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JOHN WESLEY AND THE PSALMS:
THE MUSIC OF THE HEART

by
Ting Gah Hing

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts (Research)

Asbury Theological Seminary
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Approved by: [Signature]
Department: Theological Studies
Date: July 5, 1990
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CHAPTER 1

Wesleyan Spirituality and the Psalms

I. Introduction

In the summer of 1982, a group of Methodist Studies scholars gathered at Keble College, Oxford. The occasion was the Seventh Oxford Institute of Methodist theological studies. The theme for the institute was "The Future of the Methodist Theological Tradition." Among the five different Working Groups, one group in particular--the Working Group on Wesleyan Spirituality and Faith Development--was said to have represented "a new focus of studies" in this Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies. This Working Group discussed the various elements of Wesleyan Spirituality and reported their major learnings. In order to facilitate more fruitful research, the group suggested

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2 Ibid., pp. 193-208 contain the Working Group Paper on Wesleyan Spirituality and Faith Development. According to the Group, "Spirituality concerns the Way, the Walk, and the Goal of Christian discipleship. It considers the direction of our course... its temper and discipline. It refers to... the vision of God, perfection, deification, entire sanctification, heaven, the kingdom of God" (p. 193). My study assumes this broad definition of spirituality, too.
some specific topics for future study. Selected topics are hereby listed:

1. Wesley as Homo Unius Libri: How Wesley's Understanding and Use of the Bible informs His Spirituality.
2. Wesley's Theology and Practice of Prayer.
3. The Holy Spirit and Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality.\(^3\)

Thus far, *The Devotional Life of John Wesley* -- a doctoral dissertation by J. Steven Harper--is, in my opinion, the most extensive treatment that has been rendered. In this dissertation Dr. Harper presents a systematic study that assesses the various devotional resources which John Wesley used and also the devotional patterns that Wesley developed.\(^4\) The major thesis of this work is "to show that Wesley's devotional life was a major formative influence in his life and ministry."\(^5\)

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 207. My selected topics appear as Nos. 1, 3 and 5 in the original.


Appendix A (pp. 323-335) of the dissertation contains an extensive list of books which John Wesley read devotionally from 1725-1738. This list, however, does not include Wesley's systematic use of the Bible in devotion. Nevertheless, in a response to Dr. William H. Vermillion's "The Devotional use of Scripture in the Wesleyan Movement" in *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall 1981, Dr. Harper attributes Wesley's systematic use of the Bible by "following the pattern set forth in the Table of Lessons of the Book of Common Prayer" (p. 8).

\(^5\) Ibid., p. iv.
II. The Statement of Purpose

In response to the suggestions given by the Working Group on Wesleyan Spirituality and Faith Development, the purpose of this study is to examine John Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms and ways Psalms inform his spirituality. This examination on the Psalms alone is primarily for the purpose of delimitation in the study. The reason for choosing the book of Psalms is also because

No book of the Bible seems to summon up the concerns of spirituality in the biblical period more than the Book of Psalms. Its prayer and songs of praise have served as a model and focus of the spiritual concerns of later ages, and its words have been incorporated into, indeed have shaped, liturgies in Judaism and Christianity for two millennia. Little wonder, then, the Psalter itself has served as the spiritual test par excellence. . . .

III. Materials and Methods

The examination of Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms will mainly be carried out chronologically in Chapter

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6 For further delimitation of the study, the disputing issues about particular authors and occasions of writing the Psalms will not be discussed in my study since they have no direct bearing on the purpose of this study. However, recent research on the Psalms has accumulated a valuable reference material for both the scholar and the non-scholar. For a good list of resources for further study please see Patrick D. Miller's Interpreting the Psalms (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), pp. 154-159.

7 James L. Kugel, "Topics in the History of the Spirituality of the Psalms" in Jewish Spirituality, edited by Arthur Green (New York: Crossroad, 1986) p. 113. (Underlines are added for emphasis.)
Two of this study. In this chapter, I shall investigate Wesley's parental influence in his acquaintance with the Psalms during his early years. This inevitably calls for a full report of "The Order How the Psalter is Appointed to be Read" according to the Book of Common Prayer (1662). A table which charts the Morning and Evening Psalms over a thirty-day period will be produced to show the habitual pattern which both his parents and Wesley would have established in their lives.

Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms during his Oxford days (1725-1735) will be examined through the construction of the Oxford Diary of Benjamin Ingham. During this period, Wesley read William Law's A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life. The reading of this book also helped to reinforce Wesley's practice of chanting the Psalms. This

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8 Frank Baker in his edition of The Works of John Wesley, Vol 25, Letters I, 1721-1739 provides a clear chronological chart of some major events in John Wesley's life (p. xxi-ii). In this chapter, my interpretive analysis of Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms is kept to the minimal. Interpretive analysis will be left to the third chapter.

9 The reason that it has to be constructed from the Oxford Diary of Benjamin Ingham is because Wesley's Oxford Diary of this time period will only be published in Volume 32 of The Works of John Wesley edited by Richard Heitzenrater. Heitzenrater also worked on the transcription of Diary of an Oxford Methodist; Benjamin Ingham: 1733-1734 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1985).

can be substantiated in Wesley's Sermon, "The More Excellent Way," when he referred to Law's advice on the methodology of prayer and devotion.

Wesley's missionary days in America (Oct. 1735 to Feb. 1738) also gave ample evidences of his extensive use of the Psalms. It was in this period Wesley began to learn the German language and sing the German psalms and hymns. One practical outcome was Wesley's translation of some of the German hymns and his publication of them in his 1737 Charlestown A Collection of Psalms and Hymns.11

Wesley's historic Aldersgate "heart-warming experience" (May 24th 1738) could also be seen from a psalmic perspective, since it was so intricately tied to his detailed record in the Journal of the psalm-anthem that he had heard that afternoon. The following two days indicated similar detailed accounts of Wesley's response to the psalm-anthems.12

Wesley's final days revealed a continual use of Psalms. His lifelong commitment to the use of Psalms, and also the

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11 For a fuller treatment on the subject of Wesley's translation of German hymns please see John L. Nuelsen, John Wesley and the German Hymn, translated by Arthur Holbrook, (Keighley: Mantissa Press 1972). Wesley's collection of psalms and hymns will be discussed further.

Book of Common Prayer can be seen from his significant preparation of Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America (1784). However, in the process of revision, Wesley eliminated thirty-four Psalms. Hence, a second table charting the Morning and Evening Psalms will be produced. In December 1788, Wesley worked on the correction of his brother Charles' posthumous poems on Psalms, hymns on the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles.\footnote{John Wesley, The Journal of Rev. John Wesley, A.M., Vol. VIII, edited by Nehemiah Curnock (London: Epworth Press, 1938), P. 452. See also p. 456.} Finally, Wesley was reported as having uttered the words of the Psalms when he was approaching his death.\footnote{Ibid., see pp. 131-137 for "Elizabeth Ritchie's Account of Wesley's Last Day" in the Journal, Vol. VIII. The full, proper quotation of the Psalm will appear in Chapter Two.}

Chapter Two will end with a further interaction of secondary resources of some eminent authorities on Wesley and Wesleyan studies. They are used primarily for the purpose of evaluating my study, in order to place Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms in its proper framework and perspective. A summary will then be given.

In response to Dr. Harper's desire for students to make better use of his transcription of an unpublished Prayer Manual of John Wesley,\footnote{The transcription is placed in Appendix C of the Devotional Life, (pp. 346-606). Appendix D is a facsimile of the Prayer Manual (pp. 607-692).} I shall in my third chapter focus...
first on this block of primary material. A large portion of the material is, in fact, Wesley's earliest collection of Psalms from the Book of Common Prayer and also a collection of six sets of metrical psalms from Tate and Brady's New Version of the Psalms. My 'approach in this chapter will be thematic, more analytical and interpretive. I hope to affirm once again not only the systematic, liturgical framework of Wesley's spirituality, but also the effects of Psalms on Wesley. It seems that Wesley, from his habitual devotional use of the Psalms finds the language of the Psalms to be a very natural exposition of certain theological themes. Furthermore, the devotional use of the Psalms helps him to cultivate a certain disposition of the heart--the kind of religious affections that would only be appropriate to validate the theological themes which he advocates through the Psalms. In other words, Wesley's use of the Psalms provides us with an important port of entry to know the hidden depths of Wesley's spirituality, his way and goal of life, and the principles of Christian living.

Evidently, the collection of Psalms in the Prayer Manual is for a practical purpose. A cluster of the metrical psalms and hymns appears in Wesley's first hymn-book: A Collection of Psalms and Hymns, (Charlestown, 1737). Strictly speaking therefore, the six sets of metrical psalms in the unpublished Prayer Manual is in fact the first unpublished hymn-book. From a collector of psalms
and hymns, Wesley later becomes a producer and publisher of psalms and hymns. The psalms and hymns have become the music of his heart and the means of articulating certain theological distinctives. In publishing them, Wesley reveals his pastoral concern to provide a liturgical, singing model of spiritual direction and the instruction of scriptural Christianity. This introduces us then to Wesley's famous Preface to A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists (1780). The Preface shows the distinctive role that Wesley has attributed to poetry, which in one sense is so intrinsically related to psalms-versification. A full table of contents of the 1780 Collection of Hymns will be produced to show the liturgical, singing model of spiritual direction and the instruction of scriptural Christianity.

In like manner to Chapter Two, I shall interact with some secondary resources for evaluating and the broadening of perspective.

In the Conclusion, I shall once again present an overall summary of the intrinsic relational nature of Wesley's spirituality and the Psalms. Within such a context, I shall advocate the continual, creative use of the Psalms as an important resource for Christian spirituality. The use of Psalms is indeed a well-tested model for spirituality in the history of both Jewish and Christian spirituality. Many saints of old have already drunk so
deeply from this well, and many more shall continue to do just the same.

