

## THEO 730 Discipleship and Ethics – 3 Units

### Course Syllabus

**Semester/Year:** Fall 2017  
**Units:** 3

**Instructor:** Mark D. Baker, Ph. D.  
**Office Hours** Mon. 3:30-4:30 & Weds. 1:00-2:30,  
Also available by appointment  
**Office Location:** SEM 206  
**Phone number:** 453- 2313 (of.); 255-5236 (hm.)  
**Email:** [mark.baker@fresno.edu](mailto:mark.baker@fresno.edu) (checked Mon.-Fri.)

**Length:** 15 weeks (8/31/17 – 12/14/17)  
**Schedule:** Thursday, 2:30-5:30

**This class is delivered in the following format:**  
Face-to-Face (no online attendance required)  
Total class meeting hours: 45

### Course Description

A study of the biblical and theological basis and practical application of Christian ethics that will enable a church community to become an alternative culture that resists forces of alienation and death in our society. Prerequisite: BIB 720 Church and God's Mission

### Program Student Learning Objectives

- PSLO 1: Demonstrate commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus in Christian community.
- PSLO 2: Articulate commitment to a biblical theological Christian perspective.
- PSLO 3: Interpret diverse cultural contexts of ministry using theological perspectives integrated with social scientific approaches.
- PSLO 4: Practice leadership skills in ministry, leadership and culture.

### Course Student Learning Objectives

- Distinguish the difference between an ethic of Christian discipleship and an ethic of religious morality and develop a passionate commitment to the former (PSLO 2).
- Practice giving ethical exhortation in a Christian way (PSLO 4).
- Identify various alienating forces in our society; describe how they alienate; and ways a Christian community might resist these forces (PSLO 3).
- Describe practices that will contribute to the holistic transformation of individuals and their thriving as the people God has created them to be (PSLO 2).
- Take action steps in daily life flowing from the previous objective (PSLO 1).
- Imagine ways to be God's instruments in encouraging others to adopt these practices (PSLO 4).

### Required Texts

Baker, Mark D. *Religious No More: Building Communities of Grace and Freedom*. Wipf & Stock, 2005 or IVP, 1999, ISBN 1597521051. Or Spanish version: *Basta de religion* Brenneman, Robert. *Homies and Hermanos: God and Gangs in Central America*. Oxford, 2011, ISBN, 0199753903.

Geddert, Timothy J. *All Right Now: Finding Consensus on Ethical Questions*. Herald Press, 2008, ISBN 978-0836194180.

Hallie, Philip. *Lest Innocent Blood be Shed: The Story of the Village of Le Chambon and How Goodness Happened There*. HarperCollins, 1994, ISBN 0 06 092517-5.

L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wind in the Door* (various editions available), ISBN 0312368593.

Course Pack (CP) - a collection of photocopied articles and chapters will be distributed the first class session. You will be asked to pay for the cost of copies and copyright fees.

Required texts are on reserve in the library.

ASSIGNMENTS	DUE DATE
Pre-class 1 reading & notes	8/31 2:30 PM
Class 1 response letter	9/4 8:00 AM
Pre-class 2 reading & notes	9/7 2:30 PM
Class 2 response letter	9/11 8:00 AM
Pre-class 3 reading & notes	9/14 2:30 PM
Class 3 response letter	9/18 8:00 AM
Pre-class 4 reading & notes	9/21 2:30 PM
Ethical Exhortation best draft	9/28 2:30 PM
Pre-class 5 reading & notes	9/28 2:30 PM
Class 5 quiz in class	9/28 2:30 PM
Ethical Exhortation final draft	10/5 2:30 PM
Pre-class 6 reading & notes	10/5 2:30 PM
Post-class 6 action-reflection assignment	10/12 2:30 PM
Pre-class 7 reading & notes	10/12 2:30 PM
Pre-class 8 reading & notes	10/19 2:30 PM
Pre-class 8 action-reflection assignment	10/19 2:30 PM
Pre-class 9 reading & notes	10/26 2:30 PM
Pre-class 9 action reflection assignment	10/26 2:30 PM
Pre-class 10 reading & notes	11/2 2:30 PM
Book review	11/9 2:30 PM
Pre-class 11 reading & notes	11/9 2:30 PM
Class 11 response letter	11/13 8:00 AM
Pre-class 12 reading & essay on Inequality	11/16 2:30 PM
<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	11/23
Pre-class 13 reading & written assignment	11/30 2:30 PM
Post-class 13 action-reflection assignment	12/7 2:30 PM
Pre-class 14 reading & notes	12/7 2:30 PM
Class 14 response letter	12/11 8:00 AM
Part one of the Final Reflective Project	12/14 2:30 PM
Turn in reading log	12/14 2:30 PM
Final Reflective project notes and letter	12/15 5:00 PM

## Course Calendar

**Pre-course reading:** Two narratives are foundational for this course. We will discuss them the first and second week of the class, and refer to them throughout the course. Please read L'Engle *before* the first class. You may want to read the Hallie book before the semester begins also.

### Class 1 – Aug. 31 **Introduction: Ethics as “Naming”**

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion (see directions on reading and note-taking in the assignments section):

*A Wind in the Door*, the complete book

Much of the Bible is written in narrative form, and Jesus often used stories (parables) in his teaching. This is not accidental, narratives can communicate things that text books cannot, and we can remember stories much easier than we remember the argument of an academic essay. In this novel for young people Madeleine L'Engle offers us powerful images of forces of alienation and destruction as well as inspiring and challenging images of ways to resist those forces. I invite you to immerse yourself in this story and reflect upon how it can inform the way we think about why and how a Christian community should seek to resist forces of evil and alienation in our society. As you read take note of and pay special attention to the theme of “naming” (and its various sub themes like “X-ing,” “Un-naming,” “not knowing who you are,” etc.).

