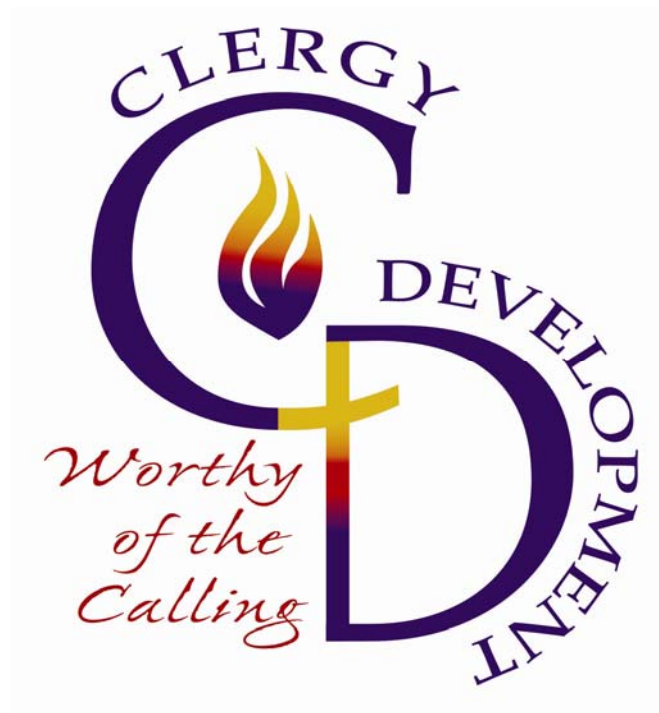

Faculty Guide

Exploring John Wesley's Theology



Clergy Development
Church of the Nazarene
Kansas City, Missouri
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2002

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The **Modular Course of Study** is an outcome-based curriculum designed to implement the educational paradigm defined by the Breckenridge Consultations. Clergy Development is responsible for maintaining and distributing the Modular Course of Study for the Church of the Nazarene.

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Series Foreword

A Vision for Christian Ministry: Clergy Education in the Church of the Nazarene

The chief purpose of all persons—indeed, all of the creation—is to worship, love, and serve God. God has made himself known in His deeds of creation and redemption. As the Redeemer, God has called into existence a people, the Church, who embody, celebrate, and declare His name and His ways. The life of God with His people and the world constitutes the Story of God. That story is recorded principally in the Old and New Testaments, and continues to be told by the resurrected Christ who lives and reigns as Head of His Church. The Church lives to declare the whole Story of God. This it does in many ways—in the lives of its members who are even now being transformed by Christ, through preaching, the sacraments, in oral testimony, and in mission. All members of the Body of Christ are called to exercise a ministry of witness and service. No one is excluded.

In God's own wisdom He calls some persons to fulfill the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and caring for God's people in a form that is referred to as the ordained ministry. God is the initial actor in this call, not humans. In the Church of the Nazarene we believe that God calls and that persons respond. They do not elect the Christian ministry. All persons whom God calls to the ordained ministry continue to be amazed that He would call them. They should continue to be humbled and amazed by God's call. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states, "we recognize and hold that the Head of the Church calls some men and women to the more official and public work of the ministry." It adds, "The church, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, will recognize the Lord's call" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 400).

An ordained Christian minister has as his or her chief responsibility to declare in many ways the whole Story of God as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His or her charge is to "tend the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3, NRSV). The minister fulfills this charge under the supervision of Christ, the chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Such ministry can be fulfilled only after a period of careful

preparation. Indeed, given the ever-changing demands placed upon the minister, "preparation" never ceases.

A person who enters the Christian ministry becomes in a distinct sense a steward of the gospel of God (Titus 1: 7). A steward is one who is entrusted to care for what belongs to another. A steward may be one who takes care of another person or who manages the property of someone else. All Christians are stewards of the grace of God. But in addition, in a peculiar sense a Christian minister is a steward of the "mystery of God," which is Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah of God. In all faithfulness, the minister is called to "make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel" (Eph 6: 19, NRSV). Like Paul, he or she must faithfully preach "the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph 3: 8-10, NRSV).

In fulfilling this commission, there is plenty of room for diligence and alertness, but no room for laziness or privilege (Titus 1: 5-9). Good stewards recognize that they are stewards only, not the owners, and that they will give an account of their stewardship to the master. Faithfulness to one's charge and to the Lord who issued it is the steward's principal passion. When properly understood, the Christian ministry should never be thought of as a "job." It is ministry—uniquely Christian ministry. No higher responsibility or joy can be known than to become a steward of the Story of God in Christ's Church. The person who embraces God's call to the ordained ministry will stand in the company of the apostles, the Early Fathers of the Church, the Reformers of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformers, and many persons around the world today who joyfully serve as stewards of the gospel of God.

Obviously, one who does not recognize, or who understands but rejects, just how complete and inclusive a minister's stewardship must be should not start down the path that leads to ordination. In a peculiar sense, a Christian minister must in all respects model the gospel of God. He or she is to "shun" the love of money. Instead, the minister must "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness." He or she must "fight the good fight of the faith" and "take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called" (1 Tim 6: 11-12, NRSV).

Hence, the Church of the Nazarene believes that “the minister of Christ is to be in all things a pattern to the flock—in punctuality, discretion, diligence, earnestness; ‘in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left’ (2 Cor 6:6-7)” (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 401.1). The minister of Christ “must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, ⁸but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, ⁹holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching...able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.” (Titus 1:7-9, NASB).

In order to be a good steward of God’s Story one must, among other things, give oneself to careful and systematic study, both before and after ordination. This will occur not because he or she is forced to do so, but out of a love for God and His people, the world that He is working to redeem, and out of an inescapable sense of responsibility. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the attitude one brings to preparation for the ministry reveals much about what he or she thinks of God, the gospel, and Christ’s Church. The God who became incarnate in Jesus and who made a way of salvation for all gave His very best in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. In order to be a good steward, a Christian minister must respond in kind. Jesus told numerous parables about stewards who did not recognize the importance of what had been entrusted to them (Mt 21:33-44; 25:14-30; Mk 13:34-37; Lk 12:35-40; 19:11-27; 20:9-18).

Preparation—one’s education in all its dimensions—for ministry in Christ’s Church should be pursued in full light of the responsibility before God and His people that the ministry involves. This requires that one take advantage of the best educational resources at his or her disposal.

The Church of the Nazarene recognizes how large is the responsibility associated with the ordained Christian ministry and accepts it fully. Part of the way we recognize our responsibility before God is seen in the requirements we make for ordination and the practice of ministry. We believe that the call to and practice of Christian ministry is a gift, not a right or privilege. We believe that God holds a minister to the highest of religious, moral, personal, and professional standards. We are not reluctant to expect that those

standards be observed from the time of one's call until his or her death. We believe that Christian ministry should first be a form of worship. The practice of ministry is both an offering to God and a service to His Church. By the miracle of grace, the work of the ministry can become a means of grace for God's people (Rom 12: 1-3). One's education for ministry is also a form of worship.

The modules that comprise the Course of Study that may lead a person to candidacy for ordination have been carefully designed to prepare one for the kind of ministry we have described. Their common purpose is to provide a holistic preparation for entrance into the ordained Christian ministry. They reflect the Church's wisdom, experience, and responsibility before God. The modules show how highly the Church of the Nazarene regards the gospel, the people of God, the world for which Christ gave His life, and Christian ministry. Completing the modules will normally take three or four years. But no one should feel pressured to meet this schedule.

The careful study for which the modules call should show that before God and His Church one accepts the stewardly responsibility associated with ordained ministry.

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Introduction

Intended Use of This Faculty Guide

This faculty guide serves as an instructor's guide for teaching principles of *Exploring John Wesley's Theology* to adult learners who are preparing for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene. The content is based on intended outcomes defined through the collaborative process conducted at Breckenridge, CO, USA, between 1990 and 1997. The materials prepare the pastor-teacher to present the topic by providing background reading, lesson plans, lectures, instructions to the teacher, and teaching resources for each class session. In many lessons complete lectures, questions for guided discussions, and defined learning activities are provided.

The pastor-teacher who will lead this module should hold a master's degree. Ideally, the pastor-teacher should have participated as a student in a module using this material prior to teaching the material to others. This faculty guide assumes that the pastor-teacher has some basic understanding of John Wesley's life and theology.

It is further assumed that learners participating in a module using this material will be high school graduates and be adult learners beyond the traditional college age. Learners are assumed to be motivated to learn, and to have adult life-experiences. No prior college classroom experience is assumed on the part of the learners.

Acknowledgments

Every module is the accumulation of effort by many people. Someone writes the original manuscript, others offer suggestions to strengthen the content and make the material more easily understood, and finally an editor formats the module for publication. This module is not different. Many people have contributed to this module. Every effort has been made to accurately represent the original intent of the principal contributors.

Principal Contributor

The principal contributor for this module is Dr. Diane Leclerc. Dr. Leclerc is professor of Historical Theology and Homiletics at Northwest Nazarene University where she has taught since 1998. She is an ordained clergy in the Church of the Nazarene and has pastored two congregations, in Maine and in Idaho. She received the Bachelor of Arts in Religion from Eastern Nazarene College, the Master of Divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary, and both her Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Drew University.

She has published articles in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* and has contributed to two books, including *Heart Religion in the Methodist Tradition and Related Movements*. Her full-length book, *Singleness of Heart: Gender, Sin, and Holiness in Historical Perspective*, won the Wesleyan Theological Society Book of the Year Award in 2002. Leclerc is an active member of the Wesleyan Theological Society and the Wesleyan-Holiness Women Clergy Association. She resides in Nampa, ID, with her husband and son.

Responder

Each module was reviewed by at least one content specialist to insure that the content did not represent a single, narrow view or opinion. The responder provided suggestions that the principal contributor could integrate into this module.

The responder for this module is Rev. Clair MacMillan. Clair MacMillan grew up in a Nazarene parsonage in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, the son of Rev. Kenneth and Myrtle MacMillan. A graduate of Olivet Nazarene University (B.A. in Religion 1970; M.A. in Theology, 1987), he has continued his education at Mount Allison University, pursuing a number of courses and research projects in Sociology and Social Anthropology.

Over the past two decades Clair has been actively involved in reforming the clergy preparation process in Canada. As a member of the Canadian National Board's "Gales Commission on the Ministry," he contributed several monographs, including "An Alternate Path to the Ministry," "The Guide to Ministerial Preparation in Canada," "The Nazarene Experience in Canada," and "The Differentiation of Religion and Theology." He is the primary author of the *SourceBook for Ministerial Preparation Canada*.

Clair has been a Nazarene pastor for 32 years and currently serves as the chairman of the National Board, Church of the Nazarene Canada. He and his wife, Donna, live in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.

Revision History

Second Quarter 2005, Revision 4, the current version,

- Text was edited for gender inclusiveness

First Quarter 2004, Revision 3,

- Module title changed from *The Theology of John Wesley* to *Exploring John Wesley's Theology*

Fourth Quarter 2003, Revision 2,

- copyright transferred to Nazarene Publishing House.

Fourth Quarter 2002, Revision 1,

- the Lesson Overview, Introduction, Body, Close format was established.

About This Module

The Church of the Nazarene is a "Wesleyan-holiness" church. By this designation, we affirm that the theology of John Wesley undergirds and informs both our theological conclusions and our theological method. While Wesley should be seen as a mentor, not "guru" (as once expressed by Mildred Bangs Wynkoop), it is crucial to our denominational identity that we teach, preach, and minister as Wesleyans. "Wesleyan-holiness" also designates that we put holiness as the hermeneutic for interpreting Wesley's life and thought, and recognize that the holiness movement of the 19th century—out of which the Church of the Nazarene was formed—was an attempt to remain faithful to Wesley's emphasis on the "way of salvation." Wesley defined salvation as more than a moment in time: it includes the lifelong process of inward and outward holiness, as well as the paramount experiences of new birth and sanctification.

Our understanding of holiness should never be divorced from Wesley's theology more broadly defined. This is crucial as we move into the 21st century, when a fundamentalist absolutism on the one hand or religious relativism on the other seem to be the only options. "Holiness of heart and life" is important to every generation. It is extremely important that those preparing for ordained ministry in the Church of the Nazarene catch, hold, and utilize the dynamism of the Wesleyan theological paradigm. This course is designed with the future denominational identity of Nazarenes firmly in mind.

To understand Wesley's theology, two major influences must be acknowledged: Wesley's life story and Wesley's theological sources. The course will examine the life of Wesley in historical context—Britain in the 18th century. It will also examine Wesley's dependence upon and creative appropriation of certain theological traditions. Wesley was greatly influenced by the Early Church (primarily Ante-Nicene and Eastern sources), by Catholic mysticism (of the middle ages), by the Protestant Reformation (James Arminius' reaction to it and the Moravian appropriation of it), and by Anglicanism (that followed the Elizabethan Settlement).

To understand Wesley's theological conclusions, it is vital to understand Wesley's theological methodology. The Wesleyan quadrilateral (as it has been termed) holds to the primacy of Scripture. Indeed Wesley was a "man of one book." And yet, Wesley believed that the Scriptures should be interpreted dynamically:

- Scripture has been interpreted by tradition—a history of interpretation that requires some fidelity.
- It witnesses to an experience of Christ and the Christian gospel that is dynamic and communal in character.
- It should be understood, organized, and effectively communicated through the aid of reason.

The end goal of the quadrilateral method not only is theological/doctrinal in nature but also informs directly spiritual formation—a fact that again places a response to grace at the very center of Wesley's entire "system." The methodology of Wesley as well as his dogma informs a Wesleyan worldview today. This worldview interprets life, ministry, and relationships through a distinctly Wesleyan lens. This lens will be contrasted to other views and other traditions, most specifically the Calvinist paradigm.

The course will address each systematic category in turn, noting both Wesley's fidelity to tradition and his

own constructive, creative thought. Special emphasis will be given to soteriological themes that have practical implications. For example, a theology of worship will lead to the question, "How do Wesleyans worship?" The doctrine of theological anthropology leads to the question, "How do we treat persons in light of the concepts of the image of God and prevenient grace?" The student will be able to display both knowledge of the content of this course, as well as personal and professional skills that arise out of the theology and spiritual formation in the Wesleyan tradition. Wesleyanism's "warm heart" is the heart of Nazarene ministry, making this course crucial to theological education of the ministers of the Church of the Nazarene, and thus crucial to the denomination as a whole.

Module Materials

We have tried to design this module to be flexible and easy to adapt to your situation. For each lesson, there are several support pieces, which we have called simply "resources." These can be used in many different ways. Resources are in the student guide for this module. The instructor will want a copy of the student guide for his or her own use.

1. The instructor may photocopy these to use for his or her own lecture outlines. There is space to add notes from the faculty guide, from the textbook, or from the additional suggested readings. Add in your own illustrations too!
2. The pages may be photocopied onto overhead transparencies for use in class.

One reason for developing this module is for the benefit of extension education. We understand that teachers all over the world are called upon to teach courses that are not in their area of specialty, but they teach them because they want to see pastors trained and leaders developed for the church. Extension education is basic to rapid church growth. We want to provide this as a resource for extension educators. If it helps others along the way, that's fine too.

Another reason for developing this module is to equip indigenous faculty. We believe that a class like this is best taught and contextualized by someone from within the culture of the students. There are many fine teachers who are leaders in our churches around the world who do not have higher degrees in theology but who have the skills to teach a module like this effectively. We want to set them free to do so, and in

so doing, to actually improve the module and make it more dynamic and meaningful for their context than it would have been had we held on to it and insisted on teaching it ourselves.

Intended Outcomes for the Module

The *Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, and the *International Sourcebook on Developmental Standards for Ordination* define educational preparation for ordination. Additionally, each region of the International Church of the Nazarene has developed educational guidelines to qualify educational programs for ordination offered within their region.

The USA Region *Sourcebook for Ministerial Development* defines outcomes for the overall ministerial development program. The module assists candidates in developing these skills. Other modules in the program may also address the same outcomes. The specific outcomes that relate to this module are:

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- CN20 Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry
- CN21 Ability to demonstrate understanding of the sources of theological reflection, its historical development, and its contemporary expressions
- CN22 Ability to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Wesleyan theology
- CN23 Ability to identify and explain the doctrine of holiness from a Wesleyan perspective
- CN25 Ability to identify and describe the significance of the major figures, themes, and events of the Patristic, Medieval, Reformation, Puritan, Pietist, Wesleyan, and Modern periods of Church history
- CN26 Ability to describe how the church implemented its mission in the various periods of Church history
- CP10 Ability to synthesize, analyze, reason logically for discernment, assessment, and problem solving, and live with ambiguity
- CP11 Ability to analyze the validity of arguments and to identify their presuppositions and consequences
- CX5 Ability to describe and interpret the relationship between culture and individual behavior
- CX10 Ability to understand and articulate the biblical, historical, and theological bases for Christian mission

OUTCOME STATEMENTS

- To interpret John Wesley's thought and discover ways in which it can inform 21st-century theological agenda for the Church of the Nazarene
- To effectively apply the methods of Wesley for pursuing personal and social holiness
- To apply appropriate Wesleyan theological principles to cultures other than one's own
- To incorporate the Wesleyan approaches to personal spiritual formation for one's own enrichment
- To understand the life of John Wesley in historical context
- To understand Wesley's theological methodology (function of the Wesleyan quadrilateral)
- To understand and articulate a Wesleyan view of the triune God and the primacy of the doctrine of soteriology
- To apply a Wesleyan worldview to one's life, ministry, relationships, and vocation

Suggested Meeting Schedule

The module lessons are designed to last 90 minutes each. Each lesson is complete in itself with an opening, a middle, and a closing. They are sequential. Each lesson assumes the learners have mastered material presented in previous lessons. The lessons can be grouped in a variety of ways to accommodate the schedules of your learners.

When lessons are taught in the same meeting, instructors will need to adjust homework assignments because participants will not have time between lessons to prepare homework. It is very important for the instructor to always be looking ahead and planning for upcoming lessons.

Here are three suggestions (out of many) for ways that the meetings can be organized.

1. Resident campus. The class can meet two days a week for 90 minutes. Present one lesson per meeting time. Total time: 8 weeks.
2. Extension education. The class can meet one day (or evening) each week for 3 to 3½ hours. Present two lessons per meeting with a break period between lessons. Participants will need to travel to a centralized location for meetings, so make it worth their time. Total time: 8 weeks.

3. Intensive module. The class can meet five consecutive days for 7 to 8 hours per day. Present two lessons in the morning with a break period between lessons and two lessons in the afternoon with another break period between the lessons. Participants must complete reading assignments before arriving at the module site, and written assignments can be submitted 30 to 60 days following the class meeting. Total meeting time: 4 days. (Elapsed time including reading and written assignments: 1 to 2 months.)

The module is divided into 15 lessons. The progression of these lessons can be seen in the chart below. Space is given for you to fill in the dates when your class sessions will meet.

Date	Lesson
	1. Wesley's Theological Biography—Epworth to Aldersgate
	2. Wesley's Theological Biography—Aldersgate to Wesley's Death
	3. Wesley's Theological Sources
	4. Epistemology and Revelation
	5. The Quadrilateral—Scripture and Tradition
	6. The Quadrilateral— Experience and Reason
	7. The Creative Triune God
	8. The Person of Christ and the Person of the Spirit
	9. Humanity and Sin
	10. The Way of Salvation, Part 1
	11. The Way of Salvation, Part 2
	12. Means of Grace and Sacraments
	13. Last Things
	14. Life in the Christian Community
	15. Life in the World

About This Faculty Guide

Note: It is critical to remember that active participation by the learners will enhance their learning. That means you will not be an information giver. This module is not about you. The focus of the module is helping students learn. Your role is to design an environment in which your students will learn. Sometimes you will give lectures. At other times you will guide discussions or assign

The faculty guide has been written to guide an instructor as he or she prepares to teach this module. It contains complete lesson plans and resources to provide a solid educational design for the topic. You will need to prepare for each lesson well in advance of the meeting time. Often there are background reading suggestions for the instructor or you may know additional reference materials you want to interject into the lesson. Questions that are intended to be

your students to work in groups. These kinds of activities keep the participants actively involved in the learning process. Learning is a team activity.

answered or discussed by the students are in italic type.

A two-column format was chosen for the faculty guide. The right-hand column contains the content of lectures, descriptions of activities, and questions to keep students involved. The left-hand column is to give suggested instructions to you, the teacher. It also contains examples you can use to illustrate concepts in the lectures. Whenever possible you should use examples from your own experience and from your students' real-life context.

