

DIDACHE 15.1 INTRODUCTION

Dean G. Blevins, Sr. Editor

Greetings and welcome to the second edition to Volume Fifteen of *Didache: Faithful Teaching*. This edition offers an interesting array of articles centering the on shifting socio-cultural setting of ministry in light of the millennial generation. The journal continues with two Spanish language resources addressing ministry and work, adds two theological treatises addressing scripture and (holy) ecclesiology, and closes with a reflection on our power of prognostication.

The edition opens with four different assessments of the millennial generation, the current cohort of young people, located primarily in North America and Europe, born within the last thirty or thirty-five years. Millennials, often called emerging adults by developmental psychologists and social theorists, may represent one of the most studied generations since the previous Baby Boomers. This descriptive nomenclature, associated with William Strauss and Neil Howe, reflects a general presupposition that generational cohorts, shaped by historical and cultural factors, reflect certain basic tendencies in life expectations and practices.¹ Originally associated with marketing studies, Strauss and Howe's work spawned ongoing research, often championed by like minded researchers, addressing intersections of age, culture, and expectations in major social institutions such as business, politics, education, and the church. For a short overview of this approach to understanding generational cohorts one might visit current online resources:

- LifeCourse Associates: <https://www.lifecourse.com/>
- Pew Research Center: Religion and Millennials: <http://www.pewforum.org/2010/02/17/religion-among-the-millennials/>
- Think Burlap: <http://dev.burlap.pub/>
- Lausanne Global Analysis: Millennial Giving: <https://www.lausanne.org/content/lga/2014-11/the-millennials>

As a generational group, Millennials capture considerable concern both in developmental thought as well as ministry practice.² Concurrent with the sociological phenomenon of this new group, other researchers notice a seeming change of demeanor among many young adults toward accepting certain social roles associated with full adulthood. Researchers like Jeffrey Jensen Arnett (education) and Christian Smith (sociology of religion) chart the dispositions and behaviors of this younger group of men and women, noting this generation's own perception of

¹ Neil Howe and William Strauss, *Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069* (New York: Morrow 1991), William Strauss and Neil Howe, *The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy* (New York, Broadway Books, 1997) Neil Howe, *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation* (New York: Vintage, 2000).

² David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church-- and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), Thom Rainer, *The Millennials: Connecting to America's Largest Generation* (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2001).

not fully having gained adulthood.³ Other researchers adopt a stronger goal of advocacy, noting the particular gifts and abilities of this group.⁴

Our edition includes four such studies. The first, commissioned, submission comes from a Millennial pastor. Reverend Danny Quanstrom notes Millennials rarely conduct research on their own cohort. Quanstrom, working with both Nazarene Research and Nazarene Clergy Development, constructed a survey to research the disposition of his fellow ministers within this own age-level cohort. Reverend Quanstrom's insights provide a fresh view of the commitment of these young ministers.

Quanstrom's assertion that Millennials remain a highly studied cohort, bears witness in the next three articles. Dr. Bonnie Perry provides a window of insight into Millennial preferences for discipleship and the types of resources needed for the future, while Dr. Marvin Jones offers insight into a Millennial understanding of worship. Both articles emerge from doctoral research by Dr. Perry (Olivet Nazarene University) and Dr. Jones (Trevecca Nazarene University). As such, readers will note the digest nature of these documents, yet also the social science work provided through studying congregational practice in the Church of the Nazarene and elsewhere. The section closes with a fourth paper by another Millennial pastor, Reverend Simone Twibell, who has since entered into doctoral studies as well. Reverend Twibell gives us a fascinating analysis of Millennials who are moving away from institutionalized religion, and implications for the church. In all, readers gain fresh insight into this socio-cultural cohort, yet we must also recognize that they reflect an important generation in the life of the church; so our attention to their education and our empowerment of their leadership remain a key challenge for the future.

The second major section of this edition draws specifically from Spanish language resources. *Didache: Faithful Teaching* remains committed to publishing quality resources in more than the English language. The next two articles come from a sister denomination, the Wesleyan Church, by way of Indiana Wesleyan courtesy Rev. Joanne Solis-Walker, Ph.D., M.Div., Director of Latin@ Education & Adjunct Professor at Wesley Seminary at Indiana Wesleyan University. Dr. Solis-Walker provided an article last edition of *Didache: Faithful Teaching*, and now graciously serves as Spanish language editor for these key contributions. Dr. Solis-Walker was good enough to provide an introduction, and I decided that we honor the spirit of these submissions by including the Spanish language intro first, along with an English translation for other readers.