The Psalms are infinitely the very music of the heart!
How often has it been observed that the book of Psalms is a rich treasury of devotion, which the wisdom of God has provided to supply the wants of his children in all generations! In all ages the Psalms have been of singular use to those that loved or feared God: not only to the pious Israelites, but to the children of God in all nations. And this book has been of sovereign use to the church of God, not only while it was in its state of infancy (so beautifully described by St. Paul in the former part of the fourth chapter to the Galatians) but also since, in the fullness of time, 'life and immortality were brought to light by the gospel'. The Christians in every age and nation have availed themselves of this divine treasure, which has richly supplied the wants, not only of 'babes in Christ'—of those who were just setting out in the ways of God—but of those also who had made good progress therein, yea, of such as were swiftly advancing toward 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ'.

The purpose of this chapter is to focus on Wesley's acquaintance and use of the Book of Psalms as "a rich treasury of devotion." I hope to show the pattern in which Wesley constantly availed himself of this "divine treasure." Wesley's use of the Psalms occurred not only in his early years as "a babe in Christ," but also when he was advancing

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toward "his measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

I. Wesley's Parental Influence

John Wesley was born June 17th, 1703, the fifteenth child of the Rector of Epworth, Samuel Wesley and his wife, Susanna.

A. Samuel Wesley (1662 - 1735)

As a Rector of the Church of England, it would be most incredible for Samuel Wesley not to be aware of "The Order How The Psalter Is Appointed To Be Read" (1662).²

The Psalter shall be read through once every Month, as it is there appointed, both for Morning and Evening prayer. But in February it shall be read only to the twenty-eighth, or twenty-ninth day of the month. And, where as January, March, May, July, August, October, and December have one-and-thirty days a piece; it is ordered, that the same Psalms shall be read the last day of the said months, which were read the day before: So that the Psalter may begin again the first day of the next month ensuing.

And, whereas the 119th Psalm is divided into twenty-two portions, and is over-long to be read at one time; it is so ordered, that at one time shall not be read above four or five of the said portions.

And at the end of every Psalm, and of every such part of the 119th Psalm shall be repeated this hymn,

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and
ever shall be: World without end. Amen.

² In my personal possession, I have The Book of Common Prayer, (London: University Press, 1928). In page 7 is printed "The Order How The Psalter is Appointed to be Read" (1662). Evidently, I am also limiting Samuel Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms, constructed from the Book of Common Prayer
Note, that the Psalter followeth the Division of the Hebrews, and the translation of the great English Bible, set forth and used in the time of King Henry the Eighth, and Edward the Sixth.

Consequently, one can safely assume that Samuel Wesley would have used such a pattern of reading and chanting the Psalm devotionally over a thirty-day period. Table A charts the specific Psalms covered each day.\(^3\)

\(^3\) Book of Common Prayer (1928) pp. 336-447. My table consists of the numbers of the Psalms only. It is here provided for the purpose that one might like to use it as a pattern of reading the Psalms over a month period.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Morning Prayer</th>
<th>Evening Prayer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>6, 7, 8</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9, 10, 11</td>
<td>12, 13, 14</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>15, 16, 17</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>19, 20, 21</td>
<td>22, 23</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>24, 25, 26</td>
<td>27, 28, 29</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>30, 31</td>
<td>32, 33, 34</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>35, 36</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>38, 39, 40</td>
<td>41, 42, 43</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>44, 45, 46</td>
<td>47, 48, 49</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>50, 51, 52</td>
<td>53, 54, 55</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>56, 57, 58</td>
<td>59, 60, 61</td>
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<td>65, 66, 67</td>
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<td>98, 99, 100, 101</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>108, 109</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>110, 111, 112</td>
<td>114, 115</td>
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<td></td>
<td>113</td>
<td>119 (vs 1-32)</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>116, 117, 118</td>
<td>119 (vs 73-104)</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>119 (vs 33-72)</td>
<td>119 (vs 145-176)</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>119 (vs 105-144)</td>
<td>119 (vs 145-176)</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125</td>
<td>126, 127, 128</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>132, 133, 134</td>
<td>136, 137, 138</td>
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<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td>147, 148, 149, 150</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>139, 140, 141</td>
<td>142, 143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Besides the order of how the Psalter is to be read, the Book of Common Prayer contains also a list of "Proper Psalms on Certain Days" which Samuel Wesley would be familiar with:

**TABLE B: Proper Psalms on Certain Days (1662)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mattins</th>
<th>Evensong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
<td>19, 45, 85</td>
<td>89, 110, 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash Wednesday</td>
<td>6, 32, 38</td>
<td>102, 130, 143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>22, 40, 54</td>
<td>69, 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter Day</td>
<td>2, 57, 111</td>
<td>113, 114, 118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascension Day</td>
<td>8, 15, 21</td>
<td>24, 47, 108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitsunday</td>
<td>48, 68</td>
<td>104, 105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The Order For Morning Prayer" and "The Order For Evening Prayer," which are supposed to be used daily through the year, reinforced further Samuel Wesley's familiarity with the Psalms. Both the Morning prayer and Evening prayer opening scriptural sentences consist of a cluster of verses from Psalm 51 alone:

I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me (Ps. 51:3). Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities (Ps 51:9). The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise (Ps 51:17).

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5 Ibid., p. 67, 79. In pages 67-87 are the complete Order for Morning and Evening Prayer. Other Morning and Evening opening scriptural sentences include: Ezekiel 18:27; Joel 2:13; Daniel 9:9-10; Jer 10:24, Psalm 6:1; Matthew 3:2; Luke 15:18,19; Psalm 143:2; and 1 John 1:8,9.
Then "Morning Prayer" also enlists Psalms 95 and 100, whereas the "Evening Prayer" includes Psalms 98 and 67.

From the above data, it would not be presumptuous to say that both Samuel Wesley and John Wesley are therefore the natural heirs to the liturgical heritage of the Church of England. After all, both of them served as Anglican priests. Perhaps in addition to all that have been mentioned, Samuel Wesley's rendering of the Great Hallel Psalms provides us an extra excellent window to his spirituality. For example:

Psalm CXIII

Ye priests of God, whose happy days
   Are spent in your Creator's praise
Still more and more express!

Ye pious worshippers, proclaim
   with shouts of joy his Holy Name,
Nor satisfied with praising, bless
Let God's high praises ay resound,
Beyond old times too scanty bound,
   And thro' eternal ages pierce;

From where the sun first gilds the streams,
To where he sets with purple beams,
Thro' all the outstretcht universe.  

It seems from this Psalm, that Samuel Wesley is fully made aware of his role and duty as a priest of God. He lives to

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6 Samuel Wesley, The Pious Communicant Rightly Prepar'd: A Discourse Concerning the Blessed Sacrament. (London: Printed for Charles Harper at the Flower-de-luce over-against St. Dunstan's Church, 1700), pp. 251-52. The original Psalm has 9 stanzas. My quote is from stanzas 1, 2 and 3.
render praise to God. He also calls the pious worshipper to praise and bless God's Holy Name. Can we say less about John Wesley?

Last but not least:

Psalm CXVI

O God, who when I did complain
Did all my griefs remove;
O Saviour! Do not now disdain
My humble praise and love.

Since thou a gentle ear didst give
And hear me when I prayed,
I'll call upon thee while I live
And never doubt thine aid.

To him what offerings shall I make,
whence my salvation came?
The cup of blessing now I'll take
And call upon his Name.7

These words aptly represented a life of trust, gratitude and obedience. The language of the Psalmist is justly employed, and Samuel has made them his very own. Little wonder, then, that with John Wesley's natural bonding and allegiance to his father, he should collect the whole cluster of Samuel's rendering of the Psalms in his unpublished Prayer Manual. This cluster of Psalms first appeared then in A collection of Psalms and Hymns, (Charlestown, 1737).

B. Susanna Wesley (1669-1742)

7 Ibid., p. 257. Psalm 116 has 19 stanzas all together. The quote is from stanzas 1 & 2. The other Hallel Psalms are 114, 115, 117 & 118.
There has always been a consensus opinion among the many Wesley Studies scholars in regard to Susanna's influence on John Wesley's life. My focus here is again to remain limited to Susanna's influence in getting Wesley acquainted with the Book of Psalms.

For this examination, Wesley's Letters and Journal in particular provide us the best entrance to this relationship that he had with his mother. In his Journal (July 30th, 1742), Wesley gave a detailed account of the death of his mother. In it, Wesley also added a letter that he had received from his mother dated July 24th, 1732. The letter has to do primarily with Susanna's principal rules in educating her family. As a woman of deep piety, and one who had a great concern in the care of the souls of her children, the letter revealed this discipline:

The Children of this family were taught, as soon as they could speak, the Lord's Prayer, which they were made to say at rising and bed time constantly; to which, as they grew bigger, were added a short prayer for their parents, and some collects, a short catechism, and some portions of Scripture, as their memories could bear.\(^a\)

In another paragraph of the letter, Susanna wrote:

When the house was rebuilt, and the children are brought home, we entered upon a strict reform; and then was begun the customs of singing Psalms at beginning and leaving school,

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morning and evening. Then also that of a general retirement at five o'clock was entered upon, when the oldest took the youngest that could speak, and the second the next, to whom they read the Psalms for the day, and a chapter in the New Testament; as in the morning they were directed to read the Psalms and a chapter in the Old, after which they went to their private prayers, before they got their breakfast or came into the family.  

At the time of writing, Susanna, "thank(ed) God this custom is still preserved among us."

Thus we may observed from the above that what is true about Samuel Wesley's practice and discipline of the devotional use of the Book of Psalms is also true for Susanna Wesley. Consequently, not only John Wesley, but also the whole family could not help but learn from their parents concerning the Book of Psalms as "a rich treasury of devotion."

It is also highly commendable to note from the other letter that Susanna Wesley also exercised such a practice in which she took a proportion of time that she could spare every night to discourse with each child apart. And her time with John Wesley was on the Thursday night.  

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9 Journal and Diaries II, 1738-1745, p. 290. "When the house was rebuilt"—this phrase referred to the incident after the burning rectory at Epworth. John Wesley was six years old then.

