



McMaster Divinity
College

Devotional Practices in the New Testament

NT 6XD6
Modified Hybrid

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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



Course Description

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
- Acquire a generalist knowledge of devotion to Jesus in its ancient context

Being

- Be an academic and teacher who is transformed by biblical devotional practice

- Allow the text to motivate and form spiritual disciplines in practice and teaching

Doing

- Research and write an academic paper & present the research to the class
- Identify and apply a methodology to the analysis of the text
- Teach a unit on early devotional practices to the class

Course Requirements

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.

Reading (10%)

Students will read 5,000 pages from works on biblical interpretation & hermeneutics. Submit the reading list to A2L by **11:59 p.m. on April 8** with a full bibliography and a total page count.

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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. 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

Methodology paper (20%)

Each student will write and present a paper on a methodology to research early devotional practices (c. 4,000 words excluding notes and bibliography) **due Friday February 25 at 11:59 p.m.**

Final Paper which combines the Methodology Paper with the Analysis of a Topic, a Passage or a Theme on Devotional Practices (40%)

Each student will write and present a paper that applies their methodology to an appropriate passage (c. 4,000 + 6,000 words excluding notes and bibliography) **due by 11:00 on April 6.**

A brief presentation of the student's research will be presented at the final class on **April 6.**

The professor assumes that students already know the basics about how to research, write and orally

present papers. However, we will work at further developing skills that are utilized in scholarly discourse and publication. Both content (research, analysis, organization of material) and presentation (mechanics and style) are important. Each student must utilize the MDC style guide. The general guidelines are that the paper should be 12 pt. font, double-spaced, with 1" margins and utilize footnotes (not endnotes). The paper should include a title page, numbering, and a staple cover (not fancy). Each paper should include a formal introduction and conclusion as well as implications for contemporary hermeneutics and any applications for contemporary ministry.

Teaching Unit (15%)

The student will prepare and teach 1 hour of the course in a video that will be viewed by the other students in the course, covering a passage/topic determined by the professor and student.

Grading Summary

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|---------------------|-----|
| ➤ Participation | 15% |
| ➤ Reading | 10% |
| ➤ Methodology Paper | 20% |
| ➤ Final Paper | 40% |
| ➤ Teaching unit | 15% |

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

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
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.

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NT 6XD6 COURSE SCHEDULE

| DATE | CLASS SESSION | Hurtado | NT & Activities |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Jan 11 On campus | Introduction to the course 1 st vs. 21 st 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 8 On campus | 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 | Methodology Paper at 11:59 p.m. | | |
| Feb 28– March 4 | READING WEEK & INTENSIVE HYBRID WEEK | | |
| 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 Off campus | 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 & 11:21–34 in the context of a common meal</i> |
| March 22 On campus | Martyrdom | 619–24 | Sacrifice (lent), fasting |

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|----------------------|--|--------------------|------------------|
| March 29 Online | Doctrinal Developments & Diversity | 519–562; 625–48 | Role of theology |
| April 5 On campus | Final Paper due 11 a.m. Presentation of Research during class | | |
| April 8 | Reading Report due 11:59 p.m. | | |

Selected Bibliography