

# CHOICE

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Phone: (860) 347-6933 Fax: (860) 704-0465  
www.choicemag.org

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HUMANITIES

Religion

Josh Messner Product Manager, Books  
Fortress Press/Augsburg Fortress  
100 S. 5th St  
Suite 600  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

*The following review appeared in the February 2014 issue of CHOICE:*

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MARC

Finn, Daniel K. **Christian economic ethics: history and implications.** Fortress, 2013. 412p bibl index afp ISBN 9780800699611 pbk, \$49.00

What does the history of Christian views of economic life mean for believers' economic lives today? This fine book by theologian/economist Finn (St John's University/College of St. Benedict) tries to answer this important question by starting with the words of scripture, then turning to interpretations and elaborations on economic themes from early church fathers and monastic practice through Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, six recent popes, and modern Protestant thinkers. Topics include slavery, usury, regulation of markets, and business-labor relations. The key message of Christianity, as Finn convincingly explains, is God's care for humanity and humans' responsibilities to always put God first, to continue God's creation, and to care for one another. Treatment of the poor "becomes the central test--the gold standard--for how well a society conducts its economic life." Christianity supports private property and individual initiative, but the clear rule of thumb is "If I have more than I need and you have less than you need, I am obliged to share my surplus with you, because God has given the earth to humanity, and my wealth to me, to meet the needs of all." **Summing Up:** Recommended. All readership levels. -- *R. M. Whaples, Wake Forest University*