

Course Description

This course is designed to examine issues of social justice and injustice from biblical, theological and sociological perspectives and to consider practical implications and courses of action for Christians in Christian community.

Purpose

The outcomes expected for students taking this course include:

- 1) increased understanding and awareness of the nature of social systems and related issues of social justice;
- 2) increased capability of students to be able to address issues of justice and injustice in the contexts of pastoral ministry; and
- 3) increased understanding of possible practical Christian responses to injustice taking into account ecclesial and personal courses of action.

Course Requirements

The student will be expected to:

- 1) attend all class sessions and participate in class discussions;
- 2) read all assigned readings and submit a 3-4 page review/critique of each of the required readings;
- 3) lead or participate in a presentation to the class of a review of a book from the recommended reading list; and
- 4) submit a 15-20 page research project on a related subject taking into account course readings (and discussions).

Course Project

Each student will submit a 15-20 page research paper. The due date for the paper is March 15, 2009. Topics should be directly related to social justice and should be approached both from biblical and theological perspectives. Practical implications for the church with recommendations for appropriate programmatic responses should also be considered. Interview sources in addition to bibliographic sources are desirable. Examples of topics include: poverty, race, gender discrimination, immigration, the global economy, environmental issues, homelessness, educational inequities, the Church as political and prophetic witness, pacifism, and church/state relationships.

Class Presentation

Each student will present (either personally or as part of a group) to the class a book from the recommended reading list. Each presentation will be allotted approximately one hour of class time. Students may contact the professor in advance to indicate their preference of which book they would like to present or wait until the first day of class when the final book assignments will be determined.

Grading

Grades will be based on the student's satisfactory participation in and completion of course requirements according to the following percentages:

Book Reviews/Critiques	40%
Course Project	40%
Class Presentation	10%
Class Participation	10%

Policy on Late Work

Work that is turned in late without an extension authorized by the professor will receive a reduction in grade.

Required Reading

- Benefiel, Ron. *Christian Holiness and the Wesleyan Mission of Mercy: The Character of the People of God in the World*. Pre-published mss.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*. Augsburg Fortress Press. 2001. (151 pp.)
- Cavanaugh, William T. *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ (Challenges in Contemporary Theology)*. Blackwell Publishers. 1998. (288 pp.)
- Emerson, Michael O. and Christian Smith. *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America*. Oxford Press. 2001. (224 pp.)
- Nouwen, Henri J.M., Donald P. McNeill and Douglas A. Morrison. *Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life*. Doubleday. 1982. (160 pp.)
- Samson, Will and Lisa. *Justice in the Burbs. Being the Hands of Jesus Wherever You Live*. Baker Books, 2007. (208 pp.)
- Sider, Ronald J. *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity*. W Publishing Group. 2005. (352 pp)
- Yoder, John Howard. *The Politics of Jesus*. Eerdmans. 1994.

Recommended Reading

- Blomberg, Craig (Editor), Thomas R. Schreiner (Editor), James R. Beck (Editor), Ann L. Bowman (Contributor), Linda L. Belleville, Craig Keener, *Two Views of Women and Ministry*. Zondervan, 2001. (372 pp.)
- Brendlinger, Irv. *Social Justice through the Eyes of Wesley: John Wesley's Theological Challenge to Slavery*. Audubon Press, 2006. (292 pp.)
- Campolo, Tony. *Letters to a Young Evangelical*. Basic Books, 2005. (224 pp.)
- and Michael Battle. *The Church Enslaved: A Spirituality of Racial Reconciliation*. Fortress Press, 2005. (138 pp.)
- Gonzalez, Catherine Gunsalus and Justo L. Gonzalez. *Revelation*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1997. (148 pp.)
- Grenz, Stanley J. and Denise Muir Kiesbo, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*. InterVarsity Press, 1995. (233 pp.)
- Gutierrez, Gustavo. *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*. Orbis Books, 1987. (160 pp.)
- Harper, Lisa Sharon. *Evangelical (Does not Equal) Republican... or Democrat*. The New Press, 2008. (221 pp.)
- Hauerwas, Stanley. *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics*. Notre Dame Press, 1984. (179 pp.)
- *The Hauerwas Reader*. Notre Dame Press. 2001. (Selected chapters) Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004. (392 pp.)
- Heitzenrater, Richard P. (ed.) *The Poor and the People Called Methodists: 1729-1999*. Kingswood Books, 2002. (193 pp.)
- Hilfiker, David. *Not All of Us Are Saints*. Ballantine Books. 1994.
- Ilibagiza, Immaculee. *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*. Hay House, 2006. (210 pp.)
- Jacobsen, Eric O. *Sidewalks in the Kingdom: New Urbanism and the Christian Faith*. Brazos Press, 2003. (166 pp.)
- Jennings, Theodore W., Jr. *Good News to the Poor: John Wesley's Evangelical Economics*. Abingdon Press, 1990. (236 pp.)
- Kozol, Jonathan. *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*. Perennial Press, 1996. (304 pp.)
- *The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*. Crown, 2005. (352 pp.)
- Kraybill, Donald. *The Upside-Down Kingdom*. Harold Press (PA), 2003. (311 pp.)
- Law, Eric H.F. *the Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community*. Chalice Press, 1993. (112 pp.)
- Marsh, Charles. *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice: From the Civil Rights Movement to Today*. Basic Books, 2005. (292 pp.)
- Marquardt, Manfred. *John Wesley's Social Ethics*. Wipf and Stock, 2001. (206 pp.)
- Orbinski, James. *Imperfect Offering: Humanitarian Action for the Twenty-First Century*. Walker and Co., 2008. (448 pp.)
- Perkins, John. *Beyond Charity*. Baker Books, 1993. (192 pp.)
- Reed, Rodney L. *Holy with Integrity: The Unity of Personal and Social Ethics in the Holiness Movement, 1880-1910*. Schmuel Publishing Co., 2003. (288 pp.)

- Runyon, Theodore. *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today*. Abingdon Press, 1998. (288 pp.)
- Sider, Ronald J. *Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcoming Poverty in America*. Baker Books, 1999. (266 pp.)
- *Good News and Good Works: A Theology for the Whole Gospel*. Baker Books, 1999. (253 pp.)
- Smith, Timothy L. *Revivalism and Social Reform: In Mid-Nineteenth-Century America*. Abingdon Press, 1957. (237 pp.)
- Storkey, Alan. *Jesus and Politics: Confronting the Powers*. Baker, 2005. (287 pp.)
- Van Heemst, David B. *Empowering the Poor: Why Justice Requires School Choice*. Scarecrow Education, 2004. (197 pp.)
- Wink, Walter. *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium*. Galilee Publishers, 1999. (240 pp.)

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Tuesday, January 20

Cleophus Larue Lecture at Mid America Nazarene University

Wednesday, January 21

Course Introduction

Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger (Sider)

Divided by Faith (Emerson and Smith)

Thursday, January 22

Compassion (Nouwen, McNeill and Morrison)

Christian Holiness and the Wesleyan Mission of Mercy (Benefiel)

Friday, January 23

Student Presentations

Prophetic Imagination (Brueggemann)

Sunday, January 25 -- Class Excursion

Monday, January 26

Student Presentations

Politics of Jesus (Yoder)

Tuesday, January 27

Student Presentations

Torture and Eucharist (Cavanaugh)

Wednesday, January 28

Student Presentations

Justice in the Burbs (Samson)

Thursday, January 29

Class Excursion

Friday, January 30

Course Review

Benefiel residence