



# ID217 Theology of Food

Professor Jeff Greenman & BGST Faculty | 1.5 CR

## About the Course

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Eating is one of the most profound ways by which we relate to each other, to the created world, and to God. In this course we will explore, within the framework of Christian theology, some of the biological, ecological, psychological, aesthetic, spiritual, agricultural, historical, economic, and ethical aspects of what, why, and how we eat. Through readings, course lectures, excursions and discussions, we shall explore a thoughtful Christian engagement on the dimensions of the

production, distribution, preparation, and consumption of food. We will spend time engaging these topics in a context of worshipping, feasting, fasting, and cooking together.

### Dates (2019)

Nov 2, (1 - 7 pm)  
Nov 4, 6 & 7 (7 - 9.30pm)  
Nov 9 (10am – 1pm)  
Nov 16 (1 - 5 pm)

\*Course includes excursion (additional charges apply)

### Credits

1.5 CR

### Class Format

Live

### Location

St Andrew's Cathedral  
11 Saint Andrew's Road  
Singapore 178959

### Fees\*

S\$225(Credit)

S\$120(Audit)

\* Students from Host Churches are entitled to 20% off credit courses only

## About the Lecturer

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Professor Jeffrey P. Greenman is President and Professor of Theology and Ethics at Regent College, Vancouver. An experienced leader in evangelical theological education, Jeff has served as Associate Dean of Biblical & Theological Studies and Professor of Christian Ethics at Wheaton College, and Vice President & Academic Dean at Tyndale Seminary (Toronto). Prior to this, he was the Canadian Executive Director of African Enterprise, and also worked for the US government in the areas of education and juvenile justice. Jeff earned his PhD in religious ethics at the University of Virginia (17th-century Anglican moral theology). An author of 11 books, he has taught and written extensively on Christian ethics, the history of biblical interpretation, spiritual formation, theological education, leadership development, and global Christianity.



# Course Objectives

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Having successfully completed the course, the student should be able to:

1. Articulate key themes in the complex role that food plays in human culture, with special attention to some of the most important contemporary issues related to the production, distribution, preparation, and consumption of food.
2. Understand more deeply the important place of food in the Christian tradition, especially with regard to its role in the Lord's Supper, hospitality, community and the.
3. Live more reflectively and wisely with regard to the role of food in your own life, in your family, and in your congregation.

These objectives will be accomplished by a combination of the following:

- a. Lectures and interactions with Prof. Greenman and guests;
- b. Field trips to:
  - a) Elsie's Kitchen (a food caterer); and
  - b) Cookyn Inc. (cooking school that uses the activity of cooking to foster interactions and team-building in organizations).
- c. Fasting and feasting [together].

# Course Outline

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Session Date / Time	Content	Remarks: Lecturer/Instructors	Hrs
2 Nov, Saturday 1.00pm – 7.00pm	Overview of the complex role that food plays in human culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction: Eat or Be Eaten? Human Eating and the State of Creation</li><li>• The Modern Food System</li></ul>	Prof. Jeff Greenman; This is a Conference, which is part of the full 1.5 credit course. Participants will end the day with a meal together.	6
4 Nov, Monday 7.00pm – 9.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Soil, Soul, and Society: Human eating in historical and biblical perspective</li></ul>	Prof. Jeff Greenman	2.5

6 Nov, Wednesday 7.00pm – 9.30pm	Ethics of food: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have it your way/Obey your Thirst: Market-mediated Consumerism</li> <li>• The Hungry Soul: Moral Issues in Food Consumption</li> </ul>	Prof. Jeff Greenman	2.5
7 Nov, Thursday 7.00pm – 9.30pm	The meal that Jesus left behind: The Eucharist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food as Culture and Identity: The Hearth, the Home, the Table</li> <li>• Setting the Table for Eucharist</li> </ul>	Prof. Jeff Greenman	2.5
9 Nov, Saturday 10.00am – 1.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to Elsie’s Kitchen, (21 Second Chin Bee Road, S(618780)) issues and reflections.</li> <li>• Food and Spirituality</li> </ul>	<p>BGST Faculty</p> <p>The visit to Elsie’s Kitchen will give a view of how a food business copes with the various issues relating to the selling, preparation and disposal of food. Required for all credit students</p> <p>(Elsie’s Kitchen is a brand for Hesed &amp; Emet, a food solutions company; see <a href="http://www.hesedemet.com.sg">www.hesedemet.com.sg</a>)</p>	3
16 Nov, Saturday 1.00pm – 5.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field trip to Cookyn Inc. (31 Ah Hood Road, #01-04, S329979)) to prepare food and eat together.</li> <li>• Reflections and lessons.</li> </ul>	<p>BGST Faculty</p> <p>Required for credit students. Additional fees apply for all audit and credit students.</p> <p>Cookyn Inc “is all about Making Food Fun by fostering interactions amongst people, be it in a social group or a corporate department. More than just a cooking school, we understand that cooking is just part of the fun of working together to create memories that will last for a long time. Come, talk to us if you are interested to organise awesome team building activities for your company.” See <a href="https://www.cookyn-inc.com">https://www.cookyn-inc.com</a></p>	4

# Course Assignments

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## 1. Required Reading

Each student must read all required readings and submit a statement that they have done so.

