

## Foundations for Biblical Justice IS 2310

Spring, 2023  
Ozark Christian College  
11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m. Tues., Thurs.  
3 Credit Hours

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### **Course Description**

This course explores the theological foundation for biblical justice. Themes include justice, suffering, the government, poverty, and the church's response to God's call for "the least of these." This course will be engaged through lecture, discussion, guided reading, and practical "hands-on" learning experiences.

### **College Mission**

The ultimate mission of Ozark Christian College is to glorify God by evangelizing the lost and edifying Christians worldwide. The immediate mission of Ozark Christian College is to train men and women for Christian service as a degree-granting institution of biblical higher education.

### **College Learning Goal**

The learning goal of Ozark Christian College is to educate and equip students to become like Christ and serve Christ in leadership ministry. Graduates will be biblically grounded, spiritually matured, culturally engaged, and vocationally prepared.

### **College Learning Outcomes**

General Education Outcomes:

GE 5: Appreciate and responsibly engage the physical world and diverse cultures, both past and present.

Professional Education Outcomes:

PE1: Articulate a philosophy of Christian service consistent with a biblical theology.

### **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, a student should be able to:

1. Articulate the intent and purpose of biblical justice in the OT, the life of Jesus, and the early Church [*PE 1*].
2. Describe the power and effect of biblical justice in the biblical text and in the broader world [*PE1*; *GE2*].
3. Appreciate the Scriptural emphasis on "becoming" like God and Christ [*GE2*].

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### **Information Literacy**

Ozark Christian College is committed to information literacy training. This training will be intentional, incremental, and missional. Students will learn to access, evaluate, and utilize pertinent information in their ministry preparation.

### **ADA Accommodation**

If you have a disability and are requesting an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Operations at 417.626.1222 as soon as possible.

### **\*\*COVID-19 Accommodation\*\***

The safety and wellness of our learning community is an urgent concern. ***Please do not come to class if you are experiencing any symptoms of sickness including a fever, a persistent cough, or a sore throat.*** If you suspect you are ill, isolate yourself and contact Health Services at [health@occ.edu](mailto:health@occ.edu) immediately. The Office of Academics will use the ADA accommodations process to coordinate services for students who test positive for COVID-19 or for those who may be required to self-isolate. This can

include the full use of existing accommodations, exempting a student from the appeals process for excessive absences, permitting students to attend via live stream or course recordings, or the switch to online courses. If such an accommodation is needed, contact the Director of Academic Operations at 417.626.1222.

### **Learning Management System**

This course will use the Canvas LMS (<http://occ.instructure.com>). The professor will keep all grades and attendance on Canvas, and all course handouts that are not given in class will be posted there.

Occasionally students will be required to do certain quizzes on the Canvas site, as well as submit certain assignments there. Students can arrange to receive notifications of changes to the course on the Canvas site in a number of different formats. Any changes to the course schedule will be made on the Canvas site, which will supersede the schedule printed in this syllabus.

### **Turnitin**

Ozark Christian College contracted with iParadigms, LLC for Turnitin® services to be used at the instructor's discretion. The Originality Check service allows students to submit a paper through Canvas to check for improper citation and potential plagiarism before it is submitted to the instructor. The Peer Review service allows students to submit assignments anonymously to peers for editing and feedback. Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

### **Classroom Policies, Procedures, and Expectations:**

- **Cheating** – Don't do it! It will always be a temptation in your classes and in your life to take shortcuts through different forms of cheating, but you must fight the urge and do your work yourself. This is how you will benefit in all areas of life in the long run. If I conclude that cheating has occurred on any assignment, it will result in a failing grade for the assignment (0%), a meeting with me, and informing both the Academic Dean and the Executive Director of Student Development for further disciplinary action (which could result in failure of the class or dismissal from the college).
- **Plagiarism** – Don't do this either! Like cheating, simply *stealing* someone else's work is always a temptation, but in this age of information, the ability to detect plagiarism is becoming easier and easier. So please don't think: "Oh, I won't get caught," because, inevitably, you will get caught. Just to be clear on the definition of plagiarism, here is a simple definition to work from: *The submission of material (in whole or in part) as your own work that is not your own work without proper citation, quotation, and/or appropriate documentation.* Like cheating, any accounts of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment (0%), a meeting with me, and informing both the Academic Dean and the Executive Director of Student Development for further disciplinary action (which could result in failure of the class or dismissal from the college).
- **Attendance** – Be here every day for class, ready to not only learn, but to engage in dialog with me throughout the lectures. If you are absent more than 4 times in this class, you will fail this course (see pp. 58-59 of the OCC Catalog). Your attendance and participation in class will be factored into your final grade.
- **Late Work** – This is virtually an oxymoron for my classes. Late work is not tolerated. The dates are clearly communicated for you so that you can plan accordingly to turn in your work on time. Even if you are absent on the day in which an assignment is due, you are still expected to turn the assignment in to me on the day it is due at the beginning of the class hour (see "Memory Work" below).