1. What does L'Engle mean by “naming”? What does a namer do?
2. What is the relation between what L'Engle portrays as naming and the pastoral importance and potential of Christian ethics?
3. What is the relation between naming and Christian community? What is the role of community in this book?
4. How did Jesus name people?
5. What are Echthroi in the book? (What does the word mean in Greek?) What do they represent? According to L'Engle how should a namer respond to them?

**After the class:** Write a response letter (see directions in assignment section)

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### Class 2 – Sep. 7 **Communities that “Name,” Resist the Powers, & Form an Alternative Culture**

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion:

Baker, Mark (CP [CP= Course Pack]), “Power/Principalities,” 1285

Dawn, Marva (CP), “Powers and Principalities,” 609-612

Ellul, Jacques (CP), “Freedom in Relation to the Powers,” 151-160

Hallie, *Lest Innocent Blood be Shed* xiii-xxi, 1-115, 166-200, 234-266

#### *Readings on Principalities and Powers*

Although we will not explicitly use the biblical language of principalities and powers in every class session, it is a theme that is present in every class. This course builds on the Church and God's Mission course in a number of ways including using this theme. These short readings are meant as a review of your more in-depth study of that theme in Church and God's Mission.

*Reading, Lest Innocent Blood be Shed* pages: xiii-xxi, 1-115, 166-200, 234-266

As you read Hallie reflect on how the reading relates to the “naming” and ethics of character themes from last week and the “principalities and powers” reading this week.

1. In a general way we can say this community was resisting Nazism. As you read the book note more specifically what they are resisting.
2. How does this book demonstrate the value and importance of a community of resistance in contrast to isolated individuals attempting to resist forces of death and alienation?
3. Although community was central in the book, individuals, including Pastor Trocmé, played very important roles. How did the individual leaders make choices, organize, develop people's character and use their influence to shape and develop a community of resistance? What can you learn from these leaders that can be helpful in leading your own communities (churches, neighborhoods, community of friends)?
4. The Protestant Reformed Church is not historically a "peace church," but non-violence is a central theme in the book. Take note of how the leaders become committed to non-violence. What can Anabaptists in our setting today learn from these non-Anabaptist pacifists? What can non-Anabaptists in our setting learn from these non-Anabaptist pacifists in Le Chambon?
5. How does being a community of resistance make them a community of freedom? That is, how can you imagine they were freer than a community down the road that did not resist as they did?
6. Many other Christians in France and Europe did not resist as they did? What was different here that led to their resistance? What can we learn from that?
7. Who do you identify with most?

*After the class:* Write a response letter

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Class 3 – Sep. 14 **Freedom From Religion: What is a Religious Ethic and What Does it Produce? & Resisting Individualism: An Alternative Culture of People in Covenant Community**

*Before class* read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion: Baker, *Religious No More*, 13-126, 147-159

1. In this class session you will have the opportunity to ask questions about the book. As you read please note questions you would like to ask the author, and bring those questions to class.
2. What is the relation between religion and “un-naming,” and the relation between freedom from religion and “naming”?
3. (Chapter 7) What might be some of the differences that would flow from the understanding justification in the way I argue for in the book (Hebraic)? How might it change Christians' view of God, the church, salvation, ethics?

*After the class:* Write a response letter

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Class 4 – Sep. 21 **Resisting Religion: Developing a Centered-Set Ethic that Frees Community Members to Live Out Who They Have Been “Named” to Be.**

*Before class* read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion: Baker, *Religious No More*, 127-146  
Blue, Debbie (CP), “Glory Doesn’t Shine, It Bleeds,” 128-133

1. What can we learn from Paul that will help us state ethical imperatives in a centered-set, non-religious way?

Moving from the above specific discussion of how to talk about ethical imperatives in a non-religious way, chapter ten of *Religious No More* discusses in a more general way how to respond to religion.

2. What insights do you find most helpful as you think about practicing a more centered-set approach? What other ideas or questions does chapter ten bring to mind?
3. What concept of God does Debbie Blue present and how does that concept of God relate to *Religious No More* and our discussion on religion?
4. What connections do you observe between the sermon and last week's class on religion and bounded/fuzzy/centered approaches to church?

**After class:** Read example sermons by Ellul, Williams, and both sermons by Hill (CP), and write an Ethical Exhortation (See directions in the assignment section; due by beginning of the next class)

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### Class 5 – Sep. 28 **An Alternative Culture: Using the Bible in Ethical Decision Making**

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion, and prepare for the quiz:

Geddert, *All Right Now*, 17-77, 125-168

1. Before you read, briefly review the main themes from the first four weeks of the course. Then as you read take note of ways that what Tim Geddert proposes coheres with, relates to or is in tension with themes we have engaged thus far.
2. What perspectives on the Bible and strategies for interpreting it presented in the book do you find most helpful? What are aspects you are skeptical of or have questions about?

*In relation to chapters six and seven:*

3. In what ways does Geddert's method lead you to see scripture relating to these issues differently and to think about the issues differently?
4. As you observe Geddert apply his method what are ways that you find you are more convinced it is a good method and ways that you are less convinced?
5. If you disagree with where Geddert ends up on an issue what are exegetical or hermeneutical moves of his that you would do differently that would justify your taking a different position?

**Quiz:** The quiz will ask questions about some of the following terms from class and reading: ethics as gift, ethics of virtue and character, naming, un-naming, principalities and powers, alternative culture, religion, individualism, bounded-group, centered-group, fuzzy-group, justification, indicative and imperative.

