

DIDACHE: FAITHFUL TEACHING 19:1-2 INTRODUCTION

Dean G. Blevins, Editor

Greetings and Welcome to *Didache: Faithful Teaching* a publication dedicated to exploring theology, culture, and pedagogy in the Wesleyan Tradition. The edition addresses issues of theology, particularly moral theology or social ethics, as well as a treatise on pedagogy with ministry in mind. The edition also covers the entire publication year (both volumes) in one setting.

While the Wesleyan theological tradition faces several issues, the articles in this edition raise both traditional concerns and others not often considered. Our first submission by Svetlana Khobnya, Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, revisits the role of women in ministry, particularly admonitions for women to keep silent in the church, noting their influence on complementarian perspectives resident in evangelical traditions. This paper derives from a workshop at the Called Conference in Croatia (autumn 2018) by reengaging 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy, Khobnya argues the Bible consists of many smaller stories constructed over a long period of time, in many cultural contexts that were very different from our modern world and experiences. Khobnya offers a treatise that situates these writings within both their larger biblical narratives, and also their historical setting, to advance a view that supports the role of women in ministry in spite of popular readings of these passages.

Moving from biblical narrative, the next two theological treatises explore our relationship with food and military participation. Often an overlooked concern, these treatises address both a sacramental and critical social engagement. The first article by Jonathan M. Platter, a PhD candidate at the University of Cambridge. Platter offers a theological mediation on how eating reflects a particular relationship to God. To borrow from his article, Platter writes: “Because food is a way God mediates God’s life to us, meals are an occasion to recognize that our physical bodies are part of our ongoing relationship with God; so in meals we learn to receive our bodies and their nourishment as gifts, and to offer them to God and one another in return.”

Jeff Spangler, DMin, a retired chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) and Pastor, Fayetteville Church of the Nazarene offers what might be seen as a rebuttal to a popular view of chaplaincy in the United States. As Spangler documents, the image of military chaplaincy often evokes either views of disparagement or confusion. Yet military chaplaincy touches at least forty different countries globally (Benjamin, 2011) and, according to Miroslav Volf (2009), may have a primary role in keeping peace in a globalized world. Spangler’s response intends to clarify the background and importance of chaplaincy albeit from a USA perspective.

Sylvia Cortez Masyuk, NTS DMin Student and Missionary, Kyiv, Ukraine, offers research on the place of trauma in Ukraine and the potential power of the eucharist to respond to this challenge. Stanley J. Rodes, Global Clergy Development Administrative Director Church of the Nazarene, offers a thoughtful, Wesleyan, engagement with missiologist Paul Heibert’s work particularly on the nature of conversion in conversation with culture. Heibert’s work with “sets” (intrinsic, extrinsic, bounded and fuzzy) sets the context for Rodes engagement using John Wesley’s theology to reveal both resonance and dissonance.

In addition to these independent submissions we are fortunate to offer the primary articles from the Eurasia Region Theology Conference. The conference, titled “The Vocation of Holiness: God’s Holy People and Discipleship” occurred November 2019 Kyrenia, Cyprus and January 2020 Hyderabad, India. The call for papers included the following information.

The biblical call to be God’s Holy People is both an identity and a vocation. But what does this calling look like amongst the people called Nazarenes on the Eurasia Region with all its complexities and challenges? Holiness is far more than a message, it is a life to be lived and a vocation to be followed as participants in the mission of God. What does it mean to be God’s holy people and how do we express our identity in the discipleship to which we are called? The theme emerges from 1 Peter 1:16–2:10 which echoes Exodus 19:5–6 and Leviticus 19:2. This text, addressed to believers who are called to live out their identity and vocation in a hostile environment, may be read in many ways in our Region. How do we express our calling and identity in these diverse contexts?

Initial plenary papers were drafted by Kent Brower, Senior Research Fellow and Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies, Nazarene Theological College (NTC) Manchester; Klaus Arnold, Rector and Lecturer in Theology at European Nazarene College; Deirdre Brower Latz, Principal and Senior Lecturer in Pastoral and Social Theology, NTC Manchester; and MiJa Wi, Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Global Mission and International Chaplain at NTC Manchester. In the next edition, we will include regional responses to these initial offerings.

One important note: Brower and Wi’s article in this edition is as a shortened and revised version of K E Brower and MiJa Wi, “‘On Earth as it is in Heaven’: The Vocation of Holiness in Scripture” in Chapter Two of *The Vocation of Holiness* edited by Al Truesdale (Kansas City: The Foundry, forthcoming). Our thanks to Bonnie J. Perry at the Foundry for allowing us to publish this version of the chapter.

Finally, the edition closes with a pedagogical treatise by Stéphane Tibi academic essay around integrating prayer and classroom practice. Reverend Tibi serves as the Eurasia Regional Education Coordinator for the Church of the Nazarene. His work combines both experiential (or as Tibi say, experimental) practice with grounded reflection. Tibi’s essay serves as a reminder that *Didache: Faithful Teaching* really seeks to provide ground insights into educational practice alongside reflections on theology and culture.

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) if they will agree to serve as the reviewer. This edition provides an excellent example of this approach.

We again 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 Carter who works tirelessly 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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References

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