



Global Faculty Initiative

**The Faculty Initiative
seeks to promote the integration
of Christian faith and academic disciplines
by bringing theologians into conversation with scholars
across the spectrum of faculties
in research universities
worldwide.**

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Preview Response

WHERE DOES CHRISTIAN THOUGHT FIT IN CONTEMPORARY WRITINGS ON JUSTICE?

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I found the preview very clear and helpful. Here are some connections with my current academic preoccupations:

- Is the desire for justice a fundamental human characteristic, and if so, what is its origin? How might a Christian understanding relate to those of evolutionary psychology and social constructionism?
- What can 'justice' contribute to the resolution of issues where the effects are intergenerational e.g. the effects of climate change, government fiscal deficits
- How does the biblical understanding of justice in the context of covenant relate to justice in the context of contract?
- Justice is a major theme of contemporary political philosophy: e.g. Rawls, *The theory of justice*, Sen, *The idea of justice*, and the immense literatures that these and other writers have provoked. There are contrasting approaches: a focus on transcendental conceptions of justice (principles of justice as the foundations of a just society) versus comparative conceptions (seeking ways to evaluate change without any particular vision of the 'good society'); or a focus on the institutions of a just society versus the rules of just behaviour. Where does a Christian understanding of justice fit into this intellectual context - if at all?
- The Biblical concept of justice appears to emphasise 'second order justice' - that is putting wrongs right. This may involve punishments but often focusses on restitution (as in the OT Law). But there are also powerful themes around forgiveness, reconciliation, salvation, restoration, which lie at the heart of the Gospel. These themes seem to be absent from much contemporary secular writing about justice.

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