



EXPLORING JUSTICE
THS 565W – 2 Credit Hours
Western Seminary – Portland Campus
Summer Semester, 2014
Gerry Breshears & Ken Wytsma, Instructors
Gerry's Office Phone: (503) 517-1870
Gbreshears@Westernseminary.edu; kenwytsma@gmail.com

SYLLABUS

COURSE SCHEDULE

9:15am to 3:45pm July 7-11.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Tim Keller [*Generous Justice*](#) Dutton, 2010, ISBN-10: 0525951903; Retail Price \$11.99
Ken Wytsma, [*Pursuing Justice: The Call to Live and Die for Bigger Things*](#) Nelson, 2013, ISBN: 0849964660; Retail Price \$19.99

SOME RECOMMENDED READING

Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* IVP, 2011
Gary Haugen, *Good News About Injustice; Updated 10th Anniversary Edition* IVP, 2009
James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World*, Oxford, 2010
John M. Perkins, *Let Justice Roll Down*, 2nd Ed., Regal Books, 2006
Brian Fikkert & Steve Corbett, *When Helping Hurts: Alleviating Poverty Without Hurting the Poor. . .and Yourself* Moody, 2009
Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Justice: Rights and Wrongs* Princeton, 2010
Michael Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010
Carl F.H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, Eerdmans, 1947
Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets: An Introduction*, Harper, 1962
Enrique Nardoni, *Rise Up, O Judge: A Study of Justice in the Biblical World*, Hendrickson, 2004

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The LORD calls, “But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” (Amos 5:24). What does justice look like biblically? How does it relate to Jesus’ call to make disciples of all nations? How do we incarnate and implement justice in a secularized west? This course will build on that experience with readings, interactions, and integrative assignments to deepen your understanding and involvement in the kingdom quest for justice. You will develop a basic biblical/theological foundation to apply the resulting principles to ministry situations in our world. (2 hours)

COURSE GOALS

- A. You will develop a theology of justice that is biblically based, theologically integrated and practically applicable.

- B. You will gain a basic familiarity with some of the major approaches to justice.
- C. You will interpret and understand the key biblical materials relating to justice and formulate a clear, teachable understanding of the biblical concept in relation to other key themes such as evangelism, shalom, righteousness, and kingdom.
- D. You will discover and evaluate the theological, ethical and ministerial implications of justice.

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US

Western: (503) 517-1870

Appointments with Gerry: Shanita Gills, (503) 517-1976

FAX: (503) 517-1859

Email: GBreshears@Westernseminary.edu ; kenwytsma@gmail.com

ONLINE CLASSROOM

This class has an online classroom. To access the site, go to <http://www.westernseminary.edu/classrooms/>. Click on 'login' (on the right above the calendar), use your student number for your username, and the password you'll receive via email when you register for the course. The on-line classroom will go live no later than the first Monday of the semester.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Quality of Work: This is a graduate level class. You will be expected to perform at that level in all you do. This means that I expect you to discipline yourself to do quality work and to do it on time. You will be expected to have interacted carefully with all assigned readings for the topics. From this basis you will participate in the class discussions to form a learning community. Anytime you hand in written material, it must reflect quality in logic, good methodology, clarity, succinctness, spelling and punctuation and grammar. It is assumed that you are able to assess the quality of your work before you hand it in. You are encouraged to consult with me in order to make sure you understand the assignment and/or to go over the first draft of your material. Much of the value of the class flows out of the contributions the course members and instructor make to each other from their experiences in ministry and from the effort they put into the work of the course itself. Plan to give your best.

Online Orientation (15 min.)

Before the end of the first Friday of the semester, you need to log onto the learning center, download the syllabus for the course, and complete the report indicating that you have read and understand the course requirements. By federal law, we now need to ensure that students participate in classes for the full length of the class. So failure to complete the online orientation on time will result in a grade penalty and may impact your financial aid eligibility.

Pre-Class Assignments

1) Reading Assignments

Prior to the first conference session, you will read Tim Keller *Generous Justice* and Ken Wytsma, *Pursuing Justice*. Write a three page response to each book, with one page summarizing the key contributions of the book, a second with strengths and weaknesses and the third page with your personal take aways and at least one action step from each book. These two papers will be about six pages total. You will report completion of the assigned reading on the form attached to this syllabus. (30 hours)

As you do the reading, spend some quality time getting familiar with the passages in the Bible reflection assignment below.

2) Blackhawk Sermons and Justice Conference Videos

You may either watch or listen to the [justice sermons](#) at Blackhawk Church along with five of the sessions from the Justice Conference 2014, 2013, or 2012 (of course you will all want to watch Gerry's and Ken's!). Scroll through the Vimeo sessions [here](#) to find speaker or Pre-Conference sessions (not the short promo voices type ones). Capture your learnings in a page of notes on each of the speakers for a total of about 10 pages. They will be due on the first day of class. (10 hours)

3) Bible Reflection

Reflect on these key passages, writing down your personal response (not just a summary of the passage) to each one in a couple of paragraphs. They will be due on the first day of class. (10 hours)

Deuteronomy 10:16-22

Deuteronomy 15

Deuteronomy 27:14-26

Job 29:12-17; 31:1-28

Micah 6

Isaiah 58

Ezekiel 18:5-8

Matthew 25 (the whole chapter, capturing the relationship of the three parables)

1 John 4

Class Sessions 9:15am to 3:45pm July 7-11

Post-Conference Assignment

1) Integrative Paper

You will write a 10 page paper summarizing your understanding of the theology of justice and the implications of it. It will be written in careful interaction with the biblical materials and the assigned readings. It will show critical interaction with the various interpretive and theological issues as well as an awareness of the ministerial and personal implications of the position.

