

THS 551A ETHICAL ISSUES IN ASIA 2 Credits

Lecturer: Rev. Dr. Lewis Winkler

About Lecturer

An ordained minister of the Evangelical Church Alliance (USA), Rev. Dr. Lewis Winkler has been a staff member of Campus Crusade for Christ since 1987. He served for six years in the campus ministry at Kansas State University. For four years he did pastoral ministry through a local church, teaching and discipling high school youth, providing leadership in adult education ministries, and preaching and teaching in the church. Lewis was part of a church plant team and a lecturer of systematic theology at the International School of Theology for five years. He has been a visiting teacher at BIOLA University (USA) and is a lecturer with the International School of Leadership providing leadership development for Christian leaders around the world. Rev. Dr. Winkler and his wife Barbara have three children.

Academic Year : 2009/10, 3rd Quarter (Jan 25 – Apr 30, 2010)
Day & Time : Mondays, 7.00 – 9.00 pm
Dates : Jan 25
(dates could be Feb 1, 8, 22
subject to change) Mar 1, 22, 29
Apr 5, 12, 19
Final Assignments due on Apr 26
Venue : EAST ASIA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
1, Dorset Road, Singapore 219486. Tel: 6291-9744

CLASS SYLLABUS

Class Description

This course takes a practical and interactive look at some of the most controversial and important ethical issues facing Asia and world today from a distinctly Christian perspective. We will attempt to address these issues from a fair and biblically informed perspective, noting the areas where legitimate disagreements exist among various Christian groups and denominations as well as interacting with other non-Christian viewpoints. The goal is not simply to give an ethical understanding, but to spur you on to biblically and philosophically informed action in the world through the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Class Pre-requisites

None

Objectives

By the completion of this class you should be able to:

1. Define and understand the significance of various ethical systems.
2. Better understand the significance and relevance of some of the most debated ethical issues of our day.
3. With certain ethical issues, be able to articulate areas where there is room for legitimate disagreement among Christians.
4. Be able to interact sensitively, intelligently, boldly and biblically with both Christians and

non-Christians about these crucial ethical issues.

5. Connect ethical thinking with ethical action in ways that produces real change personally, corporately as part of the body of Christ, and socially in the broader cultural and global context.

Class Expectations

1. That you would attend all lectures and seek to get the most from the course.
2. That you would be on time and prepared for class discussion and interaction.
3. That you would ask questions and actively participate in class discussions and interaction times in order to deepen your understanding of the material.
4. That you would strive to do your best on all class assignments.
5. That you would trust God to help you apply this class in your life and ministry.

Textbook

Scott B. Rae. *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics*, 3rd edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2009.

Class Schedule (January 25-April 30, 2010)

Unless otherwise noted, classes meet every Monday night from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in #04-06.

Date	Session Topic	Assigned Reading
	<u>Introduction to Ethics:</u>	
25 Jan.	1 Introduction to Ethics, Part 1	Bible Passages
25 Jan.	2 Introduction to Ethics, Part 2	<i>Moral Choices</i> , Ch. 1-2
1 Feb.	3 Ethical Systems and the Ordering of Values, Part 1	Bible Passages
1 Feb.	4 Ethical Systems and the Ordering of Values, Part 2	<i>Moral Choices</i> , Ch. 3
8 Feb.	5 Moral Decision-making and Gray Areas, Part 1	Bible Passages
8 Feb.	6 Moral Decision-making and Gray Areas, Part 2	<i>Moral Choices</i> , Ch. 4
15 Feb.	Chinese New Year: No Class	
	<u>Ethical Issues in Asia:</u>	
22 Feb.	7 Capital Punishment, Part 1	Bible Passages
22 Feb.	8 Capital Punishment, Part 2	<i>Moral Choices</i> , Ch. 9
1 Mar.	9 Environmentalism, Part 1	Bible Passages
1 Mar.	10 Environmentalism, Part 2	
8 Mar.	Special Break: No Class	
15 Mar.	EAST Break Week: No Class	
22 Mar.	11 War and Peace: The Great Debate , Part 1	Bible Passages
22 Mar.	12 War and Peace: The Great Debate , Part 2	<i>Moral Choices</i> , Ch. 11
29 Mar.	13 Sexual Ethics	Bible Passages
29 Mar.	14 Homosexuality, Part 1	<i>Moral Choices</i> , Ch. 10

5 Apr.	15	Homosexuality, Part 2	
5 Apr.	16	Same-sex Marriage	Bible Passages
12 Apr.	17	Multiculturalism and Religious Plurality, Part 1	Bible Passages
12 Apr.	18	Multiculturalism and Religious Plurality, Part 2	
19 Apr.	19	Ethics and Economics, Part 1	Bible Passages
19 Apr.	20	Ethics and Economics, Part 2	<i>Moral Choices</i> , Ch. 12
			Action Point Due
26 Apr.			Reading Report and Ethical Reflections Journal Due

Course Requirements (Total 30 hours)

- 1. Reading of Bible Passages and Scott Rae's *Moral Choices*: (10 Hours)**
Read the assigned *chapters and Bible passages* by the class time on the dates indicated, and be prepared to discuss the content of the readings.
- 2. Reading Report:
DUE: April 26**
Due to the interactive nature of the course, all readings should be completed *prior to the session* for which they were assigned so that the student will be prepared for that topic's discussion. Any late readings will only receive half credit. Portions not read will receive no credit. Please note as well that *every week the notes for the class have biblical passages included in them*. All of *these passages should also be read prior to each session and indicated on the reading report* as well
- 3. Classroom Debate on the Ethics of War: (5 Hours)
DUE: March 22**
The class will be divided up into two teams that will prepare to debate each other on whether or not it is ethical for a Christian to support going to war. Each team will receive a group grade as well as each individual member of the team for their level of preparation and participation in the debate.

