

Discipline, balance and commitment: the order of eusebia



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The order of Eusebia presents a quasi-centrist view on the balance between the ideological foundations of Christian theology, ethics and spirituality. The order presents a more practical view of life with the basis on religious text, especially on the New Testament. From its vision-mission statement, the ideas are fundamentally sound on the context of practicality; applying the tenets of Christian theology and ethics with a balanced view on intellectual issues and importance with practical application.

As such, the order has a website that explains the basic tenets of the order, with Joel Stephen Williams as its promoter. The mission-statement of the Order of Eusebia establishes a “ well-balanced rule to promote godliness, holiness, and piety among Christians” (Williams 2004, OE mission statement). Its vision is to provide a spiritual experience through discipline by following several facets of Christian spirituality and ethics: piety, godliness, service, love for others, worships in truth and spirit (Williams, OE Vision statement).

As such, these ideologies are practically applied through private prayer and devotion, bible study, compassion and care for the poor and needy, an advocacy for human rights, purity from sin, ands among others (Williams 2004, OE Vision statement). Though it is named as the Order of Eusebia, Williams argues that it is not associated with the Roman Catholicism or any other order (e. g. Benedictine, Dominican, Jesuits). Williams argues that religious orders are not specifically limited to monks or nuns and that every person has the equal opportunity to live a life of discipline and Christian ethics without having to become a monk, priest or nun.

The order is non-denominational, therefore, the basic precepts of Christianity is still maintained through its values it tries to propagate but not limited to a group or perspective on thinking. The strong points of the order are that it tries to diversify Christianity through an unbiased promotion of Christian doctrine. As such, members of the order do not live in seclusion but rather an association of people coming from all walks of life (Williams 2004, FAQ). The order also has a specific guideline or rule that all of its members are bound to follow.

However, this rule is not meant to replace or restrict the Bible in the order but rather an interpretative application of Christian values and ethics toward everyday application. The rules are presented in line with a specific line from the New Testament. For example, rule number one states: “ to disciple myself in Christian piety and godliness (Matthew 5: 3-7; 27; 1; Timothy 4: 7-8; 6-11; Peter 3: 11)” (Williams 2004, OE Rule). Contrary to a creedal interpretation of common monastic ideologies or precepts, the rule of the order is implied as mere guidelines for living.

Unlike most monastic orders, the rules presented derivations from intellectual understanding, and the order of Eusebia presents a general guideline supported by the Bible. Similar to that of any Christian vocation, the order strictly entails discipline and commitment, two of the important facets of the order. The strict adherence to similar Christian ideologies as one of the basic rule of the order and it requires discipline to do such. The practicality of the ideologies presented by the order is a definite contribution to the broadening of spiritual and theological perspective through a balanced view of religion.

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Also, the finer points of Eusebian philosophy are focused on a general view of Christian spirituality, ethics, and values; the application of such is given importance through practical living, devotion, and discipline. But the unique and definitive characteristic of the order is on the diversity of its scope. Members of the order need not follow the strict vocational standards of monastic life and orders, but on a free-flowing and general viewpoint on Christianity. However, there are certain questionable notions on the ideas, method, and overall aim of the order.

The website of the order offers a membership upon understanding and compliance brought by the rule. Unlike traditional Christianity or Catholicism, it does not rely on the sacraments or any spiritual form of acceptance. Thus, the subjectivity of the order provides one of its gaping holes toward the practicality of the idea itself. There is a need for thorough understanding of the aims of the order, as well as its rules and philosophies. Unlike Christianity, the reaffirmation of faith is non-existent for the order but rather a personal and semi-intellectual understanding of the rules, vision, and mission it tries to imply.

The order's theological foundations cannot be entirely justified through scripture itself, since the scripture is purely subjected to personal interpretation rather than an objectified understanding. To objectify doctrine means to present a dogmatic view of faith (e. g. Catholicism). However, the order aims to place its views in the middle, balancing Christian values, ethics and theology that " sometimes become one-sided" (Williams 2004, FAQ). As such, the order requires ' membership' rather than a wilful acceptance of

faith. In spiritual standards, personal reaffirmation comes from the self rather from an understanding of rules.

Another case in point is the strict adherence to discipline. On this description, the order does not necessarily distinguish itself from other monastic order except for living and seclusion and wearing habits. However, the approach toward spirituality is valid and effective. The balanced-approach view toward theology as well as its practical purposes separates the order from other sects in Christianity because of such generalist view. Spirituality is basically aimed toward the understanding of moral and ethical values and applying it to everyday living. It is important to 'practice what you preach. But a suggestion would come in the form of a personal reaffirmation of faith rather than presenting several ideologies that can be still discussed because of personal interpretation. Overall, the order provides a broadening of personal perspective, saving itself from the bias of a dogmatic approach on Christianity. The importance of the order lies on the discipline and commitment it tries to propagate, as well as the affectivity of spiritual formation through practical application on a person's life with regard to perspective and world-view on theology and spirituality.