



CHTH235/335

Special Topic: Theology, Money and Markets

Course Outline 2021

SEMESTER 1 2021

Lecturer:

Dr Andrew Shepherd

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Class Times:

3.00-4.50pm on Wednesday

- March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st;
- April 14th, 21st, 28th;
- May 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th;
- June 2nd.

All classes will be held at the Wellington Anglican Centre, 18 Eccleston Hill, Thorndon, and simultaneously live-streamed (via Zoom) to students in an AV room on campus in Dunedin, and (via Zoom) to students located elsewhere.

This paper explores what the Christian theological and ethical tradition offers to economic issues and concerns and reflects on the relationship between Christianity and global capitalism (both its historical development and future evolution).

Critically reflecting upon the Christian theological and ethical tradition, the paper seeks to shed new light on issues relating to markets, consumerism, wealth, poverty, inequality and economic growth. Drawing upon a wide range of resources – including the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures, historical and contemporary writings of theologians, ethicists and economists, church reports and Catholic social teaching – the paper explores important moral and ethical considerations concerning the power of money, the influence and operation of markets, and the relationship of Christianity with the contemporary prevailing economic paradigm of global neoliberal capitalism. Finally, the paper observes how the Christian tradition may encourage and enrich the development of new and alternative economic thinking and practices.

LECTURER'S INTRODUCTION

Dr Andrew Shepherd is the Theology Programme Lecturer in Theology and Public Issues, based in Wellington. His working life has alternated between academic teaching roles and leadership responsibilities in Christian and non-profit organisations. His research interests include:

- Ecological Theology and Environmental Ethics
- The Ethics and Practice of Hospitality

- Theology and Phenomenology
- Theology and Economics
- Peace Theology
- Contemporary theologies of protest and social transformation

For further information, see: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/staff/otago720307.html>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students completing CHTH 235 should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how key biblical motifs can relate to contemporary economic discourse.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the contribution made to economic ethical concerns by selected Christian writers.
3. Outline a theological ethical framework for engaging with economic concerns.
4. Offer a critical and creative theological analysis of a contemporary economic concern/issue.
5. Demonstrate analytical, interpretative and critical skills by engagement with scholarly texts.

In addition to the above, CHTH 335 students will be able to:

6. Demonstrate research skills.
7. Demonstrate advanced written and oral communication skills.

This paper is designed to foster the following graduate attributes identified in the University of Otago Teaching and Learning Plan (2013-2020) and Graduate Profile:

- **GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE:** Appreciation of global perspectives in the chosen discipline(s) and the nature of global citizenship.
- **INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE:** Commitment to intellectual openness and curiosity, and the awareness of the limits of current knowledge and of the links amongst disciplines.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Ability to communicate information, arguments and analyses effectively, both orally and in writing.
- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Ability to analyse issues logically, to challenge conventional assumptions, to consider different options and viewpoints, make informed decisions and act with flexibility, adaptability and creativity.
- **ETHICS:** Knowledge of ethics and ethical standards and an ability to apply these with a sense of responsibility within the workplace and community.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY:** Basic understanding of the principles that govern natural systems, the effects of human activity on these systems, and the cultures and economies that interact with those systems.
- **RESEARCH:** Ability to conduct research by recognising when information is needed, and locating, retrieving, evaluating and using it effectively.

EXPECTATION OF STUDY HOURS

Theology, Money and Markets is offered as either a 200-level or 300-level paper. The University expects students to put in 10 hours of study per point. As an 18-point paper CHTH235_335 therefore requires 180 hours of study over the semester. This involves approximately 6 hours of class preparation (mainly reading), participation in one 2-hour class per week, and 70-80 hours of work during the semester to complete the assessment tasks. Please take these time expectations into account and plan accordingly.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Module 1 – Monotheism and Mammon: Historical Texts and Traditions

- (1) Christian Theology and Economics – an introduction
- (2) The Bible and Economics – Torah and the Prophets
- (3) The Bible and Economics – Jesus and the Gospels; The Early Church and the New Testament
- (4) Christendom and Economy: Rules, Laws, and Social Stability
- (5) Renouncing Mammon: Reactionaries, Radicals, Reformers and Revolutionaries

Module 2 – Christianity and the Origins of Capitalism

- (6) The Rise of Capitalism and the Acquisitive Society
- (7) 'The Total Economy' and 'The End of History': The Victory of Neoliberalism & Capitalism as Religion

Module 3 – Contemporary Context: Challenges and Conundrums

- (8) Algorithms & Abstractions, Credit, Interest & Debt: An Economy of Financialisation
- (9) Distribution & Charity, Growth & Scarcity: Inequality and Ecological Limits
- (10) Commodified and Unemployed: The Future of Humanity?

