

From the Editor

The articles in this issue of *The Asbury Journal* come primarily from papers presented at the Advanced Research Programs Interdisciplinary Colloquium held at Asbury Theological Seminary on April 21, 2017. The theme of this colloquium was “Wesleyan Theology from Biblical and Missiological Perspectives.” Setting the stage for the student presentations, Dr. Laurence Wood presented a riveting paper on John Wesley’s mission to spread scriptural holiness and the theology of sanctification and Spirit baptism, which provides a framework for understanding the theological and missiological nature of Wesley’s work. With this historical and theological context established, the student papers were able to explore the theme in different ways through the lenses of Biblical Studies and Intercultural Studies.

Susangeline Patrick examines Wesley’s view of the *Imago Dei* as a missiological framework for working with Lakota and other Native American tribes to help restore God’s image to a people who have often suffered the destruction of their image in American history. Timothy Christian explores Wesley’s interpretation of Revelation 20:1-10 and argues that modern Wesleyan missions and evangelism should rightfully take a historic premillennial view of this passage to be more biblically sound. Wilmer Estrada-Carrasquillo builds upon his own heritage and identity as a Latino Pentecostal to argue that Wesley’s theology provides a useful framework for embracing hospitality in reaching out to others in our work in the mission of the Church. Ryan Kristopher Giffin dives into Wesley’s view of salvation by looking at Wesley’s notes of Philippians 1:6.

Three additional papers were not part of the colloquium, but fit the theme well. Howard Snyder examines the critical impact of Irenaeus on Wesley’s theology, and how that has had an effect on the way we see Wesley’s missiology. Marcus Dean examines the missiological question of how to contextualize the Wesleyan understanding of holiness. He argues that missions has often left a theological gap by focusing primarily on contextualizing the theology of salvation, but setting aside the importance of living a holy life as a reflection of God’s holiness. Mark Elliott presents a fascinating glimpse into the interplay of Methodism and Eastern Orthodoxy from Wesley’s early interest in the Greek Church Fathers to modern issues and concerns between the United Methodist Church and the Soviet Union

into the post-Soviet era. Elliott seeks for a common ground between Methodism and Orthodoxy that might smooth the way for future mission efforts.

The From the Archives essay in this issue looks back at a fascinating letter between two important women of the holiness movement. The letter is written to Hannah Whitall Smith, a Quaker who experienced sanctification and became interested in studying this experience and promoting it for the rest of her life. Hannah Whitall Smith wrote the holiness classic, *The Christian's Secret to a Happy Life*, which is still sold and read around the world. The letter is written from Frances Havergal, a British poet and hymn writer, who wrote one of the great holiness hymns, "Take My Life and Let it Be," which is still sung in churches all over the world. Havergal passed away at the young age of 42, and most of her work was published after her death. But this beautiful letter records Havergal's personal account of her own experience of sanctification, since Hannah and her husband, Robert Pearsall Smith asked her directly for this account. Given her early death, this may be the only personal handwritten account we have of this intimate spiritual experience, and this letter allows us in to see and understand its importance for her life. As such it brings her hymn to life in a wonderfully personal way. This letter is a spiritual gem, hidden away in one of the most used collections in the Archives and Special Collections, but it definitely deserves to be highlighted here.

Increasingly in my work as editor of *The Asbury Journal*, I have seen a growing interest and enthusiasm for developing and thinking about a Wesleyan approach to missions. This is a topic that is underdeveloped, but well worth pursuing. Wesley's understanding of prevenient grace and the role of sanctification are often overlooked by traditional Calvinistic approaches to mission, which focus more on sin and salvation as opposed to how the love of God has been at work within a culture and desires to redeem and restore not just people, but entire communities and cultures into the image of God found in Christ Jesus. My desire is that the articles in this issue might inspire more theological and missiological work of the future potential and promise of Wesleyan missions!

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