10 Journal and Diaries II, 1738-1743, p. 285. This letter was also subjoined in the Journal. The letter was originally a letter which Susanna Wesley wrote to her husband, dated February 6, 1711/12.
wonder, too, that Wesley would give such a detailed account of the mother's death, and to note that when Susanna was about to die, she requested that the children sing a psalm of praise to God.¹¹

II. John Wesley and Oxford Methodists (1725-1735)

For many years, biographers of John Wesley had wanted to transcribe Wesley's personal diaries but without much success. It is because Wesley's diaries were meticulously written in a unique combination of cipher, shorthand, abbreviations and symbol. However, in 1969, at the Methodist Archives, Richard P. Heitzenrater discovered the diary of Benjamin Ingham, also an Oxford Methodist.¹²

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28. Frank Baker, the editor-in-chief for *The Works of John Wesley*, in his volume 26, *Letters*, included Wesley's fuller account of his mother's death in a letter to his brother Charles on July 31, 1742, and to Howell Harris on August 6, 1742, (p. 82 and P. 86 of Vol. 26). Seemingly, Charles Wesley was not around when his mother died. Frank Baker attributed the psalm of praise to be that of Ps. 26:7.

Benjamin Ingham noted in his diary that he learned the Wesleyan method of keeping a diary through Charles Wesley. And Charles Wesley in turn, had learned from his brother John Wesley. In his diary, Ingham recorded the key for the Wesleyan scheme of symbols and abbreviations. This discovery has therefore made possible the decoding of five volumes of non-published Wesley's diaries, resulting also in a reinterpretation of the rise of Methodism at Oxford.\(^{13}\)

How can one know about Wesley's devotional use of the Book of Psalms at this period of 1725-1735? According to Heitzenrater, Ingham's diary reveals not only "the scholarly concerns of the Wesleyan movement at this stage," but also "the range of books read by Ingham and his friends at Queen's is almost identical to the spectrum read by Wesley's group."\(^{14}\) In my examination of Ingham's diary which has already been transcribed by Heitzenrater, I find evidences of Ingham's constant records of his using the Psalms.\(^{15}\) The entry on Friday, May the 10th 1734 is most fascinating when

\[\text{Ingham's diary for the construction of Wesley's use of Psalms and William Law's particular influence on the Oxford Methodists in chanting the Psalms.}\]

\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 11.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., p. 86. Heitzenrater also contends that only a handful of authors appearing on Ingham's pages are not mentioned by Wesley during these years, p. 87.

\(^{15}\) Richard P. Heitzenrater, ed., Diary of an Oxford Methodist, Benjamin Ingham 1733-1734. (Durham: Duke University, 1985), pp. 194-199. See May 10th, 11th, 13th, 17th for the use of Psalms, Collects, etc.
he reflected on the activities of the day. At seven in the
evening, Ingham was meeting with Ford, Washington, Watson,
Smyth, and Atkinson. Together they were reading Law. At
eight we see again this word: "Read Law and good talk of
singing psalms."\(^{16}\) Who is Law? I believe Ingham was
talking about William Law. And the book they read was
William Law's, *A Serious Call To A Devout and Holy Life*. It
is in Chapter 15 of the book that William Law has written a
full exposition:

> Of chanting or singing of Psalms in our
> private devotion.
> Of the excellency and benefits of this
> kind of devotion.
> Of the great effects it hath upon our
> hearts.
> Of the means of performing it in the best
> manner.\(^{17}\)

William Law greatly recommended "to begin all prayers with a
Psalm, so much so that he almost insisted it as a common
rule for all persons."\(^{18}\) From Law's writing we also
gathered a revealing fact that the method of chanting a
Psalm was used in the colleges, and in the universities and
in some churches.\(^^{19}\)

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\(^{18}\) *A Serious Call*, p. 209.

Taking Heitzenrater's analysis into consideration, it is almost certain that Wesley, too, would have read William Law's *A Serious Call* sometime in this stage.\(^{20}\) Substantially speaking, one can refer to Wesley's Sermon on "The More Excellent Way."\(^{21}\) In this sermon Wesley exercised his pastoral concern for his people. He wanted them to walk in the higher path, the more excellent way. This way aspired after the "heights and depths of holiness, after the image of God."\(^{22}\) According to Wesley, the practical means to walk in the excellent way is to be constantly in prayer. In speaking on the form of prayer, Wesley was fully aware that some were accustomed "to use some kind of prayer, and probably to use the same form still which they learned when they were eight or ten years old."\(^{23}\) Certainly Wesley was speaking here from his personal experience. Wesley himself did not disapprove of such forms of prayer, however, he went on to say:

> But surely there is a more excellent way of ordering our private devotions. What if you were to follow the advice given by that great and good man,

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\(^{20}\) Heitzenrater in his doctoral dissertation indicated that Wesley read *A Serious Call* in summer 1732, or precisely on Friday, July 7th. p. 171.


\(^{22}\) Ibid., p. 264.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., p. 265.
Mr. Law, on this subject?24

The reference here is of course to A Serious Call. Wesley asked his people to consider their outward and inward state of soul and vary their prayers accordingly. It is interesting to note that Wesley recommended that if their souls were in peace and rejoicing, then they should say with the Psalmist: "Thou are my God, and I will thank thee; thou art my God, and I will praise thee."25

Wesley continued:

You may likewise, when you have time, add to your other devotions a little reading and meditation, and perhaps a psalm of praise, the natural effusion of a thankful heart.26

Indeed, from the sermon, we see Wesley advocating literally the same principles that William Law had laid down, showing the influence of William Law.

In another of Wesley's sermons, "On Redeeming The Time,"27 we again observed the remarkable influence that

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24 Ibid., p. 266.

25 Ibid., p. 266. The Psalm is Ps 118:28 of BCP version.

26 Ibid., p. 266. It is the scholar's consensus view that William Law's A Serious Call...is one of the three most influential books in Wesley's life. The other two are: Jeremy Taylor's The Rule and Exercise of Holy Living and Dying, and Thomas a' Kempis' The Imitation of Christ.

William Law had over Wesley. The subject matter of this sermon is in some way similar to "The More Excellent Way." In the sermon, Wesley, subjoined a whole portion of Law's work on *A Serious Call*, in which Law advocated the importance of rising early. Albert C. Outler in his comment on the Sermon introduces us to the interesting fact that in 1783, an anonymous editor who had been much struck with the force and propriety of its reasoning abridged Wesley's original and had it published in a pamphlet, "The Duty and Advantage of Early Rising."²⁸ In this edition, the editor acknowledged the reprinting of the sermon without Wesley's knowledge, but trusted in Wesley's understanding to allow him printing it. Apparently, the editor was fully aware of Law's *A Serious Call* too, because on top of what Wesley had already subjoined on Law's work, he added the following words of Law which revealed the use of Psalms in prayer and devotion:

> If our blessed Lord used to pray early before day...
> If the primitive Christians for several hundred years, besides their hour of prayer in the day time, met publicly in the Church at midnight to join in psalms and prayers, is it not certain that these practices showed the state of their heart?²⁹

²⁸ *Sermons III*, p. 322.

Wesley evidently approved of the anonymous work, and reissued this edited pamphlet with the same title in four separate editions in his lifetime. Later he decided to include it in the *Sermons On Several Occasions* under the title of "Redeeming the Time". Thus, we can affirm Law's influence on Wesley in the matter of devotional methodology which involves the Psalms.

III. Wesley's Missionary Days in America (Oct 1735 - Feb 1738)

The period in which Wesley used the Psalms most extensively was during his missionary trip to America. The access to Wesley's Georgia Diary I (Oct 17, 1735 - April 30, 1736) has made the examination so much easier. In the diary, Wesley actually recorded the specific parts of the service in the *Book of Common Prayer*, showing which he used, and in what order. A full listing would read 'recappshs112c1234xscptb.' In this case, Heitzenrater has infinitely helped us to understand the abbreviations Wesley used.

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30 Ibid., Outler, p. 322.


32 Ibid., p. 305. Examples of days with such a type of entry: Oct 24, 25, 26; Nov. 1, 18, 21, 23, 34 (1735); Jan 13, 20, 21, 22, 23 (1736).
used. This stands for 'read ejaculations (i.e. scripture sentences), prayer of confession, absolution, Lord's Prayer, Psalm, Scripture (First Lesson), hymn (Te Deum, etc.), Scripture (Second Lesson), litanies (numbered), collects for the day (numbered), expounded, sang, collect (or creed), prayer, thanksgiving, blessing.' An earlier work by Nehemiah Curnock however transcribed 'tb' as Wesley's use of Tate and Brady's New Version of the Psalm. Personally, I think Heitzenrater's transcription is most likely to be the case, though we can be also sure that Wesley would have used Tate and Brady.

This period also introduces us to a very important aspect of Wesley's devotional life--his learning the German language and German psalms and hymns. We note in the diary that Wesley first began to learn German grammar on October 17th, 1735. On October 27th Wesley began learning to read and sing from the German Gesangbuch (meaning hymnbook). On February 23rd, 1736, Wesley translated German psalms and hymns.

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33 Ibid., see pages 308-310 of the Journal and Diaries I. It contains a Glossary of symbols, abbreviations which Wesley used.


36 Ibid., p. 316.
hymns!^{37}

The entry on March 5th, 1736 is worth noting. This was a day on which Wesley was working industriously on a revision of the prayer book and psalmbook.

Friday, March 5
5.15 Dressed; sang with Germans
(sleepy)
6 Necessary business; prayed;
write diary
7 Revised prayer book; tea,
religious talk
8.40 Prayed; sang
9 Looked over Psalmbook
10 Psalmbook
12 Prayed with Delamotte;
ended Psalmbook. . .^{38}

In brief, Wesley's own word in the manuscript Journal provides us the overall picture of his daily life during this time:

Our common way of spending time was this:
From four to five we used private prayer. From five to seven we read the Holy Scriptures, adding sometimes such treaties or give an account of the sense there of, which was once delivered to the saints. At seven we breakfasted. At eight were the public prayers. . . From nine to twelve I commonly learned German. . . At twelve we met to give an account to one another of what we had done since our last meeting, and what we

^{37} Ibid., p. 360.