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### Class 6 – Oct. 5 **An Alternative Culture: Resisting Technique's Alienating and Enslaving Ways**

*Final draft of Ethical Exhortation due by the beginning of class six.*

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion:

Ellul, Jacques (CP), Excerpts, 67-70

Greenman, Schuchardt & Toly (CP), "Technology and Technique," 19-37

Gill, David (CP), "Modern Technology: Servant or Master," 4-7, 22-24

Berry, Wendell (CP), excerpt of "Feminism, the Body, and the Machine," 185-196

Koyama, Kosuke (CP), "The Efficiency of the Crucified One in the World of Technological Efficiency," 44-49  
 Rheingold, Howard, "Look Who's Talking,"  
<http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/7.01/amish.html>  
 Marche, Stephen, "Is Facebook Making Us Lonely?"  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/05/is-facebook-making-us-lonely/308930/>  
 Richtel, Matt, "Attached to Technology and Paying a Mental Price,"  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/07/technology/07brain.html?ref=familybusiness>  
[es](#)

1. How does technique alienate? By alienate I mean: separates, un-names, keeps us from being more fully who God created us to be, inhibits community, etc. Take note of examples of alienation as you read.
2. In what ways does technology, as described by the authors, have characteristics of being what Paul called a principality or power, and what L'Engle called *Echthroi*?  
 As you read Berry focus on the logic of his argument, don't fixate on particular pieces of technology he talks about.
3. As you read Berry list insights and characteristics that might help you evaluate whether to adopt a new technology or not. What does he model for us?
4. How do you respond to Berry's exhortation to not only draw the line where we can, but also where it is not easily drawn?
5. How does Koyama's theological reflection on efficiency relate to observations the other authors have made?
6. According to the article about the Amish what is their concern? That is, what is driving their decisions about what they adopt from modern society and what they do not?
7. What can we learn from the Amish about being communities of resistance to technique? (May include positive and negative lessons.)

**After class** do the action-reflection assignment described below.

Choose a day in the week ahead for a fast from electronic communication (cell phone/mobile devices, e-mail, Twitter, Facebook and any other internet based forms of communication). You may choose the length of the fast, all day would be ideal, but less than that is acceptable. Sometime during your fast write a handwritten letter to someone you normally communicate with electronically and mail it/deliver it to them. (This is not meant to be a class response letter. You can write about anything; you may, but do not have to mention the class. You do not have to send me a copy of the letter.) After you have written the letter write a two-part critical reflection. Part one: through the lens of class 6, reflect on your experience of the fast – including stating how long your fast was; you may want to utilize some of Erisman's questions in your reflection. Part two: reflect on the experience of communicating through the handwritten, pen and paper medium what did you learn? It should one page single-spaced and is due by class 7.

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### Class 7 – Oct. 12 **An Alternative Culture: Resisting Mammon**

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion:

Geddert, *All Right Now*, 169-184

Ellul (CP), "Money" & "Children and Money," 73-88, 109-125

Hochstedler, Jodi (CP), "Speaking the Unspeakable," 7-9

Powell, Susan (CP), "The Master's Joy," 35-38

Shelly, Linda (CP), "What I Learned From Sharing Bananas and Beans," 7-9

1. List ways that money/mammon alienates. That is, how, in your experience, have you seen it distort relationships and separate us from ourselves, others and God? In what ways do you struggle with money?
  2. What are the three or four main points that Ellul makes about money?
  3. Ellul takes a position as strongly critical of money as anything I have read. He clearly is not operating out of a fuzzy paradigm. What are things that Ellul does in his discussion of money that guard against people developing a bounded group religious ethic from his analysis?
  4. What are four or five helpful points you have picked up from the other readings (articles on money) that describe various (and at times contrasting) ways of dealing with money?
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**Class 8 – Oct. 19 (Module Week\*) An Alternative Culture: Resisting Consumerism**

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion, and do the action-reflection assignment described below:

Sanburn, Josh (CP), “The Joy of Less,” (excerpts)

Wilkens & Sanford (CP), “Consumerism: I Am What I Own,” 44-60

Clapp, Rodney (CP), “Why the Devil Takes Visa,” 19-33

Miller, Lynn (CP), “What Your Retirement Planner Doesn’t Tell You,” 52-55

1. Take note of the characteristics of consumerism described by Wilkens and Sanford and think of examples of these characteristics you have seen.
2. What are common themes in the four articles?
3. Clapp begins his article with a number of historical observations from both the distant and recent past. What is his purpose in doing this? What is he seeking to communicate to us?

*Action-reflection assignment:*

Spend an hour at a mall observing how it acts as a religious place of formation and worship. Liturgy and worship practices reflect what matters to us and shape us; they give us a vision for a way of life and call us to that way of life, invite our allegiance and obedience. What is the foundational narrative of the mall—its basic truths? What is its view of the human, of “sin”? What is the vision of the good life it calls us to? What kind of people does it want us to become? As you are at the mall seek to discern the “liturgies,” the “sermons,” the “worship” practices of the mall. How does it communicate its foundational narrative/basic truths and how does it seek to shape and call us to be the kind of people it wants us to be?

Write a one page (single-spaced) analysis based on your observations. Answer the above questions. Integrate specific examples from the last question (How...?) into your answers to the other questions. It is due the beginning of class 8. Late papers will not be accepted because the assignment will be discussed in class.

