

Ventana Ministries

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Instructor: Jason Emberger
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Fall 07/Spring 08

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND ETHICS

Description

The course is set up as a conversational group learning format. Through the readings of the Trinity forum study series students will engage in conversation, thought provoking questions and writing assignments.

- The trinity forum series explores the issues of our day in the context of faith
- Presents the perspective of faith in the context of the sweep of Western civilization, recognizing the vital place of the past in the lives of nations as well as individuals.
- Presents the perspective of faith in the context of the challenge of other faiths.
- Unashamed about the necessity for tough-minded thinking.
- Recognizes that many of the urgent public issues of our day are cultural rather than political.
- Assumes the special need for and the possibility of, a social and cultural renaissance in our time.

Goals

By the end of the course students will:

A. The Journey:

- Become aware and address questions of life's meaning, such as: Who are we? Where have we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going? How should we live in light of these answers?
- Seek answers to crucial worldview questions.
- Investigate the Christian, Buddhist, materialist, or other answers to life's questions and what proves to be truth.
- Understand what is involved in committing oneself to a biblical worldview of life.

B. Steering through Chaos:

- Understand what Ethics is.
- Understand and identify each of the seven deadly sins in themselves, others, and society.
- Understand the virtues and the great opposites of the deadly vices.
- Commit to move from talking about good to living in pursuit of holiness in their lives.

C: When No One Sees:

- See themselves as leaders, persons who influence lives
- Understand what character is and why character is central to their effectiveness as leaders.
- Discern what they might do to cultivate character in their own lives
- Identify and resist the pressures of modern life on their own character

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND ETHICS SYLLABUS

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Text resources

- Guinness, OS and readers guide by Karen Lee-Thorp. *Steering Through Chaos: Vice and Virtue in an Age of Moral Confusion*. Colorado Springs : NavPress, 2000.
- Guinness, OS and readers guide by Karen Lee-Thorp. *The Journey: Our Quest for Faith and Meaning*. Colorado Springs : NavPress, 2001.
- Guinness, OS and readers guide by Karen Lee-Thorp. *When No One Sees: The Importance of Character in an Age of Image*. Colorado Springs : NavPress, 2000.

Class Requirements/Expectations

- Participate in all classroom discussion.
- Read all assigned materials.
- Complete writing assignments.
- Attend all classes unless deathly ill.
- Assigned paper after each book.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on completed reading assignments, their discussion and interaction while in class, and weekly assigned writings.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Assignment
Week 1	Introduction to course and Trinity Forum Series; The Journey: Why thinking Through One's Worldview is Important	Plato, Frankl
Week 2	A time for Questions: What keeps us from asking the big questions, and what prompts us to ask them.	Pascal, Goethe, Lewis, Berger, Chesterton, Auden
Week 3	A Time for Answers: Big Answers to the Problem of Evil from three main "Families of Faith"	Lustig, Buddha, Russel, Camus
Week 4	Time for Answers cont.	Lewis, King, Heine, Nietzsche
Week 5	Time for evidences: Disconfirmation as a part of confirmation	Pirsig, Issa, Darwin
Week 6	Time for evidences cont: A look at the Christian Faith.	Stump, Lewis, Gospel of Mark
Week 7	Time for Commitment: Three perspectives on the Commitment of Faith	Pascal, St. Paul, Lewis, Peck, Clark, Huxley, von Moltke
Week 8	Introduction to Vice and Virtues ; Pride and its counterpoint	Coles, Lewis,

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Week 9	Pride Cont.	Milton, Golding, Taylor
Week 10	Envy and its counterpoint	Plutarch, Hawthorn, Shaffer, Wesley
Week 11	Anger and its counterpoint	Plutarch, Weir, Gordon, King
Week 12	Sloth and its counterpoint	Pascal, Kierkegaard, Havel, Herbert
Week 13	Avarice and its counterpoint	Tolstoy, Gilkey, Hugo
Week 14	Gluttony and Lust and there counterpoints ;	Lewis, Lawrence, May;
Week 15	Application	Aristotle, Johnson, Gilkey, MacMillan
Week 16	Intro to –“When No One sees: The importance of Character in an Age of Image”; Does Character matter	Alexander the Great, George Washington, Hebrew Scriptures, Plato, Machiavelli, Madison, Churchill
Week 17	Character in the Crucible: crises test our character in revelation.	Sophocles, Job
Week 18	Cultural erosions of character	Riesman, Fairlie, Applbaum, Musil
Week 19	Cultural erosions of Character cont.	Freud, Boorstin, Sennett, Wilde
Week 20	Spiritual foundations for Strong Character	Forsyth, Chesterton, Augustine
Week 21	Spiritual foundations for Strong Character	Lewis, Lincoln, Mowrer
Week 22	Learn by example: Heroes of Character; Course Final	Luther, Le Chambon, Bonhoeffer

****All course work is subject to change.