DO 629 Readings in Wesley

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Readings in Wesley  
DO 629  
Kenneth J. Collins, Professor  

1. Course Description and Objectives:  
The course will explore the theology of John Wesley ranging from the doctrine of God to eschatology. Special attention will be paid to the doctrine of God, Christology, pneumatology, as well as to Wesley’s views on providence, grace, and human responsibility. 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 theology and will assess such judgments in light of the primary evidence. All the tasks of the course, then, will concern exploring Wesley’s theology in terms of its relevance for twentieth-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 theology especially in terms of the broad motif of “responsible grace.”  
2) Evidence an awareness of historiographical concerns in the interpretation of Wesley’s theology especially with respect to narrow, limited or unfair (biased) perspectives  
3) Explore the interplay between religion and culture 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:


4. Course Procedures

Competency in this course will consist in satisfying the following criteria:

A. 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 are required for course credit.

B. A reading report which indicates that students have completed all of the assigned readings is due on the last day of class.

5. Reading Selections:

**Journals**
- Wesley’s Journal from October 14, 1735 to August 1738. *WJW* 1:17-147.

**Sermons**
- “God’s Love to Fallen Man,” *WJW* 6:231-240.
- “The Mystery of Iniquity,” *WJW* 6:253-266.
- “In What Sense We are to Leave the World,” 6:452-463.
- “The Danger of Riches,” *WJW* 7:1-14
- "Walking by Sight, and Walking by Faith,” WJW 7:256-263.
- "On a Single Eye” WJW 7:297-304.
- "Free Grace,” WJW 7:373-385.
- "True Christianity Defended,” WJW 7:452-462.

Treatises

- Minutes of some late Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others in 1744, WJW 8:275-298.
- Minutes of Several Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others from the year 1744 to 1789, WJW 8:299-338.
- The Character of a Methodist, WJW 8:339-346.
- A Short History of Methodism, WJW 8:347-350.
- The Principles of a Methodist, WJW 8:359-374.
- Predestination Calmly Considered, WJW 10:204-259.
- A Dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend, WJW 10:259-265.
- A Dialogue between an Antinomian and his Friend, WJW 10:266-275.
- Serious Thoughts upon the Perseverance of the Saints, WJW 10:284-297.
- Thoughts on the Imputed Righteousness of Christ, WJW 10:312-315.
- A Blow at the Root; or Christ stabbed in the House of his Friends, WJW 10:364-369.

6. Note: this syllabus may be changed, as the instructor sees fit, due to academic considerations

7. Office Hours

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

8. 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
ν 9/19/25  Ordained Deacon
ν 3/17/26  Fellow of Lincoln College
ν 1729    Name Methodist given
ν 1735    Whitefield joins Holy Club
ν 4/25/35  Samuel Sr’s Death

ν 10/21/35  Sails for Georgia
ν 02/05/36  Reaches America
ν 08/11/36  Charles leaves Georgia
ν 12/02/37  John leaves Savannah
ν 02/01/38  John lands at Deal
ν 05/21/38  Charles’ Evangelical Conversion
ν 05/24/38  John’s Evangelical Conversion
ν 06/13/38  Visits the Moravian Church
ν 05/02/39  Field-Preaching in Bristol

ν 11/11/39  Preaches in the Foundery
ν 07/20/40  Withdraws from Fetter Lane
ν 05/28/42  First visit to Newcastle
ν 06/06/42  Preaches on his father’s tomb
ν 07/30/42  Death of Susanna Wesley
ν 05/29/43  Opens West Street Chapel, London
ν 08/26/42  Sets out for Cornwall
ν 10/20/42  Riot at Wednesbury
ν 06/25/44  First Conference

ν 08/24/44  Last University sermon
ν 08/09/47  First visit to Ireland
ν 04/08/49  Marriage of Charles
ν 10/03/49  Grace Murray marries John Bennet
ν 02/18/51  Wesley marries Mrs. Vazeille
ν April/51  First visit to Scotland
ν 06/01/51  Resigns Fellowship
ν 11/26/53  Writes his Epitaph at Lewisham
ν Jan/55    Notes Upon the NT published
ν 05/06/55  Issue of Separation Discussed

ν 1757    Charles’ itinerancy limited
ν 03/13/57  Ordination of John Fletcher
ν 02/16/59  Public Fast; fear of French invasion
ν 02/21/60  French Landing at Carrickfergus
ν 10/25/60  Death of George II
ν 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
03/14/73  Replies to Richard Hill’s *Farrago Double-Distilled*
Dec/73  Vols. 17-25 of Wesley’s Works published
06/04/74  Arrest in Edinburgh
1775  *Calm Address* published

04/27/75  Death of Peter Bohler
Aug/ 75  Asbury decides to stay in America
01/03/76  Death of Westley Hall
08/18/76  Wesley first meets Dr. Coke
04/21/77  Foundation-stone of City Road Chapel laid
01/01/78  First number of Arminian Magazine
05/30/78  Death of Voltaire
11/01/78  Opening of City Road Chapel
1779  Publishes *Popery Calmly Considered*

08/10/80  Letter to Bishop Lowth on ordination for America
01/25/81  At his Nephew’s concert
10/08/81  Death of Mrs. Wesley
Aug/ 82  Adam Clarke at Kingswood School
June/83 Visit to Holland
02/28/84 Deed of Declaration
Sep/ 84 Ordinations for America
Dec/ 84 Francis Asbury Ordained
08/14/85 Death of John Fletcher

01/24/86 Hears George III in House of Lords
07/25/86 Conference begins at Bristol
08/08/86 Visits Holland
09/24/86 Dr. Coke sails with three missionaries
Jan/ 87 Bews £ 200 for London poor
08/04/87 Conference in Manchester
1788 Second Series of Sermons Published
03/29/88 Death of Charles Wesley

04/05/88 Burial of Charles Wesley in Marylebone
08/06/88 Conference at Bristol
07/28/89 Conference at Leeds
1790 Revised Translation of the NT published
07/27/90 Wesley’s last Conference in Bristol
07/30/90 Letter to Wilberforce
10/06/90 Last open-air sermon at Winchelsea
10/24/90 Last entry in Wesley’s Journal
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

9. Bibliography

A Wesley Bibliography

Primary Sources: Books

Unpublished at This Point


**Published**


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