Large white space has been left in the left column to allow you to write notes and personalize the faculty guide.

The faculty guide has three major components: the Faculty Guide Introduction, the Lesson Plans, and the Teaching Resources. The Introduction and Lesson Plans are in this document and the Resources are contained in the companion student guide. You are reading the Faculty Guide Introduction now. It provides a teaching philosophy for adult learners, background information for organizing the module, and ideas about conducting the lessons.

Each section of the faculty guide is numbered with a two-part page number. Page 5 of Lesson 3 would be numbered "3-5." The first number is the lesson number and the second is the page number within the lesson.

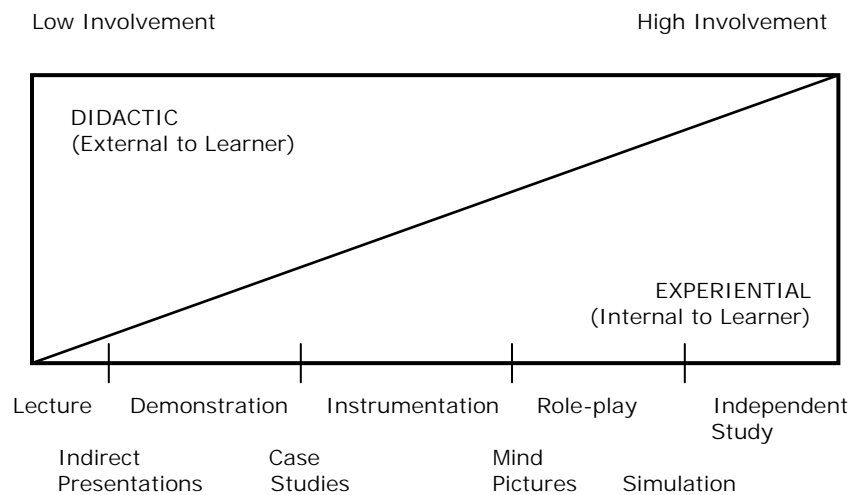
The Lesson Plans are complete in themselves. They contain an Overview, Introduction, Body, and Close. The Lesson Overview provides you with a planning tool for preparing and conducting each lesson.

The three lesson elements follow a model presented by Michael Berger from Vanderbilt University. The key to the model is the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These two elements bracket the entire lesson just like capitalizing the first letter of a sentence and placing a punctuation mark at the end. The Motivator should grab the learner's attention and Punctuate the Finish should seal the main idea of the lesson.

The Lesson Introduction should get participants' attention, orient them to the place this lesson holds in the overall module, define the intended objectives, and prepare them for the learning activities.

The Lesson Body is the core message of the lesson. The key is to keep the learners actively involved. Even in lectures, ask questions that prompt learners to think about the content not just hear the lecture. The following chart shows a continuum of learner involvement in different teaching methods. Lecture requires the least learner involvement, and independent study requires the most learner involvement.

METHODS CONTINUUM



A variety of learning activities are used to present information and allow learners to experiment with their new knowledge. Each individual has a set of preferred methods of learning and he or she has different life-experiences that can color or filter what he or she actually learns. A variety of learning activities help adults adapt to the learning task—by hearing, by doing, by reading, by discussing, or by combinations of these. The learners should have opportunities to test and clarify their new learning by talking with the instructor and other participants, and applying new knowledge in real or contrived situations as soon as possible.

The Lesson Close provides a time for answering questions, reviewing the information, connecting this lesson to future lessons, making assignments, and punctuating the finish. The close does not provide any new information but gives a sense of closure to the lesson.

Homework assignments are important learning activities. They provide the student with an opportunity

to synthesize classroom learning. Working on these assignments also extends the learning experience beyond the time constraints of class time. The student—especially the adult student—needs frequent and timely feedback about his or her learning. While interaction with other students helps the learner refine what he or she is learning, feedback from the instructor is also critical to the quality of his or her learning and ultimately to his or her persistence in the Course of Study.

It is your responsibility as the instructor for this module to provide students with timely responses to homework assignments in order to enhance the learning process. Reviewing and responding to homework will also provide you with critical information about what your students are learning and how well the teaching-learning process is succeeding.

Since these modules are preparing the learner for ordination rather than leading to a university degree, a letter grade may not be appropriate. Your response to the learners' assignments should be thoughtful and in most cases it should be written. Its purpose will always be to refine and enhance the learning of the student.

Teaching Resources are reproduced in the student guide. Each resource sheet is numbered for the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1."

You must determine how each resource will be used in your context. If an overhead projector is available, then transparencies can be made by replacing the paper in your photocopy machine with special transparency material.

The student guide for this module contains the series foreword, acknowledgments, syllabus, copies of all resources, lesson objectives, and assignments. A copy of the student guide should be made available to each student.

Recommendations for printing. You may print this faculty guide if desired. The introduction and lesson plan segments are formatted for printing on both sides of the paper.

The student guide should be printed on one side. This makes it possible for use as transparencies and in some cases students may need to turn in or use pages as part of homework assignments.

A Hidden Agenda

Hidden curriculum issues . . . because the way we teach teaches

In each session, there are certain methodological and environmental things to consider.

First, consider the classroom arrangement. Whenever possible, the room should be arranged to encourage a sense of community. The group should sit either in a circle or around a table. If the group is very large, chairs can be arranged for easily moving into clusters for discussion.

Second, consider how you present yourself as teacher. Standing behind a lectern with your students facing you in rows says that you are above the students and have something to give them (although in a very large group this standing to teach may be unavoidable). Sitting as part of the circle makes the teacher a co-learner at the same level as the students. Speak naturally. Pay close attention to your students, and value the things they share. Learn their names. Encourage participation. Remember that you are modeling for them, and the way you teach will teach them far more than the words you say.

Third, invite the Holy Spirit's presence in the classroom. Do this each time the class meets.

Fourth, the sharing of stories activity does more than help the students begin to reflect on their own Christian experiences. It is a way to build community between the students. This is more than an exercise to be checked off. It is vital to set the tone of your intentional community.

When meeting times exceed 90 minutes, consider adding break times. The break between segments is an important time for community building. Remain available to the students during this time. Consider offering coffee or tea during this time as a way to encourage fellowship.

Journaling: The Key to Spiritual Formation

Journaling is a major assignment of each module in the Ministerial Preparation Course of Study. It is the integrating element that helps you draw spiritual

meaning and ministerial application from the content of each module whether the module concentrates on content, competency, character, or context. It ensures that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in every module in which you participate. What is journaling and how can it be meaningfully accomplished?

Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration

The Syllabus contains this explanation of journaling. Journaling provides the spiritual formation component for the module and is an integral part of the learning experience.

Have students read the journaling section during the Syllabus review in Lesson 1 and emphasize that journaling is an assignment for each lesson in the module.

When giving assignments in each lesson, assign journal writing each time the group meets.

Participating in the Course of Study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each module you will be required to listen to lectures, read several books, participate in discussions, and write papers. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The module work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritual formation work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head to your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work to faithfully spend time daily in your journal. Many people confess that this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, and an ah-ha that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep

complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet, family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with module material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your module work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration—weaving together faith development and learning. Integration

moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

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These sermons by John Wesley are available in full text on the Wesley Center website at Northwest Nazarene University

<<http://wesley.nnu.edu/sermons/alpha.htm>>. The sermon titles are listed in alphabetical order.

- "The Catholic Spirit" (Sermon 39)
- "Christian Perfection" (Sermon 40)
- "The Duty of Constant Communion" (Sermon 101)
- "The Lord Our Righteousness" (Sermon 20)
- "On Patience" (Sermon 83)
- "On the Trinity" (Sermon 55)
- "On Visiting the Sick" (Sermon 98)
- "The Nature of Enthusiasm" (Sermon 37)
- "Imperfection of Human Knowledge" (Sermon 69)
- "The Repentance of Believers" (Sermon 14)
- "Scripture Way of Salvation" (Sermon 43)
- "Salvation by Faith" (Sermon 1)
- "Spiritual Worship" (Sermon 77)
- "The Unity of Divine Being" (Sermon 114)

These works by John Wesley may be found on the Wesley Center website at Northwest Nazarene University, refer to <<http://wesley.nnu.edu/>>:

- "The Imperfection of Human Knowledge"
- "Plain Account of Christian Perfection"
- "A Plain Account of the People Called Methodist"

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Lesson 1

Wesley's Theological Biography—Epworth to Aldersgate

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	Wesley's Theological Biography	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 1-1 Resource 1-2 Resource 1-3 Resource 1-4 Resource 1-5
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Heitzenrater, Richard. *Wesley and the People Called Methodists*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995, chapters 1-2.

Wesley's Sermon: "Salvation by Faith." Resource 1-6.

Become familiar with the Wesley Center for Applied Theology. <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Orientation

Go over the Student Guide with the students. Highlight the Series Foreword, Module Vision Statement, Course Requirements, Schedule, and Journaling Essay.

Also, point out the Glossary at the end of the Student Guide.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- describe the religious and political culture of the Church of England
- articulate the influences of family, education, and ordination on the spiritual formation of John Wesley
- understand the impact of the writings of Thomas à Kempis, William Law, and Jeremy Taylor on Wesley
- discuss the hopes and failures of Wesley's missionary work in Georgia
- identify the role of the Moravians on Wesley
- describe the significance of Aldersgate on Wesley's spiritual development

Motivator

From Albert Outler, John Wesley, p 44.

John Wesley was born, raised, and ordained an Anglican. Yet he can still say "I went to America to convert the Indians, but, oh, who shall convert me?"
Journal, Tuesday 24 January, 1738

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Wesley's Theological Biography

(55 minutes)

Lead students in a discussion of the questions.

How do persons' life experiences shape how they think?

How important is it to know persons' biographies in order to understand their perspective?

Refer to Resource 1-1 in the Student Guide.

John Wesley's biography is extremely important in understanding his theology. Today we will go over the first half of his life. It is also important to know that Wesley's theology always applies directly to real-life situations. He did not write a "systematic theology" in the same way John Calvin did. He never sat down and wrote out in one place what he believed about all the Christian doctrines.

Scholars must look at Wesley's more practical works—such as his sermons, journals, and letters—in order to weave together what Wesley believed about each traditional "systematic" doctrine. Wesley has therefore been called a "practical theologian."

There were many different influences on what Wesley finally concluded theologically. He is also therefore known as a rather "eclectic" theologian—he takes the best he can find from a variety of sources and synthesizes it all into a creative theological vision. More often than not, Wesley ends up in a middle position between more radical poles. A key way of interpreting Wesley is to see this *via media* (middle way) in much of this thought.

Possible answers:

- Plenary inspiration of Scripture
- Refusal to polarize over the doctrines of creation and eschatology

Can you think of any instances in which the Church of the Nazarene takes a "middle position"?

The Historical Context of the Church of England

Refer to Resource 1-2 in the Student Guide.

Wesley gained an understanding of the *via media* from the dramatic history of the Church of England—also known as the Anglican Church. King Henry VIII separated the church from Roman Catholicism in 1532. The Parliament established a form of government that placed the king as the head of both the church and the

state of England. The first official statement of English theology came in the "Ten Articles of Religion." These articles showed that while Henry had separated from Catholicism politically, he did not support all the tenets of the Protestant Reformation either.

Important for the development of the English faith were two works: *The Book of Homilies* (1546) and *The Book of Common Prayer* (1549). It is important to note here that theology is inextricably tied to liturgy, or worship.

How is theology expressed through worship in your context?

After Henry died, his son Edward VI took the throne at a young age. During his reign, the church moved in the direction of the Reformers. But when Edward died, his sister, Queen Mary, took an aggressive stance back toward Catholicism. She is known as "bloody Mary" because she would use any means to suppress any opposition to the Catholic position.

Some people and groups were exiled. When Mary died, these—primarily Calvinist—exiles returned to England determined to rid the church of the "excesses" of English Catholicism. They came to be known as Puritans.

Elizabeth became queen after Mary. She was Edward and Mary's sister, but by a different mother. Elizabeth sought and fought hard for a united church; she wished to protect the church from Rome's designs to regain control on the one hand, and the aggressive Calvinism of the Puritans on the other.

"The Act of Uniformity" (1559) helped bring a middle position. Through it, Elizabeth established a church government separate from Catholicism, and reestablished the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Book of Homilies* as theological guides. Her resolution became known as the "Elizabethan Settlement." Although succeeding kings and church leaders would attempt to throw off the balance in one direction or the other, the settlement and its *via media* became the lasting paradigm of English theology and doctrine.

There is no doubt that Anglicanism was highly influential on the life and thought of John Wesley. But it would be naive to think that the Anglicanism of the 1700s was a purely benevolent force, or to underestimate Wesley's radical departure from the Church of England on many points.

This will be discussed further in Lesson 15.

Even today, we should be sensitive to the fact that in many parts of the world Anglicanism is inextricably connected to an aggressive colonialism and various forms of oppression and exploitation. Wesley stood against the Anglicans on some points of social justice, and where he didn't directly oppose the exploitation of the colonies, he certainly should have. Also, Wesley departed significantly from Anglican theology of the day.

Epworth to Aldersgate

John Wesley was born on June 17, 1703, to Samuel and Susanna Wesley. Both Samuel and Susanna's families had been "nonconformists"—they were part of the Puritan dissenters that had separated themselves from the Church of England. However, John's mother and father both decided to rejoin the Anglican Church and did so with great zeal.

Samuel was an Anglican priest, responsible for the church in Epworth, England. Biographers have been correct in seeing John's upbringing in this family as very significant to his own spiritual formation. Samuel was an educated pastor who valued study above all else. He wrote and published. Susanna also highly valued education, for her daughters as well as her sons. She is very well known for the Christian education she provided for her children. She was also an early model of a woman in ministry; for all practical purposes, she served as a copastor to the flock at Epworth.

Perhaps significant for later Methodism, the Wesleys led "house meetings" in the rectory, where persons would share openly about their own spiritual journeys. They met regularly for prayer, reading of Scripture, and edifying conversation. Susanna often led these meetings. John seems to have had a special place in his mother's heart. She believed that God had spared him (from a fire) and called him for some very special purpose.

Who have been your spiritual mentors?

What about them has been significant?

At age eleven, John entered the famous Charterhouse School in London. His older brother, Samuel, attended Westminster School nearby—where Charles, John's famous younger brother, was also a pupil later.

Charterhouse provided John with a type of preschool education, and also with an opportunity to begin his teenaged reflection on his own spiritual life. Through it all, John's tie to his mother remained substantial and influential. In 1720, John began at Christ Church (college) at Oxford University and began to prepare for the priesthood.

Oxford provided a place for John Wesley to mature spiritually, as well as excel academically. Christ Church was one of the more prestigious colleges, and along with other professional disciplines, prepared young scholars for work in the church. Wesley was a tutor and fellow, which meant that he was supported financially throughout his years there (although there is some speculation about whether Wesley might not have gone to Georgia because of a lack of funds as a priest in England).

Training for ministry in the Church of England required the following:

- A bachelor of arts degree
- Examination by the bishop
- Ordination as a deacon—which acted as a two-year probationary period to prove gifts for ministry and to give time to finish the M.A. degree
- Another examination by the bishop
- Another ordination as priest

In order to prepare for his ordination as a deacon, Wesley began to read from the pietist tradition, which focused on holy living. Three authors are extremely significant to Wesley's theological development.

What authors have shaped your theology the most?

Refer to Resource 1-3 in the Student Guide.

The three authors that were significant to Wesley are:

- Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471), a German mystic, wrote the famous *The Imitation of Christ*.
- Jeremy Taylor (1613-67) wrote *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying*.
- William Law (1686-1761), a contemporary of Wesley, wrote two significant works: *Christian Perfection* and a *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*.

From these three authors Wesley gained three primary ideas that related to his doctrine of holiness. Holiness involves:

- A purity of intentions
- The imitation of Christ as the model for holy living
- Love for God and neighbor as definitive and normative of Christian perfection

Refer to Resource 1-4 in the Student Guide.

In Wesley's famous later work *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, he writes this:

In one view, it is purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God. In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all filthiness, all inward as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of Him that created it. In yet another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves.

These reflections began to take shape at Oxford through Wesley's reading of these three authors. Entries in his diary at that time indicated a seriousness about his own holiness. Some scholars mark this period as Wesley's "conversion," for Wesley himself, reflecting later, gave great significance to this period of his spiritual development.

Another highly significant development at Oxford was the formation of Wesley's "holy club" in 1729. It was a study group that developed over time into what some believe to be the model of Wesley's "band" meetings. He would later place all converts to Methodism into small groups for the purpose of spiritual accountability and encouragement.

It was also in the context of the "holy club" that Wesley came to highly value what we might call "social service" ministry. Members would weekly visit men in prison, an orphanage, or the sick. These types of activities were a vital part of Wesley's understanding of spiritual discipline.

By 1733, the "holy club," now known as the Oxford Methodists, was strong and growing. Wesley, on the other hand, began to have doubts about his own salvation. He wrestled to find some kind of *assurance* that he, in fact, was a child of God. When opportunity to go to Georgia as a missionary arose, Wesley went. As he said, "My chief motive . . . is the hope of saving my own soul."

From Frank Baker, ed. The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980, Letters, vol 25: 440.

Three months after his father's death in 1735, a trustee of the organization the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.) invited John Wesley to Georgia. He, along with his brother Charles and one other member of the Holy Club, sailed in January of 1736.

For all practical purposes, the time they spent in Georgia was a pastoral, relational, and spiritual failure. Part of John's plan was to convert the "Indians." Entries in his journal show that far from being thirsty for the gospel—as John had imagined because of his strong belief in prevenient grace—the Native Americans disgusted John. He also had little tolerance for the colonists.

From *Outler*, p. 11.

Albert Outler calls John's practices as pastor "tactless" and his ministry in Georgia a "fiasco." Things were further complicated with a messy romance for John. John fell in love with Sophie Hopkey but was perpetually noncommittal. She finally married someone else. John then barred her and her new husband from Holy Communion and was in turn sued for defamation of the new husband's character. Events escalated until John was to appear for a formal grand jury on twelve counts. Finally, John decided to leave for England to escape any further embarrassment.

Refer to Resource 1-5 in the *Student Guide*.

Out of the Georgia debacle, one positive benefit emerges without question: John's acquaintance with the Moravians. He first encountered them on the trip to Georgia and was impressed with their assurance of their own salvation. He met with them on occasion while there, and upon returning to England actually visited the Moravian settlement in Germany.

They strongly supported the Lutheran doctrine of *sola fide*: salvation by faith alone. Wesley's more than ten-year quest for holiness had missed the power of this vital doctrine, and at this point in his life Wesley needed to know that he was a child of God, apart from his own efforts, or "works-righteousness."

From The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, *Journal and Diaries*, vol 18: 228.

Peter Bohler, a Moravian who counseled Wesley on several occasions, challenged Wesley to "preach faith till you have it, and then because you have it, you will preach faith." Wesley did exactly that. In doing so, Wesley offended Anglican sensibilities. He defended himself by stating that the *Book of Homilies* and the *Book of Common Prayer* both strongly affirmed the doctrine of salvation by faith.

Rather than being discouraged, Wesley saw the controversy with his Anglican brothers in a positive light and stated that God's special blessing was on the sermons that gave the most offense. On May 24, 1738, John went to a Moravian meeting on Aldersgate Street and claimed for himself the assurance of salvation that he had sought. He felt his heart "strangely warmed" and wrote later in his diary, "I felt I did trust in Christ,

Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.”

There is no consensus among scholars as to what happened to Wesley that night. Some call it his true conversion, others his evangelical conversion, others one spiritual step among many, some an entire sanctification experience. Wesley himself does not help us define the moment.

He does reference 1738 as significant but could have meant the date of the first society meeting or the beginning of the evangelical revival in England. He does reprint his diary entry five times in other writings, but with no comment. In later years, Wesley references 1725 more than 1738 as key to his spiritual development. Perhaps most puzzling is his diary entries immediately following May 24. He expressed continuing doubts about his spiritual life.

What is sure is that Aldersgate turned Wesley in a new direction. Most scholars agree that Wesley experienced a new level of “assurance” of his salvation, based on grace, and not on works. This “witness of the Spirit”—as Wesley also called it—became a key doctrine in Methodism. From Aldersgate on, Wesley also preached *sola fide* so strongly in Anglican pulpits that he was barred from preaching further in many such churches. He decided that if he could not preach in the pulpits he would “preach in the fields.” And he turned his attention toward an itinerant ministry throughout Britain.

