

**ASSOCIATED CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL  
SCHOOLS OF TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**THS 648: Theological Issues in Counselling**  
**Spring, 2023**

**Course Dates:** January 11 to April 13

**Class Hours:** Wednesdays, 2:30 pm to 5:10 pm

**Instructor:** John Auxier, Ph.D.

**Contact Information:** [auxier@twu.ca](mailto:auxier@twu.ca) or [susan.mattam@twu.ca](mailto:susan.mattam@twu.ca)

**Office Hours:** Please use the above email to contact me for online appointments.

**Semester Hours:** 3 semester hours.

**Nota bene:** Spouses of “for credit” students welcome to attend this class at no cost. Recognizing that spouses often minister along-side their pastoral mates, ACTS welcomes you to follow the readings and attend the class for ministry enrichment. No transcript will be made of your attendance. Please email [Susan.Mattam@twu.ca](mailto:Susan.Mattam@twu.ca) to let us know if your spouse will be attending.

**Communication:**

The course will rely on your familiarity with the Moodle course site, where you will drop all assignments when due. Assignments are due by midnight the day before class discussion of them. Please use your @mytwu email in communication as this is the Moodle default.

## **Course Description**

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This course critically explores intersections between theology, behavioral science research, pastoral care and professional counselling. Among topics covered in the course include the imago Dei in human beings, models for relating psychology and theology, types of revelatory work of God, the implications of the Atonement for pastoral care and Christian counselling, and the relationship between science, Scripture, and mental health. A major focus will be the exploration of theological, behavioral science and clinical perspectives on the practice of forgiveness.

## **Course Objectives**

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The course will involve a significant reflective component as well as explore theological and scientific data on forgiveness process, ethical considerations and personal spiritual formation. Students can expect that issues of forgiveness can be challenging at times, with possible emotional impact as personal stories are explored in readings, journal assignments, and class discussions.

By the end of the course, students will be able:

1. To appreciatively critique selected integration models in Psychology and Theology, and articulate which approach is most compatible with the student's personal theory of counseling and/or pastoral care.
2. To demonstrate the ability to integrate faith perspectives and behavioral science data by reflective journaling on forgiveness issues and process in his/her own life.
3. To critically evaluate selected models of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement, articulate their strengths, weaknesses and implications for pastoral care and Christian counseling.
4. To compassionately assist a wounded person who is struggling with bitterness to move towards forgiveness by using Worthington's REACH model and spiritual resources in the Christian tradition.
5. To demonstrate an understanding of key concepts in Forgiveness process, from theological, research and clinical literature by critically applying this information in academic article reviews and interpreting forgiveness narratives.

## **Required Texts and Materials**

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### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

#### **Theological Reflection**

Beilby, J., & Eddy, P. R. (Eds.) (2006). The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views.  
Downers Grove: IVP.

Jones, L.G. (1995). Embodying Forgiveness: A Theological Analysis. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

#### **Integrative Framework**

Johnson, Eric. (Ed.). (2010-2<sup>nd</sup> edition) Psychology and Christianity: Five Views. Downers  
Grove: IVP.

Wiesenthal, Simon. (1998) (Rev. Ed.). The Sunflower: On the possibilities & limits of  
forgiveness. NY: Schocken Books.

## **Forgiveness Practice**

Worthington, E.L. (2003). Forgiving and Reconciling: Bridges to Wholeness and Hope.

Downers Grove: IVP.

Worthington, E. 2016. The Path to REACH Forgiveness: Less Than Two Hours to Becoming a More Forgiving Person.

Available at: <http://www.evworthington-forgiveness.com/diy-workbooks>

## **Other readings on Moodle:**

DiBlasio, F.A. (1999). "Scripture and forgiveness: Interventions with Christian couples and families".

Dorff, E.N. 1998. "Elements of forgiveness: A Jewish approach." In Worthington, E. L. (ed.), Dimensions of Forgiveness: Psychological research and theological perspectives.

Radnor, PA: Templeton Foundation Press. 29-58.

