

**Syllabus**  
**Exploring John Wesley's Theology**  
**Virginia DTC: Winter 2018-19**

**Course Dates: Nov 19-Dec 16; Dec 31-Jan 13**

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**Module Vision Statement:**

The Church of the Nazarene is a "Wesleyan-holiness" church. By this designation, we affirm that the theology of John Wesley undergirds and informs both our theological conclusions and our theological method. While Wesley should be seen as a mentor, not "guru" (as once expressed by Mildred Bangs Wynkoop), it is crucial to our denominational identity that we teach, preach, and minister as Wesleyans.

Our understanding of holiness should never be divorced from Wesley's theology more broadly defined. This is crucial as we move into the 21st century, when a fundamentalist absolutism on the one hand or religious relativism on the other seem to be the only options. "Holiness of heart and life" is important to every generation. It is extremely important that those preparing for ordained ministry in the Church of the Nazarene catch, hold, and utilize the dynamism of the Wesleyan theological paradigm. This course is designed with the future denominational identity of Nazarenes firmly in mind.

The student will be able to display both knowledge of the content of this course, as well as personal and professional skills that arise out of the theology and spiritual formation in the Wesleyan tradition. Wesleyanism's "warm heart" is the heart of Nazarene ministry, making this course crucial to theological education of the ministers.

**Outcome Statements**

This module assists the student to develop the following required abilities as defined in the *U.S. Sourcebook for Ministerial Development*. Below each competency are listed specific abilities for the course, which correspond with each particular competency. It must be recognized that the listed abilities below each competency do not necessarily comprehend the entire range of the competency addressed in the lessons.

**PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

- CN20 Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry
- CN21 Ability to demonstrate understanding of the sources of theological reflection, its historical development, and its contemporary expressions
- CN22 Ability to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Wesleyan theology
- CN23 Ability to identify and explain the doctrine of holiness from a Wesleyan perspective
- CN25 Ability to identify and describe the significance of the major figures, themes, and events of the Patristic, Medieval, Reformation, Puritan, Pietist, Wesleyan, and Modern periods of Church history
- CN26 Ability to describe how the church implemented its mission in the various periods of Church history
- CP10 Ability to synthesize, analyze, reason logically for discernment, assessment, and problem solving, and live with ambiguity
- CP11 Ability to analyze the validity of arguments and to identify their presuppositions and consequences

- CX5 Ability to describe and interpret the relationship between culture and individual behavior  
CX10 Ability to understand and articulate the biblical, historical, and theological bases for Christian mission

#### OUTCOME STATEMENTS

- To interpret John Wesley's thought and discover ways in which it can inform 21st-century theological agenda for the Church of the Nazarene
- To effectively apply the methods of Wesley for pursuing personal and social holiness
- To apply appropriate Wesleyan theological principles to cultures other than one's own
- To incorporate the Wesleyan approaches to personal spiritual formation for one's own enrichment
- To understand the life of John Wesley in historical context
- To understand Wesley's theological methodology (function of the Wesleyan quadrilateral)
- To understand and articulate a Wesleyan view of the triune God and the primacy of the doctrine of soteriology
- To apply a Wesleyan worldview to one's life, ministry, relationships, and vocation

#### Required Reading---

Become familiar with the Wesley Center for Applied Theology. This is available at <http://wesley.nnu.edu>. There will be reading required from this source. See the course requirements for specifics.

#### Course Requirements

1. Watch the video lectures. There are 6 lectures and they are made available each week through the Dropbox program. (If you do not have this, do an internet search and download it).
  - November 19—John Wesley's Theological Biography
  - November 26—John Wesley's Methodology
  - December 2—The Trinity
  - December 9—The Way of Salvation
  - December 31—Sacraments & Eschatology
  - January 7—The Christian Life

2. Discussion Boards: Each week there will be a question posted on the class website. This question will require you to be familiar with the lecture and any reading due by that week. These will be found at our online classroom <http://exploringwesleystheology.blogspot.com/>

Initial Post due by WEDNESDAY at 11:59PM

Respond to 3 fellow students by FRIDAY at 11:59PM

Respond to any posts on your initial post by SUNDAY at 11:59PM

3. Theological Biography: John Wesley's biography and the influences that entered into it profoundly shaped his understanding of God, the world and the Christian Life. We are no different. And it is important to think about what has led to our understandings of theology as we move forward.

Write a 3 page biographical essay, entitled "How my biography has influenced my theology." Be sure to take time to explore the ways your life experiences have shaped your understanding of:

- God—who is God, God's character & ability
- Human Beings—what are we at our core, what are we here for
- The Christian Life—what happens when we enter it, what is possible in the Christian life, and what is necessary to maintain it

Due on December 2 by 11:59PM. Email as Word document to the professor.

4. A Plain Account of Christian Perfection: Read this work of John Wesley. (If you need it, a copy can be found at <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/a-plain-account-of-christian-perfection/>).

Write a 4 page minimum response to this work including the following:

- A summary of Wesley's understanding of holiness and entire sanctification
- Any questions you have after reading it
- Any insights you discovered while reading it
- What of John Wesley's teaching on holiness is most critical to communicate to your target ministry group? How would you go about doing that?

Due on January 6 by 11:59PM. Email as Word document to the professor.

5. Final Assignment: Read 4 sermons from <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-theological-topic/> (although you are welcome to read more than 4 if you get inspired—don't let me limit you). Pick your sermons from 4 different sections (i.e. adoption, Christology, temptation, etc.).

Using this reading and what you have learned from the class write a 4 page minimum paper that answers:

- "How is Wesleyan theology unique?" (minimum 2 pages)
- "How will Wesleyan theology affect your ministry/service in the world?" (minimum 2 pages)

Due on January 13 by 11:59PM. Email as Word document to the professor.

**All WRITTEN assignments will be graded on fulfilling all parts of the assignment, demonstrations of higher level thinking skills, and proper spelling and grammar.**

### Course Evaluation

Discussion Board Posts	1200 pts
Biography Assignment	250 pts
Plain Account Assignment	300 pts
Final Assignment	<u>350 pts</u>
	2100 total possible points

To pass the course, each assignment must be completed.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

Pass with Distinction	1890 or above
Pass	1470-1889
Fail	1469 or below

### Instructor's Availability

Good faith efforts to serve the students both in and beyond the classroom will be made.