

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Semester, Year	Spring/Summer, 2025
Course Title	BIBLICAL AND SPIRITUAL RESOURCES IN TIMES OF GRIEF
Course Code	PAST TH52 – 1P/1S
Date	From May 5, 2025 to May 9, 2025 MONDAY – FRIDAY
Time	From 9AM To 4PM
Delivery Format	IN-PERSON WITH SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE OPTION
Class information	The classes will be livestreamed / in-person from Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM.
Instructor	TIMOTHY PERRY, PhD
Contact Information	Email: tperry@tyndale.ca
Office Hours	By appointment only.
Course Materials	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores with biblical and theological resources in the face of death, grief and loss. Topics include how the Bible and the Christian tradition portray death, grief and lament, how Christians over the centuries have practiced spiritual care for the dying and grieving, and how to extend care to others in times of sorrow, including the use of the Psalms as a resource for encouragement.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Recall from memory at least one Psalm;

2. Outline at least two theologically sound positions regarding heaven and hell;
3. Explain, using their own words, a cogent Christian answer to the question of evil in relation to dying;
4. Assess the implicit theology of death in both written (sermons, memoirs etc.) and living (those in grief, pastoral leaders etc.) sources;
5. Create a resource that either prepares individuals for grief and dying or helps them to respond.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Billings, J. Todd. [*Rejoicing in Lament: Wrestling with Incurable Cancer and Life in Christ*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2015. 201 pages. ISBN 9781587433580

Bowler, Kate. [*Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I've Loved*](#). New York, NY: Random House, 2019. 178 pages. ISBN 9780399592065

Perry, Tim. [*Funerals: For the Care of Souls*](#). *Lexham Ministry Guides*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2021.

Root, Andrew. [*The Church in an Age of Secular Mysticisms: Why Spiritualities without God Fail to Transform*](#). Volume 6. *Ministry in the Secular Age Series*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2023

One of:

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. [*Notes on Grief*](#). New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2021. ISBN 9781039001558

OR

Deraniyagala, Sonali. *Wave*. Toronto, ON: Random House, 2013. ISBN 9780771025372

OR

Hubbard, Robert. *Scenes with My Son: Love and Grief in the Wake of Suicide*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2023. ISBN 9780802883445

OR

Kalanithi, Paul. [*When Breathe Becomes Air*](#). New York, NY: Random House, 2016. ISBN 9780812988406

OR

Lewis, C.S. [*A Grief Observed*](#). London: Faber and Faber, 1961. ISBN 9780571066247

OR

Yip-Williams, Julie. [*The Unwinding of the Miracle: A Memoir of Life, Death, and Everything that Comes After*](#). New York, NY: Random House, 2019. ISBN 9780525511359

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Theological Exegesis of Psalm: Due May 15, 2025; 20% of final grade

This assignment is related to Learning Outcomes 1 & 3.

Using a format and rubric provided by the instructor in the first class, give a theological exegesis of a Psalm that Christians might use as a spiritual resource in times of grief.

Students will not do a historical-critical exegesis of a Psalm and, as such, do not require any prior Biblical studies. Part of the assignment includes memorizing all or parts of the chosen Psalm. The final exegesis will be 3-4 pages in length, double-spaced.

2. Memoir Reflection: Due June 1, 2025; 20% of final grade

This assignment is related to Learning Outcome 4.

Students will select a memoir from the Required reading list read it and write a reflection on it. Reflections will focus on three main aspects: how does the author incorporate their own biography into their understanding of death/grief, what are key theological assumptions (implicit or explicit) that the author makes, and what kind of person would find this resource spiritually helpful in a time of grief. Reflections will be 3-4 pages in length, double-spaced.

3. Eschatology and Pastoral Practice: Due June 15, 2025; 20% of the final grade

This assignment is related to Learning Outcome 2.

Students will select one of the four last things discussed in class (death, judgment, heaven and hell). They will offer a theological reflection from within their own tradition

(deploying the Bible, and key theologians both historic and current) with a specific focus on the pastoral implications of the doctrine. Reflections will be 3-4 pages in length, double-spaced.

4. Spiritual Resource: Due July 5, 2025; 40% of final grade

This assignment is related to Learning Outcome 5.

Students will create a spiritual resource that either prepares individuals for death and grief or responds to death and grief. This resource will take the form of an annotated bibliography. (1) Students will determine their primary audience, their beliefs and assumptions around death and grief, beforehand. (2) From this analysis, students will carefully select theological and spiritual resources that can comfort and challenge their chosen audience. Each entry should contain a full citation followed by a short (one 4-5 line paragraph) summary explaining the value of the resource to the primary audience. (3) Based on (1) & (2) students will craft a full funeral liturgy including prayer, song selections, scripture and other readings, and a full manuscript of the homily. Length requirements are as follows (1) 1 page, maximum; (2) 5-7 pages; (3) 5-7 pages.

