

Syllabus Becoming a Holy People

Educational Institution, Setting, or Educational Provider:

Virginia District Church of The Nazarene, District Training Center

Location of the Course:

Southside Church of the Nazarene, Chesterfield, Virginia

**Course Dates: August 31, 2019, September 14 & 28, October 12 & 26
(8:30 AM – 12:30 PM)**

Name of the Instructor:

**Jerry Bohall, Pastor Equipping & Discipleship Resources,
Southside Nazarene Church**

Instructor's Address, Telephone, and E-mail Address:

Jerry.Bohall@gmail.com

804.677.3011

****Note: Please send an email to the Instructor once you are registered so that they can provide you a link to the Reading Material and Study Guides.**

Module Vision Statement:

The Church of the Nazarene identifies itself as a “holiness” denomination. This signifies two realities. First of all, our roots grow out of a tradition known as the “Holiness Movement” that arose in 19th-century America. We relate ourselves closely to other denominations that were born out of the same tradition. Holiness is an integral part of our historical identity. Yet, this “holiness” historical context also necessarily implies a “holiness” *theology* that undergirds subsequent historical events. The denominations and other associations of the movement all claimed—and claim—a particular understanding of a “doctrine of sanctification,” which can also be articulated as a “theology of holiness.” The very word “holiness” became an abbreviation for both of these realities—the “holiness movement” and “holiness doctrine.”

The roots of this holiness doctrine can be traced back to the Early Church writers, particularly in the East—those patristics who wrote in Greek. Aspects of the doctrine can be found throughout the history of the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and Anglicanism. John Wesley, of course, was the one who articulated a fully developed doctrine of sanctification; his theological vision, as well as his historical placement, led to the formation of the Methodist denomination—established in America in 1784. And yet, when Wesley’s theology of “Christian perfection” met the 19th-century cultural, religious, and historical context, theological changes necessarily arose.

In the last few decades a debate has arisen. This must be acknowledged at the very beginning of our explorations here. There have been scholars and preachers who have seen the 19th-century changes as *grand improvements* on Wesley that are to be celebrated and held fast. On the extreme opposite side, there are scholars and preachers who see such changes as a theological *disaster*, and cry for a return to Wesley’s 18th-century articulation. There are other scholars and preachers who no doubt stand somewhere in the middle, often confused about the crucial issues, interpretations, and ultimate distinctives of the debate itself. Sides of the debate can be associated with names of scholars who represent them. The debate in some cases has been engaged fervently. Foremost, it is important here to simply recognize that the roots of the Church of the Nazarene grow from both sources, Wesleyan and Holiness. We are a Wesleyan-Holiness denomination. It will be the attempt of this author to give both of these sources due attention. It is her opinion that besides taking what is best from both, there is another critical agenda for the denomination today: how to best articulate a theology of holiness for the 21st century. Both the cry “back to Wesley” and “back to the holiness revival” need to be redirected toward the future.

Another crucial facet of holiness theology in today’s context needs to be articulated before we begin. For various reasons—which will be presented and pondered in the lessons to follow—holiness theology, particularly the doctrine of entire sanctification, is losing emphasis in the churches of our denomination. There is either a generalized apathy, or such confusion about key definitional elements, that constructive, clear, healthy, realistic, and God-centered articulations of the doctrine are harder and harder to find. If this doctrine is our clear “distinctive” as a denomination, it is not too strong to say that there is no assurance that it will be passed *well, if at all*, to the next generations. The only true way we can reclaim and re-proclaim our distinctive doctrine is through the preparation and education of our clergy. The author has committed herself to this project in light of what she believes to be a present “crisis”

as articulated above. It is hoped that this specific module will provide a means of such crucial preparation for preaching and teaching holiness now.

The structure of this module is not without an underlying support, namely, the Wesleyan quadrilateral. This is a methodology that holds to the primacy of Scripture. Yet, Wesley believed that the Scriptures should be interpreted dynamically: *Scripture* has been interpreted by *tradition*—a history of interpretation that requires some fidelity; it witnesses to an *experience* of Christ and the Christian gospel that is dynamic and communal in character; it should be understood, organized, and effectively communicated through the aid of *reason*. Thus, the lessons in this module will examine the theology of holiness from the perspective of: Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. It will also examine related doctrines that are intricately involved in a strong interpretation of holiness—the doctrines of humanity, sin, and salvation. It will deal with the realm of “holiness ethics” and finally make some recommendations for articulating the theology of holiness and the doctrine of entire sanctification in the present context. It is extremely important that those preparing for ordained ministry in the Church of the Nazarene catch, hold, and employ the dynamism of the Wesleyan-Holiness theological paradigm, particularly in its expression of the doctrine of sanctification. This module is designed with our future denominational identity firmly in mind.

