



Christian Worldview and Ethics

Institute for Biblical Studies (Cru)

Todd L. Miles, Instructor
tmiles@westernseminary.edu
(503) 517-1866

January 2022
SYLLABUS

COURSE SCHEDULE

Jan 24-28 (Mon-Fri): 9:30am-11:30am and 1:00pm-3:00pm (EST)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ethics is the study of what we ought to do. The ability to discern right from wrong—and to act appropriately in light of that discernment—is essential for maintaining and modeling moral integrity as ministry leaders. This course will enhance your moral sensitivity by acquainting you with some of the fundamental issues involved in developing a biblically-shaped personal, ministerial, and social ethic. The Christian worldview will be analyzed and crucial apologetic questions regarding the goodness of God and the morality of the Bible will be evaluated and answered.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Deepen your motivation to know, love and worship the triune God and to reflect God's character as an image-bearer in your relationships
2. Better understand how a distinctly Christian ethic emerges from a Christian Worldview
3. Better understand the ethics of serving as a missionary with Cru

4. Develop a deeper desire to be faithful to the way and truth of Jesus in our personal, ecclesial, and public decisions and practices
5. Discover the importance of ethics for evangelism, discipleship, movement-launching, and cross-cultural mission
6. Become more aware of how you and other Christians have approached ethics and moral formation
7. Better understand the wide variety of factors that shape your ethical decision-making
8. Grow in your capacity to reason ethically from the Scriptures, including the use of the Old Testament for faithful Christian decision making
9. Develop a biblical and compassionate response to contemporary ethical questions

TEXTBOOKS

Books

- Joshua Chatraw and Karen Swallow, [*Cultural Engagement: A Crash Course in Contemporary Issues*](#) (Moody, 2021). Chapters 1-3, 5-9, 12-14 (225pp)
- Shai Linne, [*The New Reformation: Finding Hope in the Fight for Ethnic Unity*](#) (Zondervan, 2019). (200pp – this is a very quick read)
- Martin Luther King Jr., [*Letter from a Birmingham Jail*](#) . (6pp) Also read the statement that provoked King’s letter: [*Statement by Alabama Clergymen*](#) (2pp – links on Canvas page)
- Cru, [*Leading in a Complex Moral Environment*](#) (16pp - link on Canvas page)
- Preston Sprinkle, Pastoral Paper, “A Biblical Conversation about Transgender Identities” (30pp - link on Canvas page)
- Preston Sprinkle, Pastoral Paper, “15 Reasons for Affirming Same-Sex Relations – and 15 Responses (16pp - link on Canvas page)
- Rebecca McLaughlin, [*The Secular Creed: Engaging Five Contemporary Claims*](#) (TGC, 2021), Chap 3 (19pp - You are encouraged to purchase the entire book, but a link to the chapter will be found on the Canvas page.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance and Participation (15%)

You are responsible to regularly attend and participate in class discussions. The class time will be conducted seminar style, so active, prepared, and intentional student participation is necessary to maximize learning.

2. Reading (15%)

All reading is to be completed prior to our first class meeting on January 24. Reading completed by October 28 will receive 90% credit. Reading completed by February 6 will receive 80% credit. A reading log is attached at the end of the syllabus.

3. **Ethics Project (50%)**

In consultation with the instructor, select **one (1)** major ethical issue helpful to your own ministerial context and prepare an 8–10-page response.

- The first page will be an excellent summary of the question/issue.
- The next two pages will be a summary of the different perspectives on and responses to the issues that you encounter in your ministry context.
- The next five to seven pages (no more) will be a thoughtful response written so you could give it to someone in your ministry context as a summary and conversation starter for your interaction. This section must rely upon the authority of Scripture and summarize the gospel-centered response to the issue.

DUE: Reports are due **Feb 6**.

4. **Pre-Course Ethical Reflection (10%)**

Pre-Course Assignment: a reflection on the manner in which you make decisions (400-500 words). A student in your ministry comes to you and asks why it is wrong for them to cheat on an exam. They want to know what makes a choice right or wrong. After listening to your response they ask what makes jay-walking wrong (they have noted that many in your ministry do not wait for “walk” signs). What about smoking marijuana? It makes them happy. Why is that wrong? How do you respond? What makes a decision right or wrong? How do you know what to do when the Bible does not speak specifically to it? Consider:

- Do you do what makes you happy?
- Do you do what it is your duty to do?
- Do you do what you are divinely commanded to do?
- Do you do what brings the greatest good to the greatest number of people?

DUE: Jan 24 (by 8:00 AM).

5. **Daily Journal (10%)**

Daily journal describing how the class is shaping your understanding of ethics. The last journal entry (Friday) can describe how you would change your pre-course assignment. Submissions of 1–2 pages of thoughtful reflection are

due by 8:00 AM each day of the class beginning on Tuesday, Jan 25. There will be four Daily Journal submissions in all (1/25, 1/26, 1/27. and 1/28).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Monday: Foundations of Ethical Decision Making;
Tuesday: Ethical Dilemmas; Use of the Bible in Ethical Decision Making;
Wednesday: Personal ethics and adiaphora (alcohol, marijuana, etc.)
Thursday: Sexual Ethics (homosexuality, transgenderism)
Friday: Justice; Ethnicity/race;

GRADING

94-100 A	74-79 C
92-93 A-	72-73 C-
90-91 B+	65-71 D
84-89 B	0-65 F
82-83 B-	
80-81 C+	

COURSE POLICIES

Assignment Format:

Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must meet the following criteria:

- 1" margins on the left, right, top, and bottom
- Double-spaced
- 12-point font (Times New Roman or Arial)
- A cover page that contains the assignment title, class title, your name, and date
- Please upload your assignments to the Canvas platform in PDF format.

Reading Log
Please upload to Canvas Classroom website by 02/06/2022

Joshua Chatraw and Karen Swallow, [*Cultural Engagement: A Crash Course in Contemporary Issues*](#): Chapters 1-3, 5-9, 12-14. (20 points)

Date Completed _____ -Or- % completed by 02/06/22 _____

Martin Luther King Jr., [*Letter from a Birmingham Jail*](#): 6pp. Also read the statement that provoked King's letter: [*Statement by Alabama Clergymen*](#) (5 points)

Date Completed _____ -Or- % completed by 02/06/22 _____

Shai Linne, [*The New Reformation: Finding Hope in the Fight for Ethnic Unity*](#) (20 points)

Date Completed _____ -Or- % completed by 02/06/22 _____

Cru, *Leading in a Complex Moral Environment* (5 points)

Date Completed _____ -Or- % completed by 02/06/22 _____

Preston Sprinkle, Pastoral Paper, "A Biblical Conversation about Transgender Identities" (5 points)

Date Completed _____ -Or- % completed by 02/06/22 _____

Preston Sprinkle, Pastoral Paper, "15 Reasons for Affirming Same-Sex Relations – and 15 Responses" (5 points)

Date Completed _____ -Or- % completed by 02/06/22 _____

Rebecca McLaughlin, [*The Secular Creed: Engaging Five Contemporary Claims*](#) (TGC, 2021), Chap 3 (5 points)

Date Completed _____ -Or- % completed by 02/06/22 _____