En esta edición de *Didache: Enseñanza Fiel*, tenemos la oportunidad de explorar el tema de la teología del trabajo. La Pastora Liz García es estudiante del Seminario Wesley en Indiana

³ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens Through the Twenties*, 2nd Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Christian Smith, Kari Christoffersen, Hilary Davidson, Patricia Snell Herzog, *Lost in Transition The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Christian Smith and Patricia Snell, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). See also SSEA: The Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood accessed online (Dec. 2015) <http://www.ssea.org/>

⁴ Shawna Songer Gaines and Time Gaines, *A Seat at the Table: A Generation Reimagining its Place in the Church* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill of Kansas City, 2014).

Wesleyan University y reside en Bogotá, Colombia. Liz presenta su reflexión sobre este tema desde una perspectiva bíblica y con el fin de promover la importancia de que cada ministro desarrolle una teología del trabajo personal. También tenemos el honor de publicar una reflexión escrita por el Dr. Pablo Jiménez quien dentro de sus múltiples roles es profesor adjunto del Seminario Wesley. En una forma puntual el Dr. Jiménez nos reta a explorar los hábitos organizacionales que existen dentro de las iglesias con el fin de poder continuar hacia adelante y dejar el pasado, en el pasado.

(In this edition we have the opportunity to explore the theme of a theology of work. Pastor Liz Garcia is a student at Wesley Seminary and resides in Bogota, Colombia where she also serves in ministry. Liz reflects on this topic from a biblical perspective with the purpose of emphasizing the importance of developing a personal theology of work. We also have the honor of publishing a reflection written by Dr. Pablo Jimenez, who serves as adjunct professor at Seminario Wesley at Indiana Wesleyan University. Dr. Jimenez writes about the need to examine the organizational habits of the church which often limit the churches capacity to embrace what God is doing and desires to do in the future.)

Our third primary section includes two theological reflections. The first article entails a response from Dr. Tom A. Noble to E. Jerome Van Kuiken's article last edition on embracing the language of inerrancy in scripture titled "[For Clarity and Charity: A Wesleyan Response to the Scripture Study Committee's Report on Article IV \(The Holy Scriptures\)](#)." Dr. Noble served as a member of Scripture Study Committee to the Twenty-Eighth General Assembly, Church of the Nazarene (<http://didache.nazarene.org/index.php/volume-13-1/892-didache-v13n1-01-scripturestudycommitteereport-king1>). Tom, writing a personal response, raises several historical and theological issues for consideration in the debate, including our use of "charity" in the conversation. In addition, we have a marvelous presentation by Susan Carole on the necessity of a holy ecclesial community. Carole, an adjunct for Nazarene Theological Seminary and other Nazarene schools, also serves as Senior Pastor of First Church of the Nazarene in San Bernardino, California. Dr. Carole presented her material originally at Mount Vernon Nazarene University in 2014 and we are fortunate to include her work in this edition.

Finally, the edition closes with a reflection by Dr. Sam Dunn, former dean and vice president for Academic Affairs at Northwest Nazarene University. Dunn reflects on the work he and his colleagues did as part of the NPH publication *Opportunities Unlimited: The Church of the Nazarene in the Year 2000*. In light of our tendency to "predict" the future of Millennials, or the future of the church, it often helps to stop and take stock of previous prognostications as a reminder that God remains faithful even when we prove less than accurate in all our conjectures.

Just a note: our next edition will include a special collection of articles from the Eurasia regional Theological Conference addressing key biblical, theological, and pastoral issues. The edition will provide readership exposure to a number of young scholars emerging in the Eurasia region.

As always, please note the journal publishes articles along the themes of theology, culture, and education within a Wesleyan heritage. Guidelines for submissions are available at the website. Professors may also submit outstanding student papers (with student permission) as long as they

will agree to serve as the reviewer. I also thank Ernalyn Longcop Fausto, with the staff of the Asia Pacific Region, who works diligently in the formatting and maintenance of our website, and Dr. Tammy Condon who works diligently promoting *Didache: Faithful Teaching*, as she does in the development of the Wesleyan Holiness Digital Library (WHDL) <https://www.whdl.org/>.

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