

THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT.

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**TITLE:** Christian Political Resistance

**TERM:** Spring 2020-2021

**PROFESSOR:** John Burgess

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3

**REGISTRATION:** LIMITED TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
# AUDITORS: Unlimited

UNLIMITED X

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** A study of different forms of Christian resistance to unjust political orders, focusing on ordinary virtues of truth-telling, caring, and dignity. Attention will be given to Biblical perspectives on justice and on resistance to oppressive state regimes; historical examples of Christian political resistance; theological reflection on different forms of resistance and how they express or violate the gospel; and philosophical and ethical analysis of the grounds for, and effectiveness of, different forms of political resistance.

**CLASS OBJECTIVES:** By the completion of this course, students will be able to examine and explain:

- 1) the way in which “ordinary” Christian virtues (especially of truth-telling, caring, and dignity) are grounded in Scripture and particular theological traditions.
- 2) how these virtues have served in specific historical contexts as forms of resistance to oppressive political regimes (e.g., Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Jim Crow America).
- 3) possibilities for exercising these virtues in political resistance to structural social injustices in contemporary America.

**PREREQUISITES:** CH110, CH120, CS110

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS/READING:**

1. Wallace Daniel, *Women of the Catacombs: Memoirs of the Underground Orthodox Church in Stalin's Russia*, N. Illinois University Press, 2021, ISBN: 978-1501754401, \$24.95 – **Publication release date 2/15/21. This book can be pre-ordered.**
2. Philip Hallie, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed* (the story of a Reformed congregation in France that rescued Jews during the Nazi occupation), Harper Perennial, 1994, ISBN: 978-0060925178, \$17.99
3. Colson Whitehead, *The Nickle Boys* (a Pulitzer-prize winning novel about a young African-American man and his quiet resistance, inspired by the speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr., to the abuses of a reformatory school in the Jim Crow South), Anchor, 2020, ISBN: 978-0345804341, \$12.76
4. John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (a Mennonite perspective on “revolutionary subordination”), Eerdmans, 1994, ISBN: 978-0802807342, \$19.39
5. Additional readings will be posted to MYPTS

**ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING:**

Reading response papers; class participation (50%); Final paper (50%)

**ATTENDANCE:** Required