Module 4 – The Church and the Future of Capitalism:

- (11) Ministry by marketing, management & metrics: The Neoliberalisation of the Church.
- (12) Theology and Policy: Democratising and Reforming Institutions
- (13) Embodied Oikonomia: The Church as Alternative Economy

TEACHING

The course consists of two elements: *independent* learning and *collaborative* learning.

Independent learning involves doing the necessary pre-reading before classes, additional reading, and research and writing for assessment tasks. Day to day, the bulk of your

study hours will be spent completing the course readings (**All reading material for the course is available on e-Reserve via Blackboard**) alongside the accompanying course Study Guide. "Completing" the reading means:

- 1) Carefully and attentively reading the assigned texts for each week/topic.
- 2) Utilising the Study Guide – both the general commentary and the questions linked to the readings – to ensure that you have understood and engaged deeply with the readings.
- 3) Make notes responding to the questions linked to these readings.
- 4) Take time to reflect on the 'Points to Ponder' questions and note down your thoughts and responses.

NOTE: Tasks 3 & 4 (above) are *especially* important. Our class times will often involve significant facilitated discussion around the assigned readings. Being prepared for class discussions includes being able to identify things that remain unclear to you and being ready to share your critical thoughts and reflections.

There are 13 class sessions/video-conferences scheduled during the course. These are scheduled for: **3.00-4.50pm on Wednesday**

- **March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st;**
- **April 14th, 21st, 28th;**
- **May 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th;**
- **June 2nd.**

Students in the Wellington region are encouraged to join me in a seminar room located at the **Wellington Anglican Centre, 18 Eccleston Hill, Thorndon** (in close proximity to the Wellington Anglican Cathedral) for these class times. Dunedin-based students will gather in the assigned AV suite in the Information Services Building on University of Otago campus and participate via Zoom. Distant students will also utilise Zoom to participate in these class times.

These class sessions/video-conferences are an opportunity for *collaborative* learning. In each of these sessions I will usually open the class with introductory material to help frame the topic and focus attention on some of the key issues that need addressing. This lecture-style input is not intended to *replace* or *repeat* the pre-reading material but rather is designed to *complement* and *complexify* the content you have already engaged with. A significant part of class sessions will be of an interactive nature. As well as utilising breakout rooms for small-group discussion, I will also employ a Socratic-method to facilitate deep and critical reflection upon the readings and study guide, and encourage open-discussion from the flow-on questions that arise.

Attendance at class times is strongly recommended. If you are unable to attend, then please, out of courtesy to myself and your classmates, inform me of your intended absence. All classes will be recorded, uploaded to Blackboard, and thus will be available for viewing later. If you are a distance-student and unable to participate in class sessions due to work or family commitments, then, upon request, there is the option of running two evening tutorial sessions during the semester to provide the opportunity to engage in discussion on course material.

Outside of class times I will be available for meetings with students, either in person (in Wellington) or by phone or Zoom. To arrange a meeting time, please contact me by email: andrew.shepherd@otago.ac.nz

ASSESSMENT**CHTH235 Assessment Tasks:****Assessment Task #1: Participation in Online Discussions**

Three online discussion forums will provide the opportunity for students to engage in class discussion and dialogue around specific themes and topics in an informed but informal way. This assessment will involve:

- Three on-line posts (300 word each) in response to a posed question/statement linked to course readings.
- At least three follow-up posts (50 words minimum/100 words maximum) responding to the initial post of another student through raising questions and/or offering remarks, reflections and other perspectives.

Length: 1050-1200 words (over three on-line discussions)

Value: 20% of final mark

Due Dates: TBC

Assessment Task #2: Creative Biblical-Theological Reflection

You have been asked by the editor of a serious religious weekly to write a piece explaining how biblical theology can contribute to current thinking on economic issues. The editor is concerned that many of her readers fail to recognise the socio-politico-economic dimensions of the Biblical narratives and understand their faith in essentially 'privatised' and 'pietistic' terms. In her view, a short, well-argued article, offering an interpretation of one passage of Scripture focused around economic concerns, and supported by theological reasoning and practical examples, could stimulate her readers to reconsider the economic implications of their faith.

Bear in mind that your readers, though of Christian faith, may not necessarily be familiar with current theological debates nor with theological or economic terminology. Use footnotes, totaling no more than 300 words, to indicate the scholarly sources you have used to develop your arguments and to note contrasting ideas, critical comments, and other thoughts that might not be appropriate for the article itself. (Note that only the body of the article would be published – the footnotes are simply to demonstrate to the marker your background thinking).