^{38} Ibid., p. 363. Heitzenrater did not identify which particular Psalmbook this was. Curnock, however, again attributed it to be the New Version of Tate and Brady (p. 175 of Vol. 1). Personally, I think it might have been the German Hymnbook which can also be translated as Psalmbook (Gesangbuch). Perhaps Wesley was looking over what other possible psalms and hymns he would like to include in his translation. Regardless of the conclusion one draws, Wesley has given us ample evidence of his use of Psalms in either the German or the English language.
designed to do before our next. About one we dined. The time from dinner till four we spent with the people, part in public reading or speaking to those several of whom each of us had taken charge. At four we had Evening prayer. Between five and six we joined in private prayer. From six to seven I read in our cabin to one or two of the passengers. At seven... I spend with the Germans in their public service. At eight we met again, to instruct and exhort one another, and between nine and ten we went to bed."

From this we observed that Wesley's life is pretty much marked by order and acts of devotion, either in private or public. We also observed that a great portion of Wesley's time was immersed in the German world—learning the German grammar and actually speaking it. He joined the German Moravians in their public worship, almost ever single day, singing and praising God in a new language.

Before turning to the next section, it can be further noted that the remaining days (before Wesley returned to England) he continued to use psalms and hymns in his private devotions and public worship. In the context of what he

39 Ibid., p. 314. The manuscript Journal is the editorial work of W. Reginald Ward though.

40 Curnock's work on Wesley's Journal, (June 10, 1735. Vol 1, pp. 226-230) furnished us with another source of lengthy information on Wesley's use of the Psalms. He revealed what Wesley commonly did on Sundays with the most serious communicants. They sang, read, and conversed after the public service. The reading was William Law's Christian Perfection. They normally began and concluded with psalms. Curnock noted that Wesley at this time was creating an organized Christian fellowship—companies—societies like their prototype, the Oxford Society (p. 229). Curnock mentioned again Wesley's effort in transcribing German Psalms and Hymns. Then added to his manuscript, was a
had done on March 5th 1736 (and his unrecorded subsequent efforts) Wesley published his first official hymnbook--A
Collection of Psalms and Hymns, (Charlestown, 1737). This
hymn-book introduced to the church a more lively form of
psalm-singing and hymn-singing.  

IV. Wesley and Aldersgate (May 24, 1738)

A lot of things have been said about Wesley's historic
Aldersgate 'heartwarming' experience when he heard the
reading of Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.
However, much is to be desired from the scholars to address
the importance of the Psalms in Wesley's 'heartwarming'
experience. Wesley's Journal on May 24th, 25th and 26th
give quite an extensive account of his quotations from the
Psalms.

In the afternoon I was asked to go to
St. Pauls. The anthem was; Out of the
deep have I called unto thee, 0 Lord.
Lord hear my voice. 0 let thine ears
consider well the voice of my complaint.
If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark
what is done amiss, 0 Lord, who may
abide it? But here is mercy with thee,

collection of some of the choicest metrical renderings of
the Psalms by Isaac Watts (p. 230). Curnock continued to
trace the development of the communicants' meetings. It
changed from meeting after the Sunday public service to
Wednesdays and Fridays, which accounted for the organization
of the Charlestown's collection of Psalms and Hymns. The
collection was divided into 3 sections: "Psalms and Hymns
for Sunday;" "Psalms and Hymns for Wednesday or Friday;"
and "Psalms and Hymns for Saturday" (p. 230).

41 Ibid., Journal, Vol I, p. 385 recorded Wesley's
having some troubles with Thomas Causton who objected to
Wesley's changing the version of Psalms.
therefore thou shalt be fear. . . O Israel, trust in the Lord: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.  

Seemingly, Wesley finds great comfort in the Psalm, reckoning in his heart that the Lord of Israel is full of mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And perhaps it is the light that the Psalm has attuned Wesley's heart to receive the assurance of his salvation when he says:

About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.  

Thus the 'heartwarming' experience in its literary arrangement in the Journal is very much a fulfillment of what the Psalmist has promised: "And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins." This literary structure of 'promise and fulfillment' can be further supported by the two other scripture texts that Wesley recorded in the 24th morning.

I think it was about five this morning that I opened my Testament on those words: 'There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, even that yet should be partakers of the divine nature.' Just as I went out I opened it again on these words, 'Thou are not far from the

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42 Journal and Diaries I, 1735-1738, p. 249.
43 Ibid., p. 250.
kingdom of God.'

Even though Wesley experienced his trust and assurance in Christ, this did not end his sense of struggle. That very night Wesley was "much inflicted with temptations." And interestingly enough, Wesley's natural response was "to lift up my eyes" (Ps 121:1) and God "sent me help from his holy place" (Ps. 20:2; or even Ps. 121:2).\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 250. The text is from 2 Peter 1:4, and Mark, 2:34. The motif of God's promise is very strong in both texts.} Seemingly, Wesley has taken the prayer language of the Psalmist for his own expression of faith in God to deliver and help.

The day after Aldersgate in the afternoon, Wesley was again in St. Paul's Cathedral. He said he could taste the good word of God in the anthem, which began,

My song shall be always the loving-kindness of the Lord: With my mouth will I ever be showing forth thy truth from one generation to another. \footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 250.}

Two days after Aldersgate Wesley's "soul continued in peace, but yet in heaviness, because of manifold temptations."\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 251.} The source of comfort that Wesley looked to was again found in the words of the Psalmist:

My soul truly waiteth still upon God; for of him cometh my salvation. He verily is my strength and my salvation; he is my
defense, so that I shall not greatly fall...
O put your trust in him always, ye people;
pour out your heart before him, for God is
our hope. 48

By the providential care of God, it is amazing to
realize how aptly and timely are the words of the Psalmist
that were addressed to Wesley's existential needs, for they
offer him God's promise, God's salvation, and God's
continual help. In brief, the above extensive record of the
Psalms reveals nothing less but the unique role of them
which they also played in Wesley's Aldersgate event. Wesley
found in them a natural attraction, a means of prayer and
praise that he had been accustomed to in his earlier years.
And now they ministered to him in his crucial moment. It
cannot be anything less than the providential love of God!

V. Wesley's Sunday Service of the Methodists in North
America (1784).

Another major evidence of Wesley's lifelong commitment
to the habitual use of Psalms is seen in his revision of the
Book of Common Prayer. In 1784, Wesley produced The Sunday
Service of the Methodists in North America. Wesley
explicitly declares his high regard and faithfulness to the
Book of Common Prayer. In the Preface, he says,

I believe there is no LITURGY in the
world, either in ancient or modern
language, which breaths more of a solid,

48 Ibid., p. 251. The Psalm is Ps 62:1-2, 8. Again I
believe Wesley, for the economy of space and time in the
Journal, did not write out the Psalm in full.
scriptural, rational piety, than the COMMON PRAYER of the CHURCH of ENGLAND: and though the main of it was compiled considerably more than two hundred years ago, yet is the language of it not only pure, but strong and elegant in the highest degree.\textsuperscript{49}

In the same Preface, Wesley outlines the "little alteration" that is made in his Sunday Service. One of the four has to do precisely with the Psalms. For Wesley says, "many Psalms left out, and many parts of the others, as being highly improper for the months of a Christian congregation."\textsuperscript{50} All together Wesley eliminated thirty-four Psalms: \textsuperscript{51} 14, 21, 52, 53, 54, 58, 60, 64, 72, 74, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 87, 88, 94, 101, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 120, 122, 129, 132, 134, 136, 137, 140 and 149. In addition, portions of 58 others disappear to make a shrinkage from 2502 verses in the Book of Common Prayer to 1625 in the Sunday Service.\textsuperscript{52}

Why are the Psalms eliminated? William N. Wade has analyzed the deletions as falling into five general categories:


\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., A1.

\textsuperscript{51} James F. White's Introductory Notes, p. 33.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p. 18.
1. Curses, wrath, killing and war
2. Descriptions of the wicked, lack faith, or special personal circumstances.
3. At odds with salvation by faith.
4. Concerns exclusively historical, or geographical, especially pertaining to Jerusalem.
5. References to the use of instruments or dance in worship.\footnote{William N. Wade, \textit{A History of Public Worship in the Methodist Episcopal Church and Methodist Episcopal Church, South, from 1784-1905.} (South Bend: University of Notre Dame, 1981), pp. 52-76. James F. White summarized the five points in his Introduction at page 18. It is interesting to note that Wesley would object to point 5?!}

In brief, I see it as a good reflector of Wesley's mature attitude of what it meant to use the Psalms as one who has advanced "toward the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."\footnote{A quote from Wesley himself, please see p. 10 of this study.} That is to say, when the Psalms are being read or chanted in the Sunday service, Wesley wanted to exert great care that they reflect the overarching teachings and attitude of Jesus Christ.

Eventually, if one were to construct Wesley's new table for the Psalms to be read over a thirty day period, it would appear as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Morning Prayer</th>
<th>Evening Prayer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6, 7</td>
<td>8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10, 11, 12</td>
<td>13, 15, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17, 18 (Part 1)</td>
<td>18 (Part 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25, 26</td>
<td>27, 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>29, 30</td>
<td>31, 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34, 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>36, 37 (Part 1)</td>
<td>37 (Part 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>39, 40</td>
<td>41, 42, 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>44, 45, 46</td>
<td>47, 48, 49</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>50, 51</td>
<td>55, 56</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>57, 59, 61, 62</td>
<td>63, 65</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>66, 67</td>
<td>68, 69</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>70, 71</td>
<td>73, 75</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>76, 77</td>
<td>84, 85</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>86, 89</td>
<td>90, 91</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>92, 93</td>
<td>95, 96</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>97, 98, 99</td>
<td>100, 102</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>107 (Part 1)</td>
<td>107 (Part 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>111, 112, 113</td>
<td>114, 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>116, 117</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>119 (Part 1)</td>
<td>119 (Part 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>119 (Part 3)</td>
<td>119 (Part 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>119 (Part 5)</td>
<td>119 (Part 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>123, 124, 126</td>
<td>127, 128, 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>135, 138</td>
<td>139</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>141, 142</td>
<td>143, 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>145, 146</td>
<td>147, 148, 150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

James F. White did not include the *Select Psalms* (pp. 162-179) of the facsimile copy. The construction of this table is from *The Sunday Service of the Methodists*, (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1876), pp. 79-128. White is right to identify that Wesley omits the Latin titles for each Psalm. Please compare with the Table A which appears in page 32 of this study. Seemingly, this reading is more manageable, making it an average of 28 verses per reading.
Apart from the Order of How the Psalter is to be read daily, Wesley also worked on the revision of Proper Psalms for certain Days and it appears as:

**TABLE D: Proper Psalms for Certain Days**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Morning</th>
<th>Evening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
<td>19, 45, 85</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>22, 40</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter Day</td>
<td>2, 57, 111</td>
<td>113, 114, 118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascension Day</td>
<td>8, 15</td>
<td>24, 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitsunday</td>
<td>48, 68</td>
<td>104, 105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidently, in comparison to Table B of this study, Wesley has updated "Mattins and Evensong" into "Morning" and "Evening." He removed "Ash-Wednesday" from the list which involved Psalms 6, 32, 38, 102, 130, 143. These Psalms, however, still appear in the thirty-day list. Wesley also eliminated six other Psalms: Christmas Day - Psalm 110, 132 in the evening; Good Friday - Psalm 54 in the morning, 88 in the evening; Ascension day - Psalm 21 in the morning, 108 in the evening. These latter six Psalms were also the ones which Wesley removed from his select Psalms.  

