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DO 770 United Methodist Theology

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United Methodist Theology

June and July 1999

Getting Ready for the Intensive

When you come to class on Monday, June 14 or July 5 make sure you have done **Four** things:

- a. Read *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials* and written the 1-page response paper (see IV. B. 1. Below for details) which is due on Monday).
- b. Read *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia* and written the 1-page response paper (see IV.B.2 below for details) which is due on Tuesday.
- c. Read Part II (“Doctrinal Standards and our Theological Task”) of the 1996 United Methodist *Discipline*. **Bring your *Discipline* to class with you on Monday & Tuesday.**
- d. Read *Straight and Narrow* and started to write the 1-page response paper (see IV.B.3 below for details) which is due on Wednesday.

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.*

Stephen Seamands, *Holiness of Heart and Life*

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

IV. Requirements:

- A. Regular **ATTENDANCE** and active participation in class sessions.
- B. Four 250-word (1 page doublespaced typed) **RESPONSE PAPERS**.
 1. The first response paper will be based on your reading of *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials* and will be **due on Monday**, the first day of class. In your response answer the following question: What did I learn about historic Methodist doctrine from reading this text?
 2. The second response paper will be based on your reading of *Waking from Doctrinal Amnesia* and will be **due on Tuesday**, the second day of class. In your response answer the following question: What did I learn about the current state of UM theology from reading this text?
 3. The third response paper will be based on your reading of *Straight and Narrow* and will be **due on Wednesday**, the third day of class. In your response answer the following question: What did you find most helpful or illuminating about the author's discussion of the issue of homosexuality?

4. The fourth response paper will be based on your reading of *Holiness of Heart and Life* and is **due on Friday**, the last day of class. In your response answer the following question: Which aspects of the author's formula for renewal did you find most crucial and helpful? Why?

C. One 750-word (3 page doublespaced typed) **RESPONSE PAPER**.

This response paper will be based on your reading of *Practical Divinity, Vol 1.* and 100 pages of collateral reading from *Practical Divinity, Vol 2.* or *Wesleyan Theology: A Sourcebook* (This book which is on reserve in the library consists of primary source material written by the theologians discussed in *Practical Divinity, vol 1.* . Choose any 100 pages from this text *except* the pages of material from Wesley's writings. Turn in a collateral reading report with your response paper to indicate which pages you read. This response paper is **due on Thursday**, the fourth day of class. In your response to these materials answer the following questions:

- a. What did I learn about Methodism's theological tradition from reading these materials?
- b. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of our tradition?
- c. Which theologian (exclusive of John Wesley) did you find most interesting? Why?

D. A final take-home **ESSAY EXAM** to be distributed on the first day of class and returned on Thursday of the following Week.

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. Two 19th Century Movements: The Holiness Movement & the Social Gospel Movement
- E. Theological and Spiritual Renewal in Methodism