Length: 1,200 words + 300 words footnotes

Value: 30% of final mark

Due Date: Friday April 23rd

Assessment Task #3: Research Essay

Write an essay offering a theological/ethical reflection upon one of the topics listed below. Drawing upon the tradition of Christian thinking on this topic, offer a constructive theological reflection which (1) critically reflects upon this economic theme/concern in the contemporary context and (2) offers an ethic/practice that responds to the issue. You may limit your focus to the situation within Aotearoa/New Zealand or adopt a more "global" perspective.

- Fair/Just Price
- Fair/Living Wage
- Interest
- Credit/Debt
- Wealth creation & questions of private ownership
- Inequality
- Economic Growth & Ecological Limits
- Distribution & Taxation
- Consumerism
- Technology & Commodification
- Labour
- Charity & Philanthropy
- The impact of capitalism on contemporary Christian belief and practice

In your essay, you should:

- Engage with the thinking of at least one economic theorist.
- Draw upon at least one Biblical source.
- Engage with the writings of at least one historical (pre-20th Century) and at least one contemporary Christian theologian/ethicist (writings after 2000).
- Give practical examples of how this theological ethic might shape economic policies and practices
 - (a) within the life of the Church;
 - (b) in broader society – either within Aotearoa/New Zealand, or globally.

Length: 2500 words
Value: 50% of final mark
Due Date: Friday May 28th

CHTH335 Assessment Tasks:

Assessment Task #1: Participation in Online Discussions

Four online discussion forums will provide the opportunity for students to engage in class discussion and dialogue around specific themes and topics in an informed but informal way. This assessment will involve:

- Four on-line posts (300 word each) in response to a posed question/statement linked to course readings.
- At least four follow-up posts (50 words minimum/100 words maximum) responding to the initial post of another student through raising questions and/or offering remarks, reflections and other perspectives.

Length: 1400-1600 words (over four on-line discussions)
Value: 15% of final mark
Due Dates: TBC

Task #2: Creative Biblical-Theological Reflection

You have been asked by the editor of a serious religious weekly to write a piece explaining how biblical theology can contribute to current thinking on economic issues. The editor is concerned that many of her readers fail to recognise the socio-politico-economic dimensions of the Biblical narratives and understand their faith in essentially 'privatised' and 'pietistic'

terms. In her view, a short, well-argued article, offering an interpretation of one passage of Scripture focused around economic concerns, and supported by theological reasoning and practical examples, could stimulate her readers to reconsider the economic implications of their faith.

Bear in mind that your readers, though of Christian faith, may not necessarily be familiar with current theological debates nor with theological or economic terminology. Use footnotes, totaling no more than 300 words, to indicate the scholarly sources you have used to develop your arguments and to note contrasting ideas, critical comments, and other thoughts that might not be appropriate for the article itself. (Note that only the body of the article would be published – the footnotes are simply to demonstrate to the marker your background thinking).

Length: 1,500 words + 300 words footnotes (300-level students)
Value: 30 % of final mark
Due Date: Friday April 23rd

Assessment Task #3: Research Essay

Write an essay offering a theological/ethical reflection upon **one** of the topics listed below. Drawing upon the tradition of Christian thinking on this topic, offer a constructive theological reflection which (1) critically reflects upon this economic theme/concern in the contemporary context and (2) offers an ethic/practice that responds to the issue. You may limit your focus to the situation within Aotearoa/New Zealand or adopt a more “global” perspective.

- Fair/Just Price
- Fair/Living Wage
- Interest
- Credit/Debt
- Wealth creation & questions of private ownership
- Inequality
- Economic Growth & Ecological Limits
- Distribution & Taxation
- Consumerism
- Technology & Commodification
- Labour
- Charity & Philanthropy
- The impact of capitalism on contemporary Christian belief and practice

In your essay, you should:

- Engage with the thinking of at least two economic theorists.
- Draw upon at least two Biblical sources.
- Engage with the writings of at least two historical (pre-20th Century) and at least two contemporary Christian theologians/ethicists (writings after 2000).
- Give practical examples of how this theological ethic might shape economic policies and practices
 - (a) within the life of the Church;
 - (b) in broader society – either within Aotearoa/New Zealand, or globally.
- 300-level students will also be required to give a 5-minute oral presentation (recorded) of their research.

Length: 3000 words
Value: 55% of final mark
Due Date: Friday May 28th

RESOURCES

- Blackboard, the University's online learning tool
- This Course Outline and the Study Guide
- eReserve, a resource for electronic readings, which you can access via Blackboard;
- The Programme's "Style Guide" which recommends students use the 16th edition of the Chicago Style Guide when writing essays. It is available online at <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>
- The handbook *Distance Learning Information and Support*, providing advice on administrative matters not covered in this Course Outline and on the Distance Library Service. (You may download the PDF from the 'Essential Information' web page).

