TED A. CAMPBELL

The “Way of Salvation” and the Methodist Ethos Beyond John Wesley: A Study in Formal Consensus and Popular Reception

Abstract

It has been well documented that the “way of salvation” was central to John Wesley’s thought. But how did Methodists in the nineteenth century express a theology and spirituality of the way of salvation? This article examines formal doctrinal materials from Methodist churches (including catechisms, doctrinal statements, and hymnals) and the testimonies of Methodist men and women to discern how teachings about the way of salvation were transmitted after the time of John and Charles Wesley. Based on these doctrinal works and personal testimonies, the article shows a consistent pattern in Methodist teaching and experience involving a) conviction of sin, b) conversion, c) struggles of the soul following conversion, and then d) entire sanctification.

KEYWORDS: conversion, salvation, John Wesley, Methodist

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1. Introduction and Background

We find ourselves now at a critical juncture in the fields of Wesleyan and Methodist studies. On the one hand, something that Methodist historians and interpreters have long desired is at last coming to pass, namely, widespread recognition of the prominent cultural influence of Methodism in the USA and its influence on the broader Evangelical movement. Beginning with Nathan Hatch’s study of *The Democratization of American Religion* (1989), a series of historical studies have explored the cultural impact of the Methodist movement in the nineteenth century and beyond. John H. Wigger’s *Taking Heaven By Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America* (1998), Ann Taves’s *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (1999), and David Hempton’s *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit* (2005) all depict Methodism as a vigorous, popular spiritual movement that has had a decisive effect not only on North American religious culture (Wigger) but also on the global culture of Evangelical Christianity (Hempton).

On the other hand, these newer interpretations of Methodist culture may leave the impression that once the Methodist movement grew beyond John Wesley, its popular spirituality had little connection to the more formal structures or formal theological commitments and expressions of Methodist denominations, and thus that the true heirs of Methodism as a spiritual movement, “boiling hot religion,” are to be found in the Holiness and Pentecostal movements rather than the institutional structures of Methodist denominations or in the doctrines or theologies or liturgies formally espoused by them. This is not an oversight because Wigger, Taves, and Hempton decided intentionally to focus on popular spirituality, at least after the time of John Wesley. Hempton, for example, has a chapter on “The Medium and the Message,” which offers (in his words) “an attempt to get to the heart and center of the Methodist message and how it was heard and experienced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.” The chapter itself proceeds by summarizing John Wesley’s theology, then moves to popular spirituality expressed in personal narratives, hymns, and sermons, mentioning the development of more formal systematic theologies at the end of the chapter. Wigger also discusses John Wesley’s theology briefly, then deals with more popular expressions of Methodist piety.

Moreover, I question whether these more recent historiographical accounts
have actually demonstrated "the heart and center of the Methodist message" (Hempton). Hempton comes closest in stating that the three consistent foci of Methodist spirituality were "conversion, sanctification, and holy dying."  

"Holy dying" was indeed an important aspect of Methodist spirituality, an expression of sanctification in articulo mortis, but Methodists' own accounts of their central message, the message of the "way of salvation," was consistently given as "conviction, conversion, and [entire] sanctification," as one traveling preacher explained the Methodist message to Jarena Lee in an account considered below. I will try to show in this paper how the rich spirituality of the "way of salvation" was a consistent theme in Methodist theological literature, hymnals, and catechisms, and how it structured the spiritual autobiographies of Methodist people.

It may well be, however, that Taves, Wigger, and Hempton have actually taken their cues in this from more traditional interpreters of Methodism who have focused on John Wesley's theology and then on the institutional history of Methodist churches after Wesley, the latter epitomized in Frederick Norwood's Story of American Methodism. Even accounts of theological developments beyond John Wesley, like Thomas Langford's study of Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition (originally published in 1984), have not elucidated the distinctive spirituality of the Wesleyan movement represented in the "way of salvation" in any depth. Langford chose to focus his work on theologians who happened to be Methodists, and in doing so, he included many theologians (such as Borden Parker Bowne) who did not identify themselves with the narrative of Methodist spirituality. Also, Langford did not consider such materials as hymnals and catechisms which, I think, do reveal much of the substance of the Methodist message. This is surprising, given the insight in Langford's title, Practical Divinity. One would think that "practical divinity" would privilege such first-order accounts of Christian teachings as those found in hymnals and catechisms, but Langford chose to focus on "professional" theologians. Not surprisingly, given Langford's choice of subject matter, his conclusions about the central theological themes of the Methodist movement are very weak, and the "way of salvation" itself does not merit sustained attention beyond accounts of Holiness theology and Langford's more generalized conclusion that the center of Wesleyan theology is "the grace of God in Jesus Christ."

So I'd venture to say that if you were to read Thomas Langford's account of sophisticated Methodist theologians and then read John Wigger's account of the "boiling hot religion" of "shouting Methodists," you might feel they were describing two vastly different universes. You would perceive at least a chasm between accounts of popular Methodist spirituality and the formal teachings of Wesley and later Methodist theologians.

It is this appearance of a significant disjunction between popular spirituality
and formal church teachings that I want to address in this paper and in a larger work in progress entitled *The Shape of the Wesleyan Tradition*. The perspective I bring is that of a United Methodist elder who writes unapologetically from my perspective as one who takes responsibility for the doctrinal, liturgical, and moral commitments of my own and other Wesleyan denominations, including those of our Pan-Methodist partner churches. I also approach this, however, as one who experienced an evangelical conversion as a result of a Lay Witness Mission in my home congregation and as a participant in the Charismatic renewal movement of the 1970s. In my own scholarship, then, I cannot jettison either the critical study of Methodist doctrine, liturgies, and moral claims, nor the various forms of popular spirituality that have been associated with the Methodist movement.

My methodology, then, will work with both formal doctrinal consensus and with popular spirituality. It takes seriously the study of doctrine as formal, communal consensus on what to teach and practice, but also insists on the critical role of what in the ecumenical movement we call the “reception” of teachings and practices on the part of the whole people of God. This marks a departure from the way in which I and others have studied doctrine in the past, where we focused primarily on formal, communal consensus.12 “Communal consensus” means that we study the teachings of a community in whatever ways communities come to formal consensus about what to teach and practice, as contrasted with the opinions of particular individuals, but “reception” connotes activity on the part of the people of God beyond formal consensus.13 Reception means that even when teachings are formally affirmed through a community’s own processes, they must also be “received” by the community itself. That is, teachings must be actually taught and practices actually affected to constitute authoritative doctrine and authoritative practices on the part of a community.