Jaeger, Marietta. 1998. Forgiving a child murderer. In Enright, R.D. & North, J. (Eds.). (1998). Exploring Forgiveness. Madison WI: Univ. of Wisconsin Press.

Various handouts.

## **RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Enright, R.D. & North, J. (Eds.). (1998). Exploring Forgiveness. Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Entwistle, D.N., (2021). Integrative Approaches to Psychology & Christianity. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Portland: Cascade Books.

Greggo & Sizemore (eds.) (2012). Counseling and Christianity: Five Approaches. Downers Grove: IVP.

Greene-McCreight, K. (2015). Darkness is my only companion: A Christian Response to Mental Illness. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press.

Hathaway, W.L. & Yarhouse, M.A. (2021). The Integration of Psychology & Christianity: A Domain-Based Approach. Grand Rapids: IVP.

McCullough, M.E., Pargament, K.I. & Thoresen, C.E. (Eds.) (2000). Forgiveness: Theory, research and practice. New York: Guilford Press.

Nouwen, H.J.M. (2000). The Return of the Prodigal Son: A story of homecoming. New York: Doubleday.

- Shults, F.L., & Sandage, S. J. (2003). The Faces of Forgiveness: Searching for wholeness and salvation. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Worthington, E.L. (Ed.) (2015). Handbook of Forgiveness. New York: Routledge.
- Yarhouse, M.A. & Sells, J.N. (2017). Family Therapies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Downers Grove, IL: IVP.

## **Course Expectations**

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This course involves readings *and structured discussions and will assume that students have completed assigned readings, forums, and assignments, prior to class.*

## **Course Activities/Requirements**

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### **1. Essay: The Relationship of Psychology & Christianity. Due Jan. 25                      25 points**

Read chapters 1-3 and 5-7 in Psychology & Christianity: Five Views. Pay attention to the list of key issues identified by Johnson in his first chapter (p. 40f) as you read about each model. Make sure you read the responses as well as the model presentation.

The models (and responses) are:

- Levels of Explanation (chapter 2)
- Integration (chapter 3)
- Transformational (chapter 5)
- Biblical Counselling (chapter 6)

Select one of the four assigned views to adopt as your primary model for interpreting the relationship between science and Scripture and write an 8 to 10 page paper summarizing your position. The paper should include three parts: Basic concepts of your model, strengths that attracted you, and potential weaknesses with a brief response.

### **2. Essay on The Atonement & Counselling.                      Due Feb. 8                      25 points**

Analysis: Pick one or two Atonement models from the book that you view as having the strongest scriptural support. Using scripture and logic explain why they are foundational to Christian faith. (4-5 p.)

2. Application: What are the praxis implications of your two models, i.e., how does the doctrine of the Atonement shape ministry/professional practice? (4-5 p.)

- 3. Jones Online Forum Due weekly (8 weeks x 2 points) 16 points**  
Post weekly on the assigned chapter (250-300 words) giving your favorite ideas, critical reactions and questions + Interact with at least one other post.

- 4. REACH Application Exercise Due March 22 14 points**  
Read Forgiving & Reconciling, underlining key points for discussion in class. Go to the website <http://www.evworthington-forgiveness.com/diy-workbooks> and download the DIY document *The Path to REACH Forgiveness: Less Than Two Hours to Becoming a More Forgiving Person*. Choose a forgiveness issue in your life and use this exercise to process it. **Note:** The REACH reflective journal will actually require 4-6 hours to work through.

- 5. Final Paper on The Sunflower Due April 12 20 points**  
Using the course texts and readings (no outside sources required) write a 10-to-12-page analytical essay on The Sunflower.  
*Part one:* Write an essay analyzing Wiesenthal's narrative from a *social science perspective*, using information from course readings/lectures regarding the psychology of forgiveness. 5-6 pages.  
*Part two:* As you read the symposium responses to Wiesenthal's story, divide them into at least two groups: forgivers and non-forgivers. Write a brief essay describing and critiquing both positions from a Christian theological/philosophical standpoint, using Embodying Forgiveness and course readings/ lectures. 5-6 pages.

