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DO 628 Theology of John Wesley

Allan Coppedge

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THEOLOGY OF JOHN WESLEY
FALL 1999

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PURPOSE
A study of the theological doctrines and opinions of John Wesley and the origin of Methodism as a vigorous reaffirmation of the evangelical faith of Christendom. The development of the doctrinal position of Wesley is studied with reference to his life, work, religious experience, and the Evangelical Revival in England in the eighteenth century. This heritage is studied in order that it may be critically and appropriately explained and communicated.

LEARNING GOALS
1. To provide an introduction to the theology and thought patterns of John Wesley in the following areas:
   - Prevenient grace and sin; Universal atonement and transforming grace; Justification and regeneration; Sanctification and Christian perfection; Christian life and means of grace; the Church and ministry; Doctrine of God the Father; Doctrines of Grace; Predestination; Religious Authority; Pluralism and the Bible.
2. To offer and analysis of the background factors that influenced Wesley’s life and thought.
3. To introduce the life of Wesley and his influence in shaping eighteenth century Methodism.
4. To understand how Methodism is a part of the larger Christian Church and where it contributes to it, especially in the areas of theology and the practice of the Christian life.
5. To see some historical models of the transforming power of grace in the application of Biblical truth to individual lives, the Church, and society.
6. To recognize the practical implications of the theological ideas.
7. To understand the positive and negative lessons from the rise of Methodism and personal lives, the collected body of believers, and the culture at large.
8. To be able from within this heritage to address the theological issues that confront the church and the world today. This goal will be accomplished primarily through lecture and discussion in class.
REQUIREMENTS

I. Study Assignments
   A. Reading and outlining of assignments as indicated in the syllabus.
   
   B. A Collateral chart (included in syllabus) is to be kept which should include a record of the number of hours per week spent reading, outlining and taken notes. The number of hours studied will determine the grade options available to the student for the entire course. To be eligible to earn any grade up through an “A”, a total of at least 52 hours should be spent over the term. For a :B:, at least 46 hours per term. For a “C:”, at least 40 hours per term. At least 36 hours per term is required for a passing grade.
   
   C. A notebook should be kept of all outlines and notes taken (but not class notes), plus a record of the student’s reading. The notebook should be organized by subject (justification, sin, sanctification, etc.). A grade will be given the notebook and the completion of assignments on time. It will constitute 33.3% of the final grade.

II. Examinations
   There will be a mid-term and final that will cover reading assignments and class presentation. The date for the mid-term examination is Friday, October 15; the final is Friday, December 17, 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

III. Attendance
   Attendance at all class periods is expected. Students should report the number of class periods from which he/she has been absent on his/her collateral sheet.

   Out of courtesy to other members of the class, it is requested that no food or beverage be consumed in class.

   IV. Textbooks
   A. Required:
      John Wesley, Wesley’s Fifty-two Standard Sermons, ed. N. Burwash.
      Kenneth Collins, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection.
      Harold Lindstrom, Wesley and Sanctification.
      Kenneth Collins, A Real Christian.

   B. Recommended:
      Allan Coppedge, John Wesley in Theological Debate.
      Kenneth Collins, A Faithful Witness.

   C. Requested:
      The Holy Bible (RSV) in class.
READING SCHEDULE

Outlining should be done so that the key arguments from any chapter or sermon can be seen from it. Normally two or three pages per chapter and one page per sermon will cover the material, although here are several exceptions to this guideline. In your syllabus is a guide to taking notes from Wesley’s *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. This should be used for the assignment on *A Plain Account* October 25-29.

**BACKGROUND**

**September 7-11**

**Read and Outline:** *(Required)*


**Read only:** *(Recommended as hours permit)*

Collins, Kenneth, *A Real Christian*

**BACKGROUND**

**September 13-17**

**Read and Outline:** *(Required)*


**Read only:** *(Required)*

Collins, *A Real Christian*. Complete this work.

**JUSTIFICATION/NEW BIRTH**

**September 20-24**

**Read and Outline:** *(Required)*


**Read only:** *(Required)*


**Read only:** *(Recommended)*

September 27 – October 1

**WITNESS OF SPIRIT/ASSURANCE**

**Read and Outline:** (Required)

Wesley, John, Works, VIII, A Farther Appeal, Part I, Section, I, Sub-section 1-6.

**Read only:** (Recommend)

Wesley, Works, VI, Sermon, LXXXVI, “A Call to Backsliders.”

October 4-8

**DOCTRINE OF GOD**

**Read and Outline:** (Required)


**Read only:** (Recommended)

Collins, A Faithful Witness, Chapter 1, “The Doctrine of God.”
Wesley, Sermons, Sermon XV, “The Great Assize.”

October 11-15

**SIN AND PREVENIENT GRACE**

**Read and Outline:** (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, Sermon XLIV, “Original Sin.”
Lindstrom, Harold, Wesley and Sanctification, pp. 19-50 (notes on key concepts).

**Read only:** (Required)


**Read only:** (Recommended)


October 18-22

**SANCTIFICATION**
Read and Outline:  (Required)


Read only:  (Recommended)

Coppedge, *The Promise of Something More*.

**CHRISTIAN PERFECTION**

October 25-29


Read only:  (Recommended)


**PASTORAL THEOLOGY**

November 1-5

Read only:  (Required)

Wesley, *Works* VIII:
“A Plain Account of the People Called Methodist.”
“Rules of the Band-Societies.”
“Directions Given to the Band-Societies.”

Read only:  (Recommended)

Wesley, *Works* VIII:
“Minutes of Several Conversations between Wesley and Others.” (Large minutes)
“Advice to the People Called Methodists.”

**THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY**

November 8-12
Read and Outline:  (Required)


Read only:  (Recommended)

Collins,  The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 4, “The Doctrine of the Church.”

**PREDESTINATION**

November 15-26
Read and Outline:  (Required)


Read only:  (Required)

Lindstrom,  Wesley and Sanctification, pp. 64-75.
Coppedge,  Wesley in Theological Debate, pp. 132-143.

Read only:  (Recommended)

Collins,  A Faithful Witness, Chapter 7, pp. 163-177.

**PREDESTINATION AND AUTHORITY**

November 29-December 3
Read and Outline:  (Required)

Wesley,  Sermons, Sermon XX, “The Lord Our Righteousness.”

Read only:  (Required)

Wesley,  Works, X, “A Blow at the Root.”

Read only:  (Recommended)

Coppedge,  Wesley in Theological Debate, pp. 191-222.

PLURALISM/DOCTRINAL STANDARDS**

December 6-10
Read and Outline:  (Required)


**Read only: (Required)**


**Read only: (Recommended)**


Oden, *Doctrinal Standards in the Wesleyan Tradition*, pp. 15-68.