



McMaster Divinity  
College

### Devotional Practices in the New Testament

NT 5XD5  
Modified Hybrid

Cynthia Long Westfall, Ph.D.  
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Winter 2022 (Term 2)

Tuesdays 4–5:50 p.m.

On Campus: Jan 11, 25, Feb 8, 22, March 8, 22, April 5

Online/Off Campus: Jan 18, Feb 1, 15, March 15, 29



#### Biography

Dr. Cindy Westfall is the Associate Professor of New Testament at McMaster Divinity College. Her research interests are wide-ranging including Greek, linguistics and discourse analysis, the book of Hebrews, Revelation and the Catholic Epistles, Bible Translation, Gender and Ministry, and Biblical Social Justice. She is the author of *A Discourse Analysis of Hebrews: The Relationship between Form and Meaning* and *Paul and Gender: Reclaiming the Apostle's Vision for Men and Women in Christ* and co-edited *The Bible and Social Justice: Old Testament and New Testament Foundations for the Church's Urgent Call*. She has been committed to crossing the boundaries in church planting and participation in the growth of urban church ministry. She is married to Glenn and lives in Dundas, ON.

#### Course Description

For the DPT, this course is the place to explore the biblical basis for our contemporary worship practices, but also to critique them biblically. Devotional practices, or spiritual disciplines, are fundamental ways that we enter the sphere of grace and foster our love for God. The devotional actions of the first Christians with which they worshipped Jesus Christ as God were stunningly innovative in their contexts. Understanding those actions anew in those contexts provides a repertoire that moves us beyond our typical traditional and our popular devotional practices. This course combines the *study* of the devotional practices in the New Testament with *interactive experience* in which we explore the application of early Christian devotional practices together.

## Course Objectives

Specific Objectives—through reading, lectures, discussion and interactive participation the student will...

### **Knowing**

- Know the spectrum of devotional practices in the New Testament and early Christianity
- Understand the social, historical, literary and religious cultural contexts in which the early church developed its devotional practices
- Grasp the nature of devotion to Jesus within exclusive monotheism

### **Being**

- Identify the role of one's identity and traditions in devotion and worship and connect it and/or differentiate it from the early Christian practice
- Evaluate one's own practices and experiences of devotion and worship with the NT

### **Doing**

- Participate in interactive practices of devotion and worship
- Through reading, research, and writing, engage in practice-led research on devotional practices in the NT that address your research question, and informs your practice of ministry
- Practice serving as a resource for the church as others as you share your expertise, sources and research with the class

## Course Requirements for NT 5XD5

### **Class Participation** (15%)

Student participation will be in a hybrid format involving both in-class and online participation based on the readings for the week and any online videos. The course will include participation in a Seder held on campus during class time and a common meal (pot luck) off campus during class time on March 15, if pandemic restrictions allow or are lifted.

### **Reading** (10%)

The required reading for the course is 4,000 pages. The student will read the core text and select appropriate reading on Devotional Practices in the New Testament (particularly as it relates to their research question) and submit on A2L a list of books and number of pages read on **April 8**.

### **Core Texts**

Hurtado, Larry W. *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

A modern version of the NT

### **Recommended**

Hurtado, Larry W. *At the Origins of Christian Worship: The Context and Character of Earliest Christian Devotion*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

Hurtado, Larry W. *How on Earth Did Jesus Become A God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

### **Textbook Purchase**

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308;

email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

#### **Additional Materials**

Any handouts for lectures and class discussion will be made available on A2L.

#### **Written Assignments**

##### **Preliminary Annotated Bibliography & Presentation (15%)**

The student will develop an annotated bibliography of approximately 5–10 resources (at least 1,500 pages) that are the most informative related to the area of your research interest, and write a 100-150 word annotation for each resource. **Follow the MDC Style Guide for your bibliography entries.** Relevant resources previously read for other courses may be submitted (mark with \*). This is your summary of the best sources available in your area of interest. **Submit this assignment to A2L in PDF form on Friday, February 4. The bibliography will be presented in class on February 8.**

##### **Summary of Biblical and Theological Foundations (20%)**

Utilizing material from the class sessions, online materials and reading the student will describe the biblical and theological basis for *your specific practice-led research* in Devotional Practices. **The paper will be approximately 3,000 words (12 pages), and submitted to A2L in PDF form by 11:59 p.m. Friday February 25.**

Include footnotes and bibliography. For all matters of style and form, consult the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses:

<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>

##### **Major Paper on Practice-Led Research in Devotional Practices (40%)**

The student will demonstrate practice-led research through a particular focus/interest in Devotional Practices and be prepared to discuss their research with the class. Their paper will include an introduction, five sections and a conclusion (subheadings are advised):

- Clearly explain how the paper is rooted based in your identity, experiences and practice
- Include your biblical and theological foundations
- Explore the challenges and problems that provoke this study (i.e. Why does this ministry practice need to be addressed?)
- Identify and develop a procedure for a methodology suitable for researching this topic.
- Integrate the biblical and theological foundations for practice from your previous paper with appropriate revisions
- A consideration of new approaches to address and improve ministry practice (local and beyond) and reflection on the application to your own ministry.

