

REGENT COLLEGE

Revised: Dec, 2006

INDS 612: BREAKING THE CHAINS: BIBLICAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES ON RESISTING STRUCTURAL AND PERSONAL EVIL

Dr. Bob Ekblad
Winter, 2007
3 graduate credit hours
Limited Enrolment: 45

Course Description

This Weekend School course will take place at The People's Seminary in the Skagit Valley of Washington State, 1½ hours South of Vancouver. The People's Seminary is a theological reflection and training center tied to Tierra Nueva, (an ecumenical ministry to Mexican migrant farm workers and other immigrants), and to Skagit County Jail Ministry—which serves inmates, ex-offenders and their families. Immigrants, ex-offenders, and people in recovery from chemical dependencies will participate in the course, sharing from their life experiences and ongoing struggles.

Breaking the Chains will examine Biblical, patristic, spiritual and social perspectives on the nature of structural and personal sin together with approaches to resisting forces that oppress and enslave. The instructor draws from his experience ministering to immigrants, ex-offenders, gang members and other marginalized people. Students will learn practical approaches to reading the Scriptures and spiritual practices that contribute to actual resistance to oppression and temptation in our personal lives and world. Through required reading, lectures and discussion students will study social prophetic perspectives, the Hesychast tradition of the early Greek Church Fathers, charismatic perspectives, in all grounded in Scripture. The objective of the course is to develop a holistic approach to spiritual struggle against many of today's most destructive forces that takes both the whole witness of Scripture and the experience of the larger body of Christ seriously.

Course Outline

- January 12-13, The course will begin by presenting a Biblical framework for announcing and living out the reality of the Kingdom of God in the midst of brokenness. The first weekend will include an examination of the Bible's language regarding structural and personal evil, examining principalities and powers, passions, and the demonic in our lives & world. In addition, students will learn to combine social analysis and spiritual discernment in order to identify the forces the oppress.
- February 23-24, The second weekend will focus on Old Testament perspectives on resistance to structural and personal evil, including treatment of oppression and liberation in Exodus, perspectives on conquest according to Joshua. praying the Psalms against enemies and Biblical and patristic perspectives on sin as sickness and God as Doctor. The Hesychast

practice of spiritual watchfulness and the prayer of the heart will also be introduced.

March 9-10

The final weekend will look at resistance to personal and structural evil in the New Testament including: Jesus as physician and deliverer in the NT. Jesus before the powers: reform, resistance and apocalyptic expectation. The course will end with teaching and discussion on how we can move towards an effective, holistic approach to announcing salvation that takes into account the Scriptures, the experience of the church and some of today's most challenging social and spiritual problems.

Academic Requirements and Time Investment

	<u>3 cr hrs</u>
Lectures	27 hrs
Reading	57 hrs (1140 pp)
Term Paper	35 hrs (15-18 pp)
Short Exegetical Paper	8 hrs (1 @ 4 pp)
Book Reviews	<u>8 hrs</u> (2 @ 2 pp)
TOTAL	135 hrs

Assignments:

1. Required Reading & Book Reviews.

Students will be required to read in preparation for each class and write three book reviews (2 pp each) on William Stringfellow's *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*, and a selection from John Cassian's *Conferences* and C. Peter Wagner's *Breaking Strongholds*.

Students will be expected to participate in class discussion. **1st Book Review DUE: Oct 14**

2nd Book Review DUE: Feb 16

3rd Book Review Due: Mar 9

2. Short Exegetical Paper.

Students will write one 4-pp. paper that presents the Biblical perspectives on God as doctor/healer in the Old or New Testament.

Exegetical paper DUE: Feb 23

3. Term Paper.

Students will write one 15-18 pp. paper consisting in three separate but integrated sections. First section: an exegetical study of a Biblical text relevant to either the struggle against the principalities and the powers or the passions (i.e. "lusts of the flesh"). Second section: either an analysis of contemporary manifestations of 1) structural evil/principalities and powers based on Chris Hedges *War is a Force that Gives us Meaning*. 2) the passions/spiritual maladies based on James Gilligan's *Violence*. Third section: Personal and theological reflection on how the chosen text and context chosen illuminate one another.

Term paper DUE: April 15

Evaluation

3 cr hrs

Book Reviews	30 % (3 @ 10 %)
Short Paper	20%
Term Paper	50 %

Bibliography

Required Reading:

Bob Ekblad, *Reading the Bible with the Damned*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 203pp..

John Cassian, *Conferences*, Trans. Colm Luibheid, The Classics of Western Spirituality, (New York, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985).

Chester and Betty Kylstra, *An Integrated Approach to Biblical Healing Ministry: A Guide to receiving healing and deliverance from past sins, hurts, ungodly mindsets and demonic oppression*, (Kent, England: Sovereign Word, 2003). 288 pp.

Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual*, (Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 1995). 287 pp.

James Gilligan's *Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic*, (New York: Vintage Random House, 1997). 267 pp.

Chris Hedges *War is a Force that Gives us Meaning*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2003)

William Stringfellow, *An Ethic for Christians and other Aliens in a Strange Land*, (Waco: Word Books, 1973). 156 pp.

C. Peter Wagner, *Breaking Strongholds in Your City: How to use spiritual mapping to make your prayers more strategic, effective and targeted*, (Ventura: Regal Books, 1993).

Recommended Reading:

John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, Trans. by Colm Luibheid and Norman Russel, The Classics of Western Spirituality, (New York: Paulist Press, 1982). 290 pp.

Douglas Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism*, (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Frank and Ida Mae Hammond, *Pigs in the Parlor: A Practical Guide to Deliverance*, (Kirkwood, MO: Impact Christian Books, 1973)

Marva Dawn, *Powers, Weakness and the Tabernacling of God*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns, 2001).

Robert Ellis Gordon and Inmates of the Washington Corrections System, *The Funhouse Mirror: Reflections on Prison*, (Pulman: WSU Press., 2000).

Jean-Claude Larchet, *The Theology of Illness*, translated by John and Michael Breck, (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002).

Francis MacNutt, *The Power to Heal*, (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1977).

The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection, Trans. by Benedicta Ward, SLG, (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1984).

The Philokalia: The complete text, compiled by St Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St Makarios of Corinth, Volume 1, trans and edited by G.E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard and Kallistos Ware, (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1979).

The Philokalia: The complete text, compiled by St Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St Makarios of Corinth, Volume 2, trans and edited by G.E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard and Kallistos Ware, (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1984).

The Philokalia: The complete text, compiled by St Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St Makarios of Corinth, Volume 3, trans and edited by G.E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard and Kallistos Ware, (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1986).

Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984).

Walter Wink, *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces that Determine Human Existence*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1986).

Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992).