THIS IS IMPORTANT!

Please Note: You **must have access to Blackboard and your University email address** in order to complete this paper. You will receive access once your enrolment is complete. Communications from your lecturer regarding teaching matters will be provided only through Blackboard and your University email address, as outlined in the University's Student Communications Policy, so you must check these emails regularly. eVision will also send important messages through your University email. If you have any concerns about your access to Blackboard or to other course resources, please contact the lecturer or administrative staff immediately so that these can be resolved.

You will find there is a lot of helpful information and resources on the Theology Programme website. In particular, we require you to read the section called "Essential Student Information." You will find it here:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

This page provides a number of useful resources such as the Style Guide and the Plagiarism Declaration Form you must attach to your assignments. It supplies detailed information on assessment and student support. In particular, it contains guidance on the topics of plagiarism and deadlines, both of which can incur penalties if not heeded. This also is where you will find instructions for making online discussion posts and submitting assignments electronically. So it is very important you make yourself familiar with this material. Our assumption is that you have read it.

We will make reference to information on the website in the following pages, so do take the time to follow the links and absorb the material. It will save you from making costly mistakes and help to make the practical experience of distance study a straightforward one.

VIDEOCONFERENCES

Distance study requires students to accept a high level of responsibility for their own study. Success is most easily achieved by students who are self-motivated, who engage readily in self-directed study, and who prepare well for our weekly class sessions. Our weekly videoconferences will not cover all the material in each module. Instead, they will focus on some of the key themes and provide opportunity for interaction between students and the course teacher. Much of the learning will take place as you work through the Study Guide modules and readings on your own.

Accessing the Videoconferences

Please see the 'Zoom Information' link on Blackboard and the 'Essential Information' web page for instructions on how to access Zoom and join in the videoconference sessions. The URL you need to join the sessions is posted under 'Zoom Information.'

Attendance at the Videoconferences

Attending videoconferences is a requirement of taking this course. If you are obliged by circumstances beyond your control to miss one, you may find a recording of the proceedings of the Videoconference on Blackboard under the Zoom Videoconferences Link.

REFERENCING SYSTEM

For writing essays, the Theology Programme requires that you use the 16th edition of the Chicago Style Guide, which is the norm for many academic journals in the Humanities and is often recommended for theses in the humanities. The Programme has prepared a Style Guide, which outlines the Chicago Style and offers other advice on essay presentation. You may find it via the Theology Programme's "Student Resources and Information" page: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK

All assignments shall be submitted **electronically** via the "Assignment" feature on Blackboard by **midnight** on the due dates notified. Please do not submit paper copies. For full instructions about how to submit assignments electronically via Blackboard as well as other important information on plagiarism, grading, and deadlines, please see the "Essential Information" web page.

All Assignments submitted in the Theology Programme must be prefaced with a student Plagiarism Declaration Form. They will not be deemed to have been submitted unless and until the Plagiarism Declaration Form has been submitted. It can be downloaded from <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

It is also on the Blackboard site for this course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All Assignments submitted in the Theology Programme must be prefaced with a student Plagiarism Declaration Form.

It can be downloaded from <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>. It is also on the Blackboard site for this course.

Academic integrity means being honest in your studying and assessments. It is the basis for ethical decision-making and behaviour in an academic context. Academic integrity is informed by the values of honesty, trust, responsibility, fairness, respect and courage. Students are expected to be aware of, and act in accordance with, the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic Misconduct, such as plagiarism or cheating, is a breach of Academic Integrity and is taken very seriously by the University. Types of misconduct include plagiarism, copying, unauthorised collaboration, taking unauthorised material into a test or exam, impersonation, and assisting someone else's misconduct. A more extensive list of the types of academic misconduct and associated processes and penalties is available in the University's Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.

It is your responsibility to be aware of and use acceptable academic practices when completing your assessments. To access the information in the Academic Integrity Policy and learn more, please visit the University's Academic Integrity website at www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity or ask at the Student Learning Centre or Library. If you have any questions, ask your lecturer.

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116838.html>
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116850.html>

STUDENT SUPPORT

The "**Essential Information**" web page provides helpful information on how to access the University Library's resources, as well as a guide to the support services available to students at the University of Otago, including the Student Learning Centre and Disability Support.

For all **administrative** enquiries, please contact the Theology Administrator:
Email: theology@otago.ac.nz Phone: 03 479 8639

We recommend that you contact the Programme as soon as possible if you have any problems participating in the course or accessing resources. Please remember to check your University email account regularly for updates and announcements.

THEOLOGY PROGRAMME

University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054, New Zealand
www.otago.ac.nz/theology