There are many cases in which teachings and practices have been formally affirmed but failed to be received in churches. Perhaps most notable as a classic instance of the lack of reception was the union between Eastern and Western churches supposedly affected by the Council of Florence. This union insisted on the use of the *filioque* clause in the Creed, but this teaching and practice was not “received” in most of the Eastern churches. Hence, it lacks in these churches the status of authoritative teaching and practice, despite the fact that Eastern church delegates (bishops) at Florence formally approved these measures.

It can be debated whether Methodist churches (including The United Methodist Church) have acknowledged the importance of reception in doctrinal authority. But taking my cue from the importance of reception in ecumenical life, I argue that studying formal consensus and popular reception together offers a very fruitful historical and descriptive methodology for getting
at the heart of a theological and spiritual tradition. What I’m looking for in my study of *The Shape of the Wesleyan Tradition*, then, is the correlation between formal consensus, on the one hand, and popular spirituality signaling reception of formal teachings on the other. In this paper I focus on the theology and spirituality of the “way of salvation” as reflected in the schemata or outlines of Methodist hymnals, catechisms and systematic theologies authorized for the training of preachers as a way of exploring formal consensus. I then examine five popular autobiographies from Methodist people as a way of correlating this formal consensus on the “way of salvation” with the ways in which these teachings were (and perhaps were not) received in popular religious culture. I would note, moreover, that this is primarily a study of nineteenth-century sources, although there will be a few eighteenth- and twentieth-century sources to which I refer.

2. The “Way of Salvation” in Formal Consensus as Revealed in the Structures of Methodist Hymnals, Catechisms, and Authorized Systematic Theologies

2.0 Background

I turn, then, to a consideration of the “way of salvation” as it is revealed in the schemata or organizational structures of Methodist hymnals, catechisms, and systematic theologies authorized by Methodist churches for the training of Methodist preachers. An earlier essay in *The Shape of the Wesleyan Tradition* will have shown that there was an important precedent in the works of pietistic Puritan authors, who explicated the out-working of election in the stages of “effectual calling” or vocation, justification (including assurance of one’s election), sanctification, and glorification. This scheme was formally taught in such Puritan works as William Perkins’ *A Golden Chaine* and William Ames’ *The Marrow of Theology*, and it was reflected in the popular literature of Puritan diaries and in John Bunyan’s imaginative allegory of *The Pilgrim’s Progress from This World to the Next*. Moreover, the earlier essay shows that John Wesley consistently identified teachings about “the way of salvation” as the distinctive content of the Methodist revival. These typically utilized the three categories of repentance, faith, and holiness (or elsewhere, “preventing grace,” justification, and sanctification) as short-hand descriptions of the Methodist understanding of the progress of the spiritual life.

2.1 Hymnals

John Wesley himself designed the first Methodist hymnal to be widely used. So we may begin a consideration of the “way of salvation” in the schemata of Methodist hymnals by noting John Wesley’s own, well-rehearsed comment on his organization of the 1780 *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists*: 

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[The Collection] is large enough to contain all the important truths of our most holy religion, whether speculative or practical; yea, to illustrate them all, and to prove them both by Scripture and reason. And this is done in a regular order. The hymns are not carelessly jumbled together, but carefully ranged under proper heads, according to the experience of real Christians. So that this book is in effect a little body of experimental and practical divinity.16

The main headings in the book are: introductory hymns (part I), “convincing” hymns (part II), hymns for mourners and backsliders (part III), hymns for believers (part IV), and hymns “For the Society” (part V). A perusal of the subheadings reveals that parts II, III and IV comprise the essence of the “way of salvation,” what Wesley apparently meant in referring to “the experience of real Christians.” Moreover, parts II and III contain hymns addressed to “mourners” or “sinners,” that is, persons who had not yet experienced justifying faith or who had experienced justifying faith and had fallen away from it (“backsliders”).17 Part IV contains hymns specifically designated for “believers,” that is, those who had experienced justification. Within this category are hymns for believers rejoicing, fighting, praying, watching, working, suffering, seeking full redemption (that is, seeking entire sanctification), “saved” (which denotes those who have experienced entire sanctification), and “interceding for the world.”18 The outline of the 1780 Collection, then, set the precedent for subsequent Methodist hymnals as they explicated the “way of salvation.”

Almost every one of the Methodist and Wesleyan hymnals I have studied, including hymnals from historically African-American Methodist denominations and hymnals from churches of the Holiness tradition, have a lengthy section singing sinners and Christians through the “way of salvation,” including repentance, faith, assurance, and the quest for sanctification or Christian holiness. The comparative table of Hymnal schemata that I have distributed separately shows how this scheme is worked out in eleven different hymnals, including the 1780 Collection of Hymns and then subsequent British and American hymnals from 1793, 1837, 1849, 1905, 1910, 1932, 1933, 1964, 1983, 1989, and 1993. In this respect the subsequent Methodist hymnals do follow the basic pattern set by John Wesley in his organization of the 1780 Collection. In introducing the Methodist Hymnal of 1964, Dr. Carlton Young noted this consistent organizational structure of Methodist hymnals:

A third distinctive trait of a Methodist hymnal is the prominence placed upon hymns that reflect, in Wesley’s words, “the experience of real Christians.” In maintaining this topical format in a hymnbook, Wesley expressed the view that the book was to be
used by Methodists and must reflect the experiences of Christians within the context of the Wesley revival.19

Although the *Pocket Hymn-Book* published by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1793 does not clearly follow this pattern, the Wesleyan *Collection* remained in print in this early period.20 The 1837 *Hymn Book of the Methodist Protestant Church* has a long section on the “Process of Salvation” with sub-headings on repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, adoption, “witness of the Spirit,” “graces of the Spirit,” sanctification, “triumph in death,” “glory in the resurrection,” “approved in the judgment,” and “immortality in heaven.”21

Methodist hymnals after 1840 typically followed the specific pattern set by the 1780 *Collection* in dividing hymns between those appropriate to “sinners” (Parts II and III of the 1780 *Collection*) and “believers” (Part IV of the 1780 *Collection*).22 The 1848 collection entitled *Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church* has a section on “The Sinner” followed by a section entitled “The Christian Life,” with sub-sections on “justification by faith,” “adoption and assurance,” and “sanctification.”23 The same general division between “The Sinner” and “The Christian” can be seen in the 1877 revision of this Methodist Episcopal hymnal.24

As of the 1905 hymnal jointly sponsored by the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, these two sections are entitled “The Gospel” and “The Christian Life,” and I would note that a *Free Methodist Hymnal* from 1910 follows this pattern closely.25 Both of these hymnals place entire sanctification rather early in the section on the Christian life, reflecting the prominent place of the Holiness movement in this period.26 The British *Methodist Hymn-Book* of 1933 and the US *Hymnal* of 1935 (jointly produced by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church) have a section on “The Gospel” (US) or “The Gospel Call” (British) followed by a section on “The Christian Life.” But we may note two important shifts that occurred with these early twentieth-century hymnals. In the first place, the weight given to the two sections had shifted. In the 1933 *Hymn-Book*, the section on “Gospel Call” has only 28 hymns, whereas the section on “The Christian Life” has 300 hymns.27 The joint American *Methodist Hymnal* of 1935 has more hymns in the section on “The Gospel” (72 hymns in this section), but this is tempered by a second factor that appears in both of these hymnals: that is, the first section on “The Gospel” or “The Gospel Call” is not strictly limited to “sinners” as was the pattern in earlier Methodist hymnals. Both have sections on faith in the first section on “The Gospel,” and the American hymnal even has hymns on “forgiveness” and “consecration” in this earlier section. The American hymnal of 1935 does not have a sub-section explicitly
labeled “sin” or “depravity,” although it does have a sub-section on “repentance.” Moreover, in the American hymnal of 1935, the sub-section on “Christian perfection” is placed at the very end of the section on “The Christian Life,” and this probably reflects the backlash against Holiness teaching that had gone on in these denominations in the early twentieth century. The same organizational division between “The Gospel” and “The Christian Life” is followed in the 1984 Bicentennial Hymnal of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The weakest Methodist hymnal with respect to the sequence of hymns on the “Way of Salvation” was the 1964 Hymnal of the Methodist Church, subsequently re-titled The Book of Hymns of The United Methodist Church. In this hymnal, although there were sections on “call” and “repentance and forgiveness,” these were actually included as sub-headings under “The Gospel of Jesus Christ” along with other hymns on the theme of christology and atonement. Also, they were severed from the section on the Christian life, which begins with “faith and regeneration” and runs through “Christian perfection” to “death and life eternal.” This hymnal reflected the very strong momentum of the liturgical renewal movement, which was pressing Methodists in the direction of organizing their hymnals according to the seasons of the Christian year. In fact, an original proposal was to do away with the “Christian Life” section entirely until the elderly Bishop Nolan Harmon pleaded, “The Christian Life is all we have,” meaning that the section on “The Christian Life” had been the most consistent and distinctive mark of Methodist hymnals.

The most recent British and American Methodist hymnals have a stronger recognition of this distinctive trait of Methodist hymnody and hymnal organization. The British Methodist hymnal, Hymns and Psalms (1983), has a section on the Christian Life (hymns 661-751), though I note that repentance is conspicuously absent from its schema. The 1989 United Methodist Hymnal has consecutive sections on “prevenient grace,” “justifying grace,” and “sanctifying and perfecting grace.” This reflects the resurgence of interest in Wesleyan theology and spirituality that had been going on through the 1970s and the 1980s. The most recent hymnal of the Church of the Nazarene (1993) follows this precedent of organizing hymns on Christian experience by the categories of prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace.

This survey of the outlines of Methodist and Wesleyan hymnals shows that there has been a consistent pattern in them, explicitly acknowledged from the time of John Wesley’s arrangement of the 1780 Collection of Hymns. In accordance with this pattern, a substantial portion of hymns are arranged in a sequence following the Wesleyan understanding of the “way of salvation.” Specific organizational schemes vary from the two-fold distinction of hymns addressed to “sinners” and “believers” in earlier hymnals to the flat pattern
that embraces hymns on evangelical repentance under the category of “The Christian Life” to the more recent pattern according to which hymns are organized under the headings of prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace. But throughout these schemata, a sequence of moments in Christian experience appears fairly consistently: namely, evangelical repentance, followed by justification, regeneration, assurance, sanctification, trials and difficulties, and finally entire sanctification.

2.2 Catechisms

A similar pattern of sequential moments in Christian experience can be seen in catechisms designed for the formation of children by Methodist and other Wesleyan churches. There has been a long and continuous tradition of Methodist catechisms, beginning with John Wesley’s Instructions for Children (1745) and continuing in most branches of Methodist churches with the exception of the United Methodist Church. Some of the most important catechetical works to be considered here are the following:

*A Short Scriptural Catechism* (1793, Methodist Episcopal Church), a revision of John Wesley’s *Instructions for Children* officially sanctioned by the Methodist Episcopal Church and reprinted consistently up until 1852, when it was superseded by a series of ME catechisms.33

“Catechism on Faith” (1817, AME Church), a revision of the shorter minutes of the early Wesleyan conferences (sometimes called the “Doctrinal Minutes”) which deals with specific issues concerning justification, faith, regeneration, assurance, good works, and sanctification, though not in the sequence of Christian experience that appears elsewhere.34

*Catechisms of the Wesleyan Methodists* (1824, Wesleyan Methodist Church [UK], also used in the Methodist Episcopal Church), three catechisms of which the first two are “graded,” that is, designed for children at different ages. The third is a more sophisticated instruction on Christian apologetics designed for youth. These were reprinted through the nineteenth century, and at some points prior to 1852 were printed in the U.S. on behalf of the ME Church.35

*Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1852, Methodist Episcopal Church), an expansion of the earlier *Short, Scriptural Catechism* in three graded catechisms. These catechisms were consistently reprinted on behalf of the ME Church and the ME South Church through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.36
“The Ten Doctrines of Grace” appended to *Catechism No. 1 with Other Lessons for Young People in the History, Doctrines, and Usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1884, Methodist Episcopal Church), a document appended to the ME Catechisms which offers another view of the “way of salvation.”

The 1817 AME “Catechism on Faith” discusses most of the critical points of the “way of salvation” (justification, faith, regeneration, assurance, sanctification), but because it follows the pattern of the early Methodist conferences, it does not deal with these in sequential order.

The other catechisms examined here have a series of questions which follow sequentially the “way of salvation,” and these can be laid out synoptically as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1793 Short Scriptural Catechism</th>
<th>1824 Catechisms of the Wesleyan Methodists</th>
<th>1852 Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church</th>
<th>1884 “Ten Doctrines of Grace”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[repentance] (7)</td>
<td>repentance</td>
<td>justification</td>
<td>justification (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[prayer] (8)</td>
<td>faith in general faith in Christ</td>
<td>justification and adoption</td>
<td>adoption (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[justification by faith] (9)</td>
<td>justification</td>
<td>adoption</td>
<td>witness of the Spirit (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[assurance] (10)</td>
<td>adoption</td>
<td>adoption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[regeneration] (11)</td>
<td>regeneration</td>
<td>regeneration</td>
<td>regeneration (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[the divine law] (12)</td>
<td>regeneration</td>
<td>regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[sanctification, including entire sanctification] (13)</td>
<td>sanctification [begins]</td>
<td>entire sanctification</td>
<td>entire sanctification (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[possibility of falling away] (14)</td>
<td>danger of falling from grace</td>
<td>final perseverance (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a consistent pattern here despite some distinctive nuances. The 1793 *Short Scriptural Catechism* has sections on prayer and the divine law which do not appear in the other catechisms. The 1852 *Catechism* of the M.E. Church puts questions on justification and adoption together, and the 1884 appended list of “Ten Doctrines of Grace” has a separate section on the witness of the Spirit and places regeneration after justification, adoption, and the witness of the Spirit. These two catechetical documents do not have separate questions on evangelical repentance. The “Ten Doctrines of Grace”
utilizes the term “final perseverance,” although the content of this section describes the same content as that of the other catechisms where they discuss the possibility of falling from divine grace. Beyond these distinctive nuances, however, we can see a common sequential pattern of moments in the “way of salvation,” which runs as follows:

- Evangelical repentance
- Justification
- Regeneration
- Assurance (adoption, witness of the Spirit)
- Sanctification
- Entire sanctification
- Danger of falling from divine grace

These form a temporal sequence, although in Wesleyan teaching, justification and regeneration and the assurance of pardon were thought of as normatively occurring at the same moment, so it is not surprising that the order of these three items is sometimes changed. Moreover, “falling away” or “falling from grace” was a danger that could present itself at any point after justification, so its location at the end of the sequence is not necessarily temporal. As we shall see, the sequence of these moments in Christian experience parallels the sequence in Methodist hymns.

2.3 Authorized Works of Systematic Theology

Methodist preachers and ordained clergy were trained utilizing formal works of systematic theology authorized by the Methodist denominations and printed by their publishing houses, beginning with Richard Watson’s Theological Institutes (1823). The officially sanctioned works of systematic theology considered here are the following:

- Richard Watson, Theological Institutes (1823), a work by an early British Methodist theologian widely reprinted and used in Britain and America for the training of pastors.45

- Thomas N. Ralston, Elements of Divinity (1847), the first American systematization of Wesleyan theology, also reprinted by Methodist denominations for the training of Methodist clergy.44

- William Burt Pope, Compend of Christian Theology (1881), the work of a British Methodist theologian of the Victorian age used in training schools in the UK and also published on behalf of the M.E. Church in the US.45

- Thomas O. Summers, Systematic Theology (1888), which became the standard systematic theology for preparation of preachers and ordained ministers in the ME South Church.46
With the exception of Summers, these works of systematic theology are organized in a pattern common to theological textbooks, including prolegomena (Watson’s “evidences”), doctrinal theology (“doctrines”), ethics (“morals”), and ecclesiology (“institutions”). 47 Within this framework, however, they devote a great deal of attention to the defense of the Wesleyan and Arminian belief in the universal availability of grace, 48 and they devote considerable space to the explication of the “way of salvation.” The exception to this is Summers, who organized his two-volume Systematic Theology as lectures on the Articles of Religion, and so does not have an extended discussion of the “way of salvation.” 49 This could explain why Ralston remained in print in Southern Methodist churches for decades beyond the publication of Summers’ textbook.

Richard Watson discusses moments in the way of salvation under “Doctrines of the Holy Scriptures.” He deals with justification in chapter 23, and in chapter 24 he discusses “Concomitants of Justification: Regeneration and Adoption (Assurance).” 50 Four chapters (25-28) defend universal availability of grace, then he deals with “benefits of redemption” in chapter 29 with an extended discussion of entire sanctification. 51 Thomas N. Ralston also dealt with moments in the “way of salvation” under the general topic of biblical doctrines. He has a long sequence under the general heading of “The Remedial Scheme—Its Benefits” (Part I, Book IV), where he discusses the influence of the Holy Spirit (chapter 25), repentance (chapter 26), faith (chapter 27), justification (chapters 28-33), regeneration (chapter 34), adoption and the witness of the Spirit (chapter 35), perseverance of the saints (including the possibility of falling from grace, chapter 36) and Christian perfection (chapter 37). 52 This outline answers almost exactly to the sequence given in the 1852 Methodist Episcopal catechisms that we have examined above.

William Burt Pope divided his material somewhat differently. His work has a Trinitarian schema, indeed, we might say an “economic” Trinitarian schema in which specific moments in the “way of salvation” are dealt with as aspects of christology under the category of “The Administration of Redemption” and other moments are dealt with as aspects of pneumatology. Under christology in the second volume of his work, Pope deals with the “preliminaries of salvation,” including free will, conversion, repentance, and faith. 53 Under pneumatology in the third volume he discusses “the state of salvation,” including regeneration and adoption, and then “Christian sanctification,” including entire sanctification. 54

The specific content of these works of systematic theology from Watson through Pope reveals a consistent defense of the Wesleyan teachings on the “way of salvation” in a dialectic with other Christian traditions. For example, the teaching about justifying faith as heart-felt trust in Christ is contrasted with beliefs in “baptismal justification” (despite the fact that Wesley believed
in a version of this) and with the notion of a merely objective faith (fides quae creditur) attributed to Lutheran and Reformed traditions. Thomas Langford comments on the lack of originality among nineteenth-century interpreters of the Wesleyan message, finding little doctrinal development between Wesley and William Burt Pope in the 1880s. Langford faults Pope in particular for his failure to deal with critical cultural issues, such as the rise of Freudian thought, facing the churches in his day. But however we may fault them, we may take their lack of originality as indicating a rather remarkable consistency in Wesleyan thought from Wesley’s own time through the early twentieth century. These nineteenth century interpreters were telling their own internal story: the story of the “way of salvation” that had structured the distinctive spirituality of the Methodist movement.

2.4 Summary: The “Way of Salvation” in Formal Doctrinal Consensus

In fact, if we consider all of these officially sanctioned documents—hymnals, catechisms, and works of systematic theology—together, we may perceive a relatively consistent and stable pattern to teaching about the “way of salvation,” according to which Christian experience was understood as embracing the following typical moments in this temporal sequence:

- evangelical repentance, followed by
- justification by faith, occurring simultaneously with
  - regeneration and
  - the assurance of pardon (including “the witness of the Spirit”), followed by the process of sanctification,
  - including trials and difficulties and the need for the repentance of believers and even the possibility of falling away, but culminated hopefully in entire sanctification.

Consider, then, a Methodist laywoman in 1855, who would have regularly sung hymns laid out in the “way of salvation,” who might attend quarterly meetings or camp meetings where the preaching followed the sequence of the “way of salvation,”57 keeping “a strict account” of how many souls were awakened, converted, and sanctified during the meeting, whose family might own a copy of one of the 1852 Methodist catechisms detailing the “way of salvation” in questions and answers that could be posed to children as an exercise in the evenings and on the Lord’s Day, and whose circuit-riding preachers would have studied the “way of salvation” as it was explicated in a more sophisticated way in Watson’s Theological Institutes or Ralston’s Elements of Divinity (and possibly also in Wesley’s Standard Sermons in addition to Watson or Ralston). There’s little doubt in my mind that if she hung around Methodists very long—and she’d have been required to hang around for
between three and six months to pass her “probationary membership” in the local society—she would have been well familiar with the “way of salvation” as Methodists understood it.