You may do an alternative assignment in consultation with the instructor.

I will be glad to review drafts of your paper with appropriate lead time. At your option I will give you comments orally or in writing. The completed paper will be due Monday, August 4, 2014. (10 hours)

Grading Criteria:

1. Present your position accurately, clearly and consistently.
2. Summarize the interpretations of Scripture and relate them to your position.
3. Respond to questions people holding another view would raise.
4. Utilize resources well.
5. Identified and clearly presented the "for sure" teachings.
6. Wrestled with the less clear issues.
7. Written with clearly and concisely.
8. Clear and useful ministry application section.

Final Course Evaluation (15 min.)

Before the end of the last Friday of the semester, you need to log onto the learning center and complete the final course evaluation. By federal law, we now need to ensure that students participate in classes for the full length of the class. So failure to complete the final course evaluation on time will result in a grade penalty and may impact your financial aid eligibility.

Required Assignments	Points	Estimated Time to Complete
Enroll in the on-line classroom and read the syllabus		
Reading	100	30 hours
Videos	100	10 hours
Bible Reflection	100	10 hours
Integrative Paper	100	10 hours
Final Course Evaluation		
Totals	500	60 hrs.

FINAL GRADE

To get credit for the class, you must earn a pass on your written doctrinal statement and your oral doctrinal examination. The letter grade will be determined on the basis of your class participation, the integration questions, and your doctrinal statement.

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-
99-100%	95-98%	93-94%	91-92%	88-90%	86-87%	84-85%	81-83%	79-80%	77-78%	74-76%	70-73%

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance and Late Assignments: Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students who miss class are responsible for missed work. Absences and tardiness may impact a student's grade. Students who anticipate an absence should discuss it in advance with the instructor. Students who miss more than 20% of the seat time for the class will not pass the course, without a request for and the completion of additional assignments. Assignments submitted after the due date and time will result in a reduction of the student's letter grade for that assignment.

Copyright Violation and Plagiarism: Research in secondary sources for the written project is permitted and welcomed. However, any appropriation of either ideas or wording taken from other sources, whether print or electronic, must be properly footnoted. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism which can result in substantial grade reduction or failure. Any unauthorized copying or use of copyrighted materials, including downloaded files of various kinds, can result in criminal charges and fines. For a fuller explanation of these issues or WS's copyright policy, see the Copyright Issues and Cheating" section of the Student Handbook: <http://www.westernseminary.edu/academic/handbook-copyright>.

Incompletes/Extensions: The final deadline for submitting all course work is the last day of the semester as noted in the Academic Calendar and in the class schedule. In the case of serious illness, family emergency, or similar extenuating circumstances, the student may request an extension. A 1-3 week extension is typical in all except the most extreme cases, and some penalty for late work may apply. Under no circumstances will the student be given more than 5 weeks to complete all required coursework except by petition and approval

of the Administrative Committee. (Extensions longer than 5 weeks are rare and should only be requested under extreme circumstances.)

If students face a personal emergency that requires requesting an extension going beyond the end of the semester, it may affect their ability to receive financial aid in the next semester, and they may face the possibility that their next semester's course registrations will be cancelled. Please contact the Financial Aid Office for assistance.

Audit/Enrichment Students: Enrichment students are encouraged, but not obligated, to participate in assignments and class discussions. Professors are not obligated to grade participation for these students, but may opt to do so depending on class size.

Statement on WiFi Services: Our community at Western Seminary is defined by our membership in the body of Christ. As we share common resources, we wish to do so with respect and consideration for others. Our IT department has created a strong and secure wireless internet network at each of our campus locations to enhance the student learning environment. Some of the considerations in developing our wifi networks have included providing excellent security (better than you'll find at the local coffeeshop) and doing so within a budget that does not significantly impact tuition costs. Keeping costs low means that we don't have an endless supply of bandwidth. We ask that you use the wifi network for academic purposes and avoid downloading large files or streaming video. Please be mindful that your internet use (both in class and on campus) can distract others or prevent them from accessing resources they need for their studies. We appreciate your participation in promoting thoughtful, considerate internet use on campus.

The Availability of Disability Services at Western Seminary: Western Seminary is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as outlined in both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Western students are assisted individually as their needs dictate. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities to identify themselves and the nature of the disability. Any student who has a disability should contact the seminary's Disability (Section 504) Coordinator, Ashley Mitchell, at 503-517-1819/1-877-517-1800, ext. 1819. Her office is at the Portland campus. Students at the northern California campuses may contact Director of Student Services – San Jose or Director of Student Services – Sacramento, or they may contact Ms Mitchell directly. Appropriate forms will be provided and must be submitted to the Disability Coordinator's office.

Name _____

READING REPORT
THS 565W Exploring Justice
Gerry Breshears & Ken Wytsma, Instructors
Summer, 2014

I completed reading Tim Keller *Generous Justice* & Ken Wytsma, *Pursuing Justice* prior to July 7.

_____ Yes

_____ I did not read the following portion(s) on time but have completed it before August 5.

_____ I did not complete reading the following portion: