

COS422 - Theological Heritage 4: Wesleyan Movement

Reading Assignments and Coursework
Wesley Theological Seminary Course of Study
General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
March 16-17, April 20-21, 2018

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Course Description

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.

Objectives

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 our Wesleyan heritage and identity.

Required Texts

Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists: Second Edition* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013)

Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998)

Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt, *American Methodism: A Compact History* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2012)

Ed by Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater, *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991)

Assignments

Due at the start of class on March 16

Part I: Historical Reflection

Read *Wesley and the People Called Methodists*

For each of the 6 chapters of the text, write 2 paragraphs (1 page per chapter, 6 pages total) reflecting on some aspect of the history covered in that chapter. Your reflection should include:

1. a brief description in your own words of the aspect of Methodist history you are considering (for example, the formation of the Oxford Society, Wesley's experience with the Moravians, the formation of classes and bands, the emergence of lay preachers),
2. a citation to the page(s) in the textbook on which you are basing your description,
3. your assessment of the historical significance of this aspect (based on your reading), and
4. your analysis on its value and relevance for contemporary life and ministry in the Methodist tradition.

Part II: Theological Reflection

Read chapters 1-3 in *The New Creation*, and the following sermons by John Wesley:

The One Thing Needful (Sermons, pp. 33-38)

Salvation by Faith (Sermons, pp. 39-47)

The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God (Sermons, pp. 183-191)

Original Sin (Sermons, pp. 325-334)

On Working Out Our Own Salvation (Sermons, pp. 485-492)

Drawing upon the Runyon text AND the sermons briefly define the following terms and describe their importance in Wesley's theology in **4 pages** (be sure to provide page citations to the texts supporting your work):

Image of God

Original Sin

Faith

The nature and relationship between Prevenient, Justifying, and Sanctifying Grace

Focus on two or three key features of each concept as developed in Wesley's theology and situate them in relationship to the others.

Due at the start of class on April 20

Part I: Historical Reflection

Read *American Methodism: A Compact History*

Taking the chapters in groups of two (1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12), write 2 paragraphs (1 page per chapter grouping, 6 pages total) reflecting on some aspect of the history covered in those chapters. Your reflection should include:

2. a brief description in your own words of the aspect of Methodist history you are considering,
3. a citation to the page(s) in the textbook on which you are basing your description,
4. your assessment of the historical significance of this aspect (based on your reading), and
5. your analysis on its value and relevance for contemporary life and ministry in the Methodist tradition.

Part II: Theological Reflection

Read chapters 4 and 6 in *The New Creation* and the following sermons by Wesley:

The Means of Grace (Sermons, pp. 157-171)

The Duty of Constant Communion (Sermons, pp. 501-510)

On Baptism (available online here: <http://danielhixon.blogspot.com/2015/07/john-wesleys-treatise-on-baptism.html>)

The Scripture Way of Salvation (Sermons, pp. 371-380)

The Use of Money (Sermons, pp. 347-357)

The Danger of Riches (Sermons, pp. 451-463)

Drawing upon the Runyon text and the sermons discuss in **2.5 pages** the importance of the 'means of grace' in Wesley's theology. What are they? How does Wesley view the relationship between *outward* practices and *inward* spiritual renewal? What role specifically do the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper play?

In **1.5 pages** discuss the implications of Wesley's understanding of salvation and sanctification in relation to poverty and wealth. What is the relationship between "personal holiness" and "social holiness"? What role do the "works of mercy" (Scripture Way of Salvation, p. 378) play in sanctification? Feel free to draw upon historical material related to Methodist social concern in *Wesley and the People Called Methodist* and *American Methodism* in addressing this question.