- **Cell Phones** – All cell phones must be turned off before class begins. That means, no phone calls, text messages, or other forms of communication indicative of current cell phones will be tolerated in class.
  - **Electronics** – No “screens” (e.g., computers, tablets, etc.) are allowed in my classroom.
  - **Assignments** – All assignments must be turned in via Canvas. ALSO, all assignments are: double spaced, 1” margins, 12 point font, Times New Romans, Turabian format.
  - **Word Counts** – For all assignments that list a word count, you need to include at the end of the section or paper a word count (i.e., “Word Count = 1,256 words”).
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***Text Books:***

Shane J. Wood, *Between Two Trees: Our Transformation from Death to Life* (Leafwood, 2019).

Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1997).

Shane Claiborne and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *Common Prayer* (Zondervan, 2012).

**Class Schedule:**

| Date | Topic  | Assignments Due:                  |
|------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1/17 | Introduction   |                                   |
| 1/19 | Introduction   |                                   |
| 1/24 | What is Biblical Justice?                                      | Biblical Justice Definitions      |
| 1/26 | The Idol of Salvation  | Between Two Trees Pt. 1           |
| 1/31 | The Idol of Salvation pt. 2                                    |                                   |
| 2/2  | Why Jesus?   | Between Two Trees Pt. 2           |
| 2/7  | Jesus' Works: Deeds  |                                   |
| 2/9  | Jesus' Works: Words  | Memory Work #1                    |
| 2/14 | Jesus' Identity: Who is Jesus in Matthew                       |                                   |
| 2/16 | Jesus' Identity: Who is Jesus in Mark                          | Between Two Trees Pt. 3           |
| 2/21 | Jesus' Identity: Who is Jesus in Luke                          |                                   |
| 2/23 | Jesus' Identity: Who is Jesus in John                          |                                   |
| 2/28 | Jesus' Identity: Who is Jesus in the Rest of the New Testament | Between Two Trees Pt. 4           |
| 3/2  | Jesus' Accomplishments: The Cross                              | Memory Work #2                    |
| 3/7  | Jesus' Accomplishments: The Cross pt. 2                        |                                   |
| 3/9  | Jesus' Accomplishments: The Lord's Supper                      | Begin 40 Days of Community Prayer |
| 3/14 | Jesus' Accomplishments: The Accomplishment of the Resurrection | Community Prayer Report #1        |
| 3/16 | Jesus' Accomplishments: The Resurrection                       | Inductive Study                   |
| 3/21 | <b>SPRING BREAK</b>  |                                   |
| 3/23 | <b>SPRING BREAK</b>  |                                   |
| 3/28 | Jesus' Accomplishments: Baptism                                | Community Prayer Report #2        |
| 3/30 | Jesus' Accomplishments: The Accomplishment of the Ascension    |                                   |
| 4/4  | Jesus' Accomplishments: The Ascension and Holy Spirit          | Community Prayer Report #3        |
| 4/6  | Our Identity   |                                   |
| 4/11 | Our Identity pt. 2   | Community Prayer Report #4        |
| 4/13 | Restoring Relationships  |                                   |
| 4/18 | RR: God and Humanity   | Community Prayer Report #5        |
| 4/20 | RR: Humanity and Self  | Memory Work #3                    |
| 4/25 | RR: Humanity and Creation                                      |                                   |
| 4/27 | RR: Humanity and Humanity                                      | FINAL Community Prayer Reflection |
| 5/2  | DIGITAL WEEK LECTURE MAKEUP                                    | Rodney Stark Book Report          |
| 5/4  | DIGITAL WEEK LECTURE MAKEUP                                    | Memory Work #4                    |
| 5/8  | Final Exam   | Final Project                     |

### **Assignments:**

- **Biblical Justice Definitions (5%)**

- You are to find **four** different definitions for "Justice."
  - You must get one from each of the following sources:
    - [1] The internet
    - [2] A Dictionary
    - [3] An Encyclopedia
    - [4] Another form of Media (e.g., song, twitter, movie, etc.)
  - I want you to list each of the definitions with the source information where you found it.
- Also, you are to write your own definition of "Biblical Justice" (as short or long as you feel necessary).
  - On the day it is due, you will submit an electronic form of the document via Canvas.
  - Also, you will bring the sheet of paper with all five definitions (the four from different sources and then the one you write yourself) to class for us to process and discuss together.
  - If you do the assignment, then you get a 100%. If you do not do the assignment, then you will get a 0%.