Your work should demonstrate the following characteristics:

- 12 pt Arial or Times New Roman
- Double spaced
- Student name and assignment title in the header
- Page number in footer
- 1-inch margins
- Footnote using the [Chicago Manual of Style](#)

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Theological Exegesis	20 %
Memoir Reflection	20 %
Eschatology and Pastoral Practice	20 %
Spiritual Resource	40 %
Total Grade	100 %

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

#	Date	Topic(s)	Reading
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1	Monday, May 5 AM	Introductions; Syllabus; Competing Imaginations	
	PM	Bible and Theology as Imaginative Material	Root
2	Tuesday, May 6, Entire Day	The Four Last Things; Their pastoral importance	Perry Part I
3	Wednesday, May 7, AM	The Psalms as Expressed Imagination	Billings
	PM	Memoir as Pastoral Resource	Bowler
4	Thursday, May 8 AM	The Pastoral Role in Grief Care	Perry Part II
	PM	Planning and Conducting the Funeral	Perry Part II
5	Friday, May 9 AM	The Homily and After Care	Perry Part II
	PM	Limit Experiences and the Need for Ritual	Root

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

([Tyndale Library](#) supports this course with [e-journals](#), [e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).)

Anderson, Ray S. *Theology, Death and Dying*. New York, NY: Basil Blackwell, 1986. ISBN 9781881266013.

Becker, Ernest. *The Denial of Death*. New York, NY: Free Press, 1973. ISBN 9780684832401

Billings, J. Todd. *The End of the Christian Life: How Embracing Our Mortality Frees Us to Truly Live*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2020. 239 pages. ISBN 9781587434204

Blount, Brian K. *Invasion of the Dead: Preaching Resurrection*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014. ISBN 9780664239411

Bush, Michael D. (ed). *This Incomplete One: Words Occasioned by the Death of a Young Person*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006. ISBN 9780802822277

- Brueggemann, Walter. *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1984. ISBN 0806621206
- Chapell, Bryan (ed). *The Hardest Sermons You'll Ever Have to Preach: Help from Trusted Preachers for Tragic Times*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. ISBN 9780310331216
- Chilstrom, Corinne. *Andrew, You Died Too Soon: A Family Experience of Grieving and Living Again*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1993. 9780806626840
- Cole, Allan Hugh. *Good Mourning: Getting Through Your Grief*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008. ISBN 9780664232689
- Gawande, Atul. *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*. New York, NY: Picador, 2014. ISBN 9780805095159
- Guthrie, Nancy. (ed). *O Love That Will Not Let Me Go: Facing Death with Courageous Confidence in God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011. ISBN 9781433516184
- Hughes, Robert. *A Trumpet in Darkness: Preaching to Mourners (Fortress Resources for Preaching)*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1985. ISBN 0800611411
- Jacobson, Rolf and Karl Jacobson. *Invitation to the Psalms: A Reader's Guide for Discovery and Engagement*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013. ISBN 9781441241399
- Jenkins, Michael. *In the House of the Lord: Inhabiting the Psalms of Lament*. Collegeville, MN: Order of St. Benedict, 1998. ISBN 0814624944
- Jüngel, Eberhard. *Death: The Riddle and the Mystery*. St. Andrew's: St. Andrew Press, 1975. ISBN 9780715202562
- Long, Thomas and Thomas Lynch. *The Good Funeral: Death, Grief, and the Community of Care*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2013. ISBN 9780664238537
- Osmer, Richard. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008. ISBN 9780802817655
- Scheffler, Samuel. *Death and the Afterlife (The Berkeley Tanner Lectures)*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013. ISBN 9780199982509
- Swinton, John, Richard Payne. (eds). *Living Well and Dying Faithfully: Christian Practices for End-of-Life Care*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009. ISBN 9780802863393

Waltke, Bruce K., James M. Houston, and Erika Moore. *The Psalms as Christian Lament: A Historical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014. ISBN 9780802868091

Weems, Ann. *Psalms of Lament*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1995. ISBN 9780664220747

Wright, N.T. *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church (Participant's Guide)*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010. ISBN 9780310324706

Young, Kevin. (ed). *The Art of Losing: Poems of Grief & Healing*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2010. ISBN 9781608194667

VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

B. INTERACTIVE LIVESTREAM AND/OR BLENDED COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

**exceptions with permission from professor*

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each individual assignment.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism

(including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details.

For proper citation style, consult [Citation Guides](#) for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at [classes.tyndale.ca](#). Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via [classes.tyndale.ca](#) course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (aa@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy

All papers and course assignments must be submitted by the due dates indicated in the course syllabus. Unless the instructor already has a policy on grading late papers in the course syllabus, grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from "A+" to "A-," from "B" to "C+"). Please note that some programs, such as cohort-based or intensive courses, may follow a different policy due to the nature of the program.

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the [Extension Request Form](#). The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or

prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete (“I”) may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of “F” will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential, and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

[Tyndale Library](#) supports this course with [e-journals, e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course’s grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or [classes.tyndale.ca](#). For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary [Grading System & Scale](#).