We will pick up this story in the next lesson.

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

*Allow students to respond.
Encourage response.*

*Do you have any questions about any of the material
or discussions from this first lesson?*

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- describe the religious and political culture of the Church of England?
- articulate the influences of family, education, and ordination on the spiritual formation of John Wesley?
- understand the impact of the writings of Thomas à Kempis, William Law, and Jeremy Taylor on Wesley?
- discuss the hopes and failures of Wesley's missionary work in Georgia?
- identify the role of the Moravians on Wesley?
- describe the significance of Aldersgate on Wesley's spiritual development?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will finish Wesley's biography.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a three-page biographical essay, entitled "How my biography has influenced my theology and worldview."

Read Resource 1-6, "Salvation by Faith."

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

From Outler, p. 50.

With Aldersgate approaching, Wesley's heart honestly confessed, "I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it."

Journal, Sunday 29 January, 1738

Lesson 2

Wesley's Theological Biography—Aldersgate to Wesley's Death

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:15	The Middle and Late Wesley	Lecture	Resource 2-1 Resource 2-2 Resource 2-3
0:50	Salvation by Faith	Small Groups	Resource 2-4
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Heitzenrater, Richard. *Wesley and the People Called Methodists*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995, chapters 3-6.

Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

Accountability

Have the students share from their biographical essays. Interject questions where appropriate. The goal of this exercise is to see how personal experiences influence theological and spiritual formation.

If the class is too large for everyone to share as one group, you may need to divide the class into small groups.

Collect homework.

You will be evaluating the students' homework—offering ideas, suggestions, questions, comments and corrections. However, you will not be assigning a grade.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- describe the rise and development of Methodism
- comprehend Wesley's controversy with the London society over the meaning of holiness
- analyze Wesley's controversy with Calvinism and George Whitefield
- explore Wesley's reasons for allowing American ordinations
- discuss John Wesley's controversy with Charles Wesley over succession

Motivator

From Outler, p. 80.

In a letter to a friend, Wesley shows the heart of his movement in his own heart:

O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but Thy pure love alone!
O may Thy love possess me whole
My joy, my treasure, and my crown.
Strange flames far from my heart remove!
My every act, word, thought, be love.
Wesley, 1765

Lesson Body

Lecture: The Middle and Late Wesley

(35 minutes)

Refer to Resource 2-1 in the Student Guide.

Biographical Concerns

Richard Heitzenrater, in his work *The Elusive Mr. Wesley*, has stated that there are historiographical difficulties when approaching the life of John Wesley for the purpose of writing his biography. First of all, Wesley was a legend in his own time, and thus information, written and recorded, about him take on the form of "hagiography" quite early. Hagiography is a biography of a "holy person," which is written to praise the person and to show him or her as a true saint of God. Many times, historical accuracy is secondary to this type of literature.

Second, Wesley was a controversial figure during his own life. Therefore, what is recorded often reflects the biases of the writer, whether positive or negative. Often the more negative material has not been included in the historiographical process of many biographies of Wesley.

Third, Wesley's own writings can be interpreted as revealing a distinctly "public" and a distinctly "private" Wesley. The historian must negotiate this area carefully.

Unpack how these descriptions are "oxymoronic."

And finally, according to Heitzenrater, the historian must deal with the often paradoxical aspects of Wesley's life and thought. Wesley has been characterized by many scholars in terms of these paradoxes, using "oxymorons" to highlight his synthetic impulses. The following is but a short list of examples: "radical conservative"; "romantic realist"; "quiet revolutionary"; "reasonable enthusiast"; "practical mystic"; and "folk theologian."

Wesley's place as theologian also raises historiographical concerns. Many scholars have rightly pointed out that Wesley's theology developed over time. Randy Maddox, in *Responsible Grace*, has been helpful in speaking of an early, middle, and late Wesley, with each phase of his life representing differing interests and concerns.

Maddox does state, however, that the late Wesley integrated his early and middle years into mature

theological positions. This developmental view of Wesley helps deal with apparent inconsistencies in his thought.

In our last lesson, we dealt with Wesley's early period, 1703-38. For our purposes here, the middle Wesley will be designated by the years 1739-60; the late Wesley from 1760 until his death in 1791. We will now go over the significant events and theological controversies from 1739 on.

The Middle Wesley

Refer to Resource 2-2 in the Student Guide.

The middle phase of Wesley's life was consumed by the rise and organization of the Methodist Revival in England, and his need to clarify Methodist theology. The very first theological move that Wesley made was to reject the extremes of Moravianism. Although Wesley deeply appreciated their influence on his own life, and their doctrine of *sola fide*, Wesley began to be uncomfortable with their "quietism."

Wesley saw that an overemphasis on the doctrine of grace could lead to a type of antinomianism—the belief that since grace is all, works are not only not necessary but harmful to the Christian's dependence on God only for salvation. Thus they remained "quiet" before God. Wesley, from 1725 on, never wavered in his belief that a Christian expressed his or her Christianity through good works, particularly works of love and mercy to the most needy. Wesley, like the Book of James, demanded that faith is shown and legitimized by such work.

The 1740s and 1750s saw the "rise of the people called Methodists." With the organization of societies, bands, and class meetings, Wesley provided his converts with a disciplined program of spiritual formation, in the context of fellowship with other Christians and focused pastoral care. Societies were larger groups, which would parallel the size of an average congregation. Band and class meetings were small accountability groups that were very intense.

Most scholars see this as crucial in the growth of Methodism, when other periodic revivals had initial success, but no long-term harvest. Wesley also initiated a large network of lay preachers. These preachers would travel to different societies to preach and to make sure Wesley's plan and theological vision was being carried out.

Annual conferences, first initiated in 1744, were also crucial in developing the distinctives of Methodism. The Methodist relationship with the Anglican Church was questioned at this time, both by Methodists and Anglicans. Wesley saw his movement as a renewal or evangelistic order within the Church of England. Through these years, Wesley steadfastly repudiated any hint of separatism.

In the context of the bands and societies, influenced by Wesley's own vision, Methodists began to testify to the experience of entire sanctification. "Holiness of heart and life" had always been one of Wesley's cherished phrases. As persons began to profess the experience, Wesley began to see the benefit of preaching its attainability. Wesley's brother Charles disagreed with Wesley's new preaching. Charles believed until the end that an experience of entire sanctification was rare, and if it did occur, it would be very near a person's death. Wesley would be forced to clarify his own position in the coming decades.

The Late Wesley

Refer to Resource 2-3 in the Student Guide.

The years following 1760 until his death in 1791 will represent for us here the "late Wesley." During these decades, Wesley faced major theological issues that would help define Methodism. Personal problems were also interspersed amid more theological concerns.

What has come to be known as the "perfectionist controversy" began in the early 1760s. During the middle period, Wesley had begun to stress the attainability of Christian perfection and to advise his followers to "seek it now." Two of his followers, Thomas Maxfield and George Bell, took the doctrine to extremes. They were the society leaders of the society in London. They emphasized that such perfection was "absolute" and claimed that a perfected Christian could not sin and would persist in an angelic-like state.

They downplayed the gradual process that Wesley had *always* emphasized as equally important. The controversy led to much debate and aggression over the doctrine of sanctification. Wesley called a conference to settle the issue, and he clarified his own positions in such publications as "On Perfection" (1761), "Sin in Believers" (1763), and perhaps most comprehensively in "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection" (first issued in 1766, and again in 1777).

Although Wesley had dealt with Methodists who deemed themselves Calvinists from the very beginning

of the movement, the 1770s brought the issue to a head. The death of George Whitefield in 1770 can be seen as a catalyst for the reemergence of the debate.

Whitefield had been a member of the Holy Club and became a very successful evangelist in both North America and England. Although closely associated with Wesley for many years, they disagreed over the doctrine of predestination. Wesley was accused of not adequately representing Whitefield's views in Whitefield's funeral sermon that Wesley delivered.

In response to the controversy, Wesley published several works: "On Predestination" (1773), "Thoughts Upon Necessity" (1774), and "On Working Out Our Own Salvation" (1785). Wesley never wavered from his strongly anti-election position. Ultimately, Methodism stood resolutely in the Arminian camp. All persons are elected by God for salvation, conditioned upon their acceptance of God's grace.

According to the Calvinist position, only certain individuals are elected to salvation, and that salvation is conditioned upon nothing; grace is "irresistible." Wesley's main argument against the doctrine of predestination was that it distorts our image of God and places God's sovereignty over God's love.

Allow for response.

What scripture references can you give for the support of Wesley's position of election and free grace?

Also during the late period of Wesley's life, the issue of Methodism's separation from the Church of England reached a climax. The issue had been faced in the earlier decades of Wesley's life. Wesley had been resolutely against separation. He wanted to see Methodism as a renewal movement within the church. Charles, Wesley's brother, was even stronger in his sentiments that separation should not occur under any circumstances.

But an unexpected situation in America forced John's hand. As we know, in the 1770s, the rise of political issues in the American colonies resulted in the Revolutionary War in 1776. In the midst of the conflict, the Anglican Church retreated back to England. This left the pastoral and practical problem of the administration of the sacraments to Methodists in America. While Methodists had always met for preaching services and for society meetings, Wesley demanded that Methodists in England and America receive the sacrament of Holy Communion in Anglican Churches.

Wesley was deeply concerned that with the absence of Anglican priests, American Methodists would have no opportunity to receive the sacrament. Holy Communion was so important to Wesley that he decided to approve a Methodist ordination of Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke, and he commissioned them as “general superintendents” of the Methodist Church in 1784 at a conference in Baltimore. In essence, this initiated a series of events that gave American Methodists independence. English Methodists became a separate church from Anglicanism after Wesley died.

Wesley's decision brought great disharmony with his brother Charles. Things between them were never the same again. Other personal difficulties were also present. John Wesley had married against Charles' advice. The marriage was a complete failure; Molly Wesley finally left John for good in 1771. When she died in 1781, Wesley only heard about it much later.

But despite all of these controversies and difficulties, Wesley remained a strong leader until his death. He continued to publish and to preach and to correspond with his Methodist people. He remained productive until the end. He was immediately recognized as an incredibly influential man. Certainly such a claim cannot be refuted, no matter how difficult it is for the historian and biographer to sift through all the evidence. Many traditions, including the Church of the Nazarene, recognize him as their spiritual and theological father.

Small Groups: Salvation by Faith

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three to discuss the Wesley sermon that was to be read for homework.

Refer to Resource 2-4 in the Student Guide.

In your group, work together to find/develop answers for the following, from the Wesley sermon that was read for homework:

Sermon Title:
Text:
Thesis Statement:
Key Points:
Relevance for Today:
Call for Response:

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions/comments about any of the material or discussions from this second lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- describe the rise and development of Methodism?
- comprehend Wesley's controversy with the London society over the meaning of holiness?
- analyze Wesley's controversy with Calvinism and George Whitefield?
- explore Wesley's reasons for allowing American ordinations?
- discuss John Wesley's controversy with Charles Wesley over succession ?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will begin to talk about Wesley's theological sources. In other words, what writers and movements influenced Wesley's thought? We will also examine Wesley's use of the writers throughout Christian history in the development of his own theology.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Create a time line of Wesley's life and theological development.

Read Resource 2-5, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation."

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

John Wesley's last words:
"The best of all is, God is with us. Farewell."
1791

Lesson 3

Wesley's Theological Sources

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:15	Wesley's Theological Sources	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 3-1 Resource 3-2 Resource 3-3
0:50	On Working Out Our Own Salvation	Small Groups	Resource 3-4
1:15	Student Response	Guided Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Campbell, Ted. *John Wesley's Conceptions and Uses of Christian Antiquity*. Nashville: Kingswood/Abingdon Press, 1984.

Tuttle, Robert G. *Mysticism in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1989.

Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

Accountability

In groups of 2-3 have the students share their time lines.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

Compile a list for all to see.

What are the important historical events—secular and church related—that happened between 100 and 1700?

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- articulate the reasons for Wesley's preference for Pre-Nicene and Eastern theology
- explore the impact of some of the Patristics on the thought and life of Wesley
- discuss Wesley's "practical mysticism"—rejection of quietism but appropriation of the value of experiencing God
- explore the influence of Luther and the Moravian's *sola fide* on Wesley
- understand the influence of Puritanism on Wesley
- understand the influence of Arminius on Methodism
- explain Anglicanism's theological influence on Wesley

Motivator

From Outler, pp. 46-47.

Wesley was influenced by many different traditions, including mystics:

I grew acquainted with the mystic writers, whose noble descriptions of union with God and internal religion make everything else appear mean, flat, and insipid . . . These gave me an entire new view of religion—nothing like any I had before.

Journal, Tuesday 24 January, 1738

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Wesley's Theological Sources

(35 minutes)

The Early Church

This is listed in the Bibliography.

The most comprehensive study of John Wesley's relationship to the Patristic period is offered by Ted Campbell in *John Wesley's Conceptions and Uses of Christian Antiquity*. Much of Campbell's book gives a chronological analysis of Wesley's use of patristic sources.

Wesley gained his appreciation for the writers of the Early Church first from his father, Samuel, who wrote to clergymen with advice about which sources to read. While Wesley was at Oxford, he was diligent about studying as much of the Patristics as he could. At this point he took them very literally and attempted to follow after them as much as he could in his own life.

He continued this pattern while in Georgia and even incorporated Early Church liturgies into his work as a priest there, as well as experimenting with small-group "bands" that he believed were modeled by the Early Church catechetical structure.

However, in January of 1738, Wesley stated that he had been wrong on several points in his appropriation of Early Church sources. He believed he had not adequately subjected them to Scripture's authority. He had extended the truly important sources too far into the fourth century. He had misunderstood councils and synods to be more universally applicable than in fact they should be.

From this point on, Wesley believed that the closer to the New Testament period, the more reliable the source. He began to prefer "Pre-Nicene" sources—those writing before the first ecumenical council in 325. He also preferred "Eastern" sources. These are the Patristics sources written in Greek, rather than Latin. But the difference is not a matter only of language. Very early on, Eastern and Western theology began to take on unique emphases.

Refer to Resource 3-1 in the Student Guide.

Eastern theology tended to be liturgically and practically focused. It had a higher estimation of the human condition and human potential for change than

did Western sources. Thus its understanding of salvation and "sanctification" focused on real character transformation through the grace of God and was thoroughly optimistic about spiritual growth in this life.

It also focused on the dynamic cooperation between God's grace and our appropriation of that grace, also known as "synergism." Some of the Eastern sources that most influenced Wesley were Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Macarius, John Chrysostom, and Ephraem Syrus. Each of these, as well as many others Wesley appropriated, focused on the experience of God and the life of holiness.

Mysticism and the Reformation

Refer to Resource 3-2 in the Student Guide.

Wesley's interest in the practical aspects of one's relationship with God took him from the Early Church to the Catholic mysticism of the Middle Ages, and to the emphasis on grace in the Protestant Reformation.

Wesley deeply appreciated the mystical tradition of such persons as Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint John of the Cross, and Francis Fenelon. Their experiences of God impressed him greatly. However, he ultimately concluded that they went too far. His disagreement focused on two major points.

First, he rejected the goal of the Christian experience as being "unification" with God. The mystics believed that a Christian can progress through certain stages to the ultimate experience of unification. Some mystics believed that the goal of unification was the complete loss of self into the essence of God. Wesley was concerned that divine and human essences remain separate, theologically. We become like God, in Wesley's scheme. Mysticism bordered on the notion of becoming a part of God himself.

Second, Wesley wanted to refute the "quietism" of some mystics. As mentioned in an earlier lesson, Wesley never wanted to affirm a Christianity that neglected the work of God in the name of grace or even of prayer. Mysticism could lead to such an emphasis on one's own mystical pursuit that practical expressions of love for neighbor are neglected.

Because of Wesley's appreciation for the mystical tradition's emphasis on devotion, coupled with his rejection of their quietistic tendencies, Wesley has been called a "practical mystic."

Allow for response.

What is your opinion of the term "practical mystic"?

Does the term apply to you?

In general, Wesley affirmed the Protestant Reformation, as expressed by Martin Luther. Luther's doctrine of *sola fide*, as conveyed to him particularly by the Moravians, greatly influenced Wesley and his Aldersgate experience. And yet, the Moravian tendency toward quietism and Luther's own problems with the concepts found in the Book of James gave Wesley pause.

The Reformation, as expressed by Calvinism, was a battlefield for Wesley's vision of Methodism. Wesley was clearly an Arminian, following the thought of James Arminius, an early 17th-century figure who refuted Calvinism's doctrine of salvation. It is in fact, surprising that Wesley did not quote Arminius more in his own defense against Calvinism.

Arminius's theology focuses on

- Freewill
- Rejection of predestination
- Affirmation that Christ died for all

During the 17th century, followers of Arminius—"Remonstrants"—were severely persecuted. The Synod of Dort, for all practical purposes, deemed Arminianism "heretical" and rigidified Calvin's thought certainly far beyond what Calvin himself ever envisioned. Anglicanism of Wesley's day was more tolerant. While some Anglican "articles of faith" were clearly Calvinistic in tone, the "threat" of Puritanism pushed mainstream Anglicanism more toward a middle position.

Wesley's Contemporaries: Puritanism and Anglicanism

Robert Monk has argued strongly that Wesley was influenced by his Puritan heritage. Both his mother and father were originally from Puritan homes. Monk makes his case by pointing out that Wesley's knowledge of Puritan literature is surprisingly extensive. He quotes Puritan writers, affirms many Puritan doctrines—the doctrines of original sin, justification by faith, assurance, and final justification. He used Puritan methods of evangelism, and he emphasized self-examination. And yet, on the more political side, Wesley rejected the Puritan's separationist tendencies. He was suspicious of those seeking a separate identity from the Anglican Church.

Refer to Resource 3-3 in the Student Guide.

Wesley was an Anglican from birth to death. His loyalty was deep and unshaken by his practical need to ordain Methodist ministers in America. But beyond an outspoken loyalty, there is no question that much of Wesley's whole theological vision was influenced greatly by Anglican thought. Directly from the Anglican theology of the 18th century, Wesley embraced certain theological understandings.

We will see these in more depth throughout the course. For our purposes, we will consider the Anglicanism focus on:

- The goodness of God
- A rejection of a satisfaction theory of the atonement
- Conditional election
- Imparted righteousness
- Christ as central to all theological conclusions
- The Bible as the sole rule of faith
- An inclination toward the via media
- The use of Early Church sources
- Holiness of heart and life

Small Groups: On Working Out Our Own Salvation

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three to discuss the Wesley sermon that the students read for homework.

Refer to Resource 3-4 in the Student Guide.

In your group, work together to find/develop answers for the following, from the Wesley sermon that was read for homework:

Sermon Title:

Text:

Thesis Statement:

Key Points:

Relevance for Today:

Call for Response:

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from this lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

- Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you
- articulate the reasons for Wesley's preference for Pre-Nicene and Eastern theology?
 - explore the impact of some of the Patristics on the thought and life of Wesley?
 - discuss Wesley's "practical mysticism"—rejection of quietism but appropriation of the value of experiencing God?
 - explore the influence of Luther and the Moravian's *sola fide* on Wesley?
 - understand the influence of Puritanism on Wesley?
 - understand the influence of Arminius on Methodism?
 - explain Anglicanism's theological influence on Wesley?

Look Ahead

Next week we will begin to discuss Wesley's theology in systematic form. We will begin by looking at his doctrine of Revelation.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a two-page essay on your own understanding of this question: How do we know what we know, particularly "religious truth"?

Paraphrase the Key Points from Resource 2-4 **or** 3-4. Keep in mind your contemporary/cultural audience. Give a contemporary/cultural illustration for one of the points.

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

From Heitzenrater, pp. 77-78.

Wesley found in Anglicanism itself the seeds for the Methodist revival. Faith is "a sure trust and confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ my sins are forgiven and I am reconciled to the favor of God."
The Book of Homilies

Lesson 4

Epistemology and Revelation

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	Epistemology and Revelation	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 4-1 Resource 4-2 Resource 4-3
0:50	Critique of Homework	Small Groups	
1:15	Student Response	Guided Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 26-35.

Wesley's Sermons: "Remarks on the Limits of Human Knowledge" and "The Catholic Spirit."

Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Accountability

Divide the class into groups of 2-3 to share and discuss their homework essays.

