

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Semester, Year	WINTER, 2026
Course Title	CHRISTIAN ETHICS IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD
Course Code	THEO 0535 1S
Date	From January 14, 2026 to April 8, 2026 EVERY WEDNESDAY
Time	From 8:15 a.m. to 11:05 a.m.
Delivery Format	SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Class information	The classes will be LIVESTREAMED on Wednesdays from 8:15 to 11:05 am.
Instructor Contact Information	PATRICK S FRANKLIN, Ph.D. Email: pfranklin@tyndale.ca Tyndale Phone Number: (416) 226-6620 Ext. 2172
Office Hours	By appointment only.
Course Materials	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Equips students to navigate the complexities of following Jesus with faithfulness, integrity, and wisdom in our contemporary post-Christian world. While the course addresses classical and contemporary ethical issues and questions, its primary focus is on forming Christian character. Central questions include: How do we become the kind of people who reflexively think, and act, and engage others as Jesus did? How do differing and changing worldviews and cultural narratives impact the way we approach and address ethical questions? What theological and spiritual commitments, disciplines, and practices are necessary to ground and sustain authentic Christian life and witness in the world?

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate the centrality of Jesus Christ to Christian Ethics
2. Clarify how to frame constructive and illumination ethical questions and observations
3. Identify central ethical concepts and differentiate various ethical traditions/systems
4. Synthesize the interrelation of Scripture, theological reasoning, and cultural understanding in a Christian approach to ethics
5. Examine their own ethical formation and continued character development
6. Recognize ethical arguments, identify presuppositions, and evaluate relative merits
7. Apply formative practices to their own lives that 'form Christ' and embody the gospel

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

All of The Following Books are Required:

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. [*Life Together*](#). Vol. 5 *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005 (available as an eBook via Tyndale library).

Han, Byung-Chul. *The Crisis of Narration*. Translated by Daniel Steuer. Cambridge: Polity, 2024. (This is not available as an eBook; Tyndale library has 1 print copy on 2-hour reserve.)

Katangole, Emmanuel and Chris Rice. [*Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing*](#). Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008 (available as an eBook via Tyndale library).

Mounk, Yascha. *The Identity Trap: A Story of Ideas and Power in Our Time*. New York: Penguin, 2023. (Tyndale library has one print copy on 2-hour reserve. Students can also access the eBook online via Tyndale library, but only one can use it at a time. It is recommended that students purchase this book in print or Kindle format.)

Wells, Samuel and Ben Quash. [*Introducing Christian Ethics*](#). Second Edition. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017. (Tyndale library has one print copy on 2-hour reserve. Students can also access the eBook online via Tyndale library, but only one can use it at a time).

In Addition, One of the Following Books is Required (choose one):

Do Vale, Felipe M. [*Gender as Love: A Theological Account of Human Identity, Embodied Desire, and Our Social Worlds*](#). Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023 (available as an e-book via Tyndale library).

Favale, Abigail. [*The Genesis of Gender: A Christian Theory*](#). San Francisco: Ignatius, 2022 (Available as an e-book via Tyndale library).

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Gushee, David P. and Glen Harold Stassen. [*Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*](#). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.

Wells, Samuel, ed. [*Christian Ethics: An Introductory Reader*](#). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Wilkins, Steve. [*Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics: An Introduction to Theories of Right and Wrong*](#). Second edition. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2011.

Tyndale recommends [STEPBible](#) – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Required Reading and Participation in class discussions (10%):

This assignment is related to Outcomes #2, #3, and #6.

Your participation in class discussions should demonstrate understanding and critical engagement with course materials (lectures, readings) and skill in interpersonal communication (clarity, logic, persuasion, charity, active listening and fitting or apt response to the comments of others).

To prepare for participation, beginning week 2 and ending on week 11, each student is required to submit to the professor, by 11:59 p.m. the night before class, 2-3 questions and/or observations in response to the required readings. An excellent submission will articulate 2-3 insightful questions and/or observations that represent a range of the required readings (if possible, not all drawn from the same source). Especially good questions and observations will illuminate the ethical dimensions of an issue in a clarifying and illuminating way. For example, a student might bring to the surface implicit ethical or theological assumptions or presuppositions. Or, a student might ask why an approach to an issue is framed one way as opposed to another (and explain why it matters, e.g., what is noticed and what is missed in the analysis). Or, a student might draw out the implications of a view, either to emphasize its merits or expose its troubling ramifications.

Generally, excellent questions and observations will employ terms, ideas, concepts, and frameworks learned in course materials (lectures, textbook, etc.) to enrich and illuminate their reading.

To qualify for full marks, students must submit on 9/10 weeks between weeks 2 and 11. This means that students can miss one week without penalty. If students complete all 10 weeks, the professor will drop their lowest mark.

2. Reflection paper on your own ethical formation (5 pp.; 20%; due Oct. 5).

This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #5, and #7.