**The paper will be approximately 3,000 + 8,000 words. Submit to A2L in PDF form April 5 by 11:00 a.m.** Include footnotes and bibliography. For all matters of style and form, consult the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses:

<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>

#### **Class Presentation of Research**

Present/summarize where you are in your research in the final class on **April 6.**

### Course Assessment Summary

Participation	15%
Reading	10%
Preliminary Annotated Bibliography & Presentation	15%
Summary of Biblical and Theological Foundations	20%
Final Paper & Presentation	40%

### Classroom Behavior

#### *Attendance*

- Students should be on time to the in-class sessions or be prepared to offer an explanation to the professor.
- Students are expected to stay for the all in-class sessions, unless arranged in advance.
- Students are expected to listen to any on-line videos which is equivalent to course attendance. "Absences" will result in the reduction of the final grade.

#### *Participation*

- Please respect the opinions of others without disrespect or ridicule, even if you do not agree with them. However, feel free to respond logically and critically in an orderly manner.
- Students are not expected to be doing work on any other subject except that which is appropriate in the course outline.
- Students are not to carry on off-topic conversations in class.
- Students are not to access e-mail, send or receive text messages, surf the net, etc., while class is in session
- Students may eat or drink in class if they do not distract others and they clean up their desks.

Students who fail to respect these guidelines may lose participation points and/or be dismissed from the class.

#### *Academic Honesty*

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. [All papers will be analysed for plagiarism by TurnItIn.](#)

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty: <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/> and the McMaster University Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3: [www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac\\_integrity.htm](http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm)

#### *Gender Inclusive Language*

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

#### **Appointments & office hours**

Contact me if I can assist you in any way via Avenue or e-mail: [westfal@mcmaster.ca](mailto:westfal@mcmaster.ca)  
Friend me on Facebook and send me a message!

**Office hours (Rm 242):**

Tuesday 2–4

Wednesday 1–3

Available by appointment in person or on Zoom calls

**Disclaimer**

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

**Deleted:** → Thursday → 3:30-5:30 p.m.

**NT 3XD3 COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>CLASS SESSION</b>	<b>Hurtado</b>	<b>NT &amp; Activities</b>
Jan 11 On campus	Introduction to the course 1 <sup>st</sup> vs. 21 <sup>st</sup> Centuries		Specializations Joining the two horizons
Jan 18 Online	Greco-Roman & Jewish Contexts vs. our context	1–53	The dynamics of household worship & the synagogue
Jan 25 On campus	The historical Jesus	53–78	How to know Jesus
Feb 1 Online	Jesus and the OT	563–602	Use of the OT
Feb 4	<b>Annotated Bibliography due 11:59 p.m.</b>		
Feb 8 On campus	<b>Presentation of Annotated Bibliography</b> Stories about Jesus	217–348, 427–86	Mt, Mark, Luke, John Memorization, story telling
Feb 15 Online	Jewish-Christian Devotion	155–216	Catholic Epistles Use of the calendar Symbolism Space/place
Feb 22 On campus	Paul & Worship	79–154	Pauline Epistles themes Exercising spiritual gifts, Dreams, prophecy
Feb 25	<b>Summary of Biblical and Theological Foundations at 11:59 p.m.</b>		
Feb 28– March 4	<b>READING WEEK &amp; INTENSIVE HYBRID WEEK</b>		
March 8 On campus	Johannine Worship Passover Seder experience Forms of Worship	349–426	Themes in John, 1, 2, 3 John, Rev Confession Communion/Eucharist in the context of Seder <i>practiced</i> Experiencing multifaceted worship practices <i>Each student selects a practice and leads the class in that practice</i>
March 15 <b>Off campus</b>	Prayer & worship in practice Table fellowship <i>practiced</i> in a common meal together	606–619	Prayer Table Fellowship <i>Students enact together 1 Cor 14:26–33 &amp; 11:21–34 in the context of a common meal</i>

March 22 On campus	Martyrdom	619–24	Sacrifice (lent), fasting
March 29 Online	Doctrinal Developments & Diversity	519–562; 625–48	Role of theology
April 5 On campus	<b>Practice-led Research Paper due 11 a.m.</b> <b>Presentation of Research during class</b>		
April 8	<b>Reading Reports due 11:59 p.m.</b>		

*Selected Bibliography*