

THIS ECD IS FOR SUMMER 2009 QUARTER ONLY!

This if for the online course beginning June 22, 2009

If you are viewing this after that time it serves as a **SAMPLE ONLY**

PH522: PERSPECTIVES ON CHRIST AND CULTURE (4 units)

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Online Facilitation by Dr. Kimberly Thacker, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Evangelism & Philosophy

DESCRIPTION:

The Christian community has long debated the appropriate ways for Christians to relate to their cultural surroundings. This course will focus on some key perspectives, beginning with a critical examination of the typology made popular by H. Richard Niebuhr in his classic study, *Christ and Culture*. Special attention will be given to "cultural mandate" theories, as well as to the contemporary relevance of traditional notions of common grace, natural law, and general revelation as they have been used to discern created commonalities that undergird a plurality of cultures. The present-day interest in "multi-culturalism" will also be explored.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: At the end of this course students will be able to

1. Demonstrate a deeper understanding of the nature of "culture";
2. Analyze and critique contemporary Christian culture from a theological and philosophical perspective;
3. Demonstrate a deeper understanding of the relationship between a biblical worldview and interaction with the wider culture;
4. Demonstrate a deeper understanding of the complexities and tensions facing the Christian church in diverse and rapidly changing cultures and subcultures;
5. Engage in theological reflection regarding possible theological responses to the wider culture;
6. Graciously articulate the good news of the gospel of Christ in a multicultural, pluralistic society.

RELEVANCE FOR MINISTRY:

Evangelical Christianity has often emphasized the need to oppose "worldliness," and the warnings have typically been based on an implicit philosophy and theology of culture. It is important for Christian leaders to clarify their understanding of these issues in order to guide the believing community in proper patterns of cultural discipleship.

COURSE FORMAT:

The class will be conducted on the Internet using a 10-week lesson program aligned with Fuller's academic calendar. Each week, students and the instructor will interact with the material and each other through journaling, threaded discussions, and web-based research. Lectures for each lesson will be available online.

REQUIRED READING:

- Brunner, Emil, and Karl Barth. *Natural Theology: Comprising "Nature and Grace," by Professor Dr. Emil Brunner, and the reply, "No," by Dr. Karl Barth*. Translated by Peter Fraenkel. Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2002.
- Carson, D. A. *Christ and Culture Revisited*. Eerdmans, 2008.
- Crouch, Andy. *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*. InterVarsity Press, 2008.
- Hauerwas, Stanley, and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*. Abingdon, 1989.
- Kuyper, Abraham. *Lectures on Calvinism*. Eerdmans, 1943.
- Mouw, Richard. *When the Kings Go Marching In: Isaiah and the New Jerusalem*. Rev. ed. Eerdmans, 2002.
- Taylor, Charles, and Amy Gutman. *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*. Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Course reader available in the online class.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Kraft, Charles. *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Orbis, 1979.
- Mouw, Richard. *He Shines in All That's Fair: Culture and Common Grace*. Eerdmans, 2001.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Christ and Culture*. Harper: San Francisco, 2001.
- Stassen, Glen, D. M. Yeager, and John Howard Yoder. *Authentic Transformation: A New Vision of Christ and Culture*. Abingdon, 1996.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin, Charles Anderson, and Michael Sleasman. *Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Texts and Interpret Trends*. Baker Academic, 2007.
- Van Til, Henry. *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture*. Baker Academic, 2001.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Weekly threaded discussions (20%), journaling (15%), and webliography (5%)
2. Five 3-4 page research/reflection papers (30%)
3. One final 8 page research/reflection paper (15%)
4. A midterm test will be required (15%)

PREREQUISITES: None.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: Meets M.Div. core requirement in Philosophical Theology (PHIL); Ministry Focus
Elective in MA in global Leadership program

FINAL EXAMINATION: No

This ECD is a reliable guide to the course design but is subject to modification.

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