

1-1-2009

## CS 601 Christian Ethics

Christine Pohl

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## Syllabus

**Course:** CS601 W1 (JA 2009)

**Title:** Christian Ethics

**Hours:** 2.00

**Published:** Yes, on 12/20/2008

**Prerequisites:**

IS501

**Department:** Church in Society

**Faculty:** Dr. Christine Pohl



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Office: AD

SPO: 922

### **Meetings:**

During 01/14/2009 to 01/16/2009 on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30a to 12:30p in AD306.

During 01/20/2009 to 01/22/2009 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 8:30a to 12:30p in AD306.

**Maximum Registration:** 35

**Catalog Description:** Prepares students to analyze and address the moral life from a Christian perspective. Introduces students to historical and contemporary sources for Christian ethics. Explores how responses to moral problems and integrity shape the Christian community. Provides a foundation for further studies in Christian ethics and for congregational/institutional responses to social and moral concerns.

### **Objectives:**

CS 601: Christian Ethics Jan09

**CS 601: Christian Ethics**  
**Asbury Theological Seminary: January 2009**  
**January 14-16, and January 20-22**  
**8:30am-12:30pm; Admin Bldg 306**

Dr. Christine Pohl, Professor

Office Location: Administration Bldg. 304D  
 Office Phone: 858-2284\*\*\*Home Phone: 858-8136  
 Office Hours after class sessions and by appointment

**Please note: This is an intensive course and requires that substantial reading be completed before the first class session on January 14. Before class begins, the books by Dennis Hollinger, Rebekah Miles and Donald Dayton must be completed. In addition, read and reflect on the Scripture passages attached at the end of the syllabus in preparation for the first day.**

### **Purpose:**

To prepare students for ministry by training them to analyze and address the moral life from a Christian perspective. To enable ministers to equip their congregations for understanding moral responsibility and for practicing ministry with integrity. To assist in training ministers who will draw all persons, including those who are excluded by society, into the care and guidance of the community of faith under the Lordship of Christ. To assist in the training of ministers who will exemplify the Gospel-mandated holy life.

### **Objectives:**

#### **Students will be able:**

- To provide a biblical basis for the moral life.
- To describe various historical and contemporary Christian interpretations of social and personal moral issues.
- To use the basic vocabulary of ethical analysis.
- To use basic tools of social analysis.
- To explain the Wesleyan emphasis on the various dimensions of holiness, specifically the expectation for personal integrity, moral concern, and social responsibility.
- To recognize and explain at a basic level: the needs, contexts, and insights of various cultural groups and marginalized communities in society and in the church (these may include, but are not limited to, particularity arising from ethnic, gender, class, and geographic locations).
- To explain how responses to moral problems and moral integrity shape congregational life.

**Texts:** Boulton, Wayne G., Thomas D.Kennedy, and Allen Verhey, eds., *From Christ to the World: Introductory Readings in Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).  
 Dayton, Donald W., *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988).  
 Hollinger, Dennis, *Choosing the Good: Christian Ethics in a Complex World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002).  
 Miles, Rebekah L., *The Pastor as Moral Guide* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999).  
 Selected readings on electronic reserve or internet.

### **Evaluation:**

- 35% Take-Home Integrative Essay on sessions 1—7
- 35% Take-Home Case Study
- 30% Final Examination (short answer)
- Debit: For inadequate class participation and/or late or incomplete reading.

**Grade Range:** Work for CS601 will be evaluated at a graduate/professional school level.

- A = (4.0) Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives
- B = (3.0) Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives
- C = (2.0) Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives
- D = (1.0) Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives
- F = (0) Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

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**Participation:** Students are required to complete all assigned readings. Reading Records will be collected on the last day of class. Failure to complete readings on time may result in a lowering of the final grade, as will poor attendance for class. Attendance will be taken. The deduction for low participation and/or late or incomplete reading of assigned material will be up to 10% against the final grade (a full letter grade reduction).

**Written Work:** All written work must be typed with 12 point type, one inch margins on all four sides, and true double spacing. Follow page limit requirements. There will be a penalty for late papers commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse. Papers are due in class on assigned date.

All written work must use inclusive language when reference is made to human beings (male and female). This provides for both greater inclusion and greater precision.

**Take-Home Integrative Essays** (5 pages, typed, double-spaced) Two essay questions will require moral reflection on, and integration of, the various biblical and historical materials covered in sessions 1—7 (includes readings on Wesley and Dayton). **Due Tuesday, January 20.**

**Take-Home Case Study** (5 pages, typed, double-spaced) Case Study will describe an issue in ministry and will require analysis from various moral and social perspectives. **Due Friday, January 30.**

**Final Examination:** The examination is oriented toward objective knowledge of ethical theory and historic traditions. Time tba.