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56 Ibid., p. A3 of facsimile.
57 See footnote 51.
A major change occurs in the function of the Order for "Morning" and "Evening" prayer. They serve as the Order for every Lord's day and become the weekly Sunday Morning and Evening service order. In both the "Morning" and "Evening" prayer, for opening scriptural sentences, Wesley keeps only Psalm 51:17 and 143:2, and removes Psalm 51:3, 9; 6:1. He removes also the entire Psalm 95 in the morning and preserves the 100th Psalm. He preserves Psalm 98 and 67 in the evening order. The reason for such an abridgement is not apparent. Perhaps he wanted to cut short the order for both services.

Ultimately, as far as Wesley's revision of the Psalms is concerned, one fact still stands—the 'Select Psalms' are by far the largest single item in the Sunday Service. Evidently it has largely to do with Wesley's habitual use of the Psalms. "They were a major ingredient in his personal formation, and he intended to transmit such a tradition, reformed to make it even better."\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., White, p. 19. (It is White's opinion that Wesley's service book is a prime source for liturgical theology, i.e. theology based on the liturgical witness to faith. The Sunday Service provides therefore important data for theological reflection today (p. 16).
VI.  **John Wesley and his Final Days**  (1788-1791)

The Journal entry on Monday the 15th of December, 1788 provides us a glimpse of Wesley's own reflection "on the gentle steps where by age steals upon us." Wesley in the Journal expressed his concern for not being able to see clearly. Still, he was glad for being able to travel and that the memory he had was very much the same as compared to years past. Then he wrote:

This week I dedicated to the reading over my brother's works. They are short poems on the Psalms, the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles. Some are bad, some mean, some most excellently good. They give the true sense of Scripture, always in good English, generally in good verse; many of them are equal to most, if not to any, he even wrote. . .

The Journal entries remind us of the Wesley we all seem to know so well---Wesley the collector of poems or poetry.

Finally, the account which relates to Wesley's death is also immersed in the atmosphere of songs and praises. While we are familiar with the word on his lips: "The best of all is, God is with us," I am personally more drawn to the role and impact of Psalms in his life. A week before his death,

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Wesley the preacher was still faithfully preaching in the City Road Chapel, after this he gave out his favorite Psalm, "I'll praise my Maker while I've breath." On Tuesday, March 1, 1791, Wesley's strength began to fail him rapidly. However, he still "broke out in a manner which, considering his extreme weakness, astonished us all, in these blessed words:

I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers:
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
while life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures."

The Psalm was apparently the very same Psalm that he had shared a week before.

Perhaps, the Psalm was very much sung in reminiscence of his old days in America, because this Psalm was Wesley's adaptation of Isaac Watts' Psalm 146, and was included in his very first hymnbook--The Charlestown's Collection of Psalms and Hymns, (1737). Life seemed to have come to a

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60 John Wesley, Journal Vol. 8, p. 132. To be precise, the account is by Elizabeth Ritchie, who helped to take care of Wesley in his last days. The authenticity of her words is commonly accepted, though.

61 Ibid., p. 138.

full cycle—he was returning to his great love for the Psalms and hymns. Even more so, it revealed the perpetual influence of Psalms in his life—a soul that refused to rest in rendering praises to his Maker. And then the account continued, showing that the next day, when he died, he cried, "The Lord is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!" (Ps 46:11) For the third time, Wesley could finally only say, "I'll praise ____ I'll praise!"

Evaluation: Review of Related Literature

In this chapter, I have examined the normative devotional use of the Psalms in the various stages of Wesley's life. One task, however, still remains—to place Wesley's habitual, devotional use of Psalms in its proper framework and perspective.

Frank Baker, a professor of English Church History, in his work John Wesley and the Church of England advocates how imperative it is to understand John Wesley within the ecclesiological framework of the Church of England. He justly points out that "in thought and affection, in habit and atmosphere, (Wesley's) while being was inextricably

63 John Wesley Journal Vol 8, p. 143. The account does not identify the Psalm, apparently from Ps 46:11.

64 Ibid., p. 143.
interwoven with that of the Church (of England)."^^ "For
John Wesley, the Church of England formed an indispensable
part of life, a limb, a major organ," Baker continues.66
Such a perspective is crucial and can not be overemphasized,
though in this chapter I have also briefly noted the
relationship that Wesley had with the Church of England.
The same must therefore be stressed for both Samuel and
Susanna Wesley. They are all sons and daughter of the
Church of England. From the Church of England they have
inherited the methodical, habitual and daily use of the
Psalms. They are used not only privately, but also
corporately—in the family, in the societies, in the
liturgical worship of the church. The Psalms are being
sung, chanted and read.

Albert C. Outler, another eminent authority in Wesley
Studies, articulates the same emphasis. How does one best
characterize this man?

John Wesley was the most important Anglican
thelogian of the 18th Century because of his
distinctive, composite answer to the age-old
question as to the nature of the Christian
life: its origins, growth, imperatives,

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65 Frank Baker, *John Wesley and the Church of England*,
(London: Epworth Press, 1970), p. 1. See also pp. 7-21,
"A Son of the Church." Frank Baker is considered to be one
of the most eminent authorities on Wesley and Wesleyan
Studies among the current Methodists. For his concern over
matters of Wesley Studies, please read "Unfolding John
Wesley: A Survey of Twenty Years' Studies in Wesley's
44-58.

66 Ibid., p. 1.
Outler stresses, too, the importance of evaluating Wesley's theology of his own stated Anglican norms: Scripture, reason, and Christian antiquity. He believes, "Of all the genres in the Wesley Corpus, the sermons focus and expound his understanding of Christian existence most clearly." The distinctive contribution of Outler's massive editorial work on Wesley's sermons is to footnote the full repertory of Wesley's biblical citations in the sermons. Outler's finding indicates Wesley's familiarity with the Psalms:

We are reminded of his rectory upbringing by the fact that when he quotes a Psalm, it is almost invariably from the Psalter of the Book of Common Prayer.

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69 Ibid., p. xiii.

70 Ibid., Sermons I, p. 70.
Outler is infinitely right to say that "it would be redundant to say more about Wesley's self understanding as a biblical theologian." "He knew it so nearly by heart that even his natural speech is biblical," Outler continues. Outler's findings suggest more areas of systemic investigation as far as the role of the Psalms in Wesley's life is concerned. Meanwhile, it is sufficient to say, Wesley had indeed grown up with the Holy Scriptures and the *Book of Common Prayer* as a second language. This is so much so that in his death, Wesley found the language of Psalms the best expression still to use.

Frank Whaling in his work, *John and Charles Wesley: Selected Writings and Hymns*, renders a good service in introducing the spirituality of both John and Charles Wesley. Again, he sees how the Wesleys "were faithful to the liturgy, doctrines, and sacraments of the Church of

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71 *Ibid*, p. 69. Outler provides also detailed data concerning the scriptural texts that Wesley likes to use. The Gospel according to Matthew was Wesley's favorite book (1362 recorded usages), followed by Hebrews (965), John (870), Luke (853), and 1 Cor. (779). His Old Testament favorite was Isaiah (668 citations), followed by the Psalms (624) and Jeremiah (208). Wesley's favorite N.T. preaching text was Mark 1:15 (190 usages), followed by 2 Cor. 8:9 (167), Eph. 2:8 (133), Gal 6:14 (129) and Matt. 16:20 (117). His favorite sermon text in the O.T. was Isaiah 55:7 (112 usages). His other favorites were Jer. 8:22 (102), Isaiah 55:6 (90), Hos. 14:4 (87 times) and Ps. 147:3 (72 times). Please see Vol. 4, the Index of Scriptural Reference, pp. 651-687 for validation. Whenever Wesley cites the Psalms from the *Book of Common Prayer*, Outler identifies it with a bracket (BCP).
England." He shares the consensus view: "Throughout his life, Wesley nourished his devotion by means of the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Church of England. This provided the *liturgical* framework for his spirituality. Such an understanding is vital in this study. It serves a checks and balance purpose—to see Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms in a wholistic perspective. For the purpose of this study, Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms is singled out and examined. Yet in reality, the Psalms are often used together with ejaculatory prayers, confessions, Lord's Prayer, scripture lessons, collects for the day. Very much as revealed in the diary when Wesley entered "ecappshscptb." Whaling introduces a very important term in defining one overarching dimension of Wesleyan spirituality—the "liturgical spirituality," and the Psalms infinitely plays an important role in Wesley's liturgical

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74 Please see footnote 32 of this chapter.

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spirituality. With Whaling's definition of Wesley's spirituality as a liturgical spirituality, J. Brian Selleck offers a refreshing insight to understand Wesley's Aldersgate. He contends that Wesley's Aldersgate "has a liturgical background and a liturgical setting as well as a liturgical outcome."