**Additional Note on Wiesenthal paper format:**

Typed, double spaced.

- MFT students use APA style, M.Div. and other ACTS students may use Turabian. When referencing my lectures or our presenters, you may put (Auxier, 2022), etc., at the end of the sentence or paragraph as a simple way to reference lecture material if you wish.
- Include a reference/bibliography page, but only list sources cited in the paper itself.
- Don't use extensive quotes. If you do use a quote, keep it to 1-2 sentences, maximum.

**Miscellaneous Notes/Policies**

1. Weekly attendance is expected. Readings, papers and forum posts must be completed prior to class to facilitate meaningful discussion.
2. Attendance is a priority in all graduate courses. Students are allowed to miss one class without penalty, and a medical note. Additional absences subtract 5% from your final grade.

3. Students are expected to budget their time and anticipate due dates for assignments. Only medical emergency or other extreme circumstances will be acceptable for late assignments. Late assignments will be deducted 2 marks per day.
4. At end of term, those who have extenuating circumstances delaying their work are required to fill out the necessary paperwork and pay the \$50 fee to the registrar. An incomplete (INC) will be entered on the student transcript until all work is completed (15 weeks maximum).
5. All assignments are to be uploaded to Moodle, and please check your @mytwu email for messages.

## Course Evaluation

Assignment	Date due	% of Grade
Psychology & Christianity Essay	Jan. 25	25
The Atonement in Counselling and Soul Care Essay	Feb. 8	25
Embodying Forgiveness Forum Posts	Weekly	16
REACH Application paper using Worthington Model	March 22	14
Sun Flower Paper	April 12	20
<b>Total:</b>		<b>100</b>

## Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A+	97-100	4.30
A	93-96	4.00
A-	90-92	3.70
B+	87-89	3.30
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.70
C+	77-79	2.30
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.70
F	Below 70	0.00

**TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topics to be covered</b>	<b>Assigned Readings</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
<b>January 11</b>	Epistemology History of Christian Counselling General & Special Revelation	_____	
<b>January 18</b>	The Five Relationships Carter & Naramore The imago Dei	Johnson 1-3 Jones 1-2	Jones Forum
<b>January 25</b>	The imago Dei Discuss readings and paper	Johnson 5-7 (skip 4) Jones 3	Jones Forum <b>Psych. &amp; Christianity Essay</b>
<b>February 1</b>	Discuss readings Sanctification & Technology	Beilby & Eddy Intro, 1-2 Jones 4	Jones Forum
<b>February 8</b>	Discuss readings Discuss Atonement paper	Beilby & Eddy 3-4 Jones 5	Jones Forum <b>Atonement Essay</b>
<b>February 15</b>	Jewish conceptions of forgiveness Discuss readings	Dorff (1998) article Worthington 1-2 Jones 6	Jones Forum
<b>February 22</b>	<b>READING BREAK</b>		
<b>March 1</b>	Cultivation of a forgiving heart	Jones 7 Jaeger article Worthington 3-4	Jones Forum
<b>March 8</b>	Overview of the REACH Model Repentance and Forgiveness Discuss Jaeger	Jones 8 Worthington 5-6	Jones Forum
<b>March 15</b>	Discuss REACH model Jones review	Jones 9 Worthington 7-8	Jones Forum
<b>March 22</b>	Forgiveness wrap-up Discuss REACH Application paper		<b>REACH application exercise</b>
<b>March 29</b>	Reconciliation after forgiveness	Worthington 9-12	
<b>April 5</b>	<b>No Class</b>		
<b>April 12</b> Last Class	<b>Colloquium on The Sunflower</b>	Wiesenthal, p.1-274.	<b>Sunflower Paper</b>

## Course Policies/Statements

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### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AT TWU

One of the core values of Trinity Western University is the integration of academic excellence with high standards of personal, moral, and spiritual integrity. The University considers it a serious offence when an individual attempts to gain unearned academic credit. It is the student's responsibility to be informed about what constitutes academic misconduct. For details on this, and on identifying and avoiding plagiarism go to the

[University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar](#) (p. 47).

