DO 690 John Wesley's Theology Today

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1. **Course Description and Objectives:**

The course will explore the theology of John Wesley in terms of his doctrine of salvation. Principal attention will be given to the following elements: 1) the nature of justification, 2) the significance of Wesley’s Aldersgate experience, 3) the new birth, 4) assurance 5) the faith of a servant, and 6) Christian perfection. In terms of methodology, the course will proceed in a Socratic and dialogical manner as it entertains an array of possible meanings of selected texts. This process, intense in many ways, should enhance the ability of students not only to understand the thought of Wesley in greater depth in its eighteenth-century context, but also to think historically and critically. Moreover, the course will be attentive to current scholarly interpretations of Wesley’s soteriology and will assess such judgments in light of the primary evidence. All the tasks of the course, then, will concern exploring Wesley’s practical divinity in terms of its relevance for twenty first-century theology and ministry.

2. **General Goals**

Upon completion of the course successful students will be able to do all of the following:

1) Identify the major elements in Wesley’s soteriology, especially in terms of the order evidenced in the key sermon, “The Scripture Way of Salvation.”
2) Evidence an awareness of historiographical concerns in the interpretation of Wesley’s soteriology, especially in terms of narrow, limited or unfair (biased) perspectives
3) Explore the interplay between religion and culture especially in terms of the intellectual developments (philosophical and theological) of the eighteenth century as reflected in Wesley’s writings.
4) Display an extensive knowledge of the theological distinctions and nuances employed by Wesley in crafting an articulate and well-developed theology, especially in the areas of justification, the new birth, and entire sanctification.
5) Demonstrate an understanding of the continuing significance of Wesleyan theology today especially for the broader ecumenical community.
6) Conceive one's calling as a minister of the gospel in light of the Methodist theology and practice.
7) Articulate the relevance of Wesleyan theology for effective pastoral ministry today

3. Texts:

   Required:


   Collateral:


4. Course Procedures
Competency in this course will consist in satisfying the following criteria:

A. Two examinations will be given during the semester: a mid-term and a final. These exams will not only include the designated reading material but will also focus on class discussions. This component will constitute 50% of the grade.

B. It is imperative that students attend class on a regular basis. Absenteeism (missing more than 2 classes) will result in grade reduction. Class participation, attendance, and completion of the assigned readings will constitute 20% of the grade.

C. Students must outline the thirty sermons of Wesley listed below. The outline must reveal the major themes and emphases of each piece in a way that is clear, coherent, and comprehensive. Do not simply follow Burwash’s outlines (if you consult this resource) in terms of the sermons for they do not pick up enough detail. Besides, the outlining should be original. On the other hand, students should not include excessive detail in the outlines. This task, then, calls for judgment on the part of students as to what is soteriologically important and what is not. Exercise such judgment. In addition, these outlines, which must be typed, should be placed in a notebook (or bound in some other fashion) and are due Thursday, May 06, 2004. Late submissions will result in grade reduction.

The sermons to be outlined as follows:

- Sermon Salvation by Faith
- Sermon The Almost Christian
- Sermon Scriptural Christianity
- Sermon Justification By Faith
- Sermon The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption
- Sermon The Witness of the Spirit I
- Sermon On Sin in Believers
- Sermon The Repentance of Believers
- Sermon The Means of Grace
- Sermon The Marks of the New Birth
- Sermon The Great Privilege of Those that are Born of God
- Sermon The Original, Nature, Properties and Use of the Law
- Sermon Christian Perfection
- Sermon The Scripture Way of Salvation
- Sermon Original Sin
- Sermon The New Birth

You must also clearly indicate on the first page of your outlines if you have outlined all of these sermons. If not, you must indicate those which were left out. Failure to complete this assignment or to follow instructions will result in grade reduction. The outlines will constitute 30% of the grade.

D. A reading report which indicates that students have completed all of the assigned readings is due on the day of the final exam. If any reading was omitted, then indicate specifically what was left undone. Failure to submit a reading report will result in grade reduction.
5. **Note:** this syllabus may be changed, as the professor sees fit, due to academic considerations

6. **Office Hours**

   The professor will post his office hours on his door (AD 405) on the first day of class.

7. **Chronology**

   Life of John Wesley

   - 6/17/03  Born at Epworth
   - 2/09/09  Saved from Fire
   - 5/12/11  Nominated for Charterhouse
   - 1/28/14  Gown-boy at Charterhouse
   - 6/24/20  Enters Christ Church
   - 9/19/25  Ordained Deacon
   - 3/17/26  Fellow of Lincoln College
   - 1729    Name Methodist given
   - 1735    Whitefield joins Holy Club
   - 4/25/35  Samuel Sr.’s Death
   - 10/21/35  Sails for Georgia
   - 02/05/36  Reaches America
   - 08/11/36  Charles leaves Georgia
   - 12/02/37  John leaves Savannah
   - 02/01/38  John lands at Deal
   - 05/21/38  Charles’ Evangelical Conversion
   - 05/24/38  John’s Evangelical Conversion
   - 06/13/38  Visits the Moravian Church
   - 05/02/39  Field-Preaching in Bristol
   - 11/11/39  Preaches in the Foundery
   - 07/20/40  Withdrow from Fetter Lane
   - 05/28/42  First visit to Newcastle
   - 06/06/42  Preaches on his father’s tomb
   - 07/30/42  Death of Susanna Wesley
   - 05/29/43  Opens West Street Chapel, London
   - 08/26/42  Sets out for Cornwall
   - 10/20/42  Riot at Wednesbury
   - 06/25/44  First Conference
08/24/44  Last University sermon
08/09/47  First visit to Ireland
04/08/49  Marriage of Charles
10/03/49  Grace Murray marries John Bennet
02/18/51  Wesley marries Mrs. Vazeille
April/51  First visit to Scotland
06/01/51  Resigns Fellowship
11/26/53  Writes his Epitaph at Lewisham
Jan/55  Notes Upon the NT published
05/06/55  Issue of Separation Discussed