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**Class 9 – Oct. 26 An Alternative Culture: Resisting TV’s and the Internet’s Alienating Power**

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion, and do the action-reflection assignment described below:

Dyer, John (CP), “Approach,” 81-96

Lasch-Quinn, Elisabeth (CP), “A Stranger’s Dream” (excerpt), 245-62

Grossman, David (CP), “Trained to Kill,” 31-39

Bennett, Stephanie (CP) “Snap, Crackle, Pop Christianity,” 9-16

Schuchardt, Read (CP) “The Crucifixion of the Word: Ellul and the Anti-Christian Bias

of Digital Media,” 1-19  
Dyer, John (CP), “Virtualization,” 159-174, 180-82 (19)  
Boers, Arthur (CP), “Eliminating Limits, Endangering Taboos,” 95-108  
Dilley, Andrea Palpant (CP), “How to Watch a Documentary,” 27

1. As you read take note of whether the article places more emphasis on the content communicated through TV/Internet, or on the impact of the medium (whether the content is good or bad), or on both. Come to class prepared to share examples.
2. What is your response to Grossman’s article? What did it leave you feeling and thinking?
3. Why does Bennett include Ellul’s reflection on the church architectural change in her article about the use of popular media in the church?
4. Which of the seven vices in Schuchardt’s paper have you observed or experienced?
5. How is Dyer’s list of characteristics (chap. 11) similar and different to Schuchardt’s?

*Action-reflection assignment:* Do one of the following options.

Option A: Take a five day fast from T.V., videos and entertainment/news on the internet (You may continue to use internet based forms of communication like e-mail, but some break from that is encouraged as well). Write a response letter reflecting on the experience and what you observed and learned. Send it to your friend and me before the next class. (You will receive extra credit if you take option A—a full grade level raise on this assignment; for example a B [3.0] becomes an A [4.0]).

Option B: Be a critical watcher of TV commercials this week. Take notes as you watch. What messages are communicated explicitly and implicitly? What are common themes and methods? How do they cohere with and conflict with the gospel and the Kingdom of God? Write a response letter reflecting on what you observed and learned. Send it to your friend and me before the next class.

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### Class 10 – Nov. 2 **An Alternative Culture: Promoting Chastity and Marital Fidelity**

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion:

Geddert, *All Right Now*, 95-123

Smith, Christian, *Lost in Transition*, 148-49, 155-58, 168-94 (available on reserve at the library and at the professor’s office)

Dawn, Marva (CP) from *Sexual Character*, 3-24, 32-38

Gardner, Christine (CP), “The Rhetoric of Chastity,” 1-3

Kennedy, John W. (CP), “Help for the Sexually Desperate” & “These Guys are Really Screwed Up,” 1-8, 1-2

Scott, Halee Gray (CP), “The Porn Paradox,” 38

Wiest, Kathy (CP), “Liberty from Pornography,” 17-18

1. As you read Smith think about why it would be necessary to address the area of sexuality to name the individuals you encounter in the chapter. How might you do so in a centered way?
2. How are the downsides of a fuzzy boundary approach evident in what Smith reports?
3. How are other themes from the semester evident in the Smith, Dawn, Gardner, Scott, Wiest and Kennedy readings (such as technique, consumerism, individualism, TV/Internet, individualism)?
4. How do individuals’ experiences in Smith, and the Kennedy and Wiest articles illustrate points from Dawn’s chapters? How does the Gardner interview relate to Dawn’s chapters?
5. What can your church learn from the readings? In response to these readings what are ways your church might change the way it addresses this issue?



6. At the end of the chapter Marva Dawn, rather than a bounded approach, puts the emphasis on character development in relation to sexuality. How does that relate to things we looked at in the first class? How does it relate to a centered approach?
7. How is a centered approach evident in Kennedy's and Wiest's articles?

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<i>Book Review due by the beginning of class 11; suggestion: look ahead at the class 12 assignment</i>
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### Class 11 – Nov. 9 **An Alternative Culture of Peace and Reconciliation and Resisting a Culture of Violence**

**Before class** read, write notes on the questions below in preparation for class discussion:

Geddert, *All Right Now*, 79-94

Christian Reformed Church, "Guidelines," <http://justice.crcna.org/acts-synod-1977-pp-44-48-550-74>

Baker (CP), "My Conversion to Christian Pacifism: Reading Jacques Ellul in War Ravaged Central America" 1-8

Roth, John D. (CP), "Don't Expect an End to War"

Bell, Daniel, listen to interview on just war tradition (on course site)

Gushee, David (CP), "Our Teachable Moment"

Derksen (CP), "Being Truly Christian in Times of Conflict," 1-3

Four authors are Christian pacifists (Geddert, Baker, Roth, and Derksen), and three hold the Just-war position (CRC, Bell and Gushee). Please note similarities and differences.

1. *On Geddert & CRC*: What are the main points of agreement and difference? How do you respond to the claim that the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount is for followers of Jesus, but not necessarily for the world?
2. If I had been more deeply schooled in the just-war theory how might my story have been different?
3. What is the key thing that Ellul did for me?
4. Based on Roth's article what are some of the differences between Christian pacifism (Roth's position) and pacifism?
5. What similarities do you observe between Roth and Ellul?
6. In what ways does Bell's emphasis on character and virtue fundamentally change the discussion about just war theory?
7. Which of Derksen's five ideas most excite you? Which one challenges you the most?

**After the class:** Write a response letter

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### Class 12 – Nov. 16 **An Alternative Culture of Greater Equality**

**Before Class:** First, read the introduction to the reading and the directions for the essay on the course site

*Watch:* "Wealth Inequality in America"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnijnsM>

and Wilkinson, Richard "How Income Inequality Harms Societies,"

[http://www.ted.com/talks/richard\\_wilkinson.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/richard_wilkinson.html)

*Read:* Wilkinson, Richard and Kate Pickett (CP), "How Inequality Gets Under the Skin," 31-45

Brenneman, Robert, *Homies and Hermanos*, 3-13, 63-90, 103-108, 115-122, 139-143, 175-87, 240-45

Write inequality essay, due at the beginning of class 12.