Module Recommendation

It is strongly recommended that students complete the module *Exploring the Theology of John Wesley* before enrolling in this module.

Educational Assumptions

1. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential to any process of Christian education at any level. We will consistently request and expect the Spirit's presence within and among us.
2. Christian teaching and learning is best done in the context of community—people being and working together. Community is the gift of the Spirit but may be enhanced or hindered by human effort. Communities have common values, stories, practices, and goals. Explicit effort will be invested to enhance community within the class. Group work will take place in every lesson.
3. Every adult student has knowledge and experiences to contribute to the class. We learn not only from the instructor and the reading assignments but also from each other. Each student is valued not only as a learner but also as a teacher. That is one reason that so many exercises in this course are cooperative and collaborative in nature.
4. Journaling is an ideal way to bring theory and practice together as students synthesize the principles and content of the lessons with their own experiences, preferences, and ideas.

Outcome Statements

This module contributes to the development of the following abilities as defined in the *U.S. Sourcebook for Ministerial Development*.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- CN 22 Ability to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Wesleyan theology
- CN 23 Ability to identify and explain the Doctrine of Holiness from a Wesleyan perspective
- CN 27 Ability to identify the formative influences of the American Holiness Movement and the Church of the Nazarene
- CP 10 Ability to synthesize, analyze, reason logically for discernment, assessment, and problem solving, and live with ambiguity
- CP 11 Ability to analyze the validity of arguments and to identify their presuppositions and consequences
- CP 21 Ability to envision, order, and participate in contextualized, theologically grounded worship and to develop and lead appropriate services for special occasions (i.e. wedding, funeral, baptism, and Lord's Supper)

OUTCOME STATEMENTS

- To recognize misconceptions about holiness that have been detrimental to understanding and articulating the doctrine, even keeping some from seeking the experience
- To relate holiness to Wesleyan theology as a whole, specifically to theological anthropology, the doctrine of sin, and the doctrine of salvation—broadly defined
- To identify and articulate Old Testament foundations for the doctrine of holiness

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- To become familiar with figures and movements that are precursors of Wesleyan holiness
- To understand John Wesley's theology of holiness
- To understand the 19th century's theology of holiness
- To compare and contrast Wesley and the 19th century's articulation of holiness
- To articulate the theology of holiness and doctrine of entire sanctification in both traditional and innovative language
- To differentiate the process and crisis of sanctification
- To identify important landmarks on the holiness journey
- To explain how holiness relates to the Wesleyan doctrine of the "means of grace"
- To articulate the foundations of a "holiness ethic"
- To articulate the substance—what it is—and the circumstance/structure—how it happens—of holiness theology
- To give students opportunity to write a holiness sermon
- To give students opportunity to deepen their own experience of holiness

Recommended Reading

Building your personal library:

For those interested in building your personal/professional library, the principal contributor recommends the following books. (Complete bibliographic citations can be found in the bibliography)

Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love*

Lindstrom, *Wesley and Sanctification*

Knight, *All Loves Excelling*

Greathouse, *Wholeness in Christ*

Lawrence Wood, *Pentecostal Grace*

Dunning, *A Layman's Guide to Sanctification*

Bassett/Greathouse, *Exploring Christian Holiness, Vol. 2.*

Obtaining materials to complete homework assignments:

One of the assignments—Lessons 5 and 6—is to read *The Way of Holiness* by Phoebe Palmer. It might be helpful to begin reading before Lesson 5. Copies should be available in most libraries—public, college, district, or church. You may want to purchase one for your own library—available through Amazon and Wesley Books. It is one title of over 2000 such texts included on a CDROM that can be purchased from the Wesley Center Online (<http://wesley.nnu.edu>).

The Way of Holiness by Phoebe Palmer is also available online at <http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyctr/books/indices/index-p-authors.htm>. An electronic copy is included on the Modular Course of Study CDROM. The editor wishes to thank Rev. Duane V. Maxey for the creation of the scanned and edited document and the Wesley Center Online with granting permission for its use.