If time permit,s have each of the groups share key ideas.

Return and collect homework.

The paraphrases of one of Wesley's sermons will be used later in small groups and can be collected at that time.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- explain the differences and similarities of general and special revelation
- define "rationalism" and "empiricism"
- articulate Wesley's concept of "spiritual senses"

Motivator

Wesley agreed with the one philosophical camp:
"nothing is in the mind that is not first in the senses."

An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Works 11:56

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Epistemology and Revelation

(30 minutes)

Refer to Resource 4-1 in the Student Guide.

Epistemology

With this lesson, we begin to look at Wesley's doctrines in a systematic form. Often "systematic theology" begins with a discussion about "method"—how are we going to go about finding the answers to each doctrine's questions? Or even more definitively, how do we know what we know about religious truth? The philosophical study of how we know what we know is called epistemology. And therefore scholars can talk about a Wesleyan epistemology.

To understand Wesley's epistemology fully, one must understand two philosophical traditions and their ideas about how we gain knowledge. Interestingly, both influenced Wesley. Once again he takes a *via media* position.

The first tradition, known as **rationalism**, goes back to Plato. Plato believed that before we experience anything, innate ideas have already been implanted in our minds by "the divine." For example, we have an idea of beauty in our minds, and so we recognize beauty when we see it.

In contrast, **empiricism**, set forth by Aristotle, believes that we only know what we have experienced. Our five senses experience the world, and then we process such information to make sense of it. During Wesley's day, empiricism was quite dominant, supported by the work of John Locke. For the most part, Wesley embraced empiricism. But when it came to knowledge of God, Wesley parted ways with it.

A strict empiricist would reject knowledge of God, because God cannot be perceived through the senses. It is here that Wesley moves more in the direction of rationalism, by believing that all knowledge of God comes from God. How Wesley synthesizes the two traditions is seen in his development of a concept of "spiritual senses." God has given us an extra sense so that we might perceive the spiritual realm.

"Spiritual senses" is a type of empiricism in that this sense allows us to directly *experience* God. It is a type

of rationalism in that this *sense*—but not knowledge—has been implanted in us by the divine, God himself.

Revelation

Refer to Resource 4-2 in the Student Guide.

The question of the knowledge of God not only raises the question of our capacity to experience God, but also raises the question of God's revelatory activity. Traditionally, revelation has been broken into two categories:

- General, or natural revelation
- Special revelation

Once again, Wesley modifies the traditional scheme. **Natural revelation**, since the time of Thomas Aquinas—the most significant scholastic theologian of the Middle Ages—has been seen as the knowledge we receive about God by considering God's effects. In other words, a certain amount of knowledge about God comes by looking at creation and the complexity of the human person.

Aquinas argued that looking at creation immediately raises the question of a creator. God must necessarily be that "unmoved mover" who put everything into motion. But while natural revelation raises the question of God and can even affirm the necessity of the existence of a creator, it cannot answer the question of what God is like.

For that, **special revelation** is needed. God must break into history and reveal himself to humanity. The ultimate special revelation is the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ reveals the nature and character of God. The Bible is also seen as special revelation in that it gives witness to the activity of God and to Jesus as the Christ.

Wesley sees the separation between natural and special revelation to be drawn too sharply. Special revelation alone has been traditionally viewed as an expression of God's gracious activity. Wesley wanted to maintain that natural revelation itself is also an expression of grace. Special revelation, then, fulfills what is started in natural revelation, and that all knowledge of God comes through God's initiative.

Allow for response.

How have you experienced God through creation?

Who then receives the gracious revelation of God?

We see here in this question Wesley's groundwork for the doctrine of **prevenient grace**. Some scholars believe that this doctrine is foundational to all of Wesley's theology.

Compile a list for the class to see.

What do you already know about prevenient grace?

Refer to Resource 4-3 in the Student Guide.

In Wesley's mature thought, he believed that prevenient grace gives a certain amount of light to every human being that awakens the spiritual senses, regardless of his or her cultural, historical, or religious context. He believed that this light—what Maddox calls initial universal revelation—enables persons to know that there is a God, that He is just and merciful, and that there will be some type of judgment, based on living up to the light given, before eternal life begins. Prevenient grace will go on to awaken persons, who directly hear about Christ and their need for His redemption.

From Maddox, p. 31.

Wesley also affirmed special revelation as crucial to our understanding of God. The witness to Christ, as revealed to us in Scripture, is definitive and normative. But is Scripture a mediator of revelation or immediate and directly from God? Again, Wesley affirms both. As Randy Maddox states, "The definitive revelation of God may come to us through Scripture but still be immediate because the Spirit who originally addressed the spiritual senses of the writers will also open our spiritual senses to perceive and attest to the truth they expressed."

Ultimately, Wesley developed what has come to be called the Wesleyan quadrilateral. This is at the heart of his theological method. Wesley believed that Scripture is primary in our understanding of religious truth, because it is God's special revelation of himself to us. But *Scripture* is only rightly interpreted in dialogue with how *tradition* has understood the Bible, how we *experience* the truth of the Bible, and how *reason* helps us process, organize, and communicate biblical truth. We begin to explore the quadrilateral in the next lesson.

Small Groups: Critique of Homework

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into two groups—one for each of the two sermon choices.

In your group share the work that you have done in paraphrasing the key points of the sermon you chose.

Discuss and critique each other's work. The emphasis is on strengthening and helping each other, not in

If there is time, you may want each group to report the work that they accomplished.

tearing each other apart. You may want to work together to rewrite the key points using the best of each other's work.

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

*Allow students to respond.
Encourage response.*

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from this fourth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

- Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you
- explain the differences and similarities of general and special revelation?
 - define “rationalism” and “empiricism”?
 - articulate Wesley’s concept of “spiritual senses”?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will examine Wesley’s understanding of Scripture and tradition as theological sources.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a two-page essay on this question: Why is the Bible authoritative?

Read Resource 4-4, “The Catholic Spirit.”

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley’s journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

John’s brother Charles wrote, “Whate’er his Spirit speaks in me, must with the written Word agree.”
Scripture Hymns, *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, 9:380

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Lesson 5

The Quadrilateral: Scripture and Tradition

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	Scripture and Tradition	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 5-1 Resource 5-2 Resource 5-3 Resource 5-4
0:50	The Catholic Spirit	Small Groups	Resource 5-5
1:15	Student Response	Guided Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Gunter, W. Stephen, et al. *Wesley and the Quadrilateral*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 36-47.

Oden, Thomas C. *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

Wesley's Sermon: "The Catholic Spirit"

Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Accountability

Divide the class into pairs to share and discuss their essays from their homework.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

The idea here is to get the class to think about the problem of Christian pluralism.

Refer to Wesley's sermon "The Catholic Spirit" and talk about the appropriate attitude toward those who disagree with us over essential or nonessential issues.

Quote Bresee: In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, and in all things, love.

How do we explain so many different theological interpretations of Scripture?

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- appreciate the meaning and function of Wesley's quadrilateral
- understand the doctrine of inspiration
- define Wesley's "analogy of faith" as a hermeneutical principle
- explore Wesley's preference for Early Church and Anglicanism as "the" tradition

Motivator

From Outler, p. 88.

What is the nature of Wesley's famous quote, in light of the fact that Wesley valued thousands of books?

God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius* [a man of one book].

Preface to *Sermons on Several Occasions*

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Scripture and Tradition

(30 minutes)

Why a Quadrilateral?

Wesley himself never used the phrase “quadrilateral.” It was a Wesley scholar, Albert Outler, who coined the phrase as a way of explaining Wesley’s understanding of religious truth.

Refer to Resource 5-1 in the Student Guide.

The resource gives three possible diagrams. You or the students may have additional ideas.

There are four parts of the quadrilateral. But we must not view them as equal parts. *Scripture* is primary to Wesley. It would perhaps be more appropriate to speak of Scripture as authoritative, with a trilateral supporting it. The supporting parts are *tradition, reason, and experience*.

The purpose of the quadrilateral is that it acts as a type of check-and-balance. To use a strong example, if someone were to say that they had an experience where God told them to have an affair, this would obviously be checked—stopped short—by Scripture, in the Ten Commandments.

But in a similar way, if I interpret Scripture in isolation from community, from reason, or from what others have experienced, my interpretation should be checked and perhaps corrected by these other sources as well.

Scripture, then, is rightly interpreted in dialogue with the other sources, just as Scripture serves as the ultimate check of the other three. Again, Wesley never laid this out directly, but it was his “theological method”; it was his way of doing theology and biblical interpretation.

Allow for response.

Can you think of other examples where the quadrilateral “works”?

The Bible

The Bible is the primary source of religious truth because it is a special revelation of God, which witnesses to the final revelation of God in Christ. The issue of the Bible’s authority should be raised at this point? Why is the Bible authoritative?

These would be groups that are fundamentalist.

There are traditions that state and believe that the source of the Bible's authority is found in its being inspired (dictated) directly from God; it is *inerrant*, and therefore trustworthy and authoritative.

We should note that the whole issue of "inerrancy" is a debate that began toward the first part of the 20th century. To ask Wesley himself, then, about the Bible's inerrancy is anachronistic. But it is not an irrelevant question to ask Wesleyans.

Allow for response.

In what sense is the Bible inerrant for a Wesleyan?

Read Manual paragraph IV.

What did the early founders of the Church of the Nazarene believe when they used the word "plenary"?

What is our doctrine of inspiration?

Refer to Resource 5-2 in the Student Guide.

While more conservative traditions would argue that the Bible is inerrant in all things, those following Wesley qualify such a statement: the Bible is inerrant in all things *pertaining to our salvation*.

As an example, the Manual 2005-2009 states "inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation" (27).

Those in more conservative—fundamentalist—churches embrace a dictation theory of inspiration. This implies that God gave the authors of Scripture each word to write down. And if God wrote every word, then the Bible is without error in every respect—in its science, history, and cosmology.

At the opposite end of the continuum on inspiration would be an understanding of Scripture as a purely human book. There is no claim at all about inerrancy at this extreme. Those who hold this position would say that the Bible is a production of only human writers.

In the middle, in the *via media*, is the doctrine of "plenary" inspiration. God inspired the authors of Scripture in such a way that their human, historical, cultural situation is not set aside, but utilized. Not just their hands—as in a dictation theory—but also each writer's mind and experiences are used by God in order to convey God's love, purposes, and plan of redemption for humankind.

God's salvation is perfectly revealed to us. It is perfectly trustworthy in the purposes for which it was inspired: salvation and holy living, according to Wesley and his followers. In a way, this is freeing. If, for example, the Bible seems to contradict itself when listing some historical chronology, its authority does not fall for Wesleyans. Those who are more

conservative need to preserve and defend the Bible as perfect in every respect, for if it seems contradictory even in a minute detail, its authority falls.

Wesley had a great deal of advice about how to interpret Scripture. He was very aware of the crucial necessity of finding the context of a passage, and avoiding “proof-texting.” He used the original languages. He investigated the historical and cultural situation in a text.

Refer to Resource 5-3 in the Student Guide.

Ultimately, Wesley developed what is called the “analogy of faith.” This phrase refers to a connection of biblical doctrines that arise out of the “whole tenor of Scripture.” We should ask of every passage in the Bible: what does it add to our understanding of human sin, justification by faith, new birth, and present inward and outward holiness?

From Maddox, p. 38.

As Maddox states, “He believed that it was the shared articulation of these truths that gave the diverse components of Scripture their unity. Accordingly, he required that all passages be read in light of these truths.”

But doesn’t the Bible deal with other issues, we might reasonably ask? Wesley would answer, of course. But issues that do not address the essential doctrines of sin, salvation, and sanctification should be seen as nonessentials. Why was Wesley concerned to draw a distinction between essentials and nonessentials? His concern was for Christian unity.

Christians often disagree and even argue over nonessentials, dividing the Body of Christ. He believed that we should “think and let think”—we should humbly allow other Christians to hold other opinions—on issues that are not essential to our salvation. This principle should inform our Wesleyan-holiness, Nazarene worldview.

For example, the Church of the Nazarene has resolutely resisted binding its members to a certain view of how the world began or how the world will end, believing these to be in the realm of speculation, and ultimately nonessential to our life in God and our quest for holiness. Ultimately then, the Bible finds its authority in its faithful witness of Christ, and in the fact that its truth of salvation through Christ has been experienced and verified by believers through the centuries.

Tradition

Through the centuries, the community of faith has interpreted Scripture. The Roman Catholic branch of Christianity has put great weight on the Church's interpretation of Scripture to such a degree that we can legitimately say that Scripture and tradition have equal authority in Catholicism. On the other extreme, parts of the Protestant Reformation were so adamant that tradition had been corrupted, that a pronouncement of *sola scriptura*, Scripture alone, became a battle cry.

Refer to Resource 5-4 in the Student Guide.

Once again, Wesley takes a middle position. Tradition is not on par with Scripture's authority. But tradition can aid in a faithful, corporate interpretation of the Bible. But which tradition? Wesley held two points on the time line of Christian history as most significant.

First, he held the Early Church writers in very high esteem. As stated in a previous lesson, Wesley preferred the Pre-Nicene period, and the works of Eastern writers.

Second, Wesley saw Anglicanism itself as a new embodiment of the Early Church ethos. Was Wesley biased at this point? Of course. Each of us would want to hold that our denomination, whatever it may be, is the clearest expression of the Christian faith; otherwise, we would seek it elsewhere.

Wesley was not static or rigid, however, in his appropriation of Anglican thought. He had a more dynamic relationship with Anglicanism, particularly with its Articles of Religion, and even edited them at will for his Methodist people. Ultimately, tradition was not a static entity for Wesley but rather the truth of the gospel in the hands of people. This is found in Wesley's understanding of apostolicity. It is not a lineage from the apostles that assured truth. It is the faith of the apostles, expressed in new ways for new generations, that gives tradition its dynamic and authoritative quality.

They can be changed by the corporate decision of the membership.

How dynamic or static are the Nazarene Articles of Faith?

Small Groups: The Catholic Spirit

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three to discuss the sermon that was read for homework.

Refer to Resource 5-5 in the Student Guide.

In your group, work together to find/develop answers for the following, from the Wesley sermon that was read for homework:

Sermon Title:

Text:

Thesis Statement:

Key Points:

Relevance for Today:

Call for Response:

Guided Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the fifth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- appreciate the meaning and function of Wesley's quadrilateral?
- understand the doctrine of inspiration?
- define Wesley's "analogy of faith" as a hermeneutical principle?
- explore Wesley's preference for Early Church and Anglicanism as "the" tradition?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will examine Wesley's understanding of reason and experience as theological sources.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a two-page essay on this question: Are reason and faith compatible?

Read Resource 5-6, "The Almost Christian."

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

From Oden, p. 67.

On tradition, Wesley writes, "The Scriptures are a complete rule of faith and practice; and they are clear in all necessary points. And yet their clearness does not prove that they need not be explained; nor their completeness, that they need not be enforced . . . The esteeming the writings of the first three centuries, not equally with, but next to the Scriptures, never carried any man yet into dangerous errors, nor probably ever will."

Lesson 6

The Quadrilateral: Experience and Reason

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	Experience and Reason	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 6-1 Resource 6-2 Resource 6-3
0:45	The Almost Christian	Small Groups	Resource 6-4
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Chilcote, Paul. *John Wesley and the Women Preachers of Early Methodism*. Scarecrow, 1984. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1987.

Gunter, Stephen, et al. *Wesley and the Quadrilateral: Renewing the Conversation*. W. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 36-47.

Oden, Thomas. *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, pp. 55-100.

Wesley's Works: "The Imperfection of Human Knowledge" and "The Nature of Enthusiasm"

Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Accountability

Have the students share their homework essays in pairs.

Have each group give a summary statement of their discussion.

Return and collect homework.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- recognize the use of reason as a tool, not a source
- discuss Wesley's view of experience as communal, not individualistic

Motivator

Charles Wesley wrote a hymn that shows the relationship between knowledge and spirituality.

Unite the pair so long disjoined,
Knowledge and vital piety;
Learning and holiness combined,
And truth and love, let all see
In those whom up to thee we give,
Thine, wholly thine, to die and live.
"A Prayer"

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Experience and Reason

(25 minutes)

Experience

Encourage response.

What role should experience play in our understanding of religious truth?

Should our experience ever impact the way we interpret Scripture?

Before Wesley, we see both the Early Church and Anglicanism using what we might call a “trilateral” of Scripture, tradition, and reason. It is Wesley’s unique contribution of experience that expands the methodology to a quadrilateral.

Refer to Resource 6-1 in the Student Guide.

How did Wesley use experience? First of all, Wesley believed strongly in “heart religion.” Christians can experience the *assurance* of God’s saving love in their lives. The doctrine of assurance—also known as the “witness of the Spirit”—is taken by Wesley from Romans 8: 16, where Paul states, “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.”

Wesley was also influenced by his own experience at Aldersgate when formulating and discussing the doctrine of assurance. Christian faith, for Wesley, is experiential. He believed that a person might affirm all the creeds, and believe all the right doctrines, but still be dead spiritually. The grace of God must be appropriated individually, resulting in assurance and a changed heart and life.

But did Wesley ever use experience as a source for doctrinal formulations themselves? Yes, and no. If by that question we mean that he reached conclusions based on experiences, *independent* from Scripture, then *no!* Wesley never used experience in this manner. Some have argued that he did in fact develop his doctrine of original sin from experience alone. However, what he was in fact doing was putting forth original sin as self-evident, obvious to all. Our experiences “prove” that humankind is corrupt. But Wesley never set aside Scripture, as if original sin was an extrabiblical concept.

The *yes* was Wesley's willingness to adapt his *interpretation* of Scripture when confronted by the experiences of his Methodist people. This is most obvious when considering two specific issues.

Refer to Resource 6-2 in the Student Guide.

First

Wesley developed his understanding of sanctification over time. The question of whether sanctification is instantaneous or a progressive process arose as Methodism developed through the decades. Wesley believed that the Bible was silent on the specific issue; it had much to say about sanctification and the life of holiness, but not about how or when it is achieved.

Wesley began to hear testimonies, many, many testimonies, to an instantaneous experience of grace after an initial conversion experience. These testimonies led Wesley to affirm that this deeper experience of sanctification can, in fact, be instantaneous, and thus expected now on the Christian journey. This modified Wesley's view. His mature position, according to Nazarene interpretation, is that sanctification is both progressive growth and an instantaneous experience.

This example points to a very important aspect of Wesley's use of experience. He saw legitimate experiences as communal in nature and consistent over time. In other words, Scripture should not be re-interpreted on the basis of individualistic "feelings," but rather on the basis of a whole community of faith testifying to a reality that has had lasting impact.

Second

Wesley applied this concept of experience being communal, also to women's leadership in the church. While early in his career, Wesley held to a traditional view of women, the reality that many Methodist women were sensing God's call to preach, finally led Wesley to affirm these "extraordinary" instances of God's direction as biblically based. He thus officially sanctioned women preachers and leaders in his Methodist societies.

Reason

Like experience, Wesley never used reason as an independent source of truth. As Rebekah Miles states, "reason is a tool, not a source." As discussed in our lesson on epistemology, we cannot reason our way to God without special revelation. But this is not to say that faith is unreasonable. Wesley was skeptical of a faith that had too much "enthusiasm" and not enough

From Gunter, p. 77.

Refer to Resource 6-3 in the Student Guide.

rationale. A true Christian is reasonable. Reason is essential.

Once again, Wesley finds a *via media* between those who discount reason and those who think too highly of it. What does Wesley believe reason does? Like the British empiricists at the time, Wesley believed that experiences, gained through sense perception, are the primary source for human knowledge. What reason does is help us process those experiences—to make sense of them, to organize them, and finally to communicate them to others. Reason also helps us to understand, analyze, structure, and communicate issues of faith and biblical truth. But ultimately, reason cannot produce a faith-filled life that expresses itself in the virtues—specifically in faith, hope, and love.

Small Groups: The Almost Christian

(30 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three to discuss the sermon that was read for homework.

Refer to Resource 6-4 in the Student Guide.

In your group, work together to find/develop answers for the following, from the Wesley sermon that was read for homework:

Sermon Title:

Text:

Thesis Statement:

Key Points:

Relevance for Today:

Call for Response:

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the sixth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- recognize the use of reason as a tool, not a source?
- discuss Wesley's view of experience as communal, not individualistic?