1757  Charles’ itinerancy limited
03/13/57  Ordination of John Fletcher
02/16/59  Public Fast; fear of French invasion
02/21/60  French Landing at Carrickfergus
10/25/60  Death of George II
11/26/62  Answer to Bishop Warburton
01/07/63  Wesley meets George Bell
Mar/63  Earthquake panic in London

04/28/63  Thomas Maxfield leaves Wesley
04/18/64  Letter to Evangelical Clergy
May/64  Hervey Letters published
Jan/65  Conference on Ordinations
01/31/66  Closer union with Whitefield
1766  Plain Account Published
03/30/67  Wesley visits Ireland
08/18/67  Francis Asbury received on trial

Jan/68  Appointed chaplain to the Countess Dowager
08/24/68  Trevecca College opened
Aug/1770  Doctrinal Minutes of the Bristol Conference
09/30/70  Death of George Whitefield
11/18/70  Wesley preaches at Whitefield’s funeral
01/17/71  Benson dismissed from Trevecca
01/23/71  Mrs. Wesley leaves him
09/04/71  Francis Asbury sails for America

09/04/71  Fletcher’s 1 and 2 Checks published
08/14/72  Meets Howell Harris at Trevecca
08/14/72  Fletcher’s 3 and 4 Checks published
08/14/72  Wesley issues Vols. 11-16 of his Works
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03/14/73</td>
<td>Replies to Richard Hill’s <em>Farrago Double-Distilled</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec/73</td>
<td>Vols. 17-25 of Wesley’s Works published</td>
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<tr>
<td>06/04/74</td>
<td>Arrest in Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td><em>Calm Address</em> published</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/27/75</td>
<td>Death of Peter Bohler</td>
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<td>Aug/75</td>
<td>Asbury decides to stay in America</td>
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<td>01/03/76</td>
<td>Death of Westley Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/18/76</td>
<td>Wesley first meets Dr. Coke</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/21/77</td>
<td>Foundation-stone of City Road Chapel laid</td>
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<tr>
<td>01/01/78</td>
<td>First number of Arminian Magazine</td>
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<td>05/30/78</td>
<td>Death of Voltaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/01/78</td>
<td>Opening of City Road Chapel</td>
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<td>1779</td>
<td>Publishes <em>Popery Calmly Considered</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>08/10/80</td>
<td>Letter to Bishop Lowth on ordination for America</td>
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<tr>
<td>01/25/81</td>
<td>At his Nephew’s concert</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/08/81</td>
<td>Death of Mrs. Wesley</td>
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<td>Aug/82</td>
<td>Adam Clarke at Kingswood School</td>
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<tr>
<td>June/83</td>
<td>Visit to Holland</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/28/84</td>
<td>Deed of Declaration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep/84</td>
<td>Ordinations for America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec/84</td>
<td>Francis Asbury Ordained</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/14/85</td>
<td>Death of John Fletcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>01/24/86</td>
<td>Hears George III in House of Lords</td>
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<td>07/25/86</td>
<td>Conference begins at Bristol</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/08/86</td>
<td>Visits Holland</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/24/86</td>
<td>Dr. Coke sails with three missionaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan/87</td>
<td>Begs £ 200 for London poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/04/87</td>
<td>Conference in Manchester</td>
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<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>Second Series of Sermons Published</td>
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<tr>
<td>03/29/88</td>
<td>Death of Charles Wesley</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/05/88</td>
<td>Burial of Charles Wesley in Marylebone</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/06/88</td>
<td>Conference at Bristol</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/28/89</td>
<td>Conference at Leeds</td>
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<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>Revised Translation of the NT published</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/27/90</td>
<td>Wesley’s last Conference in Bristol</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/30/90</td>
<td>Letter to Wilberforce</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/06/90</td>
<td>Last open-air sermon at Winchelsea</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/24/90</td>
<td>Last entry in Wesley’s Journal</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
02/22/91 Last sermon, at Leatherhead
02/24/91 Last letter, to Wilberforce
03/02/91 Dies at City Road at 10:00 a.m.
03/09/91 Buried at City Road

8. Bibliography

A Wesley Bibliography

Primary Sources: Books

Unpublished at This Point


Published


Students may also access the far more extensive Wesley bibliography on Asbury’s homepage (look under “Resources”) or download it from http://wesley.nnc.edu.