3. The “Way of Salvation” in Popular Reception as Illustrated by Five Spiritual Autobiographies

We turn now to ask how the “official” teachings of Methodist churches, represented in hymnals, catechisms, and officially sanctioned works of systematic theology, may have been “received” and understood by people in Methodist churches. Methodists produced a voluminous literature of personal conversion narratives, diaries and journals, spiritual autobiographies, and the distinctly Methodist spin on the genre of obituaries, which were also used as a way of describing personal religious experience. Just as Wesley’s Sermons and his arrangement of the 1780 hymnal set precedents for subsequent Methodist theology about the “way of salvation,” so his own published Journal set a precedent for the recording of personal religious experiences.

One way to test the level of reception of teachings about the “way of salvation” is by examining some specific spiritual autobiographies of Methodist people. Fortunately, we now have a series of published spiritual autobiographies from early American Methodist people, and I will use five autobiographies published in critical editions. The first two are from a Native American, William Apess, a Pequot Indian from Massachusetts born in 1798, and his wife, Mary Apess, who was Euro-American and was born in 1788. These are published in a volume entitled On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, A Pequot.88 William Apess had been a licensed preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church but united with the Methodist Protestant Church at about the time of its organization in 1830.89 The next three autobiographies are from a volume entitled Sisters of the Spirit: Three Black Women’s Autobiographies of the Nineteenth Century, and it includes the autobiographies of three black Methodist women, Jarena Lee (1783-after 1849), Zilpha Elaw (ca. 1790-after 1845) and Julia A. J. Foote (1823-1900). Jarena Lee was associated with the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the time of its founding by Richard Allen, and she was an early advocate of the right of women to preach in that denomination. Zilpha Elaw ministered as a lay preacher and evangelist in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Julia Foote was a preacher in the AME Zion Church. In fact, shortly before her death in 1900, she became the first woman ordained as an elder in the Zion Church. Lee, Elaw, and Foote were all free black women from northern states.60 These five autobiographies illustrate the classic Methodist understanding of the “way of salvation” and show how the formal teachings of Methodist churches were received at a popular level. The fact that four of these individuals came from minority cultures (Native American and African American) is, in
my view, a significant indication of how the Methodist message was received and internalized even across significant cultural frontiers.

3.1 Evangelical Repentance

William and Mary Apess, Jarena Lee, Zilpha Elaw, and Julia Foote all recount in detail the struggles of their souls leading up to conversion, including their awareness of God’s impending judgment, their intense awareness of their own sinfulness, and their need for divine grace. A few excerpts will illustrate the intensity of their experiences of evangelical repentance.

William Apess: “My heart now became much troubled, and I felt determined to seek the salvation of my soul... a conviction settled on my mind, more and more; and I was more serious than usual... when I considered how great a sinner I was before God, and how often I had grieved the good Spirit of the Lord, my distress for mercy was very great.”

Mary Apess: “This was the first time I had been warned to seek the salvation of my soul. [The preacher’s] words sank deep on my mind; I began to weep as soon as he had left me; I went out, and for the first time I ever felt the need of praying or of a Savior; I knelt and poured out my soul to God, that he would have mercy upon me; although I had never seen anybody kneel, yet it was impressed on my mind that I must, and from that time I cried to God earnestly every day, during some months.”

Jarena Lee, recounting an experience in early life after she had told a lie to the woman in whose household she worked as a domestic servant: “At this awful point, in my early history, the Spirit of God moved in power through my conscience, and told me I was a wretched sinner. On this account so great was the impression and so strong were the feelings of guilt, that I promised in my heart that I would not tell another lie.”

Zilpha Elaw: “I never experienced that terrific dread of hell by which some Christians appear to have been exercised; but I felt a godly sorrow for sin in having grieved my God by a course of disobedience to His commands.”

Julia Foote: “All this time conviction followed me, and there were times when I felt a faint desire to serve the Lord; but I had had a taste of the world, and thought I could not part with its idle pleasures... [She attends a dance, and] I had taken only a few steps when I was seized with a smothering sensation, and felt the same heavy grasp on my arm, and in my ears, a voice kept saying, ‘Repent! Repent!’ I immediately left the floor and sank into a seat...”
3.2 Conversion (Justification, Regeneration, and Assurance)

Each of our five Methodist autobiographies recounts a conversion narrative, usually involving a single moment in which the narrator feels her or his sins forgiven. This moment answers to justification and the “assurance of pardon” in more formal Methodist lore and probably also includes regeneration, although the term “conversion” is more common in popular Methodist literature.66

William Apess: “The result was such as is always to be expected, when a lost and ruined sinner throws himself entirely on the Lord—perfect freedom. On the 15th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1813, I heard a voice saying unto me, in soft and soothing accents, ‘Arise, thy sins that are many are all forgiven thee; go in peace and sin no more.’ There was nothing very singular, save that the Lord stooped to lift me up, in my conversion.”67

Mary Apess: “The plan of salvation was now open to my view. The Son of God was revealed to me by faith, in all his offices as prophet, priest, and king. My load of sin and fear of hell were gone... My burden of sin now left me; my tears were dried up. I felt a sweet peace in my soul.”68

Jarena Lee, after hearing Richard Allen preach: “That moment, though hundreds were present, I did leap to my feet, and declare that God, for Christ’s sake, had pardoned the sins of my soul. Great was the ecstasy of my mind, for I felt that not only the sin of malice was pardoned, but that all other sins were swept away altogether. That day was the first when my heart had believed, and my tongue had made confession unto salvation...”69

Julia Foote: “I was converted when fifteen years old. It was on a Sunday evening at a quarterly meeting [where she felt a sense of conviction]... I fell to the floor and was carried home... In great terror I cried: ‘Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner!’ The voice which had been crying in my ears ceased at once and, and a ray of light flashed across my eyes, accompanied by a sound of far distant singing; the light grew brighter and brighter, and the singing more distinct, and soon I caught the words: ‘This is the new song—redeemed, redeemed!’... Such joy and peace as filled my heart, when I felt that I was redeemed and could sing the new song. Thus was I wonderfully saved from eternal burning.”70

In contrast to these accounts of instantaneous conversions, Zilpha Elaw makes it clear that her experience of conversion was gradual rather than instantaneous, involving a growing recognition of forgiveness. Nevertheless, this culminates in an ecstatic moment in which she sees a vision of Christ that
assured her of her acceptance. “After this wonderful manifestation of my condescending Saviour, the peace of God which passeth understanding was communicated to my heart, and joy in the Holy Ghost...”