Look Ahead

Next week we will move from Wesley's theological method to his doctrine of God and creation.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a one-page response to the question: What is God's most important attribute? Defend your decision.

Paraphrase the Key Points from Resource 5-5 **or** 6-4. Keep in mind your contemporary/cultural audience. Give a contemporary/cultural illustration for one of the points.

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

We will continue with the hymn by Charles Wesley that was begun at the beginning of class:

Father, accept us through thy Son,
And ever by thy Spirit guide!
Thy wisdom in our lives be shown,
Thy name confessed and glorified
Thy power and love diffused abroad,
Till all the earth is filled with God.
"A Prayer"

Lesson 7

The Creative Triune God

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	The Creative Triune God	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 7-1
0:50	Critique of Paraphrases	Small Groups	
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 48-64.

Oden, Thomas. *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, pp. 29-54, 101-32.

Wesley's Sermons: "On the Trinity" and "The Unity of Divine Being"

Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Accountability

Have each of the students read their one-page essay. If the class is too large for all to read their essay, then you can divide into small groups or call on several students to read.

Allow the students to discuss what was read.

Return and collect homework.

The paraphrases will be used later in the lesson and can be collected at that time.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- explain Wesley's doctrine of God
- define Wesley's view of creation and its relevance for ecology
- understand Wesley's view of the Trinity

Motivator

All other doctrines start with the doctrine of God: "Ye know that the great end of religion is to renew our hearts in the image of God."

Sermon, "Original Sin," *Works* 2: 185

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: The Creative Triune God

(30 minutes)

General revelation can raise the question of God, but only special revelation answers the question, "What is God like?" John Wesley believed that God revealed himself to us most fully and finally in the person of Jesus Christ, to which Scripture gives witness.

And yet, if pushed Wesley would also say that God gives enough preening grace in the world, not only to impress upon the human heart the reality of God as eternal, infinite, all-powerful, all-knowing, etc., but also, to give some even more specific characteristics of this divine being, such as goodness, justice, and mercy. Wesley would say that the biblical witness makes these characteristics even clearer.

Refer to Resource 7-1 in the Student Guide.

These two types of attributes are usually denoted as "natural" and "moral" attributes. **Natural attributes** are those attributes of God that cannot be removed; without them God would cease to be God. These would be God's eternal, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent qualities. According to Wesley, these are essential, unchanging characteristics of God; they express God's nature.

The **moral attributes** are those qualities that give us more insight into the goodness of God, such as His love, grace, and mercy; the moral attributes express God's activity toward humankind.

The most important characteristic of God is that God is love.

Allow for response.

Is love a natural or a moral attribute?

Wesley's concern about the character of God was not just a speculative concern. He came to believe that a person's understanding of who God is, is crucial to that person's Christian life. If people misunderstand God, they will misunderstand faith and Christian practice.

The fact that God is love is the overarching principle of Wesley's theology. He will maintain God's love at any cost. By way of contrast, one could say that if pressed, a Calvinist would need to maintain God's sovereignty as the primary characteristic of God. This foundational

premise, either of love or power, would go on to shape Wesley and Calvin's whole theological vision, which moved Wesley and Calvin, then, in different directions.

The love of God is paramount and foundational for Wesley. And this love is personal, for Wesley. God is a personal God. Of course, the very word "personal" is an anthropomorphism—applying a human analogy to God, because God, in His essence, is beyond our understanding. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to say that God is relational.

One of the most important evidences of God's relational character is that God created human beings for relationship with Him. God is Creator and Sustainer, in Wesley's thought. This implies that all things originate from God (*creatio ex nihilo*, creation out of nothing), but also that the world only continues to exist and function because God presently sustains the world. God is intricately involved in life. Without God's sustaining work, nothing would continue to exist.

For the most part, Wesley adopted the scientific knowledge and religious belief structure about creation that was popular in his day. What is of interest is Wesley's persistent claim that there will be a *new* creation—earth itself will be renewed at the end of time.

Overall, Wesleyans have been interested in the question of ecology. Wesley's deep respect for the earth has influenced some to connect Wesleyan theology and ecological issues. Wesleyans should be careful about a cavalier attitude found in more fundamentalist traditions—the erosion of the earth evidences that the world will end soon. Why preserve it?

Allow for response.

Is Creator a natural or moral attribute of God?

Could God have not created and still been God?

Is ecology a religious issue?

Wesley would also maintain the relational character of God when talking about the Godhead, or the Trinity. It had been common in the "Western" part of Christendom—both in its Protestant and Catholic form—to emphasize the unity of the Godhead, and to subordinate the work of the Spirit to the work of the Father and the Son. But Wesley, more influenced by Eastern sources of the Early Church than by Western Christianity, gave emphasis to the distinctiveness of

the three Persons and gave the Spirit a great deal of attention in his thought. He is thoroughly Trinitarian, but his foci are different from his Western contemporaries.

What mattered most to Wesley was that God's characteristics, even His Trinitarian nature, influence how Christians experience and respond to God. If we love and worship the true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, than we will grow in love and virtue.

Allow for response.

What are some misconceptions of God that influence how persons respond to God?

Why is it important that our worship be Trinitarian?

How can we be sure that it is as we plan worship services?

Small Groups: Critique of Paraphrases

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into two groups—one for each of the two sermon choices.

In your group share the work that you have done in paraphrasing the Key Points of the sermon you chose.

Discuss and critique each other's work. The emphasis is on strengthening and helping each other, not in tearing each other apart. You may want to work together to rewrite the Key Points using the best of each other's work.

If there is time, you may want each group to report the work that they accomplished.

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the seventh lesson?

What, then, do you now consider to be the most important attribute of God?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- explain Wesley's doctrine of God?
- define Wesley's view of creation and its relevance for ecology?
- understand Wesley's view of the Trinity?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will study John Wesley's Christology and pneumatology.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

You can either assign the students to a doctrine or allow them to choose.

For half the class members: List what Scripture passages you would use to defend a doctrine of Jesus Christ.

For the other half of the class members: List what Scripture passages you would use to defend a doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Read Resource 7-2, "The Lord Our Righteousness."

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

Wesley had a very strong sense of the necessity of stewardship of creation. "We are now God's stewards. We are indebted to him for all we have . . . A steward is not at liberty to use what is lodged in his hands as he pleases, but as his master pleases . . . He is not the owner of any of these things but barely entrusted with them by another . . . Now this is exactly the case of everyone with relation to God. We are not at liberty to use what God has lodged in our hands as we please, but as God pleases, who alone is the possessor of heaven and earth and the Lord of every creature."

Sermon, "The Good Steward," *Works* 2:283-84

Lesson 8

The Person of Christ and the Person of the Spirit

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:25	The Person of Christ and the Person of the Spirit	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 8-1 Resource 8-2
0:45	The Lord Our Righteousness	Small Groups	Resource 8-3
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 94-141.

Oden, Thomas. *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, pp. 177-242.

Wesley's Sermons: "The Lord Our Righteousness" and "Spiritual Worship"

Lesson Introduction

(25 minutes)

Accountability

Divide the class into the two homework groups. Allow them time to share and discuss the scriptures that they selected to support their topic.

Have each group report to the class and allow some question and answer time.

Talk about these passages and what they add to our understanding of Jesus and the Spirit.

Return and collect homework.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- explain Wesley's view of Christology
- define practical monophysitism
- recognize the Spirit as a personal entity

Motivator

Quoted in Outler, pp. 234-35.

Wesley advises his ministers to:

"Declare in every sermon (and the more explicitly the better) that the first and great command to a Christian is 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ': that Christ is all in all, our 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption'; that all life, love, strength are from him alone, and all freely given to us through faith."

On Preaching Christ

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: The Person of Christ and the Person of the Spirit

(20 minutes)

Refer to Resource 8-1 in the Student Guide.

From Explanatory Notes on the New Testament, p. 730, Phil 2:6; p. 815, Heb 2:10.

Christ's Person

Wesley, being a devout Anglican, followed the Christology of the early ecumenical councils, the first four of which developed the orthodox belief in the nature of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is fully God, sharing the same essence or substance as the Father, and He who revealed the nature of God fully and finally. Jesus is unified with God in that He shares the same essence, the same attributes, and the same purposes.

As the Chalcedon creed affirms, Wesley states that Jesus is "real God, as real man," "perfect, as God and as man," and thus worthy of our true worship. And yet Wesley also recognizes that the Christology of the Early Church was philosophically bound—much of the creedal language does not come from Scripture but from the philosophical system prevalent in the late Roman Empire.

Wesley sought his Christology, as well as all of his theology, in the Bible first. He preferred scriptural language. For this reason, Wesley was not interested in some of the speculation around the issue of Christology that arose in his own day. In fact, the nature of Christ was not his primary interest. His emphasis lay in the *work* of Christ, also known as the doctrine of soteriology. His soteriology is broader than the emphasis of Western Christianity, which focused on the death of Jesus as the most significant aspect of salvation. Following in the footsteps of Irenaeus of Lyon (who wrote in the second century), Wesley affirms the saving significance of Jesus' life. The Incarnation is very significant in Wesley's thought.

And yet, according to Randy Maddox, some have argued that Wesley displays an ambivalence about Jesus' humanity. Common to Western Christianity is the tendency to keep Christ's two natures distinct. Eastern theology, on the other hand, has, as Maddox states, emphasized the "interpenetration" of the natures.

This has brought the charge of “monophysitism”—an Early Church Christological heresy that so emphasized Christ’s divine nature that His humanity was diminished. Thus the question that Maddox raises and addresses is the question of Wesley’s monophysitistic tendencies.

Maddox does see a “discomfort” with Jesus’ humanity in the writings of Wesley, particularly in his “Notes” on the New Testament. He tended to downplay any emotion or vulnerability that Jesus displays. Maddox explains this by focusing on Wesley’s resonance with Eastern Orthodoxy’s goal for humanity—to become like God (also known as deification or divinization)—what we might call the goal of the process of sanctification.

Christ’s incarnation and life, as well as His death, influences our understanding of and appropriation of holiness. Maddox also points out that the Atonement is based firmly on God’s initiative toward humankind and the divine Christ is the fullest expression of that initiative.

Allow for response.

When we say that our goal is to become Christlike, are we saying like His divinity or His perfect humanity?

Why is it important to maintain a strong emphasis on Jesus’ human nature?

As with all of Wesley’s theology, his Christology has practical relevance. He is much more interested in Christ’s work than His nature. And yet, even when talking about His nature, the *practical* implications always accompany his considerations.

The Spirit’s Person

The Spirit is the presence of God in the Christian life. It is key for Wesley that not only did Christ make provision for our redemption but also that such redemption is applied by the work of the Spirit. It is appropriate to say that Wesley paid closer attention to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit than his Western counterparts.

Refer to Resource 8-2 in the Student Guide.

Even to this day, persons standing in the Wesleyan-holiness tradition have a broader and deeper doctrine of the Spirit than those from the Reformed tradition. The Spirit is a “person” of the Godhead, with personal characteristics, and His own “beingness,” not just a subordinated, functional part of God or a present expression of Christ on earth.

From Maddox, pp. 120.

The Spirit is unique in His role in the Trinity and our lives. As Maddox says, "Wesley was clear that the Holy Spirit should be seen as fully personal, not merely a force or energy in our lives. . . . Grace for him was not simply a Divine-originated product bestowed upon humanity. It was the activity of God's very Self in human life . . . 'present to us in the indwelling Person of the Holy Spirit.'"

We will more fully investigate the work of the Spirit when we turn our attention in succeeding lessons to the doctrine of soteriology. There we will discuss the Spirit's sanctifying work and the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit. Under the topic of spiritual formation, we will discuss the fruit and gifts of the Spirit.

As way of summary, Wesley wrote:

I believe the infinite and eternal Spirit of God, equal with the Father and the Son, to be not only perfectly holy himself, but the immediate cause of all holiness in us: enlightening our understanding, rectifying our wills and affections, renewing our natures, uniting our persons to Christ, assuring us of the adoption of sons, leading us in our actions, purifying and sanctifying our souls and bodies to a full and eternal enjoyment of God.

Letter to a Roman Catholic

Do we spend enough time preaching/teaching about the Holy Spirit?

Allow for response.

Small Groups: The Lord Our Righteousness

(30 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three to discuss the sermon that was read for homework.

Refer to Resource 8-3 in the Student Guide.

In your group, work together to find/develop answers for the following, from the Wesley sermon that was read for homework:

Sermon Title:
Text:
Thesis Statement:
Key Points:
Relevance for Today:
Call for Response:

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the eighth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- explain Wesley's view of Christology?
- define practical monophysitism?
- recognize the Spirit as a personal entity?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will review Wesley's doctrines of humanity and sin.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a two-page essay: What is sin?

Read Resource 8-4, "Original Sin."

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

"I believe the infinite and eternal Spirit of God, equal with the Father and the Son, to be not only perfectly holy himself, but the immediate cause of all holiness in us."

Letter to a Roman Catholic

Lesson 9

Humanity and Sin

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:15	Humanity and Sin	Lecture	Resource 9-1— Resource 9-7
0:45	Original Sin	Small Groups	Resource 9-8
1:10	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 65-93.

Oden, Thomas. *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, pp. 133-76.

Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

Accountability

Call on three students to read their one-page essay.

Allow for discussion of what was read.

Return and collect homework.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the doctrines of the image of God
- discuss Wesley's view of the "fall"
- explain Wesley's doctrine of sin as idolatry and as relational

Motivator

"[A human being] is not mere matter, a clod of earth, a lump of clay, without sense or understanding, but a spirit like his Creator, a being endued not only with sense and understanding but also with a will exerting itself in various affections. To crown all the rest, he was endued with liberty, a power of directing his own affections and actions, a capacity of determining himself, of choosing good or evil."

Sermon, "On the Fall of Man," *Works* 2: 400-401

Lesson Body

Lecture: Humanity and Sin

(30 minutes)

Refer to Resource 9-1 in the Student Guide.

Humanity

Foundational to Wesley's understanding of humankind—also known as the doctrine of theological anthropology—is that human beings are relational. They were created for relationship. They were created for love, created to love. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop has highlighted that the very definition of the image of God—*imago Dei*—is this capacity to love.

Other traditions have defined the image in various ways. An interpretation of the image in the Early Church period—which was deemed heretical—proposed that the image was an actual physical resemblance to God. There seem to be many anthropomorphized images in Scripture. But ultimately, orthodoxy claimed that these should be interpreted metaphorically.

Many Western interpreters of the image have stated that it resides in our human capacity to reason. This is the view of many classical theologians, including the great Catholic theologian, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1275). Another interpretation is that humanity resembles God in its relationship to lesser creation. Just as God stands in a hierarchical position over humanity, so, too, does humanity stand in a hierarchical position over the earth. Still another interpretation of the image is that of human freedom. God created us free and self-determining.

Wesley was aware of these various interpretations, but, according to Wynkoop and others, he holds strongly to the image as love. H. Ray Dunning has expanded on the definitive relationships of humanity as it was meant to be: we were created to love God, love others, and have an appropriate love for self and for the world.

There are moments in Wesley's writing when he distinguishes between the natural and moral image in humanity. These parallel the natural and moral attributes of God. "That is, the natural Image of God in humanity referred to those characteristics or faculties definitive of being human, while the moral Image of God referred to the 'character' of holiness and love that

From Maddox, .g 68.

God intended for humanity." This is similar to Eastern theology's distinction between the image and likeness of God.

Refer to Resource 9-2 in the Student Guide.

Key to understanding Wesley's view of humanity and salvation is the fact that after the Fall, the image remains. It is distorted but not obliterated. And, therefore, salvation for Wesley—broadly defined to include sanctification—is the process of the restoration and renewal of the image of God in us. This idea that the image remains after the Fall has led some Wesley interpreters to speak of a doctrine of total *deprivity* instead of total *depravity*.

Through the Fall, we are *deprived* of our primary relationship with God, and our other relationships are therefore distorted, but the capacity for love and the hope of renewal remains. And prevenient grace is immediately offered to compensate for the effects of the Fall. The very strong Calvinist doctrine of total *depravity*, on the other hand, is not as optimistic. Through the Fall, we are totally depraved, without God in the world, and corrupted beyond repair in this life. These two very different understandings of the Fall and the *imago Dei* produced very different doctrines of salvation in Wesley and Calvin.

Refer to Resource 9-3 in the Student Guide.

Wesley speaks of certain human states, the natural, legal, and evangelical. The **natural** state is only a hypothetical state since the Fall. It was the state in which God created Adam and Eve. Only Jesus, as the Christ, was born into a natural state, free from original sin. By the **legal** state Wesley means our position before God prior to an experience of new birth. We live under the law, and if we allow the law to do its work, it will drive us to the place of recognizing our need for salvation. Prevenient grace assists us in being awakened to this need. The **evangelical** state, then, is subsequent to new birth in Christ; we are not under the law, but now under grace. This new birth begins the process of the renewal of the image of God in us.

Sin

What happened when Adam and Eve sinned? And how does original sin affect us? Let's begin our investigation with a discussion of the essence of original sin.

While most interpreters of Wesley have followed a traditional—Augustinian—interpretation of original sin as pride, a new interpretation of Wesley has been offered by Dr. Leclerc, published in *Singleness of Heart: Gender, Sin, and Holiness in Historical*

Scarecrow Press, 2001.

Refer to Resource 9-4 in the Student Guide.

See sermon "Original Sin," Works 6:57-62.

See sermon "Spiritual Idolatry," Works 6:441.

Refer to Resource 9-5 in the Student Guide.

Perspective. While Wesley used the word *pride* often, it is never used as the overarching paradigm of original sin, according to this analysis.

Wesley's most direct sermon on the topic—"Original Sin" (1854)—shows this lack of dominance of the word *pride*. Here, *idolatry* is unmistakably classified as the primary definition of original sin, with "pride," "self-will," and "love of the world" listed under it. Wesley says, "all pride is idolatry"; as is "love of the world." In other words, there are two forms of original sin: inordinate love of self—pride—and inordinate love of others, here listed as "love of the world"; Wesley further explains this phrase: "What is more natural to us than to seek happiness in the creature, instead of the Creator?"

Wesley also wrote a sermon entitled "Spiritual Idolatry," which he penned nearer the end of his life. It will be helpful to quote one passage at length:

Undoubtedly it is the will of God that we should all love one another. It is his will that we should love our relations and our Christian brethren with a peculiar love; and those in particular, whom he has made particularly profitable to our souls. These we are commanded to "love fervently;" yet still "with a pure heart." But is not this "impossible with man?" to retain the strength and tenderness of affection, and yet, without any stain to the soul, with unspotted purity? I do not mean only unspotted by lust. I know this is possible. I know a person may have an unutterable affection for another without any desire of this kind. But is it without idolatry? Is it not loving the creature more than the Creator? Is it not putting a man or woman in the place of God? giving them your heart? Let this be carefully considered, even by those whom God has joined together; by husbands and wives, parents and children. It cannot be denied, that these ought to love one another tenderly: they are commanded so to do. But they are neither commanded nor permitted to love one another idolatrously. Yet how common is this! How frequently is a husband, a wife, a child, put in the place of God? How many that are accounted good Christians fix their affections on each other, so as to leave no place for God! They seek their happiness in the creature, not in the Creator. One may truly say to the other, I view thee, lord and end of my desires. That is, "I desire nothing more but thee! Thou art the thing that I long for! All my desire is unto thee, and unto the remembrance of thy name." Now, if this is not flat idolatry, I cannot tell what is.

Wesley strongly believed that what Adam and Eve did in the garden had lasting effects on the rest of humanity. And yet, interestingly, he is not concerned about *how* these effects are transmitted as much as the fact that *they were*. What does concern Wesley is the question of the guilt associated with original sin.

Refer to Resource 9-6 in the Student Guide.

Western theology states that the state of original sin, the corruption of humanity into which we are born, makes us guilty before God, even though we did nothing individually and volitionally to deserve it. The *guilt* as well as the *corruption* is inherited. Wesley maintained, however, that original sin does not bring guilt but only a predisposition toward sin. We are guilty for the sins that we voluntarily commit. Wesley is clear to distinguish between “inbeing sin” and actual sins. Thus the classical definition of sin often quoted by Wesleyans: “Sin is a willful transgression of a known law of God.”

Some have said that Wesley takes a *via media* between Augustine and Pelagius on the topic of sin. Thus Wesley has been called a “semi-Pelagian.”

Refer to Resource 9-7 in the Student Guide.