Another assignment—Lessons 4 and 5—is to read John Wesley's sermon "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection." This is also available through the Wesley Center web site (<http://wesley.nnu.edu>) or your instructor may have copies available for you from the Modular Course of Study CDROM.

Course Requirements

1. **Class attendance, attention, and participation** are especially important. Students are responsible for all assignments and in-class work. Much of the work in this course is small-group work. Cooperative, small-group work cannot be made up. That makes attendance imperative. Even if one does extra reading or writing, the values of discussion, dialogue, and learning from each other are thwarted. If one lesson is missed, the learning leader will require extra work before completion can be acknowledged. If two or more lessons are missed, the student will be required to repeat the whole module.

Small-group work: Nothing is more important in this course than small-group work. The class members will be assigned to groups of two to four students each. The group members will serve as study partners for explorations and discussion.

2. Assignments

Journaling: The only ongoing assignment for this module is your journal. It is to be used regularly, if not daily. On at least one occasion during the term, the instructor will check the journals. In each lesson a journal assignment is included.

The journal should become the student's friend and treasury of insights, devotions, and ideas. Here the integration of theory and practice occurs. The spiritual life nature of the journal helps guard against the course of study being merely academic as you are repeatedly called upon to apply the principles studied to your own heart and your own ministry situation.

This journal is not a diary, not a catchall. It is, rather, a guided journal or a focused journal in which the educational experience and its implications are selected for reflection and writing.

The framers of this curriculum are concerned about the way students fall into learning "about" the Bible or "about" the spiritual life rather than learning—that is, coming to know and internalize the Bible and spiritual principles. The journaling experience ensures that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in the course of study. Be faithful with all journaling assignments.

Daily work: This module has regular homework assignments. It is called daily work because even though the class may only meet once a week, the student should be working on the module on a "daily" basis. Sometimes the homework assignments are quite heavy. The assignments are important. Even if homework is not discussed in class every session, the work is to be handed in. This gives the instructor regular information about the student's progress in the course. The normal time for homework to be handed in is at the beginning of each class session. **All** assignments are to be completed.

Course Outline and Schedule

The class will meet for 18 hours according to the following schedule:

Session Date	Session Time	
08/31/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	1. Preliminary Issues
08/31/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	2. Theological Foundations
09/14/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	3. Old Testament Foundations
09/14/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	4. New Testament Foundations
09/14/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	5. Tradition: Pre-Wesley Foundations
09/28/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	6. Tradition: Wesley on Christian Perfection
09/28/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	7. Tradition: The Holiness Movement
10/12/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	8. A Reasonable Doctrine: The Substance of Entire Sanctification
10/12/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	9. The Experience: The Structure of Entire Sanctification
10/12/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	10. The Experience: The Means to the End
10/26/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	11. The Experience: Holiness Ethics
10/26/2019	08:30 AM – 12:30 PM	12. Holiness for the 21st Century

Course Evaluation

The instructor, the course itself, and the student's progress will be evaluated. These evaluations will be made in several ways.

The progress of students will be evaluated with an eye for enhancing the learning experience by:

1. Carefully observing the small-group work, noting the competence of reports, the balance of discussion, the quality of the relationships, the cooperation level, and the achievement of assigned tasks
2. Careful reading of homework assignments
3. Journal checks

The evaluation of the course materials and the teacher will be evaluated by frequently asking and discussing the effectiveness and relevance of a certain method, experience, story, lecture, or other activity.

Some evaluation cannot be made during the class itself. Some objectives will not be measurable for years to come. If students encounter the transforming power of God at deeper levels than ever before, learn devotional skills and practice them with discipline, and incorporate the best of this course into their own ministries, the fruit of this educational endeavor could go on for a long time. In truth, that is what we expect.

Additional Information

A reasonable effort to assist every student will be made. Any student who has handicaps, learning disabilities, or other conditions that make the achievement of the class requirements exceedingly difficult should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to see what special arrangements can be made. Any student who is having trouble understanding the assignments, lectures, or other learning activities should talk to the instructor to see what can be done to help.

Instructor's Availability

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

Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration

Participating in the course of study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each course you will be required to listen to lectures, read several books, participate in discussions, write papers, and take exams. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The course work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritually formative work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head to your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work to faithfully spend time daily in your journal. Many people confess that this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling as time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, an ah-ha that came to you as two

ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet, family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with course material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems that we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your course work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration, weaving together faith development with learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

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