Nov. 23 — No Class — Thanksgiving
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Class 13 – Nov. 30 **An Alternative Culture, Exploring an Issue: Food, Part One**

**Before class** read and do the written assignment described below:

Walsh, Bryan, “Getting Real About the High Price of Cheap Food”

<http://www.nrdp.net/uufsa/EE3high%20price%20cheap%20food.pdf>

Pollan, Michael, “Unhappy Meals”

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/28/magazine/28nutritionism.t.html?\\_r=1&page=wanted=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/28/magazine/28nutritionism.t.html?_r=1&page=wanted=1)

Bahnson, Fred (CP), “Field, Table, Communion” 83-91

Ataide, Randy (CP), “If We Serve the God of Productivity is there Room for Jesus?:

Ellul’s Technique, Sacredness and Distortion in the Modern Farm Economy,” 9-14

Haspel, Tamar, “Small vs. Large: Which Size Farm is Better for the Planet”

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/small-vs-large-which-size-farm-is-better-for-the-planet/2014/08/29/ac2a3dc8-2e2d-11e4-994d-202962a9150c\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/small-vs-large-which-size-farm-is-better-for-the-planet/2014/08/29/ac2a3dc8-2e2d-11e4-994d-202962a9150c_story.html)

Miller, Lisa, “Divided we eat” <http://www.newsweek.com/2010/11/22/what-food-says-about-class-in-america.html>

Read the articles with the following themes in mind:

- Principalities and powers
- Technique
- Mammon
- Consumerism
- Television/Internet

Write to hand in by the beginning of class (if late, 50% penalty). Chose two of the above themes and describe how you understand the selected themes better through the lens of the food issue and how you understand the food issue better through the lens of these two. Use specific examples from the articles (One page single-spaced.)

**After the Class action-reflection assignment:** The action part of the assignment is to do something different than your normal routine in relation to food. This is very open ended. Some possibilities include: shop at a farmers’ market, prepare meals at home, get a trial CSA box for one week and prepare meals based on what is in it, visit a farm and discuss issues that have come up in this class, invite others to join you for a meal, have a meal be part of a Bible study or other church event, plant some vegetables, exclude sugar or fast food for the week, volunteer at a food bank, eat together as a family, etc. (you may already do some of these things, the idea is to do something that you do not normally do). Come to class prepared to report on what you did and reflect on what you observed and learned through the experience. You do not have to hand in a written report; you will just report your reflections orally and state on a sign-in list what you did.

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Class 14 – Dec. 7 **An Alternative Culture, Exploring an Issue: Food, Part Two**

**Before Class** Listen, read and take notes on the reflection questions.

Listen to the first seven minutes of the Mars Hill Audio (Vol. 113) segment (on the course site). Listening to Myers is required, listening to Wirzba is optional.

Read Col. 1:15-20

All created in him, held together in him: think about that in broad sense, all of creation – every plant, human, animal, forest—ocean. Reconciles all things to himself (doesn't say just all people) What does that mean for us? What does it mean for God to have peace and reconciliation with the land and what grows on it? For us to be included in that? Implications for us?

Read: Lev. 19:9-10; 25:1-24

Take a few minutes and through thinking and flipping through the gospels and Acts make a list of places in the gospels and Acts where food and eating play a role. Take another few minutes to reflect on your list and your reading of the texts in Leviticus. How do they relate to and inform our work on the theme of food these two weeks?

Regier, Matthew (CP), "Ellul and Wendell Berry on an Agrarian Resistance," 15-18

Bahnson, Fred (CP), "Field, Table, Communion" 95-111

Kirk, Patty (CP), "Wild Fruit," 1-7

Baldwin, Stephen and Karen (CP), "A Way of Loving," 57-63

Loftus, Matthew (CP), "Way More than Weight," 36

Fields, Leslie Leyland, (CP), "A Feast Fit for a King: Returning the Growing Field and Kitchen Table to God," 1-8

Wirzba, Norman (CP), "The Radical Politics of Fellowship," 11-13

Newhouse, Catherine (CP), "The Price is Right," 56-58

Bahnson, Fred (CP), "Ending the Hunger Season," 25-27, 46

Carnes, Tony (CP), "Back to the Garden," 56-57

1. This week's authors are all Christians. As you read reflect on how their writing is similar to and different from those authors last week who did not write from a Christian perspective.
2. Is food, its production and consumption, a Christian issue, part of a Christian ethic? Are there particularly Christian reasons to take action in this area? Is this something that in the present context Christians should be called to reflect and act upon or is this more like an extra-curricular activity, a fine thing for some to get involved in if they want, but not legitimately seen as an aspect of the church's mission in the world today?

*After the class*, write a class response letter to classes 13 and 14. Among things you may write about, include in your letter possible actions steps you might take, and reflection on this question: What do you learn about yourself as an individual, and what do you learn about your family, church, community and nation through the lens of this issue?

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### Class 15 – Dec. 14 **An Alternative Culture: Conclusion**

**Before class:** Prepare part one of the final reflective project on the course.

Turn in reading log in class.

*Due by Friday Dec. 15, 5:00 PM, Final Reflective Project letter and notes*

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### **Assessment and Grading System for Major Assignments**

**Reading and Note Taking** is central to the course and to class discussion. Reflection questions on the reading are often the basis of class discussion. Students are encouraged to notes on the

reading in a general way, but are required to at least take notes on the reflection questions. They should look at the questions before reading, and write reflections and notes on the questions as they read. Include page numbers when applicable for ease of pointing other students to the exact quote or example in class. Formal written answers to the questions are not required, but students will have to record whether they have completed notes before class. Students detract from their experience, and also others' experience if they do not do the reading and take notes. Therefore, I ask students to complete a reading log (available on the course site). It has spaces for you to check if you have completed all the week's reading on time or to specify what percentage you have completed on time, and to record if you took notes. Students who do the reading/listening and note taking before all classes will receive an "A" (4.0) in this category. Each week missed will lead to a 1/14<sup>th</sup> deduction in your "reading grade" (1 week missed = 3.71; 2 weeks missed = 3.42, etc.). If some, but not all of the reading is done in a given week you will receive partial credit. Note-taking will be 20% of each week's reading grade. You may do missed reading after a class, but will only receive half-credit and no credit for note-taking. You are to submit the reading log at the end of the semester (10%).