Augustine and Pelagius were contemporaries in the late third, early fourth centuries. Pelagius held that not only did human beings *not* inherit guilt from Adam, but also *did not* inherit any corruption. And therefore each person has the same choice that Adam and Eve had in the garden. He affirmed that we are born with *natural freedom*.

Augustine, on the other hand, pushed hard for a very strong doctrine of original sin, total depravity, and inherited guilt. The conclusion of the debate was that Pelagius was deemed heretical by orthodox Christianity.

Wesley rejected Pelagius—although he showed some sympathy for him. And yet he does not parallel Augustine’s doctrine either. The *via media* comes through Wesley’s doctrine of prevenient grace. The grace that God gives to every human being born into the world gives that person *graced freedom*.

Although a bent toward sin is in fact inherited, grace is given so that sinning—actual sin—is maintained as a choice for which we can rightly be held accountable. Wesley’s rejection of inherited guilt maintains God as truly just. It also keeps Wesley from being pressed into a position of affirming predestination.

Augustine's doctrine of sin was so strong that only a predetermined, irresistible act of God could save us. Wesley avoided this logical conclusion through his affirmation of universal prevenient grace.

Small Groups: Original Sin

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three to discuss the sermon that was read for homework.

Refer to Resource 9-8 in the Student Guide.

In your group, work together to find/develop answers for the following, from the Wesley sermon that was read for homework:

Sermon Title:

Text:

Thesis Statement:

Key Points:

Relevance for Today:

Call for Response:

Group Discussion: Student Response

(15 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

This is a very important topic. Spend the time necessary for discussion and thought.

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the ninth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- understand the doctrines of the image of God?
- discuss Wesley's view of the "fall"?
- explain Wesley's doctrine of sin as idolatry and as relational?

Look Ahead

Next week we will begin to examine Wesley's most important doctrine: Soteriology.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a one-page essay: What does it mean to be saved?

Paraphrase the Key Points from Resource 8-3 **or** 9-8. Keep in mind your contemporary/cultural audience. Give a contemporary/cultural illustration for one of the points.

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

Of original sin, Wesley writes, "If therefore, we take away this foundation, that [humanity] is by nature foolish and sinful . . . the Christian system falls apart at once."

The Doctrine of Original Sin, Works 9:194

Lesson 10

The Way of Salvation, Part 1

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:15	The Way of Salvation	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 10-1 Resource 10-2 Resource 10-3 Resource 10-4
0:55	Critique of Paraphrase	Small Groups	
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 157-91.

Oden, Thomas, *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, pp. 277-344.

Taylor, Richard S., ed. *Beacon Dictionary of Theology*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1983.

Wesley's Sermon: "Salvation by Faith"

Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

Accountability

Call on three students to read their essays.

Allow for discussion of the ideas presented.

Return and collect homework.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- differentiate between the "way" of salvation versus the "order" of salvation
- identify the various theories of Atonement
- understand the roles of "awakening," "faith," and "repentance" in salvation
- understand Wesley's doctrine of assurance
- describe the seven concomitants of salvation

Motivator

"And, first, let us inquire what is *salvation*? The salvation which is here spoken of is not what is frequently understood by that word: the going to heaven, eternal happiness. It is not the soul's going to paradise . . . It is not a blessing which lies on the other side of death . . . The very words of the text itself put this beyond all question, 'Ye *are* saved.' It is not something at a distance. It is a present thing, a blessing which through the free mercy of God ye are now in possession of. Nay, the words may be rendered, and that with equal propriety, 'Ye *have been* saved.' So that the salvation which is here spoken of might be extended to the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul till it is consummated in glory."

Quoted in Outler, p. 273.

Sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation"

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: The Way of Salvation

(40 minutes)

From Maddox, p. 144.

Wesley's doctrine of sin affected his doctrine of salvation. Again following Eastern theology, he conceptualized sin as a "disease" that needed the healing touch of God as Physician. His understanding of salvation, then, can be termed "therapeutic."

Western, Reformed theology focuses on the need for the forgiveness of guilt found in justification, and on God as Judge and Justifier. Wesley is deeply indebted to this tradition, as expressed particularly by the Moravians, in his understanding of *sola fide*. However, Wesley went further and envisioned the whole of the work of God to include justification and *sanctification*. In this lesson we will look at the work of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in the *initial* work of salvation, which Wesley preferred to call "New Birth."

Atonement Theories

Refer to Resource 10-1 in the Student Guide.

The work of Christ on the Cross has been interpreted in many different ways. These are known as Atonement theories.

The Ransom Theory

This theory envisions humanity being held captive by Satan. Christ's death is the ransom, or payment given in order to free us from Satan's imprisonment. The resurrection of Jesus, however, is God's way of taking back the ransom from Satan.

The Satisfaction Theory

This theory is concerned that sin has been an affront to God's sense of honor. This honor must be vindicated, and thus God sends Jesus to die on the Cross as a means of atoning for sin and of restoring God's sense of satisfaction that sin has been paid for.

The Penal Satisfaction Theory

This is very similar to the satisfaction theory, but it is not God's honor that needs vindication, but God's justice. It is just that sin be punished. Christ thus takes the punishment upon himself, thus maintaining God as a just God.

The *Christus Victor*

This theory was developed in the Early Church period. It affirms simply that Christ has been victorious over sin by taking sin upon himself innocently and by being raised from the dead by the power of God. This same power can defeat sin within us.

The Recapitulation Theory

This theory was also developed early in the history of the Church. It focuses on Jesus Christ as the Second Adam. This theory focuses on more than the Cross; it envelops all of Christ's life, lived obediently for God. What Adam did wrong through disobedience, Jesus does right through obedience. The Cross is the greatest expression of that obedience. Jesus in a sense redeems human life by giving us a model for living the life fully committed to the will of God.

The Governmental Theory

This theory is most often associated with Arminianism, formally developed by a student of James Arminius, Hugo Grotius. Christ's death allowed God to offer forgiveness to all who repented while at the same time retain governmental control. An important distinction must be made from the *satisfaction theory* in that Christ did not pay the penalty for our sin but instead suffered for us.

Such a distinction is crucial for Arminians because this atonement is unlimited. Thus, if Christ had paid the penalty for all then no one would be in need of redemption because Christ would have already taken the punishment. Instead the *governmental theory* insists that Christ's suffering was a substitute for penalty so that persons could receive forgiveness yet at the same time understand the seriousness of their sin as to not return to it.

The Moral Influence Theory

This theory was established by Abelard (1079-1142) and attempts to deal with some of the flaws in the *penal satisfaction theory*. For the *moral influence theory* the Atonement is found in the Incarnation instead of in the Crucifixion and Resurrection. Christ came to set the perfect example of love and only died as another demonstration among many of that love. Salvation is experienced as an act of recognition of this ultimate example of love as a lifestyle.

Wesley was interested in the objective reality of the Atonement, but also equally interested in the subjective influence on us. He borrowed from several different theories on different occasions to make his point.

Atonement theories primarily speak to what Christ accomplished for us. But the doctrine of soteriology goes much deeper. It asks the question: "How is Christ's atonement applied to us personally?" Randy Maddox has suggested that rather than fitting Wesley into the traditional model of *ordo salutis*, it is more appropriate to talk about Wesley as having a *via salutis*.

That is to say that rather than envisioning the Christian life as a series of steps, an "order of salvation," it should be conceptualized as a "way of salvation," as a moment by moment process that involves God's action and our response. For our purposes here, we will talk about certain salvific steps. But this is for the sake of clarity only. In Wesley's *way*, the steps flow fluidly into each other.

Prevenient Grace

Refer to Resource 10-2 in the Student Guide.

Salvation begins with God's free gift of prevenient grace, given from the moment we are born. Prevenient grace is the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. It is prevenient grace that draws or "woos" us to God, awakening our souls for the need of God. This grace, as all grace, can be resisted. But if it is allowed to do its work, prevenient grace and the presence of the Holy Spirit will bring a person to the place of "awakening."

This is the place where we are convicted and convinced of our own sinfulness and helplessness apart from God. This awareness of need can be the result of events, sermons, the witness of others, or even something more internal as the Spirit does His work. If we allow ourselves to be awakened, the next step is the step of repentance.

Before we move on to repentance, there are three other functions of prevenient grace that should be noted here.

First of all, the Holy Spirit is so active in the world that we can say "all truth is God's truth." One does not need to be a Christian in order to be a brilliant brain surgeon. In fact, we'd probably all choose to be operated on by an excellent brain surgeon who is an

atheist rather than a Christian brain surgeon who is mediocre.

Second, prevenient grace, which is given to every human being, will provide saving grace in situations where full acceptance of Jesus Christ is not possible. These situations would include children who die before the age of accountability, the mentally infirm, and persons who have never had that opportunity to hear the gospel, such as a sixth century, BC, Hindu woman. Persons who have not heard the gospel will be judged according to their response to the "light"—the prevenient grace—that they have been given—Romans 1 and 2. Wesley spent a great deal of time contemplating this aspect of the Spirit's work.

Third, according to Wesleyans, prevenient grace makes us accountable before God for our sin. If we are born into a condition of original sin that makes us so depraved that we cannot help but to choose evil, and that continually, how can a just God hold us accountable for what we cannot help? Prevenient grace restores to us a graced-free-will so that God's justice is preserved as justifiable.

Allow for response.

Do any of you connect with this sense of God's Spirit "wooing" you to himself prior to your conversion experience?

Repentance

Refer to Resource 10-3 in the Student Guide.

Awakening is closely connected to repentance in Wesley's scheme. In a sense, it is hard to distinguish where one ends and the other begins. It can be equated with "godly sorrow"—that sense that because of our sin, we are not in right relationship with God and yet deeply wish to be. The second meaning of repentance is the actual relinquishing of sin and amending our ways. It is key for Wesley that this second aspect of repentance is only possible *after* faith. Otherwise, we would be inappropriately connecting salvation to our own efforts at righteousness. It is only grace, through faith, that enables us to repent in this second sense.

Faith

Wesley's debt to the Moravians and the Lutheran tradition on the nature of faith cannot be overestimated. However, Wesley did not simply accept such an understanding without modification. He developed his thought over time. Wesley's initial

encounter with the Moravians changed Wesley's understanding of salvation. Put simply, whereas before 1737 Wesley believed that sanctification preceded justification, after 1738 Wesley reversed the order.

We are justified by faith alone, *sola fide*. We do not make ourselves righteous in order to make ourselves worthy of God's justification. Justification is a free gift of God, as is faith itself. But in light of Wesley's primary interest in the "therapeutic" and "sanctifying" aspect of salvation—rather than in the Western emphasis on forgiveness of guilt—and in light of Wesley's understanding of the dynamic, cooperative relationship we have with God in our own salvation—rather than the Reformed emphasis on the irresistibility of grace—Wesley's very definition of faith broadens.

Faith only as assent to a set of truth claims would never be true faith in Wesley's "experiential religion." Also, faith extends beyond justification and becomes the essence of trust in Christ for every moment along the way of salvation. Faith *is* the cooperative relationship we have with God. This is known as *synergism*—as opposed to monergism—and is foundational to all of Wesleyan theology.

Witness of the Spirit

Key to Wesley's understanding of the Christian experience is his doctrine of the witness of the Spirit, also known as the doctrine of assurance. As with many of his doctrines, Wesley's doctrine of assurance developed over time. The early—pre-Aldersgate—Wesley connected assurance with faith. But at this point, faith for Wesley was a rational assent to the basic propositions of the Christian, particularly Anglican tradition. His own spiritual struggles and his lack of assurance, despite his orthodoxy, soon led him to question the validity of this type of rationalistic assurance.

Wesley's contact with the Moravians moved his understanding on the doctrine of assurance to a place where Wesley expected that all Christians could perceive the work and presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Wesley's understanding was based on Romans 8: 15-16, which reads, "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba,' Father. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." Wesley believed, with the Moravians,

that we should anticipate this experience to such a degree that if we do not have it, it is appropriate to question our faith in Christ.

The Moravian insistence that, following an experience of assurance, Christians should experience joy, and peace, and certainty, and such continually, eventually soured in Wesley's mind. The mature Wesley came to believe that while we should expect the assurance found in Romans, it is possible to have saving faith without it. It is also possible to lose one's assurance without in fact losing one's salvation.

Concomitants of Salvation

Each of the following is a designator for a different aspect of the "moment" of salvation.

Refer to Resource 10-4 in the Student Guide.

Justification

To be justified by God implies that our sins are forgiven. The guilt of our sins is taken away. God no longer condemns us for our transgressions against Him. Wesley affirmed justification. However, he believed that fuller salvation goes beyond justification to address the underlying problem or disease. Wesley's "therapeutic" model takes him further.

Regeneration

Wesley's favorite term for salvation was "New Birth." This concept implies that we are regenerated, "born again," and are new creations in Christ. Wesley never wanted his doctrine of sanctification to minimize the power and significance of new birth.

Adoption

As stated above in the section on assurance, Wesley strongly affirms the significance of being a child of God and co-heir with Christ. This aspect of salvation also implies that we are born into a family, a community of brothers and sisters in Christ. This prevents us from imagining salvation as a purely privatistic event and life.

Redemption

Redemption implies liberation from sin. Exodus acts as a metaphor for redemption. Redemption also implies receiving a new purpose, namely, to love God with all our being, and our neighbor as ourselves. Our lives are redeemed from sin and for love

Reconciliation

We are reconciled to God. This is a theme that we find in Wesley's writing, and also in Charles's hymns. This is the sense that the alienation and estrangement from God implicit in sin is overcome when we come into a new relationship with God.

Initial Sanctification

Wesley never used this term, but it signifies his belief that the moment of salvation begins the process of being made righteous. We will cover this in more detail in the next lesson on sanctification.

Small Groups: Critique of Paraphrase

(20 minutes)

Divide the class into two groups—one for each of the two sermon choices.

In your group share the work that you have done in paraphrasing the Key Points of the sermon you chose.

Discuss and critique each other's work. The emphasis is on strengthening and helping each other, not in tearing each other apart. You may want to work together to rewrite the Key Points using the best of each other's work.

If there is time, you may want each group to report the work that they accomplished.

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the tenth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

- Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you
- differentiate between the “way” of salvation versus the “order” of salvation?
 - identify the various theories of atonement?
 - understand the roles of “awakening,” “faith,” and “repentance” in salvation?
 - understand Wesley’s doctrine of assurance?
 - describe the seven concomitants of salvation?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will continue to examine soteriology and sanctification.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write your testimony of salvation and sanctification.

Choose one of the three Wesley sermons where you paraphrased the Key Points. Using the information and ideas gathered in discussion from your small groups, write a new introduction for the sermon using contemporary/cultural language, text and presentation.

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley’s journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

On the witness of the Spirit, Wesley writes:
“None who believes the Scriptures to be the Word of God can doubt the importance of such a truth as this; a truth revealed therein not once only, not obscurely, not incidentally; but frequently and that in express terms—but solemnly and of set purpose as denoting one of the peculiar privileges of the children of God: ‘The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God’ (Rom 8: 16).”

Quoted in Outler, p. 209.

Sermon, “The Witness of the Spirit, Discourse II”

Lesson 11

The Way of Salvation, Part 2

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:15	Christian Perfection	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 11-1 Resource 11-2 Resource 11-3 Resource 11-4
0:50	Critique of Sermon Introduction	Small Groups	
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bassett, Paul M. *Exploring Christian Holiness: The Historical Development, Vol. 2*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985.

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 176-91.

Oden, Thomas. *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, pp. 311-44.

Wesley's Sermon: "Christian Perfection"

Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

Accountability

In groups of three, have the students share their testimonies.

Return and collect homework.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- define Christian perfection
- define sanctification—initial, entire, and gradual toward glorification
- identify summary statements regarding Wesley's understanding of holiness

Motivator

Wesley distinguishes two aspects of salvation: "This is sanctification, which is, indeed, in some degree, the immediate fruit of justification but nevertheless is a distinct gift of God and of a totally different nature. The one [justification] implies what God does for us through his Son; the other [sanctification] what he works in us by his Spirit."

Quoted in Outler, p. 201.

Sermon, "Justification by Faith"

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Christian Perfection

(35 minutes)

Perhaps no other doctrine of Wesley's has been so lauded, so influential, and so debated as his doctrine of Christian perfection. Other modules will deal with this doctrine more extensively. Our purpose here is to review the doctrine as Wesley understood it. Of course, there is no consensus among Wesley scholars about how Wesley himself envisioned holiness. The following reflections are by a Wesley scholar—Dr. Diane Leclerc—who interprets Wesley through a lens greatly influenced by the concerns of the Holiness Movement, of which the Church of the Nazarene is a part. This lesson will review

- Wesley's sources for the doctrine
- Wesley's key definitions around the doctrine—"What is it?"
- Wesley's understanding of its structure—"How does it happen?"

Wesley's Sources

Refer to Resource 11-1 in the Student Guide.

Wesley believed in Christian perfection because it was biblical, but also, in no small part, because he believed it was rooted in the Christian tradition. Wesley was extremely familiar with Early Church writers who offer an understanding of holiness; such persons as Ignatius of Antioch, the Shepherd of Hermas, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Macarius, John Chrysostom, Ephraim Syrus, and others.

From these writers Wesley gained great insight into the potential of God's grace to empower and enable a holy life. When Wesley read Macarius, he said his heart "sang." Overall, these writers provided Wesley with an intense optimism about the possibility of human transformation through a cooperation of grace and human response.

There are writers from the Middle Ages, as well as from the later Catholic and Pietistic traditions that greatly influenced Wesley's thought. He encouraged his preachers to read deeply from the Christian tradition, and often provided them with excerpts to aid their understanding. In 1725 Wesley named three significant authors who greatly influenced his understanding of

Referred to in Lesson 1, Resource 1-3.

holiness: Thomas à Kempis, Jeremy Taylor, and William Law.

From these individuals Wesley garnered important insights into the nature of perfection, such as the real potential to live out pure intentions, the need to imitate Christ as the model of holy living, and love for God and neighbor as definitive and normative of "perfection." This quote comes from Wesley's *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. It acts as a summary of Wesley's gleanings from à Kempis, Taylor, and Law.

In one view, [Christian perfection] is purity of intentions, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God. In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all filthiness, all inward as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of Him that created it. In yet another, it is the loving of God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves.

Definition—What Is It?

Refer to Resource 11-2 in the Student Guide.

In 1741 Wesley wrote the sermon "Christian Perfection." He attempted to define what Christian perfection is by first examining what it is *not*. However mature Christians might become in this life, they do not approach the absolute perfections of omniscience, infallibility, or omnipotence. Their understanding remains limited, their judgments are subject to error, and their actions are sometimes limited by "infirmities" of the present human condition.

Allow for response.

What might be classified as an "infirmity" today?

Christian perfection does not at all imply that a Christian is free from ongoing temptation in this life. On the positive side, Wesley believed that even newborn Christians are perfect in a sense that they need not commit outward sin. Later, Wesley modified his beliefs about the relationship of Christian perfection and sin, and stated that Christians are never made *incapable* of sin, but that sin no longer need *rule* in the heart of the believer.

In 1761, Wesley wrote "On Perfection," in which he stated that Christian perfection is

- having the mind of Christ
- the renewal of the image of God in us
- perfect love
- inward and outward holiness

Wesley's primary definition of holiness is that of love. It is love that "excludes" sin from the Christian life. According to Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, we have misunderstood holiness if we see it only as the absence of sin, or sinlessness. Holiness is not an absence, but a presence, the presence of love.

Allow for response.

What is holiness?

How does entire sanctification occur?

Occurrence—How Does It Happen?

Refer to Resource 11-3 in the Student Guide.

When Wesley uses the word "sanctification" he is referring to the whole Christian life and the "therapeutic" or spiritual healing that occurs throughout the spiritual journey. He also uses the word "salvation" in the very same sense. But "sanctification" also has several adjectival signifiers that have different meanings.

Wesley refers to what we call **initial sanctification** to make clear that the imparted righteousness of Christ begins to take effect in the new believer. Here God begins the process of actually making us righteous or holy. What we might call **growth in grace** is the "progressive" or "gradual sanctification" that occurs between new birth and "entire sanctification," *and* between "entire sanctification" and "final sanctification"—also known as glorification. Wesley strongly emphasizes the need for progressive sanctification.

By **entire sanctification** Wesley means a deeper experience of God's grace. In *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* he offers some explanation. He says that this experience is not so early as justification, nor so late as death. He stresses that the gradual work must both precede and follow the experience. He emphasizes that it is "amissible," capable of being lost. He also tackles the question of "instantaneousness" by making his classical metaphorical statement that a person may be dying for some time, but that inevitably a moment of death does occur.