3.3 Sanctification and the Trials of the Soul

Each of the five autobiographies considered here recounts the trials of the soul after conversion, including moments of “darkness” and doubt, sometimes involving “falling away” or “backsliding” into sin. William Apess recounted that he did not have the support of a local class meeting immediately after his conversion and soon fell back into sin, from which he was later delivered in another dramatic religious experience. Mary Apess continued to experience doubts and melancholy after her conversion, and as she recounts this she attributes it to the fact that she had not been willing to share with her mother and others the joy of her conversion. Jarena Lee noted that “From the day on which I first went to the Methodist church,” (and this was the day of her conversion) “until the hour of my deliverance,” (and this refers to her subsequent experience of entire sanctification) “I was strangely buffeted by that enemy of all righteousness—the devil,” and she went on to recount how she eventually came to a full consciousness of her conversion (still prior to entire sanctification). Zilpha Elaw recounts continuing trials and persecution on account of her identification with the Methodists: “But notwithstanding this tide of divine comforts so richly replenished my soul, Satan, my great adversary, frequently assailed me with various trials and temptations, and the young folks often derided me as being a Methodist....” Julia Foote offers several chapters in her autobiography recounting her spiritual struggles: some of her chapter titles following her conversion narrative epitomize the content of these struggles: “A Desire for Knowledge—Inward Foes,” “Various Hopes Blasted,” “Disobedience—But Happy Results.”

3.4 Entire Sanctification

Mary Apess, Jarena Lee, Zilpha Elaw, and Julia Foote describe how they came to understand the possibility of entire sanctification as a moment in which one can love God completely as a gift of divine grace. Mary Apess indicated that she did not believe this doctrine at first but was eventually convinced of it on the grounds that to deny it would be to deny the power of God to bring about that which God desired, namely, our complete love and dedication to God. Jarena Lee was taught the doctrine of sanctification by a traveling preacher. Julia Foote had learned about sanctification but understood at first that it was only to be expected near death. Later she learned that due to the unlimited power of God, entire sanctification is immediately available. This reflects the development of Holiness theology in the mid-nineteenth century.
Mary Apess, Jarena Lee, Zilpha Elaw, and Julia Foote all offer testimonies to the moments in which they experienced entire sanctification.80

Mary Apess: “But before the [camp] meeting closed, God in Christ showed himself mighty to save and strong to deliver. I felt the mighty power of God again, like electric fire, go through every part of me, cleansing me throughout soul, flesh, and spirit. I felt now that I was purified, sanctified, and justified.”81

I would note that the use of the term “justified” is eccentric in this passage, since formal Methodist teaching would have associated justification with the earlier moment of her conversion, and this shows how language about religious experience could become fluid in popular contexts (see below).

Jarena Lee: “But when this voice whispered in my heart, saying, ‘Pray for sanctification,’ I again bowed in the same place, at the same time, and said, ‘Lord, sanctify my soul for Christ’s sake?’ That very instant, as if lightening had darted through me, I sprang to my feet and cried, ‘The Lord has sanctified my soul’... [After being tempted by Satan] But another spirit said, ‘Bow down for the witness—I received it—thou art sanctified!’ The first I knew of myself after that, I was standing in the yard with my hands spread out, and looking with my face toward heaven.”82

Zilpha Elaw: “It was at one of these [camp] meetings that God was pleased to separate my soul unto Himself, to sanctify me as a vessel designed for honour... Whether I was in the body, or whether I was out of the body, on that auspicious day, I cannot say; but this I do know, that at the conclusion of a most powerful sermon... I became so overpowered with the presence of God, that I sank down upon the ground, and laid there for a considerable time... I distinctly heard a voice speak unto me, which said, ‘Now thou art sanctified; and I will show thee what thou must do.’”83

Julia Foote: “The second day after that pilgrim’s visit, while waiting on the Lord, my large desire was granted, through faith in my precious Savior. The glory of God seemed almost to prostrate me to the floor. There was, indeed, a weight of glory resting upon me... I lost all fear. I went straight to my mother and told her I was sanctified.”84

3.5 Use of Technical Language to Describe the “Way of Salvation”

Each of the persons whose narratives we have considered here were keenly aware of their racial, social, and cultural backgrounds. William Apess wrote explicitly from his experience as a Pequot Indian and refers to Native Americans as “the children of the forest.” He contrasts the native morality of American
Indians with the corruptions of Euro-American culture and society he recounts severe persecution at the hands of Euro-Americans, including stinging prejudice based on skin color; and he sometimes uses native expressions, such as “the Great Spirit” as a way of referring to God.\textsuperscript{85} Jarena Lee, Zilpha Elaw, and Julia Foote all recount the prejudicial treatment they received at the hands of white families for whom they worked, and Zilpha Elaw narrates the particular dangers faced by a free black woman traveling (as an evangelist) in slave states.\textsuperscript{86} Mary Apess recounted her own struggles growing up as a poor, orphaned white girl.\textsuperscript{87} None of these five persons had any formal education beyond a rudimentary knowledge of the English language for reading and writing and then the training they received at the hands of Methodist preachers and society members.

And yet each of these persons also knew and used the technical language that Methodists taught concerning the stages of the “way of salvation.” We might say that they had become “bicultural” or even “tricultural” in their ability to use the language of the Methodist subculture in addition to the language of the majority Euro-American culture and their native ways of speaking. They speak, for example, of “the plan of salvation” (William Apess)\textsuperscript{88} and they could recount in strikingly similar language the general scheme of the “way of salvation.” Jarena Lee could write that “I have now passed through the account of my conviction, and also of my conversion to God; and shall next speak of the blessing of sanctification.”\textsuperscript{89} She recounted how a visiting black preacher, William Scott,

inquired if the Lord had justified my soul. I answered yes. He then asked me if he had sanctified me. I answered no and that I did not know what that was. He then undertook to instruct me further in the knowledge of the Lord respecting this blessing... He told me the progress of the soul from a state of darkness, or of nature, was threefold; or consisted in three degrees, as follows:—First, conviction for sin. Second, justification from sin. Third, the entire sanctification of the soul to God.\textsuperscript{90}

Similarly, Julia Foote wrote that “In giving my first testimony [in Boston], I told of my thorough and happy conversion, and of my sanctification as a second, distinct work of the Holy Ghost.”\textsuperscript{91}

Reading these spiritual autobiographies, one becomes aware of the fact that in popular parlance, a number of short-hand expressions were used to describe particular moments in the “way of salvation”: “conviction” is frequently used as a short-hand term for evangelical repentance, and “sanctification” is used as a short-hand term for what would be termed “entire sanctification” in more formal Methodist doctrinal phraseology. “Conversion” is the most frequent term for the moments discretely described
in formal Methodist literature as justification and assurance and regeneration, though it was natural to see these as a single moment because formal Methodist teaching from the time of John Wesley had spoken of these three events as normally occurring simultaneously. Moreover, there is some evidence of popular usages of terms that appear confused in contrast to more formal usages: in one sentence, for example, Mary Apess refers to her experience of entire sanctification as embracing “justification” as well as sanctification, and although it is true that justification remains when one is sanctified, the term would be out of place in a more formal scheme of the “way of salvation.”