It has a liturgical background because "as part of Wesley's lifelong piety, liturgical discipline began in the parental home." Again, Selleck stressed the importance of the Holy Scripture and Book of Common Prayer in the family, how the liturgical prayer and scripture reading played an important part in family devotion, and how lessons opened and closed with the singing of Psalms.

Wesley's Aldersgate has a liturgical setting because Wesley, when "back in Great Britain, he lost no time in continuing his priestly duties... He read prayers and preached... most likely in the context of Mattins and

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75 Whaling uses the term 'liturgical' a couple of times in his introduction. He informs us that the Wesley's at the Oxford days were engaged in "Bible study, systematic devotions, and regular communion... and to analyze the implications of the works of the fourth-century monastic fathers and the liturgical practices of the early church" (p. 11). Thus the Holy Club sets "Wesley's spirituality within a liturgical context" (p. 13). See also page 15.


77 Ibid., p. 35.
Evensong.\textsuperscript{78} Selleck identified also Wesley's response to the Psalm 130 on May 24th and the following two days. He concluded in this section:

Wesley's experience of salvation may have occurred in a society meeting, but he took that experience to the Cathedral Church, to offer it up to God where he worshipped. To the liturgical setting of evensong, his newfound trust received affirmation and support. This, plus the fact that the liturgy of the Church of England continued as part of his devotional life, reveals that Wesley did not understand the Aldersgate experience as anti-liturgical, anti-sacramental, or anti-church.\textsuperscript{79}

Wesley's Aldersgate has a liturgical outcome because "Aldersgate did not cause Wesley to throw aside the means of grace as experienced in the liturgy of the Church of England."\textsuperscript{80} Selleck then described Wesley's first major crisis within eighteen months of his Aldersgate experience; a crisis which was by nature liturgical. For a while, Wesley had associated himself with the Fetter Lane Society in London: A society which then began to stray from the original Moravian principles toward the practice of quietism or stillness. The adherents were not supposed to use the means of grace, to communicate, fast, read the scriptures. This disturbed Wesley greatly. However, they challenged

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., p. 37.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., p. 40.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
Wesley in a sense to clarify his own position on quietism. As a result, Wesley held firm to and asserted that prayer, communicating, and searching the scriptures (the three components of Christian and Anglican worship) were ordinances of the means of God's grace, and they must be observed.\(^{a1}\)

Wesley evidently had "aligned himself with orthodox Anglicanism in the value it ascribed to the means of grace."\(^{a2}\) Indeed, throughout Wesley's life, the *Book of Common Prayer* was the center of methodist worship, though he also added extemporary prayer, psalms and hymn-singing. Wesley's 1784 revision of the *Book of Common Prayer* basically showed his allegiance to the use of Anglican liturgy. At heart, Wesley was still a "liturgical Christian, a believer in eucharistic worship."\(^{a3}\)

**Summary**

Wesley's lifelong habitual and devotional use of the Psalms is a fact that cannot be overemphasized. He reads them, sings them, collects them, translates them, writes them, publishes them, memorizes them, preaches them, and cherishes them to his very death.

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\(^{a1}\) *Ibid.*  
\(^{a2}\) *Ibid.*  
\(^{a3}\) *Ibid.*, p. 44.
Since the use of Psalms is so integral to the liturgy of the Church of England, Wesley's spirituality is intrinsically liturgical. He is at the very heart a liturgical person. He lives a life well ordered and formed by habitual disciplines, devotions and discipleship.

Who is John Wesley? An authentic "Methodist" is he!
CHAPTER 3
The Music of the Heart

In Chapter Two, I have examined the essential characteristics of Wesley's spirituality in which the devotional, habitual, and liturgical use of the Psalms was predominant. I have also indicated that at heart, Wesley was a very liturgical person. The task of this chapter is to analyze and interpret in greater depth the extensive effects of the Psalms on Wesley's spirituality.

I. John Wesley: The Collector of Psalms and Hymns

In The Devotional Life of John Wesley, 1703-38, Dr. Harper appended an important transcription of Wesley's unpublished Prayer Manual. He considered the Prayer Manual to be "in a sense, the heart of the dissertation, because it contained the best insights into the content of Wesley's devotional life between 1727 and 1733."¹ The Prayer Manual, upon my examination, contained in fact a large portion of Psalms-collection: Psalms which Wesley quoted mostly in

parts from the *Book of Common Prayer* and also parts of the metrical psalms from Tate and Brady's *New Version of the Psalms*. Why should Wesley ever want to collect these Psalms in the *Prayer Manual*? Especially, when he already had the *Book of Common Prayer*? Most likely, too, he would have the *New Version of the Psalms*.

A. The Collections of the Psalms in the *Prayer Manual*

A brief note to indicate Wesley's practice of collecting materials is in order. According to Dr. Harper, it was on February 8th, 1730, Wesley first entered in his *Oxford Diary* the practice of collecting prayers. And on June 7th of the same year, Wesley noted in his diary that he was "Collecting Psalms" as part of his devotional activities.²

What were the kind of Psalms that Wesley collected? Why did he collect them? Where were they placed? Apparently, they were collected in this unpublished *Prayer Manual* which Dr. Harper had transcribed.

1. First set of Psalms

The First set of Psalms consists of both the reading Psalms from the *Book of Common Prayer* and the metrical psalms from Tate and Brady. Then, there are also a number

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² *Ibid.*, p. 113. Dr. Harper had the access to *Oxford Diary* in his research. It would be interesting to note how frequently Wesley entered in the diary his practice of collecting the Psalms.
of psalms from Wesley's father.

The Psalms from the *Book of Common Prayer* are: 16, 18, 21, 27, 28, 30, 36, 42, 59, 63, 65, 68. The metrical psalms from Tate and Brady are: 8, 16, 18, 19, 63, 84. The psalms from his father are: 113, 115, 116, 117.

2. Second Set of Psalms

The second set of Psalms consists of two metrical psalms only from Tate and Brady. They are Psalms 67 and 85.

3. Third Set of Psalms

The third set of Psalms consists of two metrical psalms also. They are from Tate and Brady: Psalm 25 (2 parts) and Psalm 31.

4. Fourth Set of Psalms

The fourth set of Psalms consists of six metrical psalms from Tate and Brady. They are: 23, 32, 34, 36, 56, 57.

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^6 Ibid., pp. 401-403.

^7 Ibid., pp. 423-425.

^8 Ibid., pp. 448-453.
5. Fifth Set of Psalms

The fifth set of Psalms consist of both the metrical psalms from Tate and Brady and the reading Psalms from the Book of Common Prayer. The metrical psalms are Psalms 6, 42, 51 (2 parts) and 69. The reading Psalms are: 6, 13, 17, 22, 25, 27, 28, 39, 40, 43, 31, 38, 56, 61, 69, 51, 88, 102, 103 and 143.

6. Sixth Set of Psalms

The sixth set of Psalms are the metrical psalms from Tate and Brady. They are Psalms 19, 13, 65, and 67.

If one were to read the facsimile of the Prayer Manual manuscript, it would be relatively easy to distinguish the reading Psalms from the metrical psalms. Wesley does not numerate the reading Psalms from the Book of Common Prayer. However, he numerates the metrical psalms clearly as 1, 2, 3 and so on. For metrical psalms that have two parts, Wesley numerates them accordingly. For example, Psalm 25 in the third set is listed as numerical numbers 1 and 2. Psalm 51 in the fifth set is listed as 4 and 5. There are, however, three metrical psalms that Wesley does not write the wordings: Psalms 8 and 84 in the first set, and Psalm 23 in

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9 Ibid., pp. 484-487.

10 Ibid., pp. 497-516.

11 Ibid., pp. 516-519. Wesley apparently in the collection, collected Psalm 67 twice. The other time was in the second set.
the fourth set. Perhaps, Wesley is able to memorize them.

Only one reading Psalm from the *Book of Common Prayer* Wesley does not write the wordings of. It is Psalm 69 in the fifth set.

B. The Contents of the Psalms in the *Prayer Manual*

Before one attempts to look at the contest of the Psalms, it is imperative to note some explicit characteristics of the unpublished *Prayer Manual*. In this *Prayer Manual*, Wesley has apparently collected all the materials and classified them under eight sections or headings. The headings are:

1. Love of God
2. Love of a Neighbor
3. Humility
4. Meekness, Sweetness and Resignation
5. Sincerity andCourtesy
6. Mortification
7. (No heading here)
8. Miscellaneous*12

Evidently, the headings are also meant to correspond with the seven days of the week. This can be substantiated by

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12 Wesley used Roman numerals here for the headings. He was not consistent with 6; certain pages he used 6 and returned to use VI. The same thing happened to 7. He used 7, and VII. For 8, he used plainly 8 only. According to Dr. Harper's research, Wesley's *Oxford Diary's* opening pages listed "Particular Questions" for each day of the week with the same theme as above. Thus, in construction, 7 should be: Charity (see pp 115-117 of the dissertation). The *Oxford Diary* is *Oxford Diary II*, pp. vii-x. The inspiration for this kind of practice with special theme for the day is likely to have come from Robert Nelson's *True Devotion* (p. 113 of dissertation).
the abbreviations of a certain day placed within each section. For Example, 'M' for "Morning," 'Ev' for "Evening," 'M.M' for "Monday Morning," 'M.Ev' for "Monday Evening," and so on.

In view of the above headings and organization, it gives us an indication then of the function of the Psalms which Wesley has collected. They are used, first of all, devotionally. Like before, Wesley not only reads them, but also sings them at Morning and Evening Prayers. They also constitute part of the whole liturgical service which involves the use of other prayers, collects, intercessions and thanksgiving. It seems, however, on the second level, they are used most appropriately to articulate the theological emphasis of the day. In other words, it is inherent within the nature of the language of the Psalms to express a theological truth concerning God, a person's relationship toward God and others.

For example, in using Psalm 63 to express the theological emphasis of the love of God, the goal of one's life is to seek after God and to love Him, and to proclaim God's boundless grace, because God has shown first of all his saving love.