**Attendance and Class participation:** To get an "A" in this category you must have perfect attendance and make significant contributions to class discussion. An "A-" will be given to those with perfect attendance and good participation or to those with one absence and significant participation. Two absences will place a student in the "B" range; participation will determine whether it is a high or low "B." Three absences could move the student in to the "C" range. Four or more absences place the student at risk of receiving an "F" in class participation, but also at risk of having their course grade lowered a full letter grade or of automatically failing the class. Students may talk to the professor about ways to partially make up for absences. Note that "significant participation" refers to quality of participation not just quantity. Students who will miss a class may receive partial credit for the class by asking another student to record the class and inform the professor they have listened to the recording (10%).

**Class Response letters:** After five class sessions (1,2,3,11,14) students will write a one page, single-spaced, response to the class and reading. You will write this letter to a friend (partner in ministry, family member, church member, etc.); give one copy to your friend and give a copy to the professor. You are to write about one to three things you found most engaging; describe the concept or ideas, and explain their importance to your friend through relating the material to your life. The aim of the assignment is **not** for the students to summarize the entire class session. Rather, these letters will help students sort through content and identify and reflect upon that which is of central importance to them. The exercise reinforces the truth that course material is of more than just academic significance and allows students to practice the art of organizing and articulating their thoughts in a way that people with less expertise in the field can understand. You will be graded on clarity of thought and communication, and level of personal engagement and integration of the material with your life. The letters are due on the Monday after the class by 8:00 AM – by e-mail.

Grading standards: B for clearly communicating content, but with little or no personal engagement; A- for adequately meeting the above criteria; B- or lower for failing to meet the stated criteria; A for an above average level of personal engagement and insight into class or reading content and a high quality of writing.

**Action-reflection Assignments:** Most classes that do not have a class response letter will have another assignment to lead students to reflect more deeply on the class and reading material. The

individual assignments are described under each class. (Class response letters and action/reflections assignments together are 33% of the course grade.)

**Ethical Exhortation:** Students will write a short ethical exhortation to practice communicating in a way that promotes a centered church, undermines the religious approach of a bounded church and resists a fuzzy group (three pages double-spaced). Select one of the following: helping the poor, giving/tithing, being honest/not telling lies, practicing hospitality, loving enemies or working for racial reconciliation. Exhort people to action from a centered church perspective rather than from a fuzzy or bounded church perspective. Have your imperative flow from indicative statements and use guidelines we discuss in class number 4 to communicate an imperative in a non-religious way as an invitation to thrive through obedience to Jesus. You will be graded on how well you are able to do what is described in the previous sentence, the strength of the challenge offered, and the general quality and clarity of writing. For helpful models see sermons in the Course Pack by, Hill, Ellul, and Williams. A Best draft is due by the beginning of class 5 (This is *not* a rough draft, but the best work you can do.) Submit as Word document by e-mail. The professor will grade it and give feedback. The student will make improvements and turn in the final draft by the beginning of class 6. (The best draft's grade will be 1/3 and the final draft's grade will be 2/3 of the grade for this project) (10%).

**Review Quiz:** The first four weeks lay the foundation for the rest of the course. To insure that all students grasp terms and concepts central to the course there will be a review quiz at the beginning of the fifth class (5%).

**Book Review:** As we ask what it means to be disciples of Jesus today and form Christian communities which offer an alternative culture we will various areas of ethical concern. In order to allow you to study one of these areas in more depth, and to allow the rest of the class to learn from your exploration, each student will select and read a book from the list in Appendix B. After reading the book write a one page (single-spaced) review that includes the following: (1.) a one-to-two sentence statement of the thesis of the book; (2.) a brief evaluation of the book and response to the thesis (part of this evaluation should include an evaluation of the ethical approach of the book—does it present a centered ethic of freedom and possibility or a bounded group approach, an ethic of obligation, how?); (3.) a list of helpful insights from the book; (4.) how has the book changed your thinking and/or what are steps of action you and your church community might take based on what you learned from this book. There will be a model review in shared files on the course site to use as a guide. Send a copy to the professor and, after the due date, share a copy with the rest of the class by uploading it to the course. Due by class 11.

Grading standards: B for including each of the four elements and using the guide as a model; B- or less for not including all of the above elements, not clearly distinguishing them or writing that hinders clear understanding; B+ surpasses a B by clearly communicating a greater quantity and quality of information through heightened discernment of what to include and a quality and conciseness of writing; A- or A for, adding to the above, an evidence of passionate and thoughtful engagement with the book that is displayed through analysis or application (7.5%).

**Essay on Inequality** – See directions on the course site. Due at the beginning of class 12 (10%).

**Final Reflective Project:** *Part I* After class 14 spend at least two hours going over your class notes, assignments and response letters. Take notes on the question: What are important things to remember from this course for you personally and for your future ministry? The notes do not have to be neat, or formally written—you are to hand them in to demonstrate you have done the

work, but they are for your use. *Part II* In class 15 you will discuss your notes with another student. *Part III* Based on your notes and discussion time write a letter to yourself that you will receive in two years. What are things you will want to be reminded of from this course? (Two pages, single spaced). By Friday Dec. 15, 5:00 PM hand in notes, letter and an envelope with an address that will likely reach you in two years. Please put the professor's name and the seminary address in the return address space, or get an envelope from the professor (3%).

### **Grading Scheme**

Attendance and class participation 10%; Class response letters and other weekly assignments 38%; Exhortation 12%; Review Quiz 5%; Book review 9%; Inequality essay 13%; Final Reflective Project 3%; Reading notes and 10%;

“B” is the baseline grade. A “B” means the student is doing satisfactory work. The “B+” or higher grade indicates that the student has exceeded the baseline performance standard. The “C” grade indicates that the student has not achieved the baseline level. All student work will be evaluated by two standards: 1. By what is considered the appropriate level of graduate performance. 2. By comparison with other work submitted in a given class.

I will write a letter grade on your assignments. On my grade sheet each letter grade will be given a numerical equivalent (B+ = 3.33; A- = 3.67). At the end of the semester your numerical average will determine your final letter grade based on the following scale:

4.00 to 3.83 = A

3.82 to 3.5 = A-

3.49 to 3.17 = B+

3.16 to 2.83 = B etc.

Students taking the class for credit/no credit must complete all assignments to pass the course.

### **Course/classroom policies**

1. Students are expected to submit assignments on time; if they are late they will be graded down one grade level (a B+ becomes a B).
2. All written work should have one inch margins and Times Roman 12pt font. Please number your pages.
3. All assignments may be printed on scrap paper.

**Student use of Technology in the Classroom:** It is expected that students will use technology (cell phones, laptop computers, iPads, etc.) during classes only for the purposes of class work. Students should, therefore, turn off cell phones during classes, and refrain from texting and using laptop computers during classes except for purposes of taking notes or doing research specifically authorized by the course instructor. Students who have emergency needs not covered by this policy must ask for an exception from the course instructor.

### **Estimated Time to Complete Assignments**

Reading (including book for book review)	76
Reflection questions/notes	14
Writing papers (all types)	28
Study, preparation, study and action-reflection assignments	17

Total Homework Hours (not including 45 in-class hours)	135
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## University Policy and Procedures

Students are responsible for becoming familiar with the information presented in the Academic Catalog and for knowing and observing all policies and procedures related to their participation in the university community. A *University Policy Summary* may be found on the university web-site at <http://registrar.fpu.edu/catalog>

## APPENDIX: Potential Titles for the Book Review Assignment

Most of the books listed below are available at the library, or have been ordered by the library. Some are more theoretical others more applied. Most approach these issues in a way that is generally consonant with the approach of this course. There is, however, some diversity of perspective. Not all of the authors are Christians. I encourage you to look at several books before deciding which book you will read.

Through the Link+ consortium, you have access to over 6 million library items. You can request them online and they will be delivered to the library, usually within 2-4 days. Use Link+ when Hiebert Library doesn't have what you need or when our copy is checked out. A tutorial on how to use Link+ is available at <http://fresno.libguides.com/linkplus>.

## TECHNIQUE/TECHNOLOGY

Ataide, Randy. "If We Serve a God of Productivity is There Room for Jesus? An Analysis and Application of Jacques Ellul's Thesis of Technique in the Agri-business World" (MBBS MA Thesis, 2003)

Boers, Arthur. *Living into Focus: Choosing What Matters in an Age of Distractions*.

Borgmann, Albert. *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life*. T 14.B63

Borgmann, Albert. *Power Failure: Christianity in the Culture of Technology*. BL240.3. B67

Brock, Brian. *Christian Ethics in a Technological Age*.

Conway, Ruth. *Choices at the Heart of Technology: A Christian Perspective*. BR 115.T42 C66

Downing, Raymond. *Biohealth: Beyond Medicalization: Imposing Health*

Dyer, John. *From the Garden to the City: The Redeeming and Corrupting Power of Technology*

Ellul, Jacques. *The Technological Society*. T14 E553

Ellul, Jacques. *The Technological System*. HM221. E4313

Ellul, Jacques. *The Technological Bluff*. T14.E545

Postman, Neil. *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*. T 14.5.P667

Postman, Neil. *Conscientious Objections: Stirring Up Trouble About Language, Technology, and Education*. P40.8 .P667

Ritzer, George. *The McDonaldization of Society*. HM 131. R58

Schultze, Quentin J. *Habits of the High-Tech Heart: Living Virtuously in the Information Age*. BR115.T42 S34 2002

Turkle, Sherry. *Alone Together: Why we Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. HM851 .T86 2011

Turkle, Sherry. *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*. P96.T42 T85 2015

## MONEY/MAMMON

Blomberg, Craig. *Christians in a Age of Wealth: A Biblical Theology of Stewardship*.

Gonzalez, Justo. *Faith and Wealth: A History of the Early Christian Ideas on the Origin, Significance and Use of Money*. BR195.W4 G65

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Sharing Possessions: What Faith Demands*. BS2589 .J67 2011

Vincent, Mark. *A Christian View of Money: Celebrating God's Generosity*. ARCH BV772.V56

Wheeler, Sondra Ely. *Wealth as Peril and Obligation: The New Testament on Possessions*. BS 2545.W37

## CONSUMERISM/MATERIALISM/POSSESSIONS

- Cline, Elizabeth. *Overdressed: The Shockingly High Cost of Cheap Fashion*
- Eller, Vernard. *The Simple Life: The Christian Stance Toward Possessions*. BJ496. E36
- George, Denise. *The Christian as Consumer*. BV 4647.S48 G46
- Kavanaugh, John F. *Following Christ in a Consumer Society*. BT738 K37
- Longacre, Doris. *Living More With Less, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*.
- Pugh, Allison. *Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children and Consumer Culture*. HF5415.33.U6C23
- Schor, Juliet. B. *The Overspent American: Why We Want What We Don't Need*. HF5415.33.UD6.S36
- Sider, Ronald. *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity*.  
BR115.H86S53 (Please read the 1997 or 2005 edition of this book.)
- Sorensen, Barbara & David. *'Tis a Gift to be Simple: Embracing the Freedom of Living with Less*.  
BV4501.2.D432
- Swenson, Richard. *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*. BV4501.2.S94
- Wallace, Catherine. *Why We Struggle to Earn a Living and Have a Life*. BX2353.W35