- **Between Two Trees Reflections (15%)**

- For each portion of the book (see "Reading Schedule" below) of the book *Between Two Trees: Our Transformation from Death to Life* you will write a 500 word or more reflection, that includes:
  - [1] How did this section impact your spiritual life (e.g., your understanding of God, Jesus, his mission, our place in it, etc.)?
  - [2] How did this section change or confirm your definition of biblical justice?
  - [3] How would you summarize this section in one word (or short sentence)? Why?
- Each report should include:
  - [1] Percentage of the chapter you read (I want an actual number %).
  - [2] Your answers to each question above.
  - [3] A word count.
- Reading Schedule:
  - **Between Two Trees Pt. 1** = pp. 9-50
  - **Between Two Trees Pt. 2** = pp. 51-94
  - **Between Two Trees Pt. 3** = pp. 95-138
  - **Between Two Trees Pt. 4** = pp. 139-228

- **Memory Work (20%)**

- You will choose one of two different memory work tracks:
  - [1] 1 John 2:1-4:21 (**NIV 2011**)
    - *MW#1*: 2:1-17
    - *MW#2*: 2:18-3:10
    - *MW#3*: 3:11-3:24
    - *MW#4*: 4:1-21
  - [2] Matthew 5:1-6:34 (**NIV 2011**)
    - *MW#1*: 5:1-20
    - *MW#2*: 5:21-42
    - *MW#3*: 5:43-6:15
    - *MW#4*: 6:16-34
- Throughout the semester, you will have **four** memory work quizzes that separates the chosen text into about 17-20 verses (these will be fill in the blank).
  - You will come to class, I will have the memory work with blanks in a stack by the door, you will take the one corresponding to your chosen track and fill it out without the help of your Bible.
  - When you are finished, you will go back up to the front, take the "answer key" for your memory and then grade the work yourself.
  - Do not count off for misspellings, but you do count offer for different words, plural instead of singular (and vice versa), or words omitted.

- **Inductive Study (15%)**

- The goal of an inductive study is to take a theme(s) and trace it throughout the entire chosen text.
  - Your findings then should be categorized and discussed (for a complete explanation of how to do an inductive study, go to the Learning Center and ask for the sheet entitled, "Writing an Inductive Study," or ask one of the tutors there).
  - The idea behind this type of study is that you do not know what you are going to find until you have compiled and categorized all of your research (hence the word: *inductive*).
- **Stage #1: Compiling the Data**
  - For this assignment, you will read the book of Luke and trace the following two themes:
    - [1] Economics (e.g., economic language, situations, teachings, etc.)
    - [2] Social Injustices (e.g., outcasts, lepers, women, etc.)
  - With this information, you need to arrange the texts (I want written scripture references) into categories and list them in outline form (see below).
    - For Example:
      - I. Economics
        - A. Metaphors
          - i. "debts paid" (John 19:20)
      - II. Social Injustices
        - A. Gender
          - i. Women
            - a. Woman at the well (John 4:1ff.)
- **Stage #2: Processing the Data**
  - In addition to the outline in the previous stage, you will write a report that synthesizes the information categorized in the outline.
  - Your report should include the following elements:
    - (a) Observations about your research and findings (e.g., surprises, affirmations, contradictions, etc.): **at least 400 words**
    - (b) Difficulties/Ambiguities in the research: **at least 200 words**
    - (c) Conclusion to your research: **at least 200 words**
    - (d) How this impacts the definition of Biblical Justice: **at least 250 words**
  - Each element should conclude with a word count.