O God, my gracious God,
to Thee my morning prayers shall offered be,
For Thee my thirsty soul does pant,
my fainting flesh implores thy grace.
Within this dry and barren place,
Where I refreshing waters want.
O my longing heart once more,
that sense of saving love restore,
Which thy enlivening breath displays
then only dear Redeemer's love.
Then life its far sweeter prove:
My life shall always speak thy praise.\textsuperscript{13}

Psalm 67 of the second set demonstrates aptly the love
of neighbors and nation through one's intercession for God's
blessing and salvation, and the exhortation to glorify God
in return.

To bless thy chosen race, in mercy Lord,
    incline;
And cause the brightness of they face
    on all our hearts to shine.
O may thy wondrous ways through
    all the world be known,
May distant lands their tribute pay,
    and thy salvation own.
Let differing nations join, to celebrate
    thy fame;
Let all they creatures, Lord,
    combine to praise thy glorious name.
O let them shout and sing,
    with joy and pious mirth:
For thou, the righteous God and King,
    doest govern all the earth.\textsuperscript{14}

In showing one's humility, Wesley collects Psalm 25:

For me O gracious Lord, thy secret
    will impart;
And deep thy righteous covenant write,
    in my obedient heart.
To Thee I lift my eyes,
    and wait thy timely aid.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., pp. 376-377. Tate and Brady Psalm 63.
Note: Wesley also quotes the same Psalm from the Book of
Common Prayer.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., pp. 401-402. Tate and Brady Psalm 67.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 424.
The theological motif of God's covenant written in an obedient heart is eminent here. Seemingly, this is to stress the humility as primarily a matter of the heart.

Psalm 32:5 illustrates beautifully one's total resignation to God's wisdom and care.

To Thee, O God of truth,
my life and all that's mine;
For thou preservest me from my youth,
I willingly resign.
Whatever events betide,
thy wisdom made them all;
Then shalt thy servant satisfied,
from those that seek fall.
The brightness of thy face,
thou shalt to one disclose;
And with thy mercies still increase,
preserve me from my foes.
Ye that on God rely, courageously proceed;
For he will still our hearts
supply with strength in time
of need.\(^\text{16}\)

On the theological theme of mortification, Psalm 51 of the fifth set appears to be most illustrative. In this set, Wesley collected not only the metrical psalm (2 parts), but also quoted from the Book of common Prayer. Evidently, the importance of this Psalm in theological articulation is significant.

Blot out my crying sin, nor in me anger view;
Create in me a heart that's clean,
an upright mind renew.
Withdraw not thou thy help,
not cast me from they sight;
Nor let the Holy Spirit take His

\(^{16}\) Ibid., pp. 448-449. This Psalm is in fact mislabeled by Wesley. It is actually from Psalm 31:5, 15-16, and 24.
What can one conclude from the above examples? the general appropriateness of the language of the Psalms to articulate the theological theme or emphasis of a certain day of the week is intact. The above analysis also showed the fact that not only was Wesley reading or singing the Psalms devotionally, or liturgically, but by collecting them under a special theological heading, Wesley was also consciously involved in a process in which he has to think theologically. There is therefore a very intrinsic relationship between what one thinks about God and the appropriateness of the language used to express that faith about God. This leads us to consider even further a vital aspect of the effects of Psalms in Wesley's life. They help Wesley to cultivate a ruling disposition of the heart. In other words, the Psalms provide us with an important port of entry, a window to know the hidden depths of Wesley's spirituality, his religious affections, his way and goal of life, his principles of Christian discipleship, his vision of God and perfection. In turn, it explains the reason why he continues to work on the Psalms, and has them published to articulate the kind of scriptural Christianity that he has envisioned in Psalms and also the hymns. It explains the reason why he loves them, because they are the very

17 Ibid., p. 490.
music of his heart.

II. The Disposition of the Heart and Soul

To substantiate the theory that the Psalms helped Wesley to cultivate a ruling disposition of the heart, one has to return and examine the determinative influence of William Law's understanding of the use of Psalms in Wesley's life.

In Chapter Two, I have already briefly mentioned Wesley's reading of Law's A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life. The book has infinitely attuned Wesley to the practice of chanting the Psalms during his Oxford days. But what has been left unsaid in the chapter, is also the accentuation of the chanting of Psalms and the cultivation of the ruling disposition of the heart.

In stressing the excellency and benefits of chanting the Psalms, William Law describes the effects they have on the heart.

They create a sense and delight in God, they awaken holy desires. . . . they kindle a holy flame, they turn your heart into an altar. . . .

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18 See Chapter Two of this study, pages 19 to 25.

However, William Law appears to have prepared for an opposition from the readers: "Singing is a particular talent that belongs only to a particular people,"\(^{20}\) so they cannot participate and use this method of devotion. In anticipation of such a protest, Law repeatedly emphasizes that it is the state of the heart that disposes a person to a proper use of his voice. And he continues:

Thus if you can find a man whose ruling temper is devotion, whose heart if full of God, his voice will rejoice in those songs of praise which glorify that God is the joy of his heart. . . .\(^{21}\)

William Law then exhorts them that instead of worrying about learning a tune, they should learn to prepare their hearts. He authenticates his ideas and draws inferences from Jesus saying:

Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, etc., so it is equally true that out of the heart proceed holy joys, thanksgiving, and praise. Singing is a natural effect of joy in the heart. . . .\(^{22}\)

Apparently, the deep psychological influence that William Law has reached is pretty profound here. He goes on to stress the unity of soul and body, and the integrity of each affecting the other.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., p. 212.
\(^{21}\) Ibid., p. 213.
\(^{22}\) Ibid.
As singing is the natural effect of joy in the mind, so it is as truly a natural cause of raising joy in the mind.  

Law also sees the unity between praying and singing:

Singing is as much the natural language of praise and thanksgiving as prayer is the natural language of devotion.  

Law then summarizes his argumentation with the following thoughts:

The seat of religion is in the heart. . . We are therefore as well to use outward helps as inward meditations in order to beget and fix habits of piety in our hearts. . . For there is no state of mind so holy, so excellent, and so truly perfect as that of thankfulness to God; and consequently nothing is of more importance in religion than that which exercises and improves this habit of mind. . . You need not therefore now wonder that I lay so much stress upon singing a psalm at all your devotions since you see it is to form your spirit to such joy and thankfulness to God as in the highest perfection of a divine and holy life.

From the above, it is sufficient to say that Wesley is fully aware of Law's opinion on the matter of chanting the Psalms and would well have taken his advice. This being the case, the chanting or singing the Psalms does provide high potential for preparing and turning Wesley's heart into an

\[23\] Ibid., p. 214.
\[24\] Ibid.
\[25\] Ibid., pp. 216-218.
altar. On the other hand, it also reveals the habits of Wesley's heart and the ruling disposition of his souls. His heart is therefore marked by such characteristics of joy, praise and thanksgiving.

It is in this light therefore that we see the significant liturgical dimension of his Aldersgate experience, where the intact harmony that Wesley had with the language of the Psalms is revealed and affirmed. It is also in this light that Wesley's lifelong commitment to the use of Psalms and liturgy is established and understood. It is even more so in this light; Wesley turns from a collector of psalms and hymns and becomes a writer, a publisher of the music of his own heart. He wants his people to be cultivated in the disposition of the soul, so that "the ruling temper of the heart is the most absolute submission and the most tender gratitude to his sovereign benefactor."  

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26 John Wesley, "A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity," (1753), John and Charles Wesley: Selected Writings and Hymns. Edited by Frank Whaling, (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), p. 121. Apparently, Wesley in this pamphlet reflects a coherent structure of the theological emphasis of "the love of God," "the love of Neighbor," "Sincerity and Simplicity," and so on to explain his definition of what a Christian is. It is also interesting to note Wesley's definition of genuine Christianity as "a principle in the soul" (p. 126)--an inward principle of "holiness and happiness, the image of God impressed on a created spirit; a fountain of peace and love springing up into everlasting life" (p. 129). The psalmic aspect of Wesley's spirituality would contribute much to that inward principle of peace and love too--understand as the disposition of the heart.
III. The Music of the Heart

It is almost indisputable that Wesley loves the Psalms. They are the music of his heart. They provide him the right expression, depths and heights to vocalize his love of God. However, it must be stressed that his psalmic spirituality is not merely individualistic. He wants his people to share in the benefits of singing the Psalms, singing the music of his heart and heir own hearts. Consequently, one of the most practical dimensions of the effects of Psalms in his life is to write his own versifications of psalms and hymns that are rich in psalmic allusions and to have them published. There is a fountain of peace and joy springing up within him.

In his lifetime, he and Charles Wesley had written many psalms and numerous hymns. Together, they had published many editions of psalms and hymns, though it was common knowledge that Charles Wesley might better be considered as the Psalmist of the Methodist movement. The two brothers, however, had a general policy not to distinguish their works. Eventually, what is true of Wesley's psalmic spirituality is also applicable to Charles Wesley. They shared the same vision of God, the same intensity of love for God and for the world.

A. A Collection of Psalms and Hymns (Charlestown, 1737)
Wesley's Charlestown Collection of Psalms and Hymns is considered by many Wesley scholars to be the first hymn-book Wesley ever published. However, I wish to draw attention to the fact that a couple of psalms and hymns in the Charlestown collection had their first appearances in the unpublished Prayer Manual. Thus in one sense, the collection in the Prayer Manual is having the seminal mark of literally the first hymn-book!

The Psalms that Wesley had transferred from the Prayer Manual into the Charlestown collection are Psalms 113, 115, 116, and 117. They were actually the works of his father Samuel Wesley from Pious Communicant Rightly Prepar'd. Four hymns without any title from the Prayer Manual were also transferred into the Charlestown collection. They were identified as the work of his elder brother, Samuel Wesley Junior.

In the Charlestown collection, most of the Psalms were, however, the works of Isaac Watts, or Wesley's adaptation of

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27 The source of the psalms and hymns have already been thoroughly discussed in John Wesley's First Hymn-book, edited by Frank Baker (Charleston: Dalcho Historical Society, 1964).

28 Psalms 113, 115, 116, and 117 appeared in the first set of the collection. See page 5 of this chapter. They are numerated as Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8 respectively in the Charlestown collection (pp. 5-9).