## 2. Active participation in sessions, outings, learning experiences

Being present, being attentive, and being fully engaged are essential to the learning experience in this course. Active involvement is expected. (Quality of involvement is not the same thing as talking a lot.)

## 3. Class Journal

Students shall keep a journal of the sessions on Nov 2 (Conference), Nov 9 and 16 (field trips and excursions) and to hand in the journal. The journal should cover some key questions. The Journal should be a maximum of 1,500 words.

What were the most important things that you learned? What surprised you? What questions were raised that you need to consider more deeply?

Especially from the cooking session, think about:

- What did you learn about yourself?
- What did you learn about your experience of food? Some helpful points to cover are (you may have to do a bit of research after the session):
  - a. The history of the foods—their botanic and geographic origin, as well as their place in particular ethnic cultures and traditions.
  - b. The details of point of origin, cultivation, transportation, processing and any other noteworthy details of the specific items in the meal.
  - c. Symbolic aspects of the meal—religious, ethical, aesthetic dimensions which have been associated with the eating of these particular things. In some cases, these dimensions are obvious and abundant, in some cases less so.
  - d. Any other interesting details about the food or the making of it.
- What did you learn about hospitality?

## 4. Fasting and reflection paper

At some point before the Nov 16 class, each student will engage in a 12-hour fasting experience. Please see [\\*https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/fasting-for-beginners](https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/fasting-for-beginners) and <https://buildfaith.org/guide-christian-fasting/> for some guidelines on carrying out this fast. This will be a fast from solid food but not from water. (If you have a health issue that would preclude this, or prompt it to be modified, please discuss this with BGST Faculty as soon as possible.) Write a 300-word reflection paper on this experience of fasting. Your paper can be framed by questions such as: Was this a new experience for you? Did you find it easy or hard? What was challenging? What surprised you? What did you learn from the experience?

## 5. Research Paper

Write a research paper of approximately 3,000 words on an area of personal interest related to the material of the course and chosen in consultation with one of the course instructors. You are

encouraged to write about a topic that matters to you personally, occupationally, or communally. More details about the paper will be given in class.

### **Evaluation**

Readings and Class Participation	10%
Class Journal	30%
Fasting and Reflection Paper	20%
Research Paper	40%

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES**

1. For style and formatting of assignments, please refer to the document “General Formatting for all Assignments” available on your course Moodle page.
2. ALL assignments are to be submitted by uploading via Moodle.
3. Unless otherwise indicated, students must submit their assignments 3 months after the first day of the month following the last class/session (“first deadline”). After the first deadline, students will be granted a further 3-month extension automatically (“second deadline”). However, students who submit after the first deadline will incur the penalty of a one-third grade deduction on the specific late assignment (e.g., B+ will be downgraded to B). After the second deadline, the status of the incomplete course will be converted from Credit to Audit. This conversion will not affect overall GPA.

**First Deadline: 1 March 2020**

**Second Deadline: 1 June 2020**

#### **NOTE FOR STUDENT PASS HOLDERS:**

The first and second deadlines are shortened to 1 month and 2 months respectively.

Students are advised that BGST strongly discourages plagiarism. For more information on this point (what plagiarism is, how BGST penalises it), please consult the BGST 'Guidelines for Academic Papers'.

# Course Bibliography

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## Required Readings

Belasco, Warren. *Food: The Key Concepts* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2008). 158 pp (127 pp of text). ISBN: 9781845206734

Wirzba, Norman. *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

## Recommended Reading

Other books which are seminal to the course and from which some of the readings are assigned:

Ayres, Jennifer R. *Good Food*. (Baylor University Press, 2015)  
ProjectMUSE.muse.jhu.edu/book/40364

Bahnsen, Fred. *Soil and Sacrament: A Spiritual Memoir of Food and Faith*, Simon and Schuster, 2013.

Berry, Wendell. *The Unsettling of America: Culture & Agriculture*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1986.

Fields, Leslie Leyland, ed. *The Spirit of Food*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books (Wipf and Stock), 2010.

Le Billon, Karen. *French Kids Eat Everything (and Yours Can Too)*. Toronto: Collins, 2012. Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin, 2006.

Pollan, Michael. *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto*. New York: Penguin, 2008.

Stone, Rachel Marie. *Eat with Joy: Redeeming God's Gift of Food*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2013.

Visser, Margaret. *The Rituals of Dinner: The Origins, Evolution, Eccentricities, and Meaning of Table Manners*. Toronto: HarperPerennial Canada, 2000, c1991.

For more information, contact us at **Biblical Graduate School of Theology**  
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