<https://prezi.com/od62fxnkbmxh/plagiarism-how-to-get-it-out-of-your-life/> (Prezi presentation)

<http://bit.ly/1p00KX3> (Google Slide presentation offering more comprehensive information)

### ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Students with a disability who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Centre for Accessible Learning upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and include the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Once documented with the Centre for Accessible Learning, a letter will be sent to the student's professor recommending appropriate accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Centre for Accessible Learning outlined on the website at <https://www.twu.ca/academics/learning-commons/centre-accessible-learning>.

### HOSPITALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

TWU is committed to an ethic of inclusion centred on the principles of Christian hospitality, reciprocity and reconciliation. We seek to cultivate generous learning spaces that are based on respect for differences and are open to diverse views, opinions, and identities that are thoughtfully expressed in a collegial manner. We welcome and value all voices, including those from under-represented groups or those who have been marginalized.

### ACADEMIC FREEDOM

With our charter, mission, and identity as a Christian university, Trinity Western University is committed to academic freedom, affirming and supporting it as defined and described in the statements of Universities Canada and the Tri-Council Research Granting Agencies provided in full at the following link: <https://www.twu.ca/academic-freedom-trinity-western-university>. Students should familiarize themselves with both the academic freedom statement and policy found at the Academic Freedom website. In this course, the academic freedom of both the course instructor and students is to be respected. Trinity Western University welcomes a diversity of academic perspectives, both in class discussion and submitted course work, provided they are thoughtfully and respectfully presented. Hate speech will not be tolerated.

### CAMPUS CLOSURE AND CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event of extreme weather conditions or other emergency situations go to the <https://www.twu.ca/campus-notification>.

### FINAL EXAMINATIONS

A student who is absent from a final examination without an acceptable excuse will be assigned a zero for that examination. Absence due to illness must be supported by a medical certificate indicating the nature of the illness. If an examination is missed for any reason, including illness, the student must notify the faculty member prior to the examination and the Office of the Registrar within 48 hours of the missed examination, giving written documentation explaining the absence.”

### **TWU WRITING CENTRE**

The Writing Centre is available to assist all students with their academic writing assignments in any subject at any stage of the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Live, online writing appointments are available throughout the week by appointment and take place within the Learning Commons appointment booking system. To make an appointment, visit [www1.twu.ca/writingcentre](http://www1.twu.ca/writingcentre). For more information, visit <https://www.twu.ca/writing-centre> or contact [writingcentre@twu.ca](mailto:writingcentre@twu.ca) .

[2021-2022 Academic Calendar](#)

### Appendix I: Course Learning Outcomes

TWU Student Learning Outcome	Course Objective	Course Activity
Knowledge & it's Application	5. To demonstrate an understanding of key concepts in Forgiveness process, from theological, research and clinical literature by critically applying this information in academic article reviews and interpreting forgiveness narratives.	<i>Embodying Forgiveness</i> Forum Posts  Final paper on Wiesenthal's <i>The Sunflower</i>
Cognitive Complexity	1. To appreciatively critique selected integration models in Psychology and Theology, and articulate which approach is most compatible with the student's personal theory of counseling and/or pastoral care.	<i>Psychology &amp; Christianity</i> paper
Inter-and-intra-personal Wellness	2. To demonstrate the ability to integrate faith perspectives and behavioral science data by reflective journaling on forgiveness issues and process in his/her own life.	Worthington's <i>REACH</i> Reflective application paper
Aesthetic Expression	N/A	
Social Responsibility	4. To compassionately assist a wounded person who is struggling with bitterness to move towards forgiveness by using Worthington's REACH model and spiritual resources in the Christian tradition.	Worthington's <i>REACH</i> Reflective application paper
Spiritual Formation	3. To critically evaluate selected models of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement, articulate their strengths, weaknesses and implications for pastoral care and Christian counseling.	Atonement and Counselling/Soul Care essay

Leadership	N/A	