

Grand Rapids Theological Seminary

576 Biblical Ethics

J-Term 2009

1a. The Aims of the Course

- 1b. Understand the concepts and principles of ethical theories and how they cohere with their theoretical assumptions.
- 2b. Understand the concepts and principles of Christian ethics and their relationship to Biblical revelation and our Weltanschauung.
- 3b. Apply the concepts and principles of ethical theories to contemporary problems.
- 4b. Evaluate ethical systems by both internal and external criteria.

2a. Objectives of the Course

- 1b. Cognitive Objectives
 - 1c. Know the basic concepts and principles of ethical systems.
 - 2c. Know methods and procedure in ethics.
 - 3c. Justify methods and procedures in ethics.
 - 4c. Apply concepts and principles of ethics to new situations.
 - 5c. Use methods and procedures correctly.
 - 6c. Identify unstated assumptions in ethical theories.
 - 7c. Recognize logical fallacies in reasoning.
 - 8c. Evaluate the relevancy of evidence to ethical assertions.
 - 9c. Integrate learning from other theological areas for ethical problem solving.
 - 10c. Judge the adequacy with which conclusions are supported by evidence.
- 2b. Affective Objectives
 - 1c. Show awareness of the importance of learning.
 - 2c. Participate in class discussion.
 - 3c. Demonstrate a high value on problem resolution in ethics.
 - 4c. Formulate and develop a ministry life plan in harmony with beliefs, abilities and interests.
 - 5c. Demonstrate industry, punctuality and self-discipline.

3a. Textbooks

- 1b. *Evangelical Ethics*, by John J. Davis, Presbyterian and Reformed, 3rd ed
- 2b. *Choosing the Good*, by Dennis P. Hollinger. Baker Academic, 2002
- 3b. *Bioethics*, by Gilbert Meilaender. Eerdmans, 2005 2nd ed

4a. Research Project

- 1b. Write a 8-10 page paper on any of the following topics: a contemporary moral problem, the application of ethics to the ministry, the motivational dynamic of Christian life, or the ethics of a recent theologian/ethicist.
- 2b. The paper is to be based on a minimum of 250 pages of reading. Textbook reading which is relevant to your paper may be counted in the 250 page requirement.

5a. Examination

- 1b. The examination will cover the lecture content of the class plus specified content in the textbooks.
- 2b. There will only be one examination.

6a. Grading

- 1b. Grade: 60% test, 20% paper, 20% informal evaluation

8a. Suggested Topics in Contemporary Moral Problems for the research paper

- 1b. War. What is a just war? Is the Christian ever justified in killing during war? Pacifism. Non-resistance. Conscientious objection. Revolution.
- 2b. Social Justice. Race relations. Civil disobedience. Population control. Capital punishment. Penology. Ecology. Right to privacy. Funeral practices. Pornography. Mental Health. Violence. Communication Media. Hunger.
- 3b. Right to Life. Abortion. Mercy killing. Spare parts surgery. Genetic manipulation. Birth control. Suicide. Transplants. Artificial insemination, Reproductive Technologies, Human Genome, stem cell research
- 4b. Sexual Problem. Homosexuality. Lesbianism. Masturbation. Voyeurism. Pre-marital sexual relations. Marriage. Sex change operations. Transvestianism.
- 5b. General Problems. Hair length. Clothing styles. Drugs. Tobacco. Alcohol. Movies. Theater. Television.

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