**Class Sessions and Assignments:** *Prior to first day of class, be sure to read the Scripture passages and books by Hollinger, Miles and Dayton.*

### 1/14/09: Sessions 1 & 2: Moral Foundations and Sociocultural Contexts

**Readings:**

Assigned Scriptures (class handout) (review)  
Hollinger, pages 7-88, 149-173 (review)

### 1/15/09: Session 3: Making Moral Decisions

**Readings:**

Hollinger, pages 89-148, 174-196 (review)  
Miles, pages 1-59 (review)

### Session 4: Christ and Culture: The Historic Tradition

**Readings:**

Hollinger, pages 187-215 (review)  
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:  
    Augustine, pages 234-237  
    Thomas Aquinas, 109-118  
    Luther, 187-194  
    Schleitheim Confession, 285-287

Electronic Reserve: Calvin, Civil Government (read sections I-VII)

Internet: Didache, go to: [www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/didache-roberts.html](http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/didache-roberts.html)  
(read chapters 1-5, 11-13)

### 1/16/09: Session 5: Christ and Culture: Justice, Pluralism, and Public Engagement

**Readings:**

Hollinger, pages 216-272 (review)

Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:

Niebuhr, 241-247

Wolterstorff, 251-253

Kennedy, 436-442

Yoder, 91-101

Jordan, 442-445

King, 427-436

Boff and Boff, 474-482

Callahan, 270-279

### 1/16: Session 6: Distinctives of a Wesleyan Moral Vision

#### Readings:

Internet:

Wesley, Sermon CXX: Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity (go to <http://gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons/serm-116.stm> )

Sermon XCII: The Danger of Riches (go to <http://gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons/serm-087.stm> )

Thoughts Upon Slavery (go to <http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/wesley/thoughtsuponslavery.stm> )

Electronic Reserve:

Wesley, "Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions"

Heitzenrater, *The Imitatio Christi* and the Great Commandment

### 1/20/09: Sessions 7 & 8: The Church as a Moral Community

#### Readings:

Dayton, entire book (review)

Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:

Rasmussen, 311-315

### Written Assignment #1: Take Home Essays due Jan. 20

### 1/21/09: Session 9: The Church as a Moral Community: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity

#### Readings:

Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:

Ruether, 88-91

Gilligan, 172-176

On internet:

Catherine Clark Kroeger, "Does Belief in Women's Equality Lead to an Acceptance of Homosexual Practice?" (go to [www.cbeinternational.org/new/pdf\\_files/free\\_articles/doesbeliefinwomensequality.pdf](http://www.cbeinternational.org/new/pdf_files/free_articles/doesbeliefinwomensequality.pdf))

"Breaking the Black/White Stalemate" (go to Library Info Commons login; type in student id# in Borrower ID field and login. Click on Asbury Scholar; under List of Resources, click on Academic Search Premier; then in keyword field, put in "Breaking the Black/White Stalemate").

Douglas McConnell, "Confronting Racism and Prejudice in Our Kind of People" (go to Library Info Commons login, type in student id# in Borrower ID field and login. Click on Asbury Scholar; under List of Resources, click on ATLA Religion. In the keyword field, put in "Confronting Racism and Prejudice").

Miroslav Volf, "A Vision of Embrace: Theological Perspectives on Cultural Identity and Conflict." *Ecumenical Review* 47.02 ( Follow instructions as above to get to ATLA Religion database; put "A Vision of Embrace" in keyword field.)

### **1/21/09: Session 10: The Church as a Moral Community: Friendship, Sexuality, and Homosexuality**

#### **Readings:**

Miles, 103-126 (review)  
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:  
    Meilaender, 264-270

#### Electronic Reserve:

Hays, Homosexuality, excerpt from *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*,  
379-406

### **1/22/09: Session 11: Marriage, Family, and Aging**

#### **Readings:**

Miles, 76-102 (review)  
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:  
    Farley, 342-346  
    Smedes, 347-353

#### Electronic Reserve:

Lysaught, excerpt from *Growing Old in Christ*, 267-301  
Van Leeuwen, excerpt from *My Brother's Keeper*, 189-208

### **Session 12: Work, Environment, and Worship**

#### **Readings:**

Miles, 60-75 (review)  
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:  
    Pope John Paul, 468-473  
    May, 514-524  
    Berry, 524-528

#### Electronic Reserve:

Volf, excerpt from *Work in the Spirit*, 123-156

### **Written Assignment #2: Take Home Case Study due Friday, Jan. 30.**

## **CS 601: Christian Ethics Selected Biblical Texts**

### ***Read and Reflect on:***

Genesis 1 – 3

Exodus 20:1 –23:13

Leviticus 19:1-18,33-34; 24:17 – 25:55

Numbers 35:9-28

Deuteronomy 1:16-17; 10:12-22; 15:1-11; 23:19-20; 24:10-22

1 Samuel 2:1-10

Nehemiah 5:1-19

Job 22 – 24; 29; 31

Psalms 37; 72; 82; 146

Proverbs 16; 31:8-9

Isaiah 1; 55 – 59

Jeremiah 12; 22:1-17

Amos 3 – 5

Matthew 5 – 7; 20:1-16; 23:23-24; 25:31-46

Luke 10:25-37; 14:1-24; 15:11-32; 19:1-10

Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-37

Romans 12

1 Corinthians 6:12-20; 13

2 Corinthians 8 – 9

Galatians 3:26-29

Philippians 1:27 – 2:18; 4:8-9

2 Timothy 3:16

James 2:1-13; 5:1-6

1 Peter 1:13-16

1 John 4:7-21