



Development of Wesleyan Thought
Religion 470 Spring 2008
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Objectives

The goal of this course is to understand the contribution of John Wesley to the development of Christian doctrine. Specifically, the student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

1. Outline the life of Wesley and show the relationship between his life and thought;
2. Name the specific areas of theology to which Wesley contributed and explain his teaching in these areas;
3. Understand the relevance of Wesley's contributions for the church today.

Texts

Outler, Albert, ed. *John Wesley*.
Miller, Basil. *John Wesley*.

Grades

The quizzes, the preparation of the paper, the paper itself, and the exam will each make up 1/4 of the final grade. An average on the quizzes of 0-59% will be worth no points, 60-74% .25 points, 75-79% .5 points, 80-88% .75 points, and 89-100% 1 point. Each of the last four stages of the paper preparation will be worth .25 points, and must be done sequentially. The student may not go on to the next stage until she has completed the previous one successfully. No paper will be considered without the necessary preparation. For the paper and exam, F = 0, D = .25, C- = .45, C = .5, C+ = .55, B- = .70, B = .75, B+ = .80, A- = .90, and A = 1. For the final grade 3.75 points are necessary for an A, 3.5 for an A-, 3.25 for a B+, 3 for a B, 2.75 for a B-, 2.5 for a C+, 2 for a C, 1.75 for a C-, and 1.5 for a D.

Quizzes

A weekly quiz will encourage students to read each assignment and will test the student's understanding of the previous lectures. The instructor reserves the right to retest any student whose grade on an examination or quiz is uncharacteristically low or high.

College policy permits no student more than 6 absences from this course without penalty. Additional absences will result in a reduction of the final grade at the discretion of the instructor.

The instructor expects proper behavior and attire for the class. At the discretion of the instructor eating and drinking are not allowed, nor are hats, muscle shirts, or other clothing which detracts from the seriousness of academic endeavor.

Paper

The research paper is designed to drive the student to master the primary source material, using the secondary materials only to explain what has already been read. The student will choose an area in which Wesley made an original contribution to Christian thought and explain that contribution.

Students might consider writing about John Wesley's views on any of the following topics or something of special interest to them. Please clear your paper topic with the professor if it is not one of those listed below:

1. The taxonomy of spiritual development
2. Economics
3. The Sacraments
4. Church structure
5. Relationships among believers
6. Spirituality
7. Slavery
8. Liquor

9. Government
10. Women in ministry
11. Calvinism
12. Scripture
13. The role of theological controversy

Exam

Because you have the whole semester to prepare for this exam you should have an extraordinary grasp of the material. Every generalization should be backed with a specific, and you should be able to supply names, dates, places, and details. You will have one hour to answer each question therefore your answer should be at least one thousand words long. The final exam will contain some or all of the following questions:

1. You are a layperson in Downtown Conservative Methodist Church, where the average income of the 500 giving units is \$73,000. Last year offerings for all purposes totaled \$1.1 million. Your sanctuary seats 1000 and is filled every Sunday morning. Sunday evening averages about 400. Land is available for expansion. A new sanctuary will cost about \$2,500 a seat. The pastor asks you as a student of John Wesley to tell her the things you have learned from Wesley that would help her know what to do. What do you say?
2. Pastor Thill at the College Evangelical Methodist Church has just been to a Serendipity seminar and wants to launch a small group ministry in his church. He turns to you as a student of Wesleyanism and asks you to organize the church and prepare the congregation for this new venture through preaching. What do you do? How do you sell this program to the people?
3. The pastors of the local conference of Serious Methodist churches are concerned that they have lost 1% of their membership in the last year. Recognizing that John Wesley was one of the church's greatest evangelists and that you know more about him than anyone around they ask you to help them organize their churches and prepare their sermons so that they can use his insights to reach more people. What do you do?
4. You are pastor of the Ernest Methodist Church. Susie Superficial has been a Christian 3 months. During Sunday night testimony time she stands up and reports that she has been watching Moral Rogers on TV and has asked God to make her a perfect Christian. Although she still can't give up her smoking habit, she knows that God has sanctified her because she has faith in God's word. What insights does the study of John Wesley give you as you speak to her at that time and in later private pastoral counseling sessions?
5. You are pastor of the Costly Methodist church in suburban Bigtown, USA. At a board meeting you suggest that your church support Habitat for Humanity. Redd Neck, one of your stewards, jumps to his feet and says, "Social action is just for liberals. Let them rearrange the deck furniture on the *Titanic*. Our job is to save souls." Knowing that Redd is a life-long Methodist how would you use John Wesley's insights to respond to this statement?
6. "If you want anything done in the church, hire a minister to do it." What would John Wesley say in response to this statement of the former president of the National Association of Evangelicals?
7. The year is 1969. You are a member of the Wesleyan Theological Society and are asked to change the doctrinal statement to affirm the infallibility of Scripture instead of the inerrancy of Scripture. What beliefs of John Wesley would guide you in knowing how to vote?

Schedule and Assignments (May be modified if necessary)

Feb 1	Wesley's century		
Feb 4	Wesley's family	M 1-3	10 point quiz
Feb 6	Wesley's time in Georgia	M 4-6	10 point quiz
Feb 8	Rise of class meeting	M 7-9	10 point quiz
Feb 11	Decline of class meeting	M 10-11	10 point quiz
Feb 13	Decline of class meeting		10 point quiz
Feb 15		O iii-33	
Feb 18	No class		
Feb 20		O 34-69	Topic

Feb 22	O 70-86	
Feb 25	O 87-103	
Feb 27	O 104-118	
Feb 29	O 119-133	
Mar 3	O 134-176	Bibliography
Mar 5	O 177-180	
Mar 7	O 181-196	
Mar 10	O 197-208	Thesis
Mar 12	O 209-220	
Mar 14	O 221-230	
Mar 26	O 231-237	Outline
Mar 28	O 238-250	
Mar 31	O 251-270	
Apr 2	O 271-282	
Apr 4	O 283-297	
Apr 7	O 298-305	
Apr 9	O 206-316	Paper
Apr 11	O 317-331	
Apr 14	O 332-346	
Apr 16	O 347-376	
Apr 18	O 377-383	
Apr 21	O 384-424	
Apr 23	O 425-471	
Apr 25	O 472-491	
Apr 28	O 492-499	
Apr 30		
May 2		
May 5		
May 7		
May 9		
May 12		