- **Community Prayer (15%)**

- On the designated day in the schedule, our class will begin 40 days of prayer through the Shane Claiborne and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *Common Prayer* (Zondervan, 2012).
  - You will need to pray the prayers (morning, midday, and evening) each day for 40 consecutive days.
  - **Each week** of the 40 days, you will turn in a report that states:
    - [1] What percentage of prayers you did for that week (I want an actual number %).
    - [2] A 300-400 word reflection from the week's prayer times (something that struck you in the prayers or the time of prayer that week).
- **At the end of 40 days**, you will write a 600-700 word reflection on how this 40 days of consistent prayer impacted you (e.g., insights, discipline, etc.).
  - In the "assignments," this final report will be entitled: "FINAL Community Prayer Reflection."

- **Rodney Stark Book Report (5%)**

- You will read and submit a book report on: Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1997).
- The report should include:

- [1] A confessional statement with % of the book that you read (I want an actual number %).
  - [2] A summary of the book as a whole in one word (or phrase)
  - [3] Answer this two-part question in 250-300 words: What is the one factor that you see as the key sociological (not theological) factor for the rise of Christianity? Why? (put a word count at the end of the answer)
  - [4] Answer this two-part question in 175-225 words: What is one insight that Rodney Stark surfaced that you either (a) had never encountered before or (b) that enriched your understanding of the early Christian practices of biblical justice? Why is this significant? (put a word count at the end of the answer)
- **Class Participation (5%)**
    - Every class period will lend itself to times of discussion and questions, and every person is expected to engage in these times.
    - A class is only as good as the involvement of the students that are in it, and therefore, your participation is vital for the overall effectiveness of the class.
    - This is worth 5% of your grade—so PLEASE take advantage of the easy points by simply participating in class.
- **Final Project (20%)**
    - **PART 1:** For the final project (which will take the place of a final exam), you will be given 4-6 scenarios from which you will choose **three**.
      - Each scenario will focus on some sort of justice issue (e.g., racism, economic disparity, etc.), some of which will be more domestic and others more international in orientation.
      - For each of the three scenarios that you choose, you will be required to do the following:
        - **[1] Practical Solution (at least 500-700 words)**
          - You will need to develop a plan of engagement in which you will describe in detail how you would approach and address this particular justice issue.
          - The plan of engagement should move step by step describing how the injustice will be attended to in that context (e.g., research the context, who will take the lead and why, etc.).
        - **[2] Theological Foundation (at least 500-700 words)**
          - After the practical solution portion, you will need to engage with the biblical text to show how Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension is mirrored in your actions.
          - You will need to provide both biblical texts and a description that shows how your actions imitate Christ.
      - This final project will be uploaded to Canvas on the day of the final exam.
    - **PART 2:** On the day of the final, you will come to class, take the appropriate blank sheet of paper from me, and then fill out the chart rehearsed throughout the semester.

### **Course Assignments and Expectations**

In keeping with standards typical of higher education, the expectation is that you will work about two hours outside of the classroom for every hour inside the classroom. It is estimated that in this course you will work 6 hours per week outside of class in order to accomplish course expectations.

### **Grading**

The official OCC grading scale will be followed for the student's mid-term and final grades:

| %      | Grade | %     | Grade |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| 95-100 | A     | 73-76 | C     |
| 90-94  | A-    | 70-72 | C-    |
| 87-89  | B+    | 67-69 | D+    |
| 83-86  | B     | 63-66 | D     |
| 80-82  | B-    | 60-62 | D-    |
| 77-79  | C+    | 0-59  | F     |

The Final grades for this class will be based on the following percentages of the assignments described above.

| Assignment                   | %    |
|------------------------------|------|
| Biblical Justice Definitions | 5%   |
| NT Wright Book Chapters      | 15%  |
| Memory Work                  | 20%  |
| Inductive Study              | 15%  |
| Community Prayer             | 15%  |
| Rodney Stark Book Report     | 5%   |
| Class Participation          | 5%   |
| Final Project                | 20%  |
| TOTAL                        | 100% |

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### **Bibliography** (\* = Class Textbooks)

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Claiborne, Shane and Chris Haw. *Jesus for President* (Zondervan, 2008).

\*Claiborne, Shane and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. *Common Prayer* (Zondervan, 2012).

Gorman, Michael J. *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (Eerdmans, 2001).

Grenz, Stanley J. *Theology for the Community of God* (Eerdmans, 1994).

Gutierrez, Gustavo. *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People* (Orbis, 1984).

Harrington, Daniel and James Keenan. *Jesus and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New*



- Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Sheed and Ward, 2002).
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- \*Wright, N.T. *The Lord & His Prayer* (Eerdmans, 1997).
- Wright, N.T. *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (HarperOne, 2008).