Wesley scholars are most divided by the question of how Wesley envisions entire sanctification to transpire.

Some claim that the Holiness Movement's stress on "instantaneousness" goes well beyond Wesley's intentions and "rigidifies" his more fluid and dynamic theology. Others claim that a definite, second crisis experience is very much in line with Wesley's own paradigm and should not be seen as a 19th-century renovation. Dr. Leclerc's interpretation is that Wesley hoped that *both* an instantaneous experience and gradual growth would receive equal emphasis.

Summary Statements

Refer to Resource 11-4 in the Student Guide.

Maddox, pp. 176-91.

1. Wesley holds to love for God and neighbor as descriptive and normative of the Christian life. Love is not only present but "ruling" in the heart of Wesley's mature Christian.
2. Wesley came to equate entire sanctification with a level of Christian maturity and was cautious about claiming it too soon in the Christian pilgrimage, but he also exhorted persons to seek the experience "now."
3. Holiness, or perfect love, is a work of grace that is both progressive and instantaneous.
4. Holiness, or perfect love, is synergistic; it is lived out in a dynamic relationship with God who provides the grace we need to be holy as we cooperate with such grace.
5. Wesley became suspicious of terms such as the "destruction" of sin, for the reason that this implied an impossibility of sin's return; but Wesley was highly optimistic about how love shed abroad in our hearts through faith can "exclude" sin. He tired of the debate over whether or not Christian perfection was sinless. His emphasis was on love, not sinlessness as the goal of Christian maturity.
6. One of his major points, if not the major, for Wesley was that the Christian life did not have to remain a life of continual struggle. For him, to deny this type of victorious transformation was to deny the sufficiency of God's empowering grace—to make the power of sin greater than the power of grace.

Small Groups: Critique of Sermon Introduction

(25 minutes)

In groups of three, have the students evaluate each other's introductions from the sermon that they have chosen.

You may want to group the students together who are working on the same sermon or group them so that there are three different sermons in each group.

Over the next two lessons the students will continue working on one of Wesley's sermons—re-writing the introduction, close, and the body. The students should stay in the same group for all three of the small-group times for this activity.

In your group listen to the sermon introductions of each member.

Ask questions of each other and offer suggestions for improvement.

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the eleventh lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- define Christian perfection?
- define sanctification—initial, entire, and gradual toward glorification?
- identify summary statements regarding Wesley's understanding of holiness?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will examine Wesley's understanding of the means of grace and his views on the Sacraments.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a one-page essay: How do you typically conduct (or participate in) a service where Communion is served? What makes a "good" Communion service?

Continue with the Wesley sermon that you chose for rewriting the introduction. Using the information and ideas gathered in discussion from your small groups, write a new closing/call for response for the sermon using contemporary/cultural language and presentation.

Read Resource 11-5, "The Duty of Constant Communion."

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

The Holiness Movement's interpretation of sanctification would emphasize Wesley's words here:
It is of importance to observe that there is an

inseparable connection between these three points—except it *by faith*, expect it *as you are*, and expect it *now!* To deny one of them is to deny them all. To allow one is to allow them all. Do *you* believe we are sanctified by faith? Be true then to your principle and look for this blessing just as you are, neither better nor worse; as a poor sinner that has still nothing to pay, nothing to plead but 'Christ *died.*' And if you look for it as you are, then expect it *now.* Stay for nothing! Why should you? Christ is ready and he is all you want. He is waiting for you! He is at the door! Let your inmost soul cry out,

Come in, come in, thou heavenly Guest!
Nor hence again remove;
But sup with me and let the feast
Be everlasting love."

Quoted in Outler, 282.

Sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation"

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Lesson 12

Means of Grace and Sacraments

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:15	Means of Grace and Sacraments	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 12-1 Resource 12-2 Resource 12-3 Resource 11-5
1:00	Critique of Sermon Close/Call to Respond	Small Groups	
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 192-215.

Staples, Rob L. *Outward Sign and Inward Grace*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1991.

Wesley's sermon, "The Duty of Constant Communion."

Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

Accountability

Call on 2-3 students to read their one-page essays.

Allow for questions and discussion.

Return and collect homework.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- discuss and identify the means of grace
- articulate the Wesleyan understanding of infant and adult baptism
- explore the meaning of the Eucharist in contrast to other positions

Motivator

From Works, Jackson Edition, vol 5:187.

"By 'means of grace' I understand outward signs, words, or actions, ordained by God, to be ordinary channels whereby he might convey to persons prevenient, justifying, or sanctifying grace . . . All who desire the grace of God are to wait for it in the means that he has given."

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Means of Grace and Sacraments

(45 minutes)

Wesley's Means of Grace

Refer to Wesley Quotes in the Student Guide Lesson 12.

At the very heart of Wesley's understanding of spiritual formation, of how a Christian grows, is his concept of the "means of grace." He writes: "By 'means of grace' I understand outward signs, words, or actions, ordained by God, to be ordinary channels whereby he might convey to persons prevenient, justifying, or sanctifying grace." Further, "All who desire the grace of God are to wait for it in the means that he has given."

The means of grace are the ways in which we open ourselves to experience God's love and grace in our lives. Too often we do activities such as reading our Bibles or praying, because by doing them we "prove" to God our willingness to obey, or worse yet, as a work by which we earn God's favor.

From Works, Jackson Edition, vol 5:189.

But Wesley's understanding takes us beyond sheer obedience or any type of works righteousness, by emphasizing that the ways in which we act as Christians are actually beneficial to our own growth and transformation into the likeness of Christ. To be perfectly clear, Wesley strongly stated that "the use of the means will never atone for one sin; that is the blood of Christ alone." But how do we receive the benefits of Christ's atonement? Wesley is clear: by attending to the means.

Refer to Resource 12-1 in the Student Guide.

There are three categories into which Wesley has placed certain activities.

First are the **general** means of grace. In this list he includes keeping the commandments, denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and exercising the presence of God. By denying ourselves, Wesley believed that we could draw closer to God when distractions are willingly set aside. By "taking up our cross," Wesley believed we could also draw closer to God and His purposes, by doing things that go against our natural inclinations. Exercising the presence of God is the practice of being conscious of God throughout the day. Each of these general means open us to the grace of God.

By the **instituted or particular** means of grace, Wesley refers to those means that Christ himself admonishes His disciples to participate in, such as prayer, searching the Scriptures, the Lord's Supper, fasting, and "Christian conference," by which Wesley meant Christian conversation. As Christians speak about God together, grace is poured out upon the participants in such conversation.

The **prudential** means of grace have been developed over time, having been recognized as "wise" actions in the life of growth in grace. These include class meetings (small groups), prayer meetings, covenant and watch night services, love feasts (a type of testimony service), visiting the sick, doing all the good one can, and reading devotional classics.

Wesley on the Sacraments

Much of the following can be gleaned from an important book in Wesleyan theology, Rob Staples's Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The Place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality.

Baptism

Infant Baptism

Refer to Resource 12-2 in the Student Guide.

The Church of the Nazarene has always affirmed infant baptism, even though most members do not realize this. It is up to the parents to decide whether to dedicate or baptize their infant child. Infant baptism comes from our Methodist roots, and the theology of John Wesley. When we baptize children, we are acknowledging together several important characteristics of God.

- First of all, we proclaim together our common belief in the reality of God's prevenient grace. While a dedication focuses on the *parent's* commitment to the child, a baptism focuses on *God's* commitment to the child, and thus is one of the few places where the Church celebrates together the doctrine of prevenient grace.

Prevenient grace is that grace that makes the infant a part of the Body of Christ. It is the grace that keeps him or her safe in God's loving arms if anything were to happen to him or her; and it is the grace that will draw him or her to a place of personal commitment to Jesus Christ when he or she gets older, if he or she responds. It is grace

given by the Holy Spirit, who we believe will mysteriously work in his or her life.

- In presenting a child for baptism, the parents are making a commitment before the people of God to do everything in their power to guide and nurture their child spiritually. But even more so, we acknowledge that God himself is committed to the child in deep and lasting ways—in ways beyond what we could ask or imagine.
- We believe that baptism, as a sign of the new covenant, is a sign of God's promises even to the child, as circumcision was a sign of God's covenant in the Old Testament. We believe that God owns the child as His own. Baptism is a sacrament, and we do recognize as a denomination, the very sacredness of this event, as we acknowledge the sacredness of life.

Believer Baptism

The Church of the Nazarene also affirms the validity of adult or "believer's" baptism. This would have been much more rare in Wesley's own context, because nearly every British citizen would have been baptized as an infant into the Church of England.

From Staples, pp. 119-60.

It is thus up to scholars, such as Rob Staples, to develop a Wesleyan understanding of adult baptism. Staples lists five different meanings that the symbol of baptism elicits.

1. *Bearing the mark of Christ:* The Christian is to wear the "mark" of Christ's purity.
2. *Dying the death of Christ:* The symbol, particularly when the mode of immersion is used, represents a burial—beneath the water—that signifies death to sin.
3. *Living the life of Christ:* Coming out of the water symbolizes our participation in Christ's resurrection, and that, having our sins buried frees us to live a new life as a new creation in Christ.
4. *Receiving the Spirit of Christ:* Just as the Spirit was present at Christ's own baptism, we affirm that the Spirit is present in our baptism. As Paul says in Romans, all who are in Christ have received the Spirit of Christ. Baptism, being a symbol of our life in Christ, is also symbolic, therefore, of the Spirit's presence.
5. *Becoming a part of the body of Christ:* From the very earliest Christian liturgies, we realize that baptism was seen as a transition point of the catechumen into full membership in the Church.

Eucharist

Wesley had a very high estimation of the Lord's Supper. It will be easier to discuss his position by outlining the classical Eucharistic interpretations.

Refer to Resource 12-3 in the Student Guide.

Transubstantiation: This theory is most often associated with Roman Catholicism. It is the belief that the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Christ. When the priest says the prayer of consecration, there is a change in the essence of the elements, even though they may still appear as bread and wine.

Consubstantiation: This theory is most often associated with Martin Luther. It is similar to transubstantiation in that Christ's body and blood are literally present in the bread and wine. The difference is that the essence of the elements also remain bread and wine while being body and blood.

Spiritual Presence: This theory is most often associated with John Calvin. Calvin did not believe that there was a change in the elements but that Christ truly comes into the bread and wine in a spiritual sense.

Memorialist: This theory is most often associated with Ulrich Zwingli, a Reformer, contemporary with Calvin and Luther. This theory affirms that the Lord's Supper is to be taken as a memorial of the death of Christ, as a remembrance of His self-sacrifice for us. There is no sense that Christ participates in the actual elements.

Most scholars agree that Wesley's position falls between the concept of spiritual presence and the memorialist position—with some interpreters of Wesley's position placing it extremely close to Calvin's.

The difference between Wesley and Calvin is that it is not only Christ's presence that is experienced, as Calvin stressed, but also the presence of the whole Trinity in the whole act of the Eucharistic meal. Wesley's position focuses on the Eucharist as a *means of grace*. Here are some of Wesley's words:

The Lord's Supper was ordained by God to be a means of conveying either prevenient, justifying, or sanctifying/preserving grace, according to the necessity of the people. The persons for whom it was ordained are all those who know and feel that they want the grace of God, either to restrain them from sin, or to show their sins forgiven, or to renew their souls in the image of God, or to enter into the

presence of God in communion with him. No preparation is necessary other than a desire to receive whatsoever grace God pleases to give. No fitness is required other than a sense of our state, or our utter sinfulness and helplessness apart from Christ. Therefore if you want such grace as God pleases to give to you, draw near in faith and find comfort and strength.

Rob Staples stresses that the Eucharist is a means particularly of *sanctifying* grace, and in doing so reminds us that there is an integral connection between the means of grace and growth in our sanctification in Wesley's thought. It is impossible to grow in our Christian walk without attending to the means of grace in general. But for Wesley, the Eucharist was the most important means, and to neglect it was unthinkable.

Spend some time going over the points of "The Duty of Constant Communion" that the students were to have read for homework—Resource 11-5.

Allow for response.

Duty of Constant Communion

How often does the Church of the Nazarene offer Communion?

How often should the Church of the Nazarene offer Communion?

Again, Rob Staples helps interpret the significance of the Eucharist by examining the meaning of the symbol.

From Staples, pp. 228-49.

The Eucharist is a symbol of

- Thanksgiving to the Father
- Commemoration of Christ
- Self-sacrifice or consecration
- Fellowship and unity of the faithful
- The promise of the coming Kingdom

Allow for response.

How could these images be used in sermons to prepare the people for Communion?

Small Groups: Critique of Sermon Close/Call to Respond

(15 minutes)

In groups of three have the students evaluate each other's close/call to respond from the sermon that they have chosen.

In your group listen to the sermon close/call to respond of each member.

Ask questions of each other and offer suggestions for improvement.

The students will continue working on one of Wesley's sermons—re-writing the introduction, close, and the body. The students should stay in the same group for all three of the small-group times for this activity.

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

*Allow students to respond.
Encourage response.*

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the twelfth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- discuss and identify the means of grace?
- articulate the Wesleyan understanding of infant and adult baptism?
- explore the meaning of the Eucharist in contrast to other positions?

Look Ahead

Next week we will examine Wesley's understanding of "last things."

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a one- to two-page essay: What do you believe about the end of the world?

Continue working with the Wesley sermon that you have selected for the rewrite of the introduction and closing. Using the information from your small groups, rewrite the body—key points—of the sermon using contemporary/cultural language, illustrations, and presentation.

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

Quoted in Outler, 336.

"If, therefore, we have any regard for the plain command of Christ, if we desire the pardon of our sins, if we wish for strength to believe, to love and obey God, then we should neglect no opportunity of receiving the Lord's Supper."

Sermon, "The Duty of Constant Communion"

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Lesson 13

Last Things

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:15	Last Things	Lecture	Resource 13-1 Resource 13-2 Resource 13-3
0:40	Critique of Sermon Body	Small Groups	
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994, pp. 230-53.

Oden, Thomas. *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, pp. 345-60.

Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

Accountability

Call on 2-3 students to read their essays on the end of the world.

Allow for questions and discussion.

Return and collect homework.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- identify the "most" Wesleyan of end-time theories
- define the Wesleyan understanding of
 - death
 - resurrection
 - judgment
 - intermediate states
 - new creation

Motivator

Wesley always connected the coming Kingdom with present salvation: "He is already renewing the face of the earth. And we have strong reason to hope that the work he hath begun he will carry on unto the day of his Lord Jesus; that he will never intermit this blessed work of his Spirit until he has fulfilled his promises; until he hath put a period to sin and misery, and infirmity, and death; and re-established universal holiness and happiness, and caused all the inhabitants of earth to sing together 'Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!' "

From Works, 2:499.

Sermon, "The General Spread of the Gospel"

Lesson Body

Lecture: Last Things

(25 minutes)

Refer to Resource 13-1 in the Student Guide.

Introductory Remarks

The general consensus of Wesley scholars is that speculation about the end of the world falls outside the realm of what is “Wesleyan.” This is not to say that Wesley did not consider such inquiries at all. It is to say that eschatology is by nature speculative theology. And since Wesley’s primary doctrine, out of which all other doctrines flow, is soteriology, the doctrine of end times is theologically relevant to Wesleyans *only* as it relates to the doctrine of salvation.

The Church of the Nazarene has resolutely resisted demanding that its members ascribe to a certain end times theory. It gives members full liberty on this issue. In sum, that there is a final salvation is what is important, not how the final culmination of all things comes about. Wesley himself was skeptical about much of the sensationalistic “enthusiasm” that tended to go hand in hand with the eschatology of his day. Michael Lodahl—in his *Wesleyan Theological Journal* article published in 1994—elaborates more fully on Wesley’s eschatological reservations.

According to Lodahl, it is not inappropriate to connect Wesley’s eschatological considerations to his doctrine of sanctification. Lodahl calls this a “realizable eschatology.” By that he means that Wesley insisted that perfect love for God and neighbor is attainable in this life through the process and the crisis of entire sanctification.

Unlike other traditions, that can only hope for a day when sin will be overcome and wait for an “escape” from this world, the Wesleyan theology of sanctification holds to the potential of divine grace to affect us in *this* life and, in a sense, to sanctify the value of the here and now. Lodahl states

From Lodahl, “Wesleyan Reservations about Eschatological ‘Enthusiasm’.” Vol 29, Spring-Fall, 1994.

One might even surmise that the same impatience Wesley showed toward those who testified to being in a “state” of perfection, because they tended to rest in a past experience, he might extend toward those who tend to look ahead to some future moment of eschatological perfection. The crucial nature of the

“now” before God . . . [can be] obscured by moments either remembered or anticipated.

Another incredibly important insight from Lodahl arises at the point of the need for continuity between Wesley's understanding of present salvation and future salvation. Lodahl rightly agrees that Wesleyan theology is thoroughly synergistic.

Lodahl insightfully asks, “Can we not, indeed, ought we not interpret the idea of synergism in categories that are larger, more encompassing and more cosmic than simply an understanding of the individual's relationship to God?”

In other words, it would make little logical sense that Wesley would insist on the dynamic between divine grace and human cooperation in his soteriology where human free will is key, and then subscribe to a unilateral notion of eschatology, where humanity sits by and waits for a preordained and predetermined end where God's absolute sovereignty is completely divorced from human activity.

For this reason, scholars who have attempted to categorize Wesley's eschatology in traditional terms have placed him in the postmillennialist camp, for postmillennialism sees human cooperation in history as crucial to bringing about God's kingdom on earth.

Scholars are divided as to which of the three available millennial theories Wesley finally ascribed to. His Anglican training would have placed him squarely upon an amillennialist position. Amillennialism believes that there is no actual thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, but that we stand in a figurative millennium because we stand between the first and second Advents of Christ.

There was a period of time when Wesley studied the work of Johann Bengel, which some interpreters categorize as a postmillennialist, in that he believed that an actual reign will commence when the Church itself brings about a period of peace and righteousness on earth. At best, Wesley's endorsement of Bengel is cautious.

Some Wesley scholars hold to the fact that Wesley's final conclusions represent a premillennial position: the belief that is accompanied by the idea that the world will worsen until the return of Christ. But this, according to scholars like Randy Maddox, is a misreading of Wesley. Present-day “dispensationalism”

would have been completely foreign to Wesley in his context. And since dispensationalism tends to focus on a prevailing pessimism about the condition of the world, in its essence it is contra-Wesleyan.

Death, Immortality, Resurrection, Intermediate States, and Judgment

The 18th-century religious ethos emphasized that not only is a Christian to live right, he or she is to “die right,” thus the title of the book by Taylor—one that greatly influenced Wesley—*The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying*.

Refer to Resource 13-2 in the Student Guide.

Death

The distinguishing characteristic of Christian dying is that one dies with no fear, but with a blessed anticipation of seeing Christ. Wesley’s own death was a celebrated event in Methodism.

Immortality/Resurrection

Wesley’s speculations about the transition from this life to the next are not extensive, and certainly not dogmatic. He does reject the Platonic idea that only the soul survives death; Wesley clearly stands with the orthodox position regarding immortality: “I believe in the resurrection of the body.”

Intermediate States

On what happens next, Wesley is less clear. At certain periods in Wesley’s developing thought, he affirms what are known as “intermediate states.” By affirming this concept, he rejects the concept of “soul sleep.” Wesley surmises that for those whose final destiny is heaven, they await the culmination of the world and the beginning of eternity in a place called “paradise.” For those destined to hell, they wait in “Hades.” He resolutely rejected the concept of purgatory, where one could change one’s future destiny by enduring present punishment or discipline.

Judgment

By affirming the intermediate states that he does, a theological paradox is immediately raised: if the Judgment will not occur until the end of time, how is the individual assigned to either paradise or Hades? Wesley never satisfactorily answered this dilemma. Keeping with Wesley’s synergistic theology, he stressed that any ultimate judgment that led to hell would only be the result of the person’s deliberate choice to resist grace.

New Creation

Refer to Resource 13-3 in the Student Guide.

One distinctive of Wesley's eschatological theology is the concept of the new creation. Toward his later years, he shifted his hope from heaven to a future of new creation. This new creation will be an actual physical place. This is where the human destiny of eternity will play itself out.

