

# Social Justice and the Bible (EM210)

Australian College of Theology name: *Aid and Development*

## Unit Description

Understand the world's needs and the efforts of aid agencies to alleviate these. Examine the foundations for Christian responses, and the role of aid and development in holistic mission. Study transformational community development, analysing Christian responses which enhance human dignity, community solidarity and effective witness to the reality of the kingdom of God.

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## Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, you will:

### A. *Know and understand:*

1. Biblical perspectives on aid and development
2. General aid and development theories in the contemporary world
3. Christian approaches to aid and development

### B. *Be able to:*

1. Outline biblical perspectives on aid and development
2. Outline the relation of Christianity and cultural anthropology
3. Present an evidence-based perspective on Christian approaches to aid and development

### C. *Be in a position to:*

1. Use perspectives from 'Aid and Development' for personal understanding and in ministry contexts

## Content

### *Section A: The World's Need, and the World's Responses*

1. Poverty in the World today and the efforts of Aid agencies to alleviate the problems. Issues such as:
  - a. Poverty status and first world/third world divisions.
  - b. Urbanisation, refugee and displaced peoples.
  - c. Emergency relief, disaster responses, rehabilitation.
  - d. Governmental aid versus non-government aid agencies.
  - e. Aid and trade.

- f. Declining aid budgets.
- g. The disability and poverty cycle.

### **Section B: Foundations for Christian Responses**

2. Biblical and theological reflections on human need, e.g., the themes of creation, the community of Israel, the prophetic response to poverty and injustice, the life and teaching of Jesus, the practices of the early Church.
3. Aid and Development in holistic mission, such as:
  - a. The role and significance of Christian non-government organisations
  - b. Incarnational and Kingdom mission
  - c. The continuing debate over the nature of the Gospel, and its historical and contemporary expressions, e.g.,
    - evangelism and social concern
    - action for justice
    - confronting the powers
    - changing oppressive structures
4. Ecotheology and environmental issues

### **Section C: Studies in Transformational Community Development**

5. Analysis of Christian responses which enhance human dignity, community solidarity, and effective witness to the reality of the Kingdom of God, such as:
  - a. Principles of community development
  - b. The employment challenge in the two-thirds world
  - c. The treatment of indigenous peoples
  - d. Disability
  - e. Fair trade
  - f. Ecotheology
6. Studies of particular situations which enable reflection on such themes as worldview, empowerment, transformation etc. to enable reflection on the principles and practices in a context of Christian Mission. This could include possible presentation by representatives of various Christian transformational ministries to understand and experience how biblical and theological principles are related to the planning, implementation, evaluation and celebration of change.