Write a reflection paper (5 pages) on your personal ethical formation. Begin by describing your most basic convictions and / or core values and then reflect on how these developed or were formed in you. Your reflection should include the following:

- a) Some key formative events, life experiences, and people in your ethical formation (these may include cultural influences or religious background other than Christianity).
- b) The influence of Scripture, tradition, reason (and study), and personal experience of God on your ethical formation.
- c) The role that the church has played (or failed to play) in forming you ethically.
- d) **Optional:** The extent to which “secular liturgies” have shaped you (see the chapter by James K. A. Smith posted on Moodle; Email me if you have trouble finding it).

On the final paragraph of your paper, based on prayerful reflection, share how you feel God is calling you to grow ethically (or as a disciple of Jesus). This might include a plan for “counter formation” (see Smith chapter on “secular liturgies”) or the adoption of “transforming initiatives” (Stassen & Gushee chapter).

3. Theological-Ethical Reflection Papers on Main Course Texts

This assignment is related to Outcomes #2, #3, #4, and #6.

For each of the 5 main course texts excluding the introductory textbook by Wells and Quash (so, including: i) Bonhoeffer; ii) Han; iii) do Vale or Favale; iv) Kantongole/Rice; and v) Mounk), write a 5-paged theological-ethical reflection paper.

For Due Dates, see the [Summary of Assignments Table](#) below and [Section IV](#).

Each paper should include the following essential elements:

- a) Summary of the book’s thesis and discussion of 2-3 central points or arguments it employs to defend its thesis (1.5–2 pages)
- b) An analysis and evaluation of the book’s significance for Christian ethics (2.75–3.25 pages)
- c) A final paragraph (1/4 page) describing the book’s impact on you personally as someone who is seeking to follow Jesus in your present life context (and/or vocational context)

NOTE on paper length: Try to be as concise as possible. If your paper requires a 6th page, that's fine, but points will be deducted if you go over 6 pages.

4. Optional Assignment: Exploratory Paper on a Topic of Interest

This assignment is related to Outcomes #1, #5, #6, and #7.

Students may choose to submit this assignment in place of one of the papers required for Assignment 3. It is optional (i.e., not required for students who complete all of Assignment 3).

Please note that the final book (Mounk, *The Identity Trap*) is not eligible for replacement.

The purpose of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to learn about the ethics of a topic of interest to you. Accordingly, it's best to choose a topic about which you feel you are not sufficiently informed.

Choose a book from the bibliography for this assignment provided in Moodle (or select your own book, with the approval of the Professor). Read the book and provide a 5-paged summary of what you learned. Use the first two pages of your paper to summarize concisely the author's own thesis and to identify and explain the key concepts and arguments the author employs. Then, in the remaining three pages, reflect on 2-3 insights you gained from reading the book. Conclude with a statement (a few sentences perhaps) summarizing how your thinking on this issue has been impacted and how you might pursue this issue in more depth in the future.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	Weight
Weekly questions & participation in discussions	Weekly	14%
Reflection paper on ethical formation	Feb. 25	16%
Theological-ethical reflection papers on course texts - Han, <i>Crisis of Narration</i> * - Bonhoeffer, <i>Life Together</i> * - Kantangole and Rice, <i>Reconciling All Things</i> * - Favale (<i>Genesis of Gender</i>) or do Vale (<i>Gender as Love</i>)* - Mounk, <i>The Identity Trap</i> (must complete)	Jan. 23 Feb. 6 Mar. 6 Mar. 20 Apr. 13	70% (14% each)
Optional exploratory paper	Due on the date above associated with the paper* you are replacing	14% (if chosen)
Total Grade		100 %

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Please complete all readings prior to attending class, so that we can make the most use of class lecture and discussion time. Other required readings (articles, chapters not included in the required textbooks) will be posted or linked on the course page on Moodle (classes.tyndale.ca).

Week 1 (Jan. 14)

- Introduction
- The need for Christian Ethics
- Locating Christian Ethics
 - Wells and Quash, chs. 1-3
 - Hays, "Why Love and Liberation are not Sufficient"
 - Optional: Hauerwas, "How Christian Ethics Came to Be"

Week 2 (Jan. 21)

- Holistic Christian Character Ethics
 - Wells and Quash, ch. 4
 - Stassen and Gushee on "Transforming Initiatives"
- DUE on Saturday:** Theological-Ethical Reflection Paper #1: Han, *Crisis of Narration*

Week 3 (Jan. 28)

- Sources of Authority for Christian Ethics
 - Wells and Quash, chs. 5-7 (stretched between this and next week)
 - Bonhoeffer, "Costly Grace"

Week 4 (Feb. 4)

- Framing the Questions: Universal, Subversive, and Ecclesial Ethics
 - Wells and Quash, chs. 5-7 (stretched between this and last week)
- DUE on Saturday:** Theological-Ethical Reflection Paper #2: Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

Week 5 (Feb. 11)