But he also suggests that animals will participate in this new creation at a higher level. As stated in Romans, all of creation has been yearning for redemption. Thus all of creation, according to Wesley's developing thought, will thus be redeemed in actuality. It is Eden revisited, but far beyond what Eden ever actually was.

Wesley also hinted at the fact that Christian growth will continue in this place. We will have already been made perfect at glorification—where sin will no longer be an issue—but a new type of growth will be made possible. As Maddox states, "Progression in our abilities and maturity is so central to what it means to be human that we will surely continue to progress in the life to come." Thus synergism, although in a new form, will continue on into eternity.

From Maddox, p. 253.

Small Groups: Critique of Sermon Body

(35 minutes)

Have the students get into the small group that they have been working with during the last two lessons on the sermon assignment.

In your group listen to the sermon body of each member.

Ask questions of each other and offer suggestions for improvement.

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Allow students to respond. Encourage response.

Do you have any questions about any of the material or discussions from the thirteenth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- identify the “most” Wesleyan of end-time theories?
- define the Wesleyan understanding of
 - death?
 - resurrection?
 - judgment?
 - intermediate states?
 - new creation?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will examine Wesley’s understanding of the church and pastoral ministry.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write an essay on one of the following topics:

- What is the Church?
- What is a pastor?

This address is quite lengthy. You may want to select portions that would be most beneficial for the students to read.

Read Resource 13-4, “Address to the Clergy.”

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley’s journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

Wesley’s view of the future, a “new earth” is laced with scriptural references of hope: “Suppose now the fullness of time to be come, and the prophecies to be accomplished—what a prospect is this! . . . Here is no din of arms, no ‘confused noise,’ no ‘garments rolled in blood’ . . . no country or city divided against itself, and

tearing out its own bowels . . . Here is no oppression to make even 'the wise man mad,' no extortion to 'grind the face of the poor;' no robbery or wrong; no rapine or injustice; for all are 'content with such things as they possess.' Thus 'righteousness and peace have kissed each other;' they have 'taken root and filled the land;' righteousness flourishing out of the earth, and 'peace looking down from heaven.' "

From Works, 1:170-71.

Sermon, "Scriptural Christianity"

Lesson 14

Life in the Christian Community

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:25	Life in the Christian Community	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 14-1 Resource 14-2 Resource 14-3
0:50	Address to the Clergy	Small Groups	Resource 13-4
1:15	Student Response	Group Discussion	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Dunning, H. Ray. *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1988, pp. 505-38.

Wesley's treatise, "A Plain Account of the People Called Methodist."

Wesley's treatise, "Address to Clergy," Resource 13-4.

Lesson Introduction

(25 minutes)

Accountability

Have one student read his or her essay on "What Is the Church?" and one student read his or her essay on "What Is a Pastor?"

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

Use Scripture, tradition, reason, or experience to answer these questions:

Address the relationship between the local and universal Church.

What is the Church?

Does a Wesleyan perspective influence how we develop an ecclesiology?

What is the purpose of the Church?

What are the functions of the Church?

What are the particular functions of the Church that address the needs of Christians—what we might call the "internal" functions of the Church?

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- develop a Wesleyan ecclesiology
- incorporate pastoral identity into their personal life and ministry
- appreciate Wesley's quest for spiritual formation, as in the Methodist societies
- recognize Wesley's commitment to Christian education in the training of lay pastors and preachers

Motivator

Before 1784 Wesley strongly affirmed the following: "God could have made [the Methodists] a separate people . . . [but] this would have been a direct contradiction to his whole design in raising them up;

namely, to spread scriptural religion throughout the land, among people of every denomination, leaving everyone to hold his own opinions and to follow his own mode of worship. This could only be done effectually by leaving these things as they were, and endeavoring to leaven the whole nation with that 'faith that worketh by love.' "

From Works, 3:511.

Sermon, "On God's Vineyard"

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Life in the Christian Community

(25 minutes)

Wesley on the Church

While Wesley certainly had a conception of the Church that can be found in his sermons and treatises, his ecclesiology shows most clearly in the very real need to work out the relationship between the Church of England and the Methodist societies. As with many of Wesley's theological tenants, his concerns were practical rather than theoretical.

John Wesley was an Anglican at birth, and by his own admission would be an Anglican until the day he died. And yet, in 1784, the American Methodists broke with the Church of England with John's approval. It was only after his death that the British Methodists would follow the Americans.

What would bring John to such a radical decision—one that caused he and his brother, Charles, to be at odds for the rest of their lives? From the very beginning of the Methodist movement, John saw their identity as a renewal movement *within* Anglicanism.

Wesley developed societies that acted in many ways like congregations. The societies met together for preaching meetings. They broke into smaller groups for accountability and spiritual formation. The societies fellowshiped together, served the world together, and served each other in very specific ways. And yet, Wesley would not have seen these societies as churches.

Unity with the Church of England was extremely important to him, despite their veiled rejection of him and their outright decision to bar him from Anglican pulpits. Wesley wanted his Methodist people to see themselves as Anglicans. Whatever they might do during the week in Methodist meetings, he demanded that all Methodists attend Anglican worship services on Sundays in order to receive the Eucharist.

When the Revolutionary War broke out in the Colonies, Anglican clergy returned to England. By this time, Methodist meeting houses crisscrossed the 13 Colonies and beyond. Wesley was deeply concerned that these

Methodists would be deprived of the sacraments in light of the absence of clergy. And so he allowed the ordinations of preachers *as Methodists*. Methodism became its own denomination. Wesley was willing to sacrifice church unity in order to serve the practical need of his people to have access to the sacraments.

Allow for response.

Why did the Church of the Nazarene break from Methodism?

What was deemed the greater principle by Bresee?

What, then, is Church unity?

Wesley on Pastoral Identity

Even before the American split, Wesley was deliberate and diligent about training his lay preachers and society leaders. He wanted them to be as educated as possible, intentional about their preparation, but also recognized the need for gifts and graces that only come from God. It is the church that confirms the inward call by examining outward fruits of ministerial labor. Let's consider a partial list of qualities outlined in Wesley's "Address to Clergy" (1756).

Refer to Resource 14-1 in the Student Guide.

The students will be working with this list and finding reference places in the address during the small-group time.

If you prefer, you could do the activity at this time either in small groups or as a class.

1. Good understanding, sound judgment, and a capacity for reasoning
2. Discernment
3. Good memory
4. A deep understanding about the nature of the pastoral call
5. A deep knowledge of the Scriptures
6. Knowledge of the original biblical languages
7. Knowledge of the sciences, philosophy, and logic
8. Knowledge of the patristic writers
9. Knowledge of personalities and character in people
10. Common sense
11. Courtesy and scholarship
12. Singlemindedness
13. Love for God and neighbor
14. Desire for personal holiness
15. Desire to cooperate with God's grace

Allow for response.

Is Wesley neglecting anything you see as crucial, perhaps in light of today's context?

Wesley on Spiritual Formation

Refer to Resource 14-2 in the Student Guide.

The “internal” functions of the Church can be placed under two main categories: spiritual formation, and Christian education. These are intertwined in significant ways, but for our purposes here, we will define spiritual formation as progress in holiness, and Christian education as the knowledge—doctrinal, theological, practical—that aids that progress. As you will learn from other modules that deal more specifically with issues of spiritual formation, such formation is at the very heart of Wesleyanism.

Works of individual piety (means of grace), such as prayer and devotion, Scripture study, devotional reading, and “practicing the presence of God” will lead to works of mercy (also means of grace), such as caring for the sick, feeding the hungry, and ministering to the needs of others in general. This is the “breathing in” and the “breathing out” of the spiritual life, so to speak.

In a Wesleyan context, we also add the interdependence we have on our fellow Christians as integral to our own growth in holiness and love. To be formed spiritually is a communal as well as an individual process. To be formed spiritually *is* the process of sanctification that continues until we die. This was Wesley’s goal: for his Methodist people to *go on* to perfect love, and then to go on from there living out the sanctifying love they had experienced. For Wesley, this is impossible without the Church.

Wesley on Christian Education

Refer to Resource 14-3 in the Student Guide.

Also integral to Wesley’s understanding of the Church is the Church’s responsibility to teach its people very deliberately. Wesley’s mother was dedicated to education. Wesley valued his own education very highly. Wesley demanded the education of his ministers. And Wesley expected that education would take place within the societies and bands. Education was at the forefront of Methodism.

From A Prayer.

In no sense, whatsoever, is Wesleyanism anti-intellectualistic. As Charles once wrote, “Unite the pair so long disjointed: knowledge and vital piety.” Knowledge and devotion are both crucial to the Christian life. Wesley wanted his people to know a wide range of topics, from the Methodist interpretation of the “Articles of Religion,” to how to correctly interpret Scripture, to the great devotional classics of the

previous centuries, to latest understanding of holiness discussed at the latest Methodist conference. Much of what Wesley published was for the educational benefit of his people.

How are our local Nazarene churches doing in terms of this broader understanding of Christian education?

Small Groups: Address to the Clergy

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of 2-3.

In your group, work together to find the paragraph in the "Address to the Clergy" where Wesley talks about each of the qualities found on Resource 14-1.

Which quality spoke to you?

Did you find a quote that you will take with you?

Group Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

*Allow students to respond.
Encourage response.*

Do you have any questions or comments about any of the material from the fourteenth lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- develop a Wesleyan ecclesiology?
- incorporate pastoral identity into your personal life and ministry?
- appreciate Wesley's quest for spiritual formation, as in the Methodist societies?
- recognize Wesley's commitment to Christian education in the training of lay pastors and preachers?

Look Ahead

Next lesson we will examine Wesley's understanding of evangelism and Christian service in the world.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a one- to two-page essay: What is social justice?

During Wesley's lifetime the words "liberal" and "fundamentalist" were not used in the same way that they are used in the church today. How would Wesley see himself in reference to these terms? How would he see the Methodist movement in relation to these terms? How would he respond to being labeled by one of these terms? Write a two-page paper.

Assure the students that you will not be reading the specific entries but checking their faithfulness in completing the assignment.

Be prepared to show your journal to the instructor during the next class session. The instructor will not read it in detail nor will it be handed in. It will be briefly inspected to note regularity and quality of entries and organization.

If the students do not have access to the Internet, they could reflect on the Wesley quotes that are in the Motivator and Punctuate the Finish. These quotes are on the lesson page of the Student Guide.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. Read a portion of John Wesley's journal and reflect on your reading. His journal can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu>

Punctuate the Finish

At the heart of Wesley's doctrine of the Church is mutual nurture. He mourns the absence of this in many parishes and admonishes Methodism to be different: "Who watched over them in love? Who marked their growth in grace? . . . Who prayed with them and for them, as they had need? This, and this alone, is Christian fellowship. But, alas! Where is it to be found? Look east or west, north or south; name what parish you please. Is this Christian fellowship there? Rather, are not the bulk of the parishioners a mere rope of sand? What Christian connexion is there between them? . . . What bearing of one another's burdens?"

*A Plain Account of the People
Called Methodists, Works 8:251-
52*

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Lesson 15

Life in the World

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:15	Life in the World	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 15-1 Resource 15-2 Resource 15-3 Resource 15-4
0:45	Wesley's Response	Small Groups	
1:10	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide Resource 15-5

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Meeks, M. Douglas, ed. *The Portion of the Poor: Good News to the Poor in the Wesleyan Tradition*.
Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1995.
Wesley's treatise, "On Visiting the Sick."

Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

Accountability

In pairs have the students share their essays on social justice.

Return and collect homework.

The Wesley Response paper will be used later in the class in small groups.

Make arrangements for returning the last homework assignments to the students.

Orientation

What are the particular functions of the Church that address the needs of the world—what we might call the “external” functions of the Church?

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand how “mission” flows naturally from Wesley’s soteriology
- appreciate how prevenient grace affects evangelism
- relate Wesley’s practice of “Acts of Mercy” with contemporary opportunities for compassionate ministry
- recognize the implications of Wesleyanism for social justice
- relate Wesleyan theology to “liberation” theology

Motivator

From Works, 8:239.

Wesley would “fly away” from the prosperous in order to minister to the poor. Thus Wesley could say to his critics: “The honourable, the great, we are thoroughly willing to leave to you. Only let us alone with the poor, the vulgar, the base, the outcasts of men.”

A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion

Lesson Body

Lecture/Discussion: Life in the World

(30 minutes)

As we have seen throughout this module, Wesleyanism is thoroughly optimistic. Those who hold to Wesleyan theology hold to a belief in God that emphasizes the depth and breadth of His love for all of humanity. It emphasizes that God's grace can truly transform an individual from the inside out, that true sanctification is possible in this life; it believes in the growth and maturity that can come from spiritual formation and the means of grace; it believes in the community of faith as a place where love is genuinely expressed and needs are truly met through mutual accountability and acceptance.

Refer to Resource 15-1 in the Student Guide.

Wesleyan theology is optimistic, intensely optimistic, not only about individual transformation but also social transformation; about the difference perfect love can make, not only in the individual's life, and in the Church but also in the world.

Every aspect of Wesley's relentless focus on an individual's holiness was for the purpose of making that individual an agent of perfect love to those around him or her. Inward transformation, if it were real and sustained, necessarily led to what Wesley would call "acts of mercy." As he is so often quoted to say, there is no holiness but social holiness.

The heeded admonition of particular acts of service in the world permeated the ethos of Methodism, not only in the time of Wesley, but also in the next century and beyond. Scholars are now recognizing that well before what is known as the "social gospel movement" of the early 20th century—a movement associated with liberal Protestantism—Methodism and the Holiness Movement of the late 19th century in particular, evangelized the downcast, assisted the needy, ministered to the sick, fed the poor, advocated for the oppressed, and sought liberation for slaves and women all in the name of perfect love for God and neighbor.

For our purposes here, we will delineate those acts into evangelism, compassionate ministry, social justice, and liberation. It is not coincidental that we end on this lesson, for the totality of Wesleyan theology drives toward touching real lives with real love.

Wesley on Evangelism

It is fair to wonder: if Wesley had not been barred from Anglican pulpits, would he have ever moved to preaching in the fields, with the “world as his parish”? What we can be sure of is that after 1738 and Aldersgate, Wesley saw the necessity of preaching “salvation” and its assurance. In most respects, he absolutely lined up with the great revivalists of his age, including Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. He called persons to faith in Jesus Christ. His is, without a doubt, an “evangelical” call to new birth and new creation. He told his lay preachers:

Refer to Resource 15-2 in the Student Guide.

From “Minutes of Several Conversations,” Works, Jackson, 8:310.

You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those that want you, but to those that want you most. Observe: It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance.

But unlike his Calvinist contemporaries, Wesley's understanding of salvation represents a broader, more holistic view:

From “A Further Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,” Works, Jackson, 8:47.

By salvation I mean, not barely, according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell, or going to heaven; but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth.

Evangelism, for Wesley, must lead to placing a new believer into a method of spiritual formation if its results are to be lasting. The genius of Methodism, and that for which its significant and lasting growth can be attributed, is small groups—bands and classes—that connected newly confessing Christians to the means of spiritual growth.

Wesley on Compassionate Ministry

There is no doubt that Wesley's evangelistic concerns were specifically directed toward the poor. And yet, it would have been unthinkable and unconscionable for Wesley to have *preached* the good news of the gospel, without also attending to the basic physical needs of his listeners. But even more than that, Wesley believed

that not only was the good Methodist's *service* to the poor necessary, life *with the poor* was absolutely requisite for the genuine Christian disciple.

From Theodore Jennings, Jr., "Wesley and the Poor: an Agenda for Wesleyans," in The Portion of the Poor: Good News to the Poor in the Wesleyan Tradition, p. 21.

From "A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," Works, Jackson, 8:239.

Refer to Resource 15-3 in the Student Guide.

According to Theodore Jennings, "Wesley could no more imagine a week without visiting the hovels of the poor than he could a week without participation in the Eucharist." His commitment was relentless. Wesley could say: "The honourable, the great, we are thoroughly willing to leave you. Only let us alone with the poor, the vulgar, the base, the outcasts of men."

Methodists gave to the poor, lived with the poor, and preferred the poor. This was a matter of principal for Wesley, biblically based and theologically sound. But it was driven by contact with real persons whom Wesley called his people to love in the name of Christ. The Church of the Nazarene was founded with a similar driving agenda. It is only with deliberate thought and action that we will remain faithful to our roots.

Wesley on Social Justice

Wesley was interested not only in feeding, clothing, and caring for the poor but also in rectifying and reforming the social structures that kept them poor. It was, and is, not good enough to call such oppressive structures an unfortunate result of the evil in the world that came as a result of the Fall. Acting, specific intentional acting, for what has come to be known as "social justice" must be at the heart of Wesleyan theology.

In the 1980s, one hundred million children died of poverty—as a point of reference, twelve million people died in the Nazi holocaust. A holocaust of neglect plagues this world. National, political, institutional structures contribute to this horrific reality. It is the Christians' responsibility not only to work to alleviate the symptoms of suffering but also to alleviate the *reasons* for the suffering. This applies personally, locally, and globally.

Allow for response.

Do you have any additions or comments from the essays that you wrote?

Wesley and Liberation Theology

Since the 1960s, various "theologies" have arisen that have now come to be known as "liberation" theologies. They are characterized by the "doing" of theology from a particular context, a context from *within* a

marginalized group. Although some of these have developed into complex theological reflection, for each, the practical—known as “praxis”—liberation of the oppressed remains the ultimate goal.

Examples are:

- Black Theology
- Feminist Theology
- South American Liberation Theology—known as S.A.L.T.
- Asian Theology
- Latino Theology

Scholars have made connections between the ethos of these movements and the ethos of John Wesley's optimism regarding social transformation. Wesley advocated for black slaves in England and America; he is recognized as a rather progressive “feminist” in light of his views on men and women's spiritual and ecclesiastical equality, and his sanction of women's “right” to preach.

Refer to Resource 15-4 in the Student Guide.

As has been stated, he sided with the oppressed, the poor, the outcast of society. There is definitely a theme of *liberation* in Wesley's individual and social vision. Flowing out of his optimism about true liberation from the power of sin in this life, he envisioned social liberation for certain classes and marginalized groups, and he demanded that his Methodist people work for such human freedoms.

And yet, unfortunately, popular evangelical Christianity today is sometimes known more for its individualism, its escapist mentality, its separationist tendencies, and even its hate for the “other.” Wesleyan theology offers a different paradigm. And the Church of the Nazarene, as an evangelical but *not* fundamentalist Church, has opportunity to make a difference in the world's perception of Christianity. “Holiness” and “perfect love,” as taught and lived by John Wesley and his followers, is not only our past but also our future, if we let it guide us—not just as our “distinctive” but as our directive.

Small Groups: Wesley's Response

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three to share their papers on Wesley's response to the words “liberal” and “fundamentalist.”

In your small group share your papers on how Wesley would respond to the words “liberal” and “fundamentalist.”

Ask questions of each other and try to get at the heart of Wesley and his *via media*.

While the students are working in their groups, check their journal work. Assure them that you are looking for their faithfulness to the assignment and not reading the specifics of the entries.

If time permits, you may ask for some groups to report.

Collect the papers at the end of the discussion.

Lesson Close

(20 minutes)

Review of Module

Refer to Resource 15-5 in the Student Guide.

Allow the students about 5 minutes to write answers to the questions.

Spend most of the remaining time discussing the responses to the evaluation form.

How has this module been helpful to you?

How will it affect your ministry?

How will it affect your preaching and/or Christian education program?

How will it affect your service in the world?

If you were asked, "Who was John Wesley?" how would you answer?

If you were asked, "How is Wesleyan theology unique?" how would you answer?

Any closing remarks?

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Commit to applying the theology and practices of John Wesley—the basis of Nazarene theology—to your ministry.

Write in your journal. Reflect on the wisdom and strength of Wesley's *via media*.

Punctuate the Finish

From Wesleyan theologian Theodore Runyon: "Some theologians have found a peculiar affinity between Wesley's doctrine of sanctification and movements for social change. When on the individual level Christian perfection becomes the goal, fundamental hope is aroused that the future can surpass the present. And a corresponding holy dissatisfaction is aroused with regard to any present state of affairs—a dissatisfaction that supplies the critical edge necessary to keep the process of individual transformation moving. Moreover, this holy dissatisfaction is readily transferable from the realm of the individual to that of society, where it

provides a persistent motivation for reform in the light of 'a more perfect way' that goes beyond any status quo."

The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today, Theodore Runyon, p. 168

Close in a time of prayer and blessing for each of the students

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