



COS 422 – THEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IV: WESLEYAN MOVEMENT

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Online Sessions: August
(see deadlines below)
Face-to-Face: Sept. 13-14

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

Aug. – Online – *Videos will be posted by the professor on YouTube and notification sent to the class when they are uploaded.*

The Evangelical Revival: Methodism in Context
Epworth, Oxford, and Georgia: The Making of John Wesley
Aldersgate Reconsidered: Conversion and Justification in Wesleyan Thought
Christian Perfection: Wesleyanism's Distinctive Contribution
Methodism's Model of Christian Formation
Challenges: Methodism as a Revival Movement within Anglicanism

Sept. 13

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

Sept. 14

Methodism in America
Francis Asbury: American Methodist Pioneer

Splits and Mergers: Methodism After Asbury

REQUIRED TEXTS

Kenneth Collins and Jason Vickers, eds., *The Sermons of John Wesley: A Collection for the Christian Journey* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013).

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, except for the Wesley sermons volume – although you can't go wrong with Wesley sermons.

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)
- Papers must use footnotes (Chicago style) to cite sources. Do not use endnotes or in-text citation.
- 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. Write your papers based on Heitzenrater's biography of Wesley, and supplemented by the following sermons of John Wesley:

1. Original Sin
2. The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption
3. The New Birth
4. Justification by Faith
5. The Scripture Way of Salvation

Heitzenrater and the sermons must be used in your papers. 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 and these are specifically addressed in the five sermons required for this assignment.

2000 words, Due Aug. 15

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.
- 3) Cite two Wesley sermons not used in the first paper – any sermons of your choice from the Collins/Vickers text.

2000 words, Due. Sept. 30

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.

APPROACHING THE PAPERS

In addition to the material above, I have written "helps" for writing church history papers in general that will be of use to you in your writing.

Here is what I will be looking for when grading the papers:

1. Does the paper fulfill the requirements of the assignment (i.e., is it a biography? impact paper?)
2. Does the paper use footnotes?
3. Does the paper fit within word limits?
4. Does the paper make sense? Does it use correct grammar?
5. Does the paper use appropriate primary and secondary materials? If you're not clear on appropriate primary and secondary materials, please communicate with me, or the Wesley library staff. Secondary materials must be peer-reviewed. Stay clear of encyclopedias (whether online or in print) except to get a better idea of where to find useful source material. Encyclopedias **will not count** as source material in these papers.
6. At what level does the paper engage the source materials? And, is it accurate?

The difference between an A and a B will be determined by the student's ability to thoughtfully engage source materials.

Some helpful hints for an historical paper:

1. Make sure that your formatting is correct: indented paragraphs, footnotes, word count, etc.
2. Do not refer to the historical figure by first name unless that is all we have (i.e. Tom did this, Tom did that . . .) Use their whole name at the beginning of the paper and then refer to them

by surname throughout the rest of the paper.

3. Avoid what is called “hagiography.” This is the attempt to write as though the person was a saint in whom there was never an ill thought, word, or action. Let them be human, in other words.

4. Try to be objective. One should never use the term “I” in an academic paper. You – as the author – shouldn’t be in the paper at all, except your name at the top. Treat the subject with the necessary distance to remain critical, even if informed.

5. Avoid pious language. It’s not the historian’s duty to determine if the Lord called this person or not (or whether or not He did anything). What the historian is concerned with is whether the person made such a claim (or other claims). Base your assertions in fact.

6. Footnote anything that came from another source, unless it’s basic information about the person/context, etc.

7. Include basic information, i.e. a biographical paragraph should include information such as the date of the person’s birth and death, the place where they were born, lived, etc.

8. Use primary **AND** secondary source material to augment your argument, not to create a litany of sources with little to no narrative (i.e. do not use long quotes to fill in your paper when it should be a crafted argument based on those sources.)

9. If you have a longer quotation (more than four lines) it should be single-spaced, indented, and footnoted. It will require no quotation marks if it is indented properly and thus set apart from the body of the text.

10. Keep in mind that the person(s) you are working with actually believed in something. Don’t leave out his/her beliefs (and footnote your sources). He/She was propelled by his/her beliefs.

A Note on How I grade papers:

When I read a student’s paper, the first thing I notice is the formatting. If the paper lacks paragraphs or footnotes, or is less than the minimum word count, the paper rarely receives a grade higher than a B. If the paper lacks footnoting entirely, I take away 10% off the top of the grade. The first paragraph should include an obvious thesis statement. If I have to look for it, or it is absent, the paper is hampered and the argument unclear.

I often look at papers and see a lack of editing. Read over your papers a few times (or give them to a friend/spouse/etc. to read) before turning them in. A successful paper presents a clear argument, is well written, and uses both primary and secondary source material to support the argument of the paper.

As to the interpretation of historical events/persons, the first thing I look for is accuracy. If the paper contains historical inaccuracies, it is often the case that the author is regurgitating Methodist “lore” and has not read the assigned materials from the class. The difference between an A and a B (formatting and other basic things aside) often hinges on whether or not a student paper engages the historical material with insight (making connections, providing intelligent/informed interpretation of actions, etc.) or simply provides a summary of historical

fact and data. A paper that receives a grade of C often provides inaccurate historical data with little to no interpretive lens. Failing papers often lack historical accuracy, interpretation, formatting, and proper grammar.

EXTRA CREDIT (5%):

Visit a UMC Historical Site and write a one-page reflection on your experience. Must be completed by the first in-person class session.

For a list of historical sites: <http://gcah.org/research/register-of-historic-sites>