

Carey Theological College

BIBL 642: Confronted by Justice
Encounters between the Biblical Narrative and our World

Tim Dickau, DMin. and Dave Diewert, PhD
3 graduate credit hours
Tuesday, April 17 – Friday, April 20, 2012

Course Description:

Central to the biblical story and the life and ministry of Jesus is the enactment of justice as envisioned in God's kingdom. In this course, we will trace this biblical vision of justice by following a number of relevant themes that run through the entire biblical corpus, such as Sabbath and Jubilee formulations, economic redistribution, communal solidarity, hospitality, and care for creation. The course will also explore dimensions of our own world and the structural injustice that exists within it, how a biblically grounded vision of justice might be actualized, and what the role of the faith community could be in embodying it. Our time together will provide fresh and invigorating challenges, both in how we read the biblical texts and in considering together what it means for us to live faithfully in light of its resolute call to do justice.

Course Objectives:

- Explore and understand a biblical vision of justice, based on sustained exegetical readings of numerous biblical texts drawn from the Torah, Prophets, Gospels, Paul's letters, and Revelation.
- Delineate and grapple with issues of biblical and theological interpretation that surface in the engagements with various biblical texts
- Reflect together on our specific contexts and communities, and how the biblical vision of justice might be realized in these diverse settings
- Describe ways and means to nurture communities of faith dedicated to the pursuit of local and global justice

Course Outline:

Tuesday

- Thematic overview: trace out a biblical vision of justice, drawing from exodus narratives, torah instructions, prophetic utterances, and gospel stories. (Dave)
- Hermeneutical stance: unraveling our own social location within the political economy of power (Tim)

Wednesday:

- Reading the text & reading the world: engaging biblical texts in relation to current issues of systemic (in)justice
 - Poverty and homelessness in the local context (Dave)
 - Hearing the prophetic voice (Dave)
 - Refugees and immigration (Tim)
 - Welcoming the stranger (Tim)

Thursday

- The journey of faithfulness: Communities of Christ followers in pursuit of justice and shalom
 - Jeremiah 7 (Tim)

- Paul in the midst of Empire (Dave)
- Paths of social change to pursue as the gathered and dispersed church (Tim)

Friday

- Economic justice: exploring an ‘economics of enough’ within a world of profit and consumption (Dave)
- Justice and creation: a theology of hope (Rev 21-22) (Tim)

1. READ:

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*, 2nd edition (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2001).

McLaren, Brian, Elisa Padilla, and Ashley Bunting Seeber, *The Justice Project* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009).

Selected chapters:

Chapter 6: Richard Twiss, “Reading the Bible Unjustly: How has the American Church read the Bible Unjustly?” pp. 67-73

Chapter 19: Dario Lopez, “Just Wealth: How is the Poverty of the Poor in the Global South a Matter of Justice for the Rich in the Global North?” pp. 151-157

Chapter 24: Jorge Tassin, “Justice in the Slums: Urban Poverty as a Monument to Injustice,” pp. 185-190.

Wright, N.T. *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008). Chapter 13: “Building for the Kingdom,” pp. 207-232.

2. WRITE:

Write a book notation on the Prophetic Imagination. Book notations are more than simple book reports or reviews, offering, instead, a critical review of a book, reflecting both a thorough understanding of the argument, and interaction with the content with the student's own context of ministry.

Format:

Ideally, a book notation should be completed on one side of a page, printed and single-spaced. Two pages is the maximum length. If double-spacing is preferred, then the submission should not exceed 4 pages.

- a. At the top side of the first page, put the name of the course on the left-hand side, and put your name on the right hand side.
- b. Use the following format:
 - Place the title, author, publishing company, year, and number of pages in section one.
 - In section 2, write a brief review of the book, stating your understanding of the basic thrust of the book.
 - In section 3, provide a brief evaluative comment, presenting both positive comment and critical review,
 - .In section 4, reflect on the implications for ministry in your context

10 hours reading
4 hours (writing)
20% of final grade
Due: April, 25th, 2011 (500 words)

2. Exegete a gospel parable

Give a careful, detailed reading and explanation of one of Jesus` parables (chosen from the list below), giving specific attention to issues of power, wealth, and exclusion. Give particular attention to the social context

within Jesus ministry. Describe how this parable fits into the overall thrust of Jesus' life and mission. Also indicate how your social location in society might affect your own reading of this parable. In the last ¼ of the paper, explore how the parable contributes to the Biblical vision of justice as discussed in the course.

Parable list: Luke 10:30-37; 14:15-24; 16:19-31; 19:11-27.

Read 240 pages from your choice of the following resources and use what you learn in the reading and explanation of the parable you choose.

Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke*. (New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1997).

Herzog, William R., II. *Jesus, Justice and the Reign of God: A Ministry of Liberation* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2000).

Herzog, William R., II. *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 1994)

Horsley, Richard A. *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New Order* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003).

Horsley, Richard A (editor). *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance* (Louisville: WJKP, 2008).

King, Gordon. *Reading Parables of Jesus with Christian Community Development Workers*. Doctor of Ministry Project. Carey Theological College. 2011. (Available through Carey Theological College)

Myers, Ched. *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1997).

Wright, N. T. *The New Testament and the People of God*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

———. *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.

———, *Mark (Matthew, Luke and John) for Everyone*, (London, SPCK, 2003).

240 pages 12 hours reading
1000 words = 8 hours
20% of final grade
Due: May 14, 2011

3. Major paper

This paper should demonstrate your understanding of the Biblical vision of justice and its relevance to issues in our world today. Choose one issue of justice/injustice that is relevant to your social context and explore that issue in four ways:

a. Biblical Exegesis. Elucidate how specific passages and larger Biblical themes confront this issue of justice/injustice.

b. Theological Reflection. Reflect both upon how the Biblical argument you have developed fits into and impacts your own theological framework.

c. Social Information and Analysis. Gather and summarize relevant quantitative and qualitative information regarding your issue of study. Offer an analysis of how the local and global systems impinge on your issue of study

d. Envisioning a New Future. Explain what a Biblical vision of justice would look like regarding this issue. Set forth a proposal for how the community of faith can participate in God's justice-seeking kingdom.

Read 900 pages from the bibliography in research and preparation for this paper. Show clear evidence throughout the paper as to how the resources informed your thinking, and report what you read, as well as the number of pages completed.

900 pages 45 hours reading
3500 words = 28 hours
60% of final grade
Due: June 25th, 2011

TIME INVESTMENT

Lectures/Discussion	28 hrs
Reading	67 hrs
Written Assignments	40 hrs
TOTAL	135 hrs

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander, Bruce K. *The Roots of Addiction in Free Market Society*. Vancouver, B.C.: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2001.

Baumann, Zygmunt. *Modernity and the Holocaust*. New York: Ithaca Press, 1999.

_____. *Community*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2001.

_____. *Society Under Siege*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2002.

Bell, Daniel. *Liberation Theology and the End of History: The Refusal to Cease Suffering*. New York, Routledge Press, 2001.

Boff, Leonardo. *Saint Francis: A Model for Human Liberation*. Translation by John Diercksmeier. New York: Crossroads Books, 1984..

Cox, Harvey. "The Market as God." *The Atlantic Monthly*. March 1999. 18-24

Diewert, Dave, "Interview with Dave Diewert". *Clarion: Journal of Spirituality and Justice* (June 9, 2006).

Dykstra, Laurel A. *Set Them Free: The Other Side of Exodus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002).

Dykstra, Laurel and Ched Myers (eds). *Liberating Biblical Study: Scholarship, Art, and Action in Honour of the Center and Library for the Bible and Social Justice*, vol. 1 (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2011).

Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke*. (New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997).

Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1973.

Hauerwas,, Stanley. *After Christendom: How the Church is to Behave If Freedom, Justice, and a Christian Nation Are Bad Ideas*. Nashville, Tennessee, Abingdon Press, 1991.

_____, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983.

- Herzog, William R., II. *Jesus, Justice and the Reign of God: A Ministry of Liberation* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2000).
- Herzog, William R., II. *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 1994)
- Horsley, Richard A. *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New Order* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003).
- Horsley, Richard A (editor). *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, Louisville: WJKP, 2008.
- MacIntyre, Alisdair. *Whose Justice, Which Rationality?* Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 1989.
- Myers, Ched. *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1997).
- Perkins, John. *With Justice For All*. Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1982.
- Romero, Oscar. *The Violence of Love*. 2nd Edition. Farmington, Pennsylvania: Plough Publishing, 1998.
- Rutba House, editor. *Schools of Conversion: The 12 Marks of New Monasticism*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2002.
- Sobrino, Jon. *Witnesses to the Kingdom: The Martyrs of El Salvador and the Crucified Peoples*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2003.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration into Identity and Otherness*. (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1996).
- Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1986.
- _____. "The Grace That Shaped My Life". In *Philosophers Who Believe: The Spiritual Journeys of 11 Leading Thinkers*, edited by Kelly James Clark. Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- _____. *Justice: Rights and Wrongs*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Wright, N. T. *Paul*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2005.
- _____. *Evil and the Justice of God*. Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- _____. *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. New York: Harper Collins, 2006.
- _____. *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*. New York: Harper Collins., 2008.