

2023-24

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Candidates for the Certificate in Westminster Biblical Studies (CertBS) are required to attend at least six lectures (in person or online), and to write two essays to a C-grade standard from a list provided. Essays should be around 3,000 words in length; insights and quotations from authors consulted should be clearly attributed, and a bibliography provided.

GRADING

A (Exceptional): Reserved for work that, in addition to meeting grade B criteria, makes a thorough-going application to the Christian life

B (Good): A good range of source material has been accurately summarised and synthesised to reach a persuasive conclusion

C (Satisfactory): An accurate attempt to synthesise a range of relevant source material

D (Requires improvement): A basic understanding of elementary material is evident, but there is a lack of detail, accuracy or coherence

ESSAY TITLES

ESSAY 1: *Hamartiology and Conversion* | Dr Ian Hamilton

What does it mean to be 'in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption'? (1 Cor 1:30)

READING LIST:

- Robert Letham, Union with Christ.
- John Murray, Redemption Accomplished and Applied (chapter on union with Christ).
- Calvin's Institutes: Book 3 with some of Book 2 (sections on union with Christ).

ESSAY 2: *Evangelicals, Slavery and Colonialism* | Prof Ian Shaw

Is it the duty of the church to repent of the sins of a previous generation?

Your answer should be supported from scripture, and make particular reference to the response to slavery and colonialism of evangelicals at the time.



READING LIST:

- Bull, J. 2007. *The Life of John Newton*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust.
- Coffey, J. 2020. 'Difficult histories: Christian memory and historic injustice.' *Cambridge Papers*, 29 (4). Cambridge: Jubilee centre.
- Cotton Capital: How Slavery Shaped the Guardian, Britain and the World. Special Issue of *The Guardian*. April 2023. <http://www.theguardian.com/news/series/cotton-capital>
- Hague, W. 2008. *William Wilberforce: the Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner*. London: Harper.
- Lewis, C. S. 2014 'Dangers of national repentance.' In *God in the Dock*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Masters, P. 2006 *Missionary Triumph Over Slavery: William Knibb and Jamaican Emancipation*. London: The Wakeman Trust.
- Roe, M. E. (Ed) 2021a. *Preaching Deliverance to the Captives: Particular Baptist Sermons on the Abolition of the Slave Trade*. Privately Published.
- Shaw, I. F. 2023. 'Evangelicals, Slavery and Colonialism in the 18th and 19th Centuries.' Report of the 2022 Westminster Conference, titled *Wrestling with Our Past*.
- Shaw, I. J. 2012. *Churches, Revolutions and Empires: 1789-1914*. Fearn: Christian Focus Publications.

ESSAY 3: *The Apologetics of CS Lewis | Dr Peter Sanlon*

What are the three most important approaches to apologetics modelled by CS Lewis, and how can you use them in your ministry?

READING LIST:

- Chatraw, Joshua D., Allen, Mark D.. *Apologetics at the Cross: An Introduction for Christian Witness*. United States: Zondervan Academic, 2018.
- Lewis, Clive Staples. *Mere Christianity: A Revised and Amplified Edition, with a New Introduction, of the Three Books, Broadcast Talks, Christian Behaviour, and Beyond Personality*. United Kingdom: Collins, 1995.
- Lewis, C. S.. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: Full Color Edition*. Taiwan: HarperCollins, 2000.



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- Lewis, C.S.. *A Grief Observed*. United Kingdom: Faber & Faber, 2012.
 - Markos, Louis. *Apologetics for the Twenty-First Century*. United States: Crossway, 2010 (Chapters 1-7).
 - Marsden, George M.. *C. S. Lewis's Mere Christianity: A Biography*. United States: Princeton University Press, 2020.
 - Ward, Michael. *Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C. S. Lewis*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2007.
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ESSAY 4: *Christian Witness in a Plural Society* | Dr Steven Firmin

How does the Bible's teaching on non-Christian worldviews and religions shape the way we present the gospel to them?

READING LIST:

- Daniel Strange, *For their Rock is not as Our Rock: An Evangelical Theology of Religions*.
 - JH Bavinck, *The church between the temple and the mosque*
 - Leslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*.
 - *Only One Way? Three Christian Responses to the Uniqueness of Christ in a Religiously Pluralist World* (D'Costa, Knitter, Strange).
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ESSAY 5: *The Gospel and Earthly Government* | Dr Steven Firmin

How does the gospel impact upon the role of earthly government?

READING LIST:

- Oliver O'Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations*.
- *A Royal Priesthood? The use of the Bible ethically and politically* (Puts O'Donovan's Book into conversation with other thinkers).
- James KA Smith, *Awaiting the King: Reforming Public Theology* (An accessible application of O'Donovan's book to Kuyperian reformed political thought).
- David VanDrunen, *Politics After Christendom* (An alternative reformed perspective which disagrees with O'Donovan).
- John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (An anabaptist Mennonite reading that disagrees with O'Donovan and VanDrunen).



ESSAY 6: *Beholding the Glory of Christ* | Dr Ian Hamilton

How do I see the glory of Christ?

READING LIST:

- John Owen, *The Glory of Christ*. Banner of Truth, 1994
 - RC Sproul, *The Glory of Christ*. Presbyterian and Reformed, 2012
 - Lewis Allen and Tim Chester, *The Glory of Grace*. Banner of Truth, 2018
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ESSAY 7: *Worship in spirit and in truth* | Dr Terry Johnson

How should God's people worship Him when they come together?

READING LIST:

- Terry Johnson, *Worshipping with Calvin: Recovering the historic ministry and worship of reformed Protestantism*. Evangelical Press, 2014
 - Philip Graham Ryken, Derek W.H. Thomas, and J. Ligon Duncan III, *Give Praise to God: A Vision for Reforming Worship*, 2012
 - Michael Horton, *A Better Way: Rediscovering the Drama of Christ-Centered Worship*. Baker PG, 2003
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