But even noting these differences in vocabulary, one cannot but note the strong correlation between the formal theological consensus about the “way of salvation” which we have seen in the schemata of hymnals, catechisms, and officially sanctioned theologies, on the one hand, and the narratives of personal religious experience given by these five witnesses on the other hand, and these five are only a small sample of the wide body of Methodist testimonial literature that bears out these correlations. The more formal theological pattern, it is true, separates justification and regeneration and the assurance of pardon but all the while notes that these normally appear simultaneously in the experience of believers. It is to be expected, then, that these three elements of the “way of salvation” should be collapsed into the one moment of “conversion” in the actual testimonies of Methodist people.

4. Conclusion(s)

In conclusion, I return to what I’ve described as a disjunction in contemporary accounts of the Methodist ethos between those who have focused on popular spirituality and those who have focused on more formal theological developments. The narratives of William and Mary Apess, Jarena Lee, Zilpha Elaw, and Julia Foote fit very well into the descriptions of popular Methodist spirituality offered by Nathan Hatch, John Wigger, Ann Taves, and David Hempton. Indeed, Wigger and Hempton have used the autobiographies from *Sisters of the Spirit* as part of their larger sketches of Methodist spirituality. But considered in direct dialogue with the formal literature reflecting Methodist consensus on “the way of salvation” in hymnals, catechisms, and authorized works of systematic theology, these autobiographies show how ordinary Methodist people, even across the frontiers of subcultures, had “received” and internalized the teaching about the “way of salvation” that John Wesley had considered to be the distinctive mark of the Methodist movement.

I argue, then, that by examining the correlation between formal consensus and popular reception, we can see that this disjunction, at least as respects the critical teaching on the “way of salvation,” is only a perception, a mirage created by the absence of critical reflection on the voluminous body of
literature, including hymnals, catechisms, and more formal theological treatises, by which Methodist churches consistently taught the spirituality of the “way of salvation,” a spirituality that also appears in popular accounts of personal religious experiences. This takes us to the heart of the Methodist message and the distinctive essence of what this spiritual and theological tradition has stood for.

**End Notes**


4. Wigger's subtitle indicates his primary interest in popular spirituality, “Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America,” and his book carries this through. Hempton's introduction makes clear his desire to focus on popular spirituality, concluding with his hope that he will make a substantial contribution to historiography “by examining the rise of Methodism as a transnational movement of ordinary people not easily confined to particular times, places, and institutions” (p. 10).


6. Hempton, pp. 56-60 (Wesley’s theology), pp. 60-68 (popular spirituality expressed in personal narratives), pp. 68-74 (hymns), pp. 74-79 (sermons), and p. 84 (development of formal systematic theologies).

7. Wigger, pp. 15-20 (John Wesley’s theology), and (e.g.) pp. 104-124 (“Boiling Hot Religion”).

8. Hempton, p. 60 and following in chapter three.

9. Russell E. Richey argues that there were four distinct “languages” in early American Methodism: the language of popular evangelicalism, Wesleyan language, episcopal or Anglican language, and republican language (*Early American Methodism* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991], chapter 6, pp. 82-97). With respect to his categories, I would see formal consensus as reflecting Wesleyan language (although consistently revised and restated by American Methodist churches) and popular narratives as reflecting the language or culture of popular evangelicalism, but I will argue for a strong correlation between these “languages” as regards the content of the “way of salvation” (see the conclusions below).

10. I am grateful to Randy Maddox for this insight. Maddox has consistently argued for the nature of Wesleyan thought as “practical divinity” which would privilege first-order theological activities; cf. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley’s Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books imprint of Abingdon Press, 1994), pp. 15-18. The expression “practical divinity” came from a letter from Susanna Wesley to John Wesley at the time of the latter’s decision to seek holy orders in
1725, and by this term she denoted the literature of the Anglican “Holy Living” tradition and of late medieval works of the Devoitio Moderna tradition (such as Thomas à Kempis), which had been favored by advocates of the “Holy Living” tradition. The term, then, did denote what Maddox calls “first-order” theological activities (Susanna Wesley, letter to John Wesley, 23 February 1724/25; in Charles Wallace, Jr., ed., Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings [New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997], pp. 106-107). John Wesley also used the term “practical divinity” in the preface to the 1780 Collection of Hymns for Use of the People Called Methodists (see the quotation in the text below), and used it to refer to the Collection itself, another instance that would suggest that “practical divinity” ought to privilege such first-order theological work.


17. Ibid., section II comprises hymns 88-95 (in Hildebrand and Beckerlegge, eds., *Collection*, pp. 188-200); section III comprises hymns 96-181 (in Hildebrand and Beckerlegge, eds., *Collection*, pp. 201-307).


19. Carlton R. Young, *An Introduction to the New Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House/Graded Press, 1966), p. 7. The quotation from John Wesley is from the preface to the 1780 *Collection of Hymns*, given above in the text. Young describes the topical layout of the 1780 *Collection* as a precedent for the organization of subsequent Methodist hymnals. However, in using the term “real Christians” Wesley seems to have denoted his sense of an ideal, i.e., what a “real” Christian ought to be, where Young takes this expression as referring to the actual or lived experiences of Christians.

20. *A Pocket Hymn Book: Designed as a Constant Companion for the Pious, Collected from Various Authors* (Philadelphia: Henry Tuckness, 1800; original printing was 1793). This hymnal, designed as an inexpensive alternative to the Wesleyan *Collection*, follows some of the categories of the 1780 *Collection* but is quite jumbled, with (for example) three different sections marked “penitential.”

21. *Hymn Book of the Methodist Protestant Church: Compiled by the Authority of the General Conference* (14th edition; Baltimore: Book Concern, Methodist Protestant Church, 1852; original printing was 1837).


23. Ibid., hymns 261-330.


26. In the 1905 MEC and MECS hymnal, the sub-section on entire sanctification is entitled "entire consecration and perfect love" and comprises hymns 353-381. In the 1910 Free Methodist Hymnal this sub-section is entitled "entire sanctification" and comprises hymns 333-386.


