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WO 611 Models of Evangelistic Worship: Baptism with Integrity

Lester Ruth

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Recommended Citation

Ruth, Lester, "WO 611 Models of Evangelistic Worship: Baptism with Integrity" (2003). *Syllabi*. Book 1599.
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Models of Evangelistic Worship: Baptism with Integrity

WO 611 (One hour)

Friday, September 26, 5-9 p.m.

Saturday, September 27, 8-5 p.m.

This course will involve distance-learning instruction since it is a joint Orlando/Wilmore class. Students will be expected to have familiarity with the appropriate technologies.

Professor's information: Dr. Lester Ruth; BC (Beeson) 218; 859-858-2175; fax 858-2026; lester_ruth@asburyseminary.edu; Office hours: Tuesday/Thursdays 1:15-2:00. During office hours, I can be contacted by telephone, email, or First Class chat room. Telephone calls preferred over emails. I will also each lunch in the cafeteria on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Appointments for other office meetings gladly welcomed.

Course Description:

Most baptismal services ask candidates for baptism some of the most essential questions in our faith: Do you renounce Satan? Do you reject evil? Will you follow Christ? Will you be one with other disciples? What would it mean if we took these questions seriously? What would it mean to get people to this critical point, pass them through the water, and then walk with them in fulfillment of their answers? What would it mean to baptize with integrity?

To answer this question, this course will look at an ancient model of relating worship and evangelism known as the catechumenate, seeing how this model relates to conversion, baptism, and incorporation into a church's worship life. The catechumenate will be explored in both its past historical setting and contemporary attempts to recover it in North America. Of particular interest will be a historical comparison of how certain understandings of God, salvation, and the church find expression in this mode of relating worship and evangelism.

Course Goals: Students completing this course will:

- be able to discuss the presumptions of current baptismal services;
- be able to reflect on the dynamics of holistic Christian conversion as assumed by the baptismal services;
- know the historical roots for current appropriations of the catechumenate;
- understand and show evidence of adapting for today the dynamics of a catechumenate approach to baptism as worship evangelism; and
- identify the underlying soteriological (theology of salvation) and ecclesiological (theology of the church) issues which support this manner of approaching baptism.

Prerequisites: None

Textbooks (4):

For the historic catechumenate segment of the course:

Alan Kreider, *The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press)

For the modern catechumenate segment of the course:

Daniel T. Benedict, *Come to the Waters* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources)

Lester Ruth, *Accompanying the Journey* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources)

Grant Sperry-White, *Echoing the Word* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources)

Course requirements

Students can choose which level of grade for which they would like to aim. Ability to achieve different grade levels is dependent upon two factors: number of assignments completed and the appropriate quality for those assignments.

F=failure to attend all class time and failure to read all of the assigned readings by noon, Monday, November 3.

D=attendance at class but failure to read all of the assigned readings by noon, Monday, November 3

C=attendance at class and completion of all assigned readings by noon, Monday, November 3

B=attendance at class, completion of all assigned readings by noon, Monday, November 3, and completion of five page reflection paper on how the assigned readings have helped you accomplish the learning goals listed above (“Students completing this course.....”) by noon, Monday, November 3.

A=attendance at class, completion of all assigned readings by noon, Monday, November 3, completion of five page reflection paper on how the assigned readings have helped you accomplish the learning goals listed above (“Students completing this course.....”) by noon, Monday, November 3, and successful completion of a 15 minute oral examination by the professor on materials from Saturday’s class and the four assigned readings. The exam will take place in the week of November 3-7. To prepare think through the interaction between the learning goals and the course material.

N.B. Completion of a certain amount of work does not guarantee that letter grade. The quality of work must be appropriate for that letter grade. Please see the catalog on the qualitative descriptions associated with letter grades: A=exceptional (notice the word); B=good; C=acceptable; D=marginal. In other words, a student who completes all the assignments for A level work but does only acceptable or marginal on the oral exam will not receive an A for the class despite the quantity of work done. The professor reserves the right to keep the entire range of grades open for every student depending upon the quality of work done.

N.B. Work can be delivered via email attachment, fax, or directly to Dr. Ruth’s office but all written work and indications of completed readings must be received by noon, Monday, November 3.

N.B. Concerning the oral exam:

--Wilmore students must do it face-to-face.

--Orlando students will do it by V-tel technology

--Special arrangements will be made for students not on either campus.

--The student must inform the professor of her/his desire to take the oral exam so that a mutually convenient time can be found during the week of November 3-7.

N.B. Any exceptions to these deadlines must be approved by the professor and should be based on true emergencies.

Course schedule

The course will be conducted on an intensive format, meeting over a two-day period.

WO611 Reading Indicator

All Students Must Return by Noon, Monday, November 3

(Orlando students can email the same information to lester_ruth@asburyseminary.edu.)

Name: _____

My signature below indicates that I have read all of the required readings for this course.

Signed: _____

For those students attempting an A or a B, please attach your five page written report on the readings.

Note, Note: Failure to return this form by noon, Monday, November 3 will result in a grade no higher than D.