



**COS 422 –
THEOLOGICAL
HERITAGE IV:
WESLEYAN
MOVEMENT**

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Weekend COS Fall 2015
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October 16-17 & Nov 6-7, 2015

DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This course covers the significant individuals, decisive events, and theology of the Methodist movement. Utilizing categories of grace, faith, and holiness, the student will appropriate the Wesleyan heritage.

Students will be able to:

1. Understand and reflect on the movements, major figures, and events that led to the eighteenth century revivals, especially the lives and ministries of John and Charles Wesley.
2. Understand and articulate the vision of holiness and the theology of grace as it shaped the Wesleys, and the structures of the Methodist movement.
3. Identify and discuss significant theological and historical developments in American Methodism, including ordination and episcopacy.
4. Reflect theologically on their Wesleyan heritage and identity.

SCHEDULE

Oct. 16

The Evangelical Revival: Methodism in Context
Epworth, Oxford, and Georgia: The Making of John Wesley
Aldersgate Reconsidered: Conversion and Justification in Wesleyan Thought

Oct. 17

Christian Perfection: Wesleyanism's Distinctive Contribution
Methodism's Model of Christian Formation
Challenges: Methodism as a Revival Movement within Anglicanism

Nov. 6

Doing Theology as Wesleyans: Hymns, Sermons, and Liturgy
Responsible Grace: Understanding Wesley's Grace-Infused Vision
Evangelical Sacramentalists: The Means of Grace and the Christian Life

Nov. 7

Methodism in America
Francis Asbury: American Methodist Pioneer
Splits and Mergers: Methodism After Asbury

REQUIRED TEXTS

Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists, Second Edition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014).

Russ Richey and Jeanne Miller Schmidt, *American Methodism: A Compact History* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012).

Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Divinity* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994).

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

John Wigger, *Taking Heaven by Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America* (University of Illinois Press, 2001).

OTHER RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Kenneth Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007).

Henry Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism, Third Edition* (London: Epworth Press, 2014).

David Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to have read *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* before the first session. Between sessions, students are to read *Responsible Grace*. After the second weekend, students are to read *American Methodism*.

All texts should be read in their entirety.

ASSIGNMENTS

For both assignments, the student is to email his/her finished papers to the professor (rdanker@wesleyseminary.edu) on the date due. No late papers will be accepted. The papers are to be formatted logically (make sure you have a thesis statement in the first paragraph, supporting paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph) and to use footnotes (Chicago style) to cite sources. Be careful to only use source-material that is scholarly in nature. Blogs, Wikipedia, etc., are simply not acceptable for this type of work. Please e-mail the professor with any questions you may have. Also, give yourself plenty of time to complete the assignments. Procrastination is not a Wesleyan virtue.

FIRST ASSIGNMENT

In early Methodism, there was distinct interplay between Wesley's understanding of the "Way of Salvation" and the development of the early Wesleyan system of societies, classes, and bands within the overall structure of the Church of England. Based on Heitzenrater's biography of Wesley, and supplemented by any of the sermons of John Wesley (accessible online and in various editions) the student is to thoughtfully (critically) examine the inter-relationship between Wesley's evangelical theology and the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist movement in the eighteenth century. How did his theological vision come to be implemented in a practical way? In what ways did the Methodist "system" reflect Wesley's holistic theology? Emphasis should be placed on the historical rise of Methodism and early Methodist practice. Although the student will not have been expected to read Maddox before the first assignment

is due, Heitzenrater covers major Wesleyan theological themes (grace, justification, Christian perfection, sacraments, etc.) in his biographical treatment.

2000-2500 words, Due Oct. 16

SECOND ASSIGNMENT

Wesleyanism is now a world-wide movement. As such, Wesley's theological vision has come to be expressed in contexts different from the eighteenth-century Church of England. Based on Maddox and Richey/Miller Schmidt, the student is to engage Wesley's theological vision in the American context. The second assignment is to have two parts:

- 1) In the first part of the paper, how was Wesley's theological vision (as outlined in Maddox) transplanted to the American context (as outlined by Richey/Miller Schmidt)? Describe both continuity and discontinuity in the American context.
- 2) In the second part of the paper, the student is to engage the Wesleyan vision as it is lived-out in contemporary United Methodism. How have United Methodists faithfully continued to embody Wesley's original vision of a holistic evangelical theology? How might we better engage/embody that tradition? The student is to be careful in this section. While the second part of the paper is an opinion piece, it should be informed by authentic, historic Wesleyan thought and show engagement with the assigned texts and any additional source-material (primary and/or secondary scholarly materials) necessary to augment your argument.

2000-2500 words, Due Nov. 13

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. Any student who plagiarizes will fail the course. If you include any ideas, words, phrases, thoughts from any source, footnote that source. Be careful to properly cite any quotation. If you are in doubt whether something should be referenced, reference it. At minimum, place a footnote at the end of a paragraph that includes the ideas of someone other than yourself. All quotations should be footnoted at the end of the quotation.

ENGAGING THE COURSE

Theological study can be a means of grace. I want to encourage you to approach your work in this class as such. God powerfully used the early Methodist movement to bring the gospel to people who had never heard about God's saving grace. As you learn more about your own heritage, look at the ways in which God has worked and continues to work in transformed lives. The witness of the Wesley brothers, early Evangelicals, Asbury, Phoebe Palmer, Matthew Simpson and so many other Methodist forebears point to a profound and transformation encounter with the God revealed in Jesus Christ. As you explore the Methodist heritage, you will find a rich well from which to draw for your own life and for your ministry.