30. The quotation from Bishop Harmon is from the recollection of Professor James Logan of Wesley Theological Seminary, who was part of the process leading up to the 1964 Hymnal. The quotation from Carlton Young (in the text above) was given in a pamphlet introducing the hymnal of 1964 and reflects at least his recognition that the hymnal did succeed in incorporating "the Christian life" as an organizational pattern consistent with historic Methodist hymnals.

31. I was present when the suggestion was made that we use this structure: the suggestion was made in a meeting of the Wesley texts subcommittee at Duke Divinity School by Scott J. Jones, whose mother Bonnie Jones Gehweiler was chairing the session, and the suggestion was passed from that group to the hymnal committee. All of the classic loci of the "way of salvation" appear under these three headings in the Hymnal. However, it might also be noted that the total number of Charles Wesley hymns in the 1989 hymnal is relatively low, second only to the 1964 hymnal.


33. The version consulted here is A Short Scriptural Catechism Intended for the Use of the Methodist Societies (New York: N. Bangs and J. Emory for the M. E. Church; Azor Hoyt, printer, 1825).

34. The "Catechism on Faith" is included in every AME Discipline since 1817; the version consulted here is from The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1996-2000 (Nashville: AMEC Sunday School Union, 1997), pp. 21-35.

35. The version consulted here is the Catechisms of the Wesleyan Methodists: Compiled and Published by Order of the Conference for the Use of Families and Schools Connected with That Body (London: J. Mason, 1842). Catechism no. 1 is "For Children of Tender Years"; Catechism no. 2 is "For Children of Seven years of Age and Upwards"; Catechism no. 3 is "For the Use of Young Persons" and carries the subtitle, "On the Evidences of Christianity, and the Truths of the Holy Scriptures."

36. The version consulted here is Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Number 3 (Cincinnati: Cranston and Stowe for the Sunday-School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1852). This carries an approbation by Bishops Levi Scott, Nathan Bangs, and Joseph Holdich. It also gives the text of Catechism Number 1 (pp. 1-18).
37. The version cited is given in Catechism No. 1 with Other Lessons for Young People in the History, Doctrines, and Usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church (New York: Phillips and Hunt; Cincinnati: Cranston and Stowe, 1884).

38. In the version cited, lessons 7-14 (pp. 11-26).


41. In the version cited, pp. 30-31.

42. “Evangelical repentance” denotes the repentance that precedes justification, as contrasted with “the repentance of believers” in Wesleyan lore.

43. The edition cited is Richard Watson, Theological Institutes: Or, A View of the Evidences, Doctrines, Morals, and Institutions of Christianity (New York: B. Waugh and T. Mason for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1833). Although the work was originally published in multiple volumes, this printing is “complete in one volume.” On Watson, cf. Langford, Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition, pp. 50-57.


46. The edition cited is Thomas O. Summers, Systematic Theology: A Complete Body of Wesleyan Arminian Divinity Consisting of Lectures on the Twenty-Five Articles of Religion (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1888). On Summers, cf. Langford, pp. 95-96. I would have to differ with Langford’s conclusion about Summers’ reliance on Watson, because Summers’ outline follows the Articles and so assumes a very different shape than Watson’s. The lack of sustained treatment of the “way of salvation” in Summers shows the significant difference between his approach and that of Watson.

47. But note that Ralston places the doctrinal section ahead of the “evidences” (what we would think of as prolegomena).


49. Summers does have discussions of regeneration (2:73ff), “preventing” grace (2:77ff), justifying faith (2:102ff and 2:125 ff), and the admissibility of grace (2:173ff).

50. Watson, pp. 242-452 (chapter 23) and 453-461 (chapter 24).

51. Watson, pp. 544-553 (chapter 29); the discussion of entire sanctification is on pp. 544-548.

52. Ralston, pp. 329-472.


54. Pope, 3:1-27 (on regeneration and adoption) and 27-61 (on sanctification, including entire sanctification).

55. Watson distinguishes the Wesleyan conception of heart-felt faith from
other options, pp. 424-453; Ralston devotes six chapters to this topic, pp. 367-416; Pope makes a similar distinction between living faith and "dead faith" in his discussion of the "preliminaries of salvation," 2:358-385; Summers elaborates a similar argument about justifying faith in 2:102ff and 2:125ff.

56. Langford, pp. 62-63 (on Pope), 95 (on Ralston and Bascom), and 96 (on Summers).

57 Russell E. Richey's study of *The Methodist Conference in America: A History* (Nashville: Kingswood Books imprint of the Abingdon Press, 1996) makes the point that early Methodist conferences (quarterly as well as annual conferences) were primarily occasions for preaching, worship, hymn-singing and generally matters related to spirituality rather than business meetings (chapter 6, pp. 51-61).


59. He actually gives the date of his joining the Methodist Protestant Church as 11 April 1829, and this was during the period when the MP denomination was becoming separate from the ME Church but prior to its formal organization (p. 133).


61. Apess, pp. 126 and 127; the entire section from p. 121 through p. 127 recounts the period of mourning over sin leading up to William Apess' conversion.

62. Apess, p. 134; the entire section from p. 133 through p. 139 recounts the period of mourning over sin leading up to Mary Apess' conversion.

63. Jarena Lee, in *Sisters of the Spirit*, p. 27.


66. Lester Ruth's recently published collection of early Methodist materials includes a number of testimonies to conversion experiences in language similar to these, pp. 72-82.

67 Apess, p. 129.

68. Apess, pp. 139-140.


70. Julia Foote, in *Sisters of the Spirit*, p. 180 (the conversion narrative continues through the next page).

71. Zilpha Elaw, in *Sisters of the Spirit*, pp. 55-57; the quotation is on p. 57.

72. Apess, pp. 130-132.

73. Apess, pp. 140-142.


75. Zilpha Elaw, in *Sisters of the Spirit*, p. 58.

76. Julia Foote, in *Sisters of the Spirit*, chapter titles on pp. 182 (chapter eight), 184 (chapter nine), and 186 (chapter ten).

77 Apess, p. 142.

79. Julia Foote, in *Sisters of the Spirit*, p. 186, “They told me that sanctification was for the young believer, as well as the old.”

80. Lester Ruth’s collection of materials exhibiting early Methodist life includes a number of testimonies to entire sanctification, pp. 115-130.

81. Apess, p. 143.

82. Jarena Lee, in *Sisters of the Spirit*, p. 34.


85. Apess, pp. 119-121. He refers to God as “the Great Spirit” on p. 121.


88. Apess, p. 122.


92. Apess, p. 143.

93. This is consistent with Russell Richey’s argument that Methodist conferences and other institutional structures in the nineteenth century were primarily concerned with spirituality rather than business matters; see his conclusions in *The Methodist Conference in America*, pp. 199-204.