

Confronting the #MeToo/#ChurchToo Crisis

Saturday, November 9, 2019

8:30 AM to 4:30 pm

PT 551: One Credit Seminar, FALL 2019

**Missio Seminary exists to produce missional Christian leaders-
men and women who incarnate the story of Jesus with humility and authenticity and who
communicate the story with fidelity to Scripture, appreciation of the Christian tradition,
and sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of postmodern culture.**

INSTRUCTOR

Name: Carolyn Custis James, MA/Biblical Studies

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Guest Instructor: [Heather Evans](#), LCSW, DSW, Clinical Social Work/Therapist,

Guest Presenters:

- Pastor Rasool Berry, Teaching Pastor, [Bridge Church](#) NYC
- Pastor [Jimmy Hinton](#), [Somerset Church of Christ](#), Pittsburgh, Lived Experience
- Mike Sloan, Director of Safeguarding Certifications, [GRACE](#)

Office Hours: by appointment. Contact me by email or text to schedule a face-to-face or phone appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The #MeToo/#ChurchToo sexual abuse crisis is one of the most pressing issues facing the 21st Century Protestant church. The avalanche of #MeToo and #ChurchToo stories from victims of sexual abuse perpetrated both outside and *inside* the church and of cover-ups to protect perpetrators, blindsided Protestant leaders who thought this was a Roman Catholic problem. Major news media's investigative reporting corroborated the fact that, instead of providing safe haven for victims and being at the forefront in combatting this crisis, many Protestant churches are complicit. This seminar will examine the crisis from multiple angles for pastors and ministry leaders. How does church teaching about women and men create an environment that is conducive to sexual abuse and to the protection of perpetrators? How do #MeToo narratives in the Bible provide a vital pastoral resource for raising awareness and creating safety for victims to find help and the care they need? Trauma counseling, legal, and pastoral experts will provide crucial guidance to church leaders in securing professional and legal help, avoiding common mistakes when allegations surface, and becoming leaders in combatting this serious crisis.

PERSONAL NOTE FROM THE PROFESSOR

As an author and advocate, I am constantly confronted with the crisis of sexual violence against women and children locally and globally. I hear the stories. I witness the destruction in the lives of survivors and how their suffering is compounded by the church's response. My work centers on God's creation vision for his daughters and his sons as the *imago dei*. The #MeToo/#ChurchToo crisis violates that vision when God's image bearers (male or female) are sexually assaulted or abused as well as when God's image bearers perpetrate abuse and protect perpetrators. This class is part of the urgent effort to counteract this crisis—by raising awareness and presenting concrete ways of being part of the solution, instead of part of the problem. It is inherent in our missional calling, not only to make the church a safe place for the vulnerable, but to move out as leaders combatting this crisis in the wider culture. This class weaves together biblical, theological, sociological, counseling, legal, and pastoral threads to raise awareness and to help equip church leaders confront this crisis.

SYLLABUS

This syllabus provides an overview of the course and course requirements. Students are responsible to know the content of the syllabus and follow the course schedule. Questions about the syllabus or schedule should be emailed to the professor promptly and will generally be answered in an email to the entire class so that everyone is informed.

This syllabus is intended to give the student guidance in what may be covered during the term and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the professor reserves the right to modify and supplement as course needs arise.

PROGRAM GOALS AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Engage biblical and theological roots that contribute to (or confront) this crisis.
2. Present what pastors, ministry leaders, and staff need to know about the impact on, care for, and response to survivors/victims;
3. Examine best practices for leaders in responding when allegations surface;
4. Explore what pastors/ministry leaders are doing and can do to raise awareness and make their church/ministry organization a safe place for victim.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS AND HOMEWORK HOURS

ASSESSMENTS AND HOMEWORK HOURS*	PERCENT OF GRADE	ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE	MEANS OF ASSESSMENT
Attendance at the one-day Saturday seminar	40%	8 hours	Class attendance and active participation in discussions.
View movie and read: 2 articles and 1 report	20%	5 hours	Indicate in class that these assignments are complete.
3-4 Page paper utilizing a biblical #MeToo story	40%	6-8 hours	Submitted through e-Campus

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS

- **Movie:** Watch [Spotlight](#) (available on [Amazon Prime](#) and [other sites](#))
- Read *The Houston Chronicle's* reporting on the Southern Baptist Church's #ChurchToo crisis—"[Abusing Faith: 20 years, 700 victims: Southern Baptist sexual abuse spreads as leaders resist reforms](#)"
- Read *The Chicago Tribune's* reporting on Willow Creek's #ChurchToo Crisis—"[After years of inquiries, Willow Creek pastor denies allegations](#)"
- Read Southern Baptist Church [Caring Well Report](#)

COURSE PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

Attendance Policy and Grades

Attendance at the one-day seminar is mandatory—no exceptions.

Before the November 9 seminar, pre-seminar assignments must be completed.

After the November 9 seminar submit a 3-4 page paper based on a biblical #MeToo story

Pre-seminar Assignments

- Watch: [Spotlight](#) (available on [Amazon Prime](#) and [other sites](#))
- Read *The Houston Chronicle's* reporting on the Southern Baptist Church's #ChurchToo crisis—"[Abusing Faith: 20 years, 700 victims: Southern Baptist sexual abuse spreads as leaders resist reforms](#)" (1st article)
- Read the Chicago Tribune's reporting on Willow Creek's #ChurchToo crisis
- Read The Southern Baptist Church's "[Caring Well Report](#)"

Post-seminar Assignment

- Choose one of the following #MeToo narratives in the Bible: Hagar, Bathsheba, King David's daughter Tamar, Esther)
- Write a 3-4 page paper in response to the following questions:
 - What makes this narrative a #MeToo story?
 - How and why has her #MeToo story been minimized and/or overlooked?
 - How does the abuse of power play a role?
 - How is her story an important resource in helping pastors and ministry leaders understand, raise awareness, and address #MeToo/#ChurchToo in your ministry context?
 - How could you employ her story to confront the #MeToo/#ChurchToo in your ministry context?Additional instructions for this assignment will be provided in class.

[More instructions for this assignment and additional resources will be provided in class.]

Paper is **due November 15** - please turn in on e-campus.

Course Schedule

A detailed schedule, including time and place of the seminar, and additional information about other presenters will be posted here. Consideration of relevant biblical and theological texts will frame the entire seminar which will include various presentations and stories from experts. Class discussion and interaction will be a crucial element.

Grading System

The seminar is a pass or fail course with the grade appearing on student transcripts as a "P" or "F".