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DO 670 United Methodist Theology

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DO 670
2 Hours

United Methodist Theology

June 9-13, 2008

Getting Ready for the Intensive

When you come to class on Monday, June 9 at 8:30 am, make sure you have done five things (in the order that follows):

- a. Read *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials*
- b. Read Part II (“Doctrinal Standards and our Theological Task”) of the 2004 United Methodist *Discipline*. **Bring your *Discipline* to class with you on Monday & Tuesday.**
- c. Read *United Methodist Beliefs: A Brief Introduction*.
- d. Read *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia*
- e. Read *Holiness of Heart and Life*.

If you want to get ahead, write the five page response paper described below (see IV.B) before class begins.

The reading of the remaining texts is to be completed by Wednesday, June 11 (*Straight and Narrow*) and Friday, January 13 (*Practical Divinity, Vol 1.*)

I Purpose: The course seeks to introduce students to the content and development of Methodist Theology from the time of Wesley to the present. Following an assessment of the current state of Methodist Theology as it is reflected in the 1972 and 1988 Doctrinal Statements and current theological issues such as God-language, baptism, and homosexuality which United Methodists are wrestling with, we will move back to Wesley to determine the character of Methodist theology, and then forward through Methodist history to show how its character is reflected in its major movements and principal figures. We will also consider the possibility of theological and spiritual renewal within Methodism.

II. Objectives: By the end of this course students will:

- A. Understand the current state of Methodist theology and some of the major theological issues United Methodists are wrestling with today.
- B. Be able to identify the major figures and themes in the development of Methodist theology since Wesley.
- C. Have examined, evaluated, and used a reasonable range of literature relating to the study of Methodist theology.
- D. Be able to better understand and dialogue with United Methodists adhering to various theological viewpoints.

III. Textbooks:

William Abraham, *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia*

Ted Campbell, *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials*

Thomas Langford, *Practical Divinity, vol 1.*

Thomas Schmidt, *Straight and Narrow: Compassion and Clarity in the Homosexuality Debate*

Stephen Seamands, *Holiness of Heart and Life*

William Willimon, *United Methodist Beliefs: A Brief Introduction*

By Water and the Spirit (download at http://www.gbod.org/worship/articles/water_spirit/)

IV. Requirements:

- A. Regular **ATTENDANCE** and active participation in class sessions.
- B. A 1250-word (5 page doublespaced typed) **RESPONSE PAPER**.

This response paper will be based on your reading of *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials*, *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia*, *United Methodist Beliefs: A Brief Introduction, Part II of the UM Discipline*, and *Holiness of Heart and Life*. This response paper is **due on Thursday**, the fourth day of class.

You are attending a meeting of the local ministerium in the community where you are serving either as a pastor or a staff member of a local UM church. Sitting around the table with you is (a) Moe, a Southern Baptist pastor, (b) Michael, a Roman Catholic priest, (c) Martin, a Church of God in Christ (African American Pentecostal pastor, (d) Markus,, a Missouri Synod (conservative) Lutheran pastor, and (e) Marilyn, a Social Activist Female Presbyterian pastor. Based on your reading of the above materials, engage in a conversation with each of these local ministerial colleagues (one page each). In your conversation spend half your time (1/2 page) telling your colleague what you have in common with or appreciate about his or her theological tradition or emphasis. Spend the other half (1/2 page) telling them where you have differences with or reservations about their theological tradition or emphasis.

C. A final take-home **ESSAY EXAM** to be distributed on the first day of class and returned on Thursday of the following Week (January 17).

V. Course Outline:

- A. The Current State of UM Theology : The 1972 and 1988 Doctrinal Statements.
- B. Current Theological Issues United Methodists are Wrestling With: God-language; Baptism, Homosexuality.
- C. Wesley's Theological Legacy.
- D. Theological and Spiritual Renewal in Methodism