## TELEVISION/INTERNET

- Note: A number of the following books are by psychologists,--some are quite critical and some discuss positive benefits of TV.
- APA Task Force on Television and Society. *Big World, Small Screen: The Role of Television in American Society*. HQ520.B65
- Bauerlein, Mark. *The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Ages Stupefies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future*.
- Boers, Arthur. *Living into Focus: Choosing What Matters in an Age of Distractions*.
- Challies, Tim. *The Next Story: Life and Faith after the Digital Explosion*
- Davis, Walter. *Watching What We Watch: Prime-Time Television Through the Lens of Faith*.  
PN1992.6.W37
- Gitlin, Todd. *Media Unlimited: How the Torrent of Images and Sounds Overwhelms our Lives* P90.  
G4778
- Godawa, Brian. *Hollywood Worldviews: Watching Films with Wisdom and Discernment*. PN1995.5.G65
- Hipps, Shane. *The Hidden Power of Electronic Culture: How Media Shapes Faith, the Gospel, and Church* BR115.C8 H56 2005
- Jackson, Maggie. *Distracted: The Erosion of Attention and the Coming Dark Age*.
- Kelsey, Candice. *Generation Myspace: Helping your Teen Survive Online Adolescence*.
- Laytham, Brent. *iPod, YouTube, Wii play : theological engagements with entertainment* BL65.C8 L39
- Liebert, Robert M. & Joyce Sprafkin. *The Early Window: Effects of Television on Children and Youth* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). HQ784.T4 L48
- Marc, David. *Bonfire of the Humanities: Television, Subliteracy, & Long-Term Memory Loss*.  
PN1992.6.M366
- McKibben, Bill. *The Age of Missing Information: Invigorating*. PN1992.6.M38
- Palmer, Edward. *Television and America's Children: A Crisis of Neglect*. PN1992.8.C46 P36
- Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. P94.P63
- Ravitch, Diane and Joseph P. Viteritti. *Kid Stuff: Marketing sex and violence to American children*. HN90.V5 K5 2003
- Schultze, Quentin. *Redeeming Television: How TV Changes Christians--How Christians Can Change TV*.  
PN1992.6.S285
- Sales, Nancy Jo. *American Girls: Social Media and the Secret Lives of Teenagers*.
- Sommerville, C. James. *How the News Makes Us Dumb: The Death of Wisdom in a Information. Society*.  
PN4888.O25.S66
- Taylor, Ella. *Prime Time Families: Television in Postwar America*. PN1992.8.F33 T39
- Winter, Richard. *Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment: Rediscovering Passion & Wonder*. BV4599.5  
B67 W56



## MARITAL FIDELITY/CHASTITY

- Benedict, Forest. *Life After Lust: Stories & Strategies for Sex & Pornography Addiction Recovery*  
Dawn, Marva. *Sexual Character: Beyond Technique to Intimacy*. BT708.D385  
Freitas, Donna. *Sex and the Soul: Juggling Sexuality, Spirituality, Romance and Religion on America's College Campuses* (electronic link)  
Grant, Jonathan. *Divine Sex: A Compelling Vision for Christian Relationships in a Hypersexualized Age*  
Kuehne, Dale. *Sex and the iWorld: Rethinking Relationship beyond an Age of Individualism* BT708 .K84 2009  
Ryan, T. C. *Ashamed No More: A Pastor's Journey Through Sex Addiction*  
Simon, Caroline. *Bringing sex into focus : the quest for sexual integrity* BT708 .S535 2012  
Winner, Lauren. *Real Sex: The Naked Truth About Chastity*. BV4647.C5 W56

## FOOD

- Ayers, Jennifer. *Good Food: Grounded Practical Theology*  
Bahanson, Fred & Norman Wirzba. *Making Peace with the Land: God's Call to Reconcile with Creation*.  
Berry, Wendell. *The Unsettling of America: Culture & Agriculture*. HD1761.B47  
Berry, Wendell. *The Gift of Good Land: Further Essays Cultural and Agricultural*. S441.B4725  
Berry, Wendell. *Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food*  
Davis, Ellen. *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible* BS1119.L28 D39  
Graham, Mark E., *Sustainable Agriculture: A Christian Ethic of Gratitude* BJ1275 .G735 2005  
Jackson, Wes & Wendell Berry. *Meeting the Expectations of the Land: Essays in Sustainable Agriculture and Stewardship*. S441.M38  
Wirzba, Norman, ed. *The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of Wendell Berry*  
Hamilton, Lisa. *Deeply Rooted: Unconventional Farmers in the Age of Agribusiness*.  
Kingslover, Barbara. *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food* S521.5.A67 K56 2007  
McMinn, Lisa Graham. *To the Table: A Spirituality of Food, Farming and Community*.  
Patel, Raj. *Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System*.  
Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* GT2850 .P65 2007  
Pollan, Michael. *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto*  
Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*  
Thompson, Paul B. *The Spirit of the Soil: Agriculture and Environmental Ethics*. S589.75.T48  
Books relating specifically to the Central Valley in California and issues of land use, farm size, and water.  
Goldschmidt, Walter. *As You Sow: Three Studies in the Social Consequences of Agribusiness*. HD1775.C2 G6  
Preston, William. *Vanishing Landscapes: Land and Life in the Tulare Lake Basin*. Folio F868.S173 P73  
Taylor, Paul. *Essays on Land, Water and the Law in California*.

\* We will meet Oct. 19 during module week, and will not meet on Thanksgiving Day. The Department of Education requires that we have 45 hours of class time for a 3 unit class. If you are taking a module week class please contact the professor for a make-up option.