On the evening of the debate your team will hand in any notes, illustrations, outlines, powerpoints, bibliographical resources, etc. you used to prepare for the debate. Each team will be graded for its coordinated organization, utilization of every team member, clarity and relevance of argumentation, style of presentation and creative resources used to argue for their perspective.
- 4. Ethical Reflections Journal: (10 Hours)
DUE: April 26**
For each topic of discussion (e.g., Homosexuality, Environmentalism, Capital Punishment, etc.) you should keep a journal of questions, reflections, ideas, musings, etc. that pertain to that particular subject. While there is no outside limit on the number of pages for each entry, to adequately reflect upon the topic, every entry should not be *less than* a full typed (double-spaced) A4-sized document page. If you

wish, you may write the journal by hand, in which case the handwriting must be legible and be at least two pages in length.

Although there is no set format for this journal outside of the aforementioned page-limits, each journal entry should include how the session notes, scripture passages, teaching and discussion times in class have confirmed/challenged/changed/modified/etc. your views on that particular subject. It should also include scriptures, prayers and especially any application points that arise as a result of your reflections on the issue.

Keep in mind that part of your grade for this journal will be on your linguistic style as well as the content, grammar and language. When referencing any outside resources, you may use footnotes, or endnotes, but only use one and not both.

PLEASE NOTE: If English is not your first language please have Sylvia or another native English speaker read and help you with the language, grammar and style of your journal before turning it in. This will only be possible if you use a computer to create it.

5. Action Point: (5 Hours)
DUE: April 19

Choose a relevant ethical issue, either covered in class or one of your own choosing (subject to instructor approval). See the list of possible subjects in sessions 1 and 2 for ideas. Design an ethical issue survey on that subject which incorporates in some way some of the ethical theory covered in this class.

Take the survey with a *minimum of ten* people. Depending on the subject matter and the purpose of your survey, it may be designed for Christians, non-Christians or even a "mixture" of both.

When you are finished, hand in all the copies of the surveys you took with ten or more people along with your organized summary and analysis (at least 2-3 pages long) of these surveys. This analysis should include your own evaluation of the experience, reflections on what went well, and what you might have done differently if you were to do it again. Also include a section where you thoughtfully reflect on the issue you chose, giving recommendations for future action both for you personally and the church in general concerning it.

PLEASE NOTE: If the surveys are in a language other than English, please include a translation of all materials. Also, if English is not your first language please have Sylvia or another native English speaker read and help you with the language, grammar and style of your analysis before turning it in.

Grading

What	Grade Percentage:	Due
Group Debate	15	March 22
Ethical Reflections Journal	30	April 26
Reading Report	25	April 26
Action Point	30	April 19
Total	100%	

Late Policy

All late assignments are graded down *10% per class period*, so make every effort to turn your work on time. ***Absolutely no work will be accepted after May 3***, and anything not turned in at that point will be awarded zero points. Any exceptions to these aforementioned policies will be made on a case-by-case basis at the instructor's discretion.

Select Bibliography

Beckwith, Francis J., ed. *Do the Right Thing: A Philosophical Dialogue on the Moral and Social Issues of Our Time*. Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 1996.

_____, and Norman L Geisler. *Matters of Life and Death: Calm Answers to Tough Questions about Abortion and Euthanasia*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.

Blomberg, Craig L. *Neither Poverty nor Riches*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999.

Clark, David and Robert Rakestraw. *Readings in Christian Ethics: Volume One, Theory and Method*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994.

Clark, David and Robert Rakestraw. *Readings in Christian Ethics: Volume Two, Issues and Applications*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1995.

Colson, Charles and Nancy Pearcey. "Moral Education After Monica," in *Christianity Today*. March 1, 1999.

Denise, Theodore C., Sheldon P. Peterfreund, and Nicholas P. White, eds. *Great Traditions in Ethics*, 8 ed. Boston: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1996.

Dyrness, William A. *The Earth Is God's: A Theology of American Culture*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997.

Feinberg, John S. and Paul D. Feinberg. *Ethics for a Brave New World*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1994.

Geisler, Norman L. *Christian Ethics: Options and Issues*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989.

Koh, K. S. Daniel and Kiem-Kiok Kwa, eds. *Issues of Law and Justice in Singapore: Some Christian Reflections*. Singapore: Genesis Books, 2009.

Lewis. C. S. "Conditions for a Just War," in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994.

_____. *Mere Christianity*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2001.

_____. *The Abolition of Man*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2001.

_____. *The Problem of Pain*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2001.

Lomborg, Bjørn. *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue*, 2 ed. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.

_____. *Dependent, Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1999.

_____. *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990.

McQuilkin, Robertson. *An Introduction to Biblical Ethics*. 2nd Ed. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1995.

Mill, John Stuart. *On Liberty*. Indianapolis, IN: The Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing Company, 1956.

Smith, R. Scott. *Virtue Ethics and Moral Knowledge: Philosophy of Language after MacIntyre and Hauerwas*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003.

_____, John Gerstner, and Arthur Lindsley. *Classical Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984.

Wilkins, Steve. *Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995.