Course Information
The class will meet March 14-18, 2005 at Reformed Theological Seminary’s Orlando campus. This is a two-credit class.

Instructor Information
Rev. Mo Leverett is founder and president of Desire Street Ministries (DSM). In 1990, after graduating from Reformed Theological Seminary, Mo and his wife, Ellen, moved to the inner city of New Orleans. Mo began his ministry in the Desire neighborhood by volunteering as a football coach at Carver High School and holding weekly Bible studies in his home. Over the past fourteen years, DSM has grown exponentially, serving the community through a church plant and many community development initiatives. Mo is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Urban Studies at the University of New Orleans. He is also a gifted singer/songwriter. Mo and Ellen have three daughters ages 12, 11, and 8, and a son age 6. For more information on Mo and his ministry, go to the DSM website at www.desirestreet.org. The best way to contact Mo is by e-mail (moleverett@desirestreet.org).

Readings and Movies
By choosing these selections, I have provided you with tools for social interaction. You will also receive brief exposure to Christian thinking about the themes we will discuss, thereby providing you with a spectrum of perspectives for personal stimulus.

There is not much written in our theological circles along these lines. Therefore, text and movie selection is more arduous. Weaving your way through these selections is also more arduous. It is unfortunate that secularists are thinking and reflecting a great deal more than we are about the context of the urban environment and its many challenges. Perhaps some of you will begin to turn this around.

You should complete the following reading prior to the first day of class:

*You are required to read chapters one through three (pages 3-80).*

*You are required to read the following chapters:*
- Chapter 8: Cone, James H. “Black Theology and Black Liberation,” 106-113.
- Chapter 23: Cone, James H. “Black Theology and the Black Church: Where Do We Go from Here?” 266-275.

*You are required to read the entire book.*

*This is available online at www.thirdmill.org.*

You are required to read the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1**: Conn, Harvie M. “Mission, Missions, Theology, and Theological Education,” 11-26.
- **Chapter 12**: Greenway, Roger S. “Getting David out of Saul’s Armor,” 225-239.

**King, Martin Luther, Jr.** “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”

You are required to read the entire letter and the statement that prompted it. This can be found online at http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/popular_requests.


You are required to read chapter one (pages 3-51).


You are required to read books one and two.

You should watch the following movies prior to the first day of class:

- **Mississippi Burning.** Dir. Alan Parker. MGM/UA, 1989.

It is my understanding that all of the readings are on reserve in the library.

**Course Description**

In light of God’s redemptive work in history, this course will pursue the biblical pattern and blueprint for the Christian life in a fallen world. It will explore the nature of God’s work and its implication for our own work in the world, especially in the context of the American city and unique problem of racial injustice.

We will attempt to enter into a better understanding of the biblical mandates that flow out of an understanding of the gospel as God’s work in the world. We will explore in an introductory manner the biblical themes of the kingdom of God, the biblical poverty mandate, justice and mercy, faith and works, the gospel and race, and the lost art of redemptive suffering. We will explore all of these things focusing primarily on the existential context of the American South and urban America.

We will also briefly look at appropriate and effective contemporary models for the implication of these principles in a holistically redemptive way. Special attention will be given to your personal and spiritual cultivation in preparation for your own appointed task.
Course Goals and Objectives
This is not a how-to-do urban ministry class. I am not as interested in teaching you ten steps to starting a successful urban ministry. Too often we gravitate toward the how and miss the why. I want you to learn the why of urban ministry. I want you to learn the theological basis for urban ministry. I want you to gain deeper understanding of the life God has called each of us to. For if you truly understand the concepts taught this weekend (the why), you will be able to apply them to your specific situation (the how).

To that end, I hope you will begin:

- To evaluate and apply biblical imperatives of the authentic Christian life.
- To experience personal transformation and theoretical preparation toward a pursuit of becoming worthy ambassadors of the gospel in urban pockets of poverty.
- To identify some of the dynamics of the inner city of America in order to become more capable of gospel application in that particular context.
- To understand the appropriate Christian response to the gospel and to assess and employ innovative and theologically sound solutions to the contemporary urban crisis in America.

Class Expectations
You will need to respond to the readings and movies in one of the following ways:

- Write down your reaction to each of the movies and readings (one-half page minimum). I am more interested in your reaction to what you read than simply a retelling of what you read. In fact, your reaction to the movies and readings, not your summary of them, will reveal how well you understood what you watched and read. In your reaction, I am especially interested in how this work has influenced your thinking about your Christian responsibility.
- Creatively group the readings and movies into four or five categories. Give each category a cool title. Then tell me why each reading and movie falls under this title. Finally, let me know your response to each category, especially the role each category plays in what you believe to be your Christian responsibility.

All responses are due the first day of class, so we can discuss them in class. Your class participation grade will be based, in part, on your in-class interaction with these works.

All grades will be based upon the published RTS grading scale. Your grade will be determined as follows:

30% Reading / Movie Summaries
20% Class Participation
50% Exam: An open book exam will be handed out on the last day of class. The exam is to be postmarked by Friday, April 1, 2005.

All work not handed in during class must be mailed (no email or fax copies will be accepted) to Mo Leverett / Desire Street Ministries / PO Box 26966 / New Orleans, LA 70186.