

# INDS 504: Rebuilding the Household Family & Church in the Technological Age

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July 15 - 19, 2019; 8:30 - 11:30 am

1 or 2 graduate credit hours; 1 audit hour

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Three revolutions — the financial, industrial, and computational revolutions — have shaped the modern world and dramatically changed the conditions of “household” life, both for families and for the “household of God,” the church. A fourth revolution — the biological revolution, in which human beings gain decisive control of the production and nature of both human and non-human life — is on the horizon. How can we find our bearings, and sustain flourishing homes and churches, in the midst of these radical changes in the conditions of human existence? What can we learn from current enthusiasts for and critics of technology, like Yuval Harari and Sherry Turkle; and from Christian voices past and present, including Craig Gay, Amy Julia Becker, and Felicia Wu Song? We will aim to identify ways that the household — the basic unit of culture and society, where persons are formed and loved — can survive and thrive even in a technologized world.

## SPECIAL NOTE

Credit students are expected to have read Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, (ch. 1) and Gay, *Modern Technology and the Human Future*, (ch. 5 and 7) by the first day of class.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Upon the successful completion of this course, students should have a clearer understanding of:**

1. Give their own theologically informed account of the meaning of “technology” and its significance for personhood and human flourishing.
2. Give an account of the economic and financial forces that undergird the technological society, as well as the spiritual forces, biblically considered, that undergird economic forces in turn.
3. Articulate the effects, positive and negative, of the technological society on persons who live with physical disability, mental illness, and other socially marginalizing conditions.
4. Identify ways that human families are affected by technology and ways that they can mitigate its harmful effects and benefit from its promise.
5. Identify ways that Christian congregations can create contexts for personal flourishing in the technological era.

## COURSE OUTLINE

**Day 1** Tools and Devices: Technology and Its Critics

**Day 2** Persons and Avatars: Social Media and Sociability

**Day 3** Money and Mammon: The Supremacy of Economics in the Modern World

**Day 4** “God Sets the Lonely in Families”: Restoring Personhood in the Home

**Day 5** The Household of God: Restoring Personhood in the Church

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Gay, Craig M. *Modern Technology and the Human Future: A Christian Appraisal*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018. ISBN: 9780830852208.

Crouch, Andy. *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2017. ISBN: 9780801018664.

Harari, Yuval N. *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial, 2018. ISBN: 9780807056431.

Polanyi, Karl. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001 [1944]. ISBN: 9780807056431.

Turkle, Sherry. *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*. New York, NY: Penguin, 2015. ISBN: 9780143109792.

Please Note: This Course Information Sheet is meant to assist in selecting courses. The official syllabus should be consulted for more detailed information. A full syllabus with drop deadlines, policies, and course assignment details is available on Moodle for registered students: [moodle.regent-college.edu/login](https://moodle.regent-college.edu/login)

