique or difficult but not extraordinary circumstances. Any student who abuses this policy, per the instructor's discretion, is liable to have this policy revoked and the grade revert to either a zero or that based on any submission prior to the due date.

Appendix: How to set up your Canvas Account

This course will use the free version of Canvas. This means that you will be able to set up a Canvas account with your regular email and will be able to access the course on Canvas with a simple course invitation sent to your email. Please perform the following steps to set up your Canvas account:

- Check your email for a course invitation to Canvas.
- Click the “Get Started” button, which should redirect you to a Canvas page.
- Accept the course invitation. Upon accepting, it should redirect you to a page that will allow you to either set up a new Canvas account or link a current Canvas account.
- If you do not already have a free Canvas account, proceed to create a new account. To create a new account, it will set your login to be your email, you simply need to set your password and accurate time zone.

Your new account should be all set. To log in to Canvas in the future, go to the following URL: <https://canvas.instructure.com/login/canvas>

Use your email and password to log in. Then click on your MINISTRY 101 course.

To use the mobile Canvas app, you’ll want to download the Canvas app. Upon downloading and opening the app for the first time, it will prompt you to “Find my School.” Select this option and put in “Free Canvas Accounts.” Select this option and proceed to log in with your email and password associated with your free Canvas account.

Appendix: How to submit assignments on Canvas

From the course’s Canvas home page, navigate to the assignments tab. Select the specific assignment from the list of assignments. Follow the instructions for the different cases of typed and handwritten submissions.

For typed documents:

- Click “Start Assignment” (“Submit Assignment” in the mobile app)
- Click “Upload File” (“Files” in the mobile app)
- Click “Choose File” (simply select the file in the mobile app)
- Navigate to the proper file and select it
- You may add any number of files by selecting “Add Another File”

For handwritten documents:

You may use a scanner, scanner app, or simply take photos of your work and submit the files by following the same steps outlined for typed documents. The best option may be to use the Canvas mobile app to submit the assignment and use the scanner feature as an option after selecting “Submit Assignment.”

Please note, you may submit as many times as you would like prior to the assignment deadline. The most recent submission will count as your graded submission.

Appendix: Academic Integrity

Students are expected to hold themselves to a Christian standard of ethics in all matters.

This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from any forms of plagiarism, cheating, sharing or acquiring any materials that would give a student an unfair advantage, or any dishonest representation of one's work. Below are outlined the consequences for an infringement of academic integrity for a given assignment:

- First offense – A grade of zero is given for the assignment; the professor must notify the Registrar and Dean of Students. A statement goes into the student's file.
- Second offense – A grade of F is assigned for the course; the professor must notify the Registrar and Dean of Students. A statement goes into the student's file. The Dean of Students and/or Registrar will notify faculty of students who incur a second offense in this area.
- Third offense – The professor must notify the Registrar and Dean of Students. A statement goes into the student's file and the student may be suspended or dismissed from this institution.

Appendix: Policy on Use of Generative Language Models For Written Assignments

The use of generative language models, such as ChatGPT, is not strictly prohibited and in some cases is very much encouraged as a research and brainstorming tool. However, all written assignments submitted as your own work should reflect your own personal writing. This prohibits copy and paste use of such tools, however, you may feel free to quote such tools provided that you make clear it is a quotation.

In general, you should treat generative language models as equivalent to speaking to another person. You may gain insight from them and be able to improve your value and productivity, but you should not misrepresent someone else's work as your own. These tools may also be treated somewhat like calculators in a math class. You may use them when appropriate and assignments may even assume their use in some ways, but all submitted work must be your own unless specified otherwise.