- Good Order
 - Wells and Quash, chs 7-8
 - O'Donovan, *The Just War Revisited* (excerpt)
 - Hauerwas, "Jesus: The Presence of the Peaceable Kingdom"

Feb. 18: NO CLASS (Reading Days are Feb. 17-20)

Week 6 (Feb. 25)

- Good Life #1: Economics, Wealth, Poverty, Work, Stewardship
 - Wells and Quash, ch. 9

Stafford, "Ron Sider's Unsettling Crusade"
Adam Smith, "The Invisible Hand"
Medellín Conference on the Poverty of the Church
Martin Luther King, Jr., "I see the Promised Land" and "I have a dream"
DUE on Saturday: Reflection Paper on Ethical Formation

Week 7 (Mar. 4)

- Good Life #2: Race
 - Bonhoeffer, "The Church and the Jewish Question"
 - Carter, *Racism: A Theological Account* (excerpts)
 - Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory* (excerpt)
 - The Barmen Declaration*
- DUE on Saturday:** Theological-Ethical Reflection Paper #3: Kantangole and Rice, *Reconciling All Things*

Week 8 (Mar. 11)

- Good Relationships #1: Friendship, Marriage & Family, Sexuality
 - Wells and Quash, ch. 10
 - Hollinger, "The Christian Worldview and Sex"
 - Sprinkle, "15 Responses to Arguments Affirming Same-Sex Sexual Relationships"
 - Klein, "Does 'solo polyamory' mean having it all?" (BBC article)
- Optional Readings:
- N. T. Wright, "What is Marriage For?"
 - Pierce, "Biblical Equality and Same-Sex Marriage"
 - Krieg, "10 Things I Wish Every Christian Leader Knew About Gay Teens in Their Church"

Week 9 (Mar. 18)

- Good Relationships #2: Christian Ethics and Gender Identity
 - GLAAD, "Media Reference Guide and Glossary of Terms"
 - The Cass Review (Read at least pages 21-45; the rest is optional and recommended)
 - Davidson, "Human Sexuality: Logical Fallacies and ... Arguments from Nature"
- One of:
- Smith, "Gender Incongruence and the Question of Medicalization"; OR,
 - Jelsma, "On Gender Incongruence and Gender Affirming Care"
- Optional Readings:
- Sprinkle, On Caring for People with Gender Identity Issues
 - Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender: [Pastoral Papers on Sex and Gender](#)
- DUE on Saturday:** Theological-Ethical Reflection Paper #4: Favale (*Genesis of Gender*) or do Vale (*Gender as Love*)

Week 10 (Mar. 25)

- Good Beginnings and Endings

Wells and Quash, ch. 11

Callahan, "Abortion and the Sexual Agenda: A Case for Prolife Feminism"

Michael Gorman Post on Abortion

Podcast Episodes: Please listen to the podcast episode in preparation for class and record your thoughts, insights, and questions for class discussion:

- *Undeceptions* Podcast, episode 49: "[Pro Life](#)," with Margaret Somerville and Emma Wood; download the podcast on your device or view it online.
- *Unbelievable* Podcast (Sept. 25, 2021): "Should People of Faith Support Assisted Dying?"; download the podcast on your device, or view it online here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XLdHtblzpQ&t=576s>

Optional Readings:

"What is Palliative Care and Hospice?"

Harrison and Cloyes, "Theology and Morality of Procreative Choice" (excerpt)

Canadian Catholic Bishops and EFC: "Declaration on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide"

Week 11 (Apr. 1)

- Good Earth

Wells and Quash, ch. 12

Wendell Berry, "The Pleasures of Eating" (excerpt)

Kathryn Hayhoe, *Saving Us* (excerpt)

View in advance of class and record thoughts, insights, questions for discussion:

Kathryn Hayhoe, "Christians, Climate Change, and our Culture" (Keynote address at the May 2018 national conference for the Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation); online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GgcxlOegrI>

Week 12 (Apr. 8)

- Identity and Christian Ethics

Read in advance for discussion: Mounk, *The Identity Trap*

DUE on Monday Apr. 13: Theological-Ethical Reflection Paper #5: Mounk, *The Identity Trap*

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTREAM INTERACTION (*SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE ONLY*)

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

**exceptions with permission from professor*

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each assignment on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details. Students must review the policies and procedures regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) outlined in [Academic Calendar](#) and consult guidance from their course instructors.

For proper citation style, consult [Citation Guides](#) for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for policies and expectations on Attendance and Classroom Expectations, Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (seminaryoffice@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy

All papers and course assignments must be submitted by the due dates indicated in the course syllabus. Unless the instructor already has a policy on grading late papers in the course syllabus, grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from "A+" to "A-," from "B" to "C+"). Please note that some programs, such as cohort-based or intensive courses, may follow a different policy due to the nature of the program.

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the [Extension Request Form](#). The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete ("I") may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of "F" will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential, and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

[Tyndale Library](#) supports courses with [e-journals, e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course's grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or classes.tyndale.ca. For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary [Grading System & Scale](#).