

# **CHRISTIAN FAITH AND SOCIETY SYLLABUS**

## Overview

This course is designed to deal with justice issues in today's world from the perspective of biblical faith. Because of the preeminence of current concerns about local, national, and global economics, we will focus primarily on the biblical teachings regarding Sabbath Economics, also known as Jubilee Spirituality. We will consider God's challenge to all God's people as we face today's economic crisis.

## Objectives

Participants will sharpen their social analysis skills, making use of worksheets listed here.

Participants will explore relationships between biblical theology and economy with relevant worksheets.

Participants will clarify their response to today's economic crisis and biblical teaching with additional worksheets.

## **Introduction:**

**Theology and Economy**  
**Why People are Poor**  
**Biblical Hermeneutics of Liberation**

## **TODAY'S WORLD**

**500 Years of Oppression, Patriarchy, and Racism**  
**Accelerating Polarization between Rich and Poor**  
**Banking on Misery**  
**Sabbath Economics and Market Economics**  
**Fair Trade is unfair trade—The Philippines**

## **BIBLICAL FAITH**

**The Exodus and the Logic of Liberation**  
**Nehemiah and the Debt System**  
**Jesus' Jubilee Prayer**  
**Jesus and Empire**

**God and Mammon  
Pentecost and Jubilee**

**RESPONSIBLE DISCIPLESHIP**

**Letter from Accra  
Bread for the World—Alliance to End Hunger  
Jubilee and Human Rights  
Empire or Earth Community  
The Great Work for this Generation**

Assignments

1. Participants will receive one-page handouts on the above issues for personal reflection, discussion in class, and possible use with study groups in their congregations.
2. Participants will gather from periodicals, journals, and other resources and bring to class information and questions related to the above issues.
3. Participants will prepare and lead a discussion on at least one of the issues presented in this course—for a youth group, adult education classes, or other setting.
4. Participants will prepare a final paper (3 to 5 pages) that will attempt to summarize their critical appraisal of at least one of the issues considered in this course and their recommendations to their congregations for study and action.

Additional Recommended Reading

Ross Kinsler and Gloria Kinsler, *The Biblical Jubilee and the Struggle for Life: An Invitation to personal, Ecclesial, and Social Transformation*, Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999

Ross Kinsler and Gloria Kinsler, eds., *God's Economy: Biblical Studies from Latin America*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2005

Ched Myers, *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, Washington: Church of the Savior, 2002

Matthew Colwell, *Sabbath Economics: Household Practices*, Washington: Church of the Savior, 2007