29 The hymns are given the title: Hymn to God the Father, Hymn to God the Son, Hymn to God the Holy Ghost, and Hymn to the Trinity in the Charlestown collection. They appeared as Nos. 11, 12, 13 and 14 (pp. 11-14).
Watts' works. A couple of hymns were Wesley's translation of the German hymns during his missionary days to America.\(^{30}\)

One Psalm in particular was to be noted for its extensive influence in Wesley's life. It was Wesley's adaptation of Psalm 146 by Isaac Watts: "I'll Praise my Maker While I have Breath."\(^{31}\) This Psalm, as indicated in the earlier chapter, was reckoned by Wesley himself to be his favorite, and he sang and uttered those words before he died. It signified immeasurably the heart of true spirituality in Wesley's life, a life that was characterized by joy, gratitude and thanksgiving, and the desire to praise and proclaim God's Almighty Name forever and ever.

One Question still remains: "Whatever happened to those collections of psalms from Tate and Brady?" None of them has appeared in the Charlestown Collection. "Does Wesley ever use them in his other publications?"

On his return from America in 1738, Wesley published another anonymous *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*; the title and the general arrangement were the same as of the one published in 1737. Upon examination, this Collection had 14 psalms from the *New Version of the Psalm* by Tate and Brady. They were Psalms 18, 89, 91, 103, 113, 114, 139, 140, 150

\(^{30}\) See Frank Baker's work for all the details of individual psalms and hymns.

\(^{31}\) Psalm 146 appears as No. 9 in the Charlestown Collection (pp. 9-10). See also page 39 of Chapter Two of this study for the full quote and its role in Wesley's life.
(under Part I: Psalms and Hymns for Sunday), 8, 29, 65, 65 (part 2), and 148 (under Part III: Psalms and Hymns for Saturday). Then there was one psalm (Ps. 104) from the New Version, but it was considered a hymn, and was given the title, "David's hymn to the Creator." In cross-reference to the Prayer Manual, Wesley had already collected Psalms 8, 18, and 65. The fact that the 1738 Collection had more Psalms, serves as a good indicator of Wesley's continual use of the New Version.

In the 1741 Collection of Psalms and Hymns, Wesley included from the New Version Psalms 36, 51, 91, 93, 8, 16, 68, 68 (part 2), 84, 89, 103, 104, 104 (part 2), 104 (part 3), 104 (part 4), 113, 114, 139, 148 and 150. Only Psalms 8, 16, and 51 (2 parts) appeared in the Prayer Manual. Again, this Collection reveals Wesley's familiarity with and continual use of the New Version.

B. A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists

The 1780 Collection of Hymns is reckoned by Wesley himself to be the definitive edition of all his publications

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33 Ibid., p. 39.

34 Ibid., pp. 3-6. It's most likely Ps. 104 is the hymn—David's hymn to the Creator in the previous Collection.
of psalms and hymns. It has also long been recognized by the Methodists themselves and others alike to be a classic representation of Methodist worship and spirituality. For the purpose of this study, I will examine the Preface of the edition to highlight the unique place that Wesley ascribed to the role of poetry, and also the intention of this edition to give a full account of scriptural Christianity, to be further substantiated by its Contents.

In the Preface, Wesley states very explicitly that "the spirit of poetry is the spirit of piety." In other words, if one were to consider the psalms and hymns as poetry, they would be used as a means of raising or quickening the spirit of devotion, of confirming his faith, of enlivening his hope, and of kindling or increase his love to God and man.

Undoubtedly, Wesley is pretty attuned to the principles that William Law advocated in the chanting of the Psalms, only drawing more inferences. Apparently too, Wesley has learned much from his classification of theological emphasis in the Prayer Manual when he placed the love of God and man as the top priority of Christian living. Now, in this edition, he wants to advocate the same principles.

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36 Ibid.
Besides the unique role that Wesley has ascribed to poetry, he is also crystal-clear about the purpose of the publication. He wants to give "an account of scriptural Christianity," to declare "the heights and depths of religion, speculative and practical."\textsuperscript{37} He desires to direct the christians' "calling and election," and to perfect their "holiness in the fear of God."\textsuperscript{38}

To achieve such a purpose, Wesley explains that "the hymns are not carelessly jumbled together, but carefully ranged proper heads, according to the experience of real Christians."\textsuperscript{39} He eventually hopes to prove that "this book is in effect a little body of experimental and practical divinity."\textsuperscript{40}

Before one turns to look at the Contents, a brief note concerning Wesley's spirituality and maturity is in order. Wesley's Preface reflects a lifelong immersion in the "spirit of poetry and piety," and for that matter, the Psalms. He articulates the intrinsic relationship between singing, prayer, and theology. Indisputably, the Preface also reflects a lifelong learning process in which Wesley

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., Even though Wesley only mentions hymns here, one must also understand that a lot of hymns are full of psalmic allusions.

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
continued to learn to do a better and a better job in his art of collection and classification. It all humbly began with the little-known collection in the unpublished Prayer Manual, in which Psalms and hymns had already played a major role.

In order to fully appreciate Wesley's intention of wanting to give "an account of scriptural Christianity," one needs only look at the amazing clarity and classification of his table of Contents.

The Contents
Part I

Containing Introductory Hymns.
Sect. I. Exhorting and Beseeching to Return to God
II. Describing, 1. The Pleasantness of Religion
   2. The Goodness of God
   3. Death
   4. Judgement
   5. Heaven
   6. Hell
III. Praying for a Blessing

Part II

Sect. I. Describing Formal Religion
II. Describing Inward Religion

Part III

Sect. I. Praying for Repentance
II. For Mourners convinced of Sin
III. For Mourners brought to the Birth
IV. Convinced of Backsliding
V. Recovered

Part IV

Sect. I. For Believers Rejoicing
II. For Believers Fighting
III. For Believers Praying
IV. For Believers Watching
V. For Believers Working
VI. For Believers Suffering

68
VII. For Believers Groaning for Full Redemption
VIII. For Believers Brought to the Birth
IX. For Believers Saved
X. For Believers Interceding for the World

Part V

Sect. I. For the Society, Meeting
II. For the Society, Giving Thanks
III. For the Society, Praying
IV. For the Society, Parting

What is Wesley trying to do in the table of Contents? He is mapping out the way, the crossroads, the ups and downs of the Christian life. The headings are intrinsically related to some of the most predominant theological themes that he preaches: sin, grace, repentance, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and perfection. They also indicate that Christian spirituality is very much of a corporate nature as the Methodist societies gather to worship. In short, they may well be considered the changing tempo, tune and orchestration of the music of the hearts!

C. Select Psalms

By no means can one give an exhaustive list of the versifications of Psalms that the Wesleys have written. However, in order to authenticate the importance of their giving "an account of scriptural Christianity" and "the spirit of poetry in the spirit of piety," a few selections

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\[1\] Ibid., p. 722.
are essential.  

1. Psalm 1

Blessed is the man, and none but he,
Who walks not with ungodly men;
Nor stands their evil deeds to see,
Nor sits the innocent to arraign;
The persecutor's guilt to share,
Oppressive in the scorners chair.

Obedience is his pure delight,
To do the pleasure of the Lord;
His exercise by day and night
To search His soul-converting Word;
The Laws of liberty to prove,
The perfect law of life and love.

Fast by the streams of Paradise
He as a peasant plant shall grow;
The tree of righteousness shall rise,
And all his blooming honors show;
Spread out his boughs, and flourish fair,
And fruit unto perfection bear.

His verdant leaf shall never fade,
His work of faith shall never cease.

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42 The best primary material that lists all the versifications of Psalms by the Wesleys is in, The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley, Vol. VIII, collected and arranged by G. Osborn, (London: Wesleyan-Methodist Conference, 1870). This work identifies the source of each Psalm, that is, from which particular publication of the Wesleys it appears. Some are only published for the first time—the collector's time, 1870. This primary material deserves further study to provide a subject index to some of the most dominant Wesleyan themes such as sin, grace, love, justification, sanctification, perfection and so on.

One may question the validity of the O.T. Psalms giving "an account of scriptural Christianity." Fortunately, in the process of versifications of the Psalms, they are rendered in the light and in the language and truth of the N.T., yet they retain the beauty of prose and the poetry form of the Psalms. Oftentimes, they are very Christocentric also.

Technically speaking, I am also aware that the Preface to the 1780 collection is meant for that precise edition. Yet the "spirit of piety" is applicable to all of Wesley's former works of Psalms and Hymns. One may also want to look at the hymns of the 1780 edition with the psalmic allusions in the Index of scriptural allusions of the Works of John Wesley, Vol. 7, pp. 727-729.
His happy toil shall all succeed,
Whom God Himself delights to bless.
But no success the ungodly fine,
Scattered like chaff before the wind.

No portion and no place have they
With those whom God vouchsafes to approve;
Cast in the dreadful judgement-day,
Who trample on their Saviour's love;
Who here their bleeding Lord deny
Shall perish, and forever die.\(^3\)

Psalm 1 is without any question one of the most important Psalms, not only to the Book of Psalms itself, but also in our understanding of the major tenets of Wesleyan spirituality and theology:

This psalm was put first as a preface to all the rest, as a powerful persuasive to the serious study of the whole book, and of the rest of the holy scripture, taken from that blessedness which attends upon the study and practice of it. It shows, the holiness and happiness of a good man. . .\(^4\)

The Psalm accentuates the major themes of "obedience," "the soul-converting Word," "fruit of perfection," "works of faith," and "happy toil." One is also clear, though, that those who choose to do otherwise, "they shall perish and forever die."

\(^3\) Poetical Works, pp. 3-4. Source: Collection of Psalms and Hymns, 1743.

\(^4\) John Wesley, Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament, Vol. 2, (Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers, 1975), p. 1626. Wesley's Introductory note to the whole Book of Psalms is also very remarkable: "We have now before us one of the choicest parts of the O.T., where in there is so much of Christ and his gospel, as well as God and his law, that it has been called the summary of both testaments. . . This book brings us into the sanctuary. . . and drives us into communion with God (p. 1625).
2. Psalm 8

Sovereign, everlasting Lord,
   How excellent Thy Name!
Held in being by Thy Word,
Thee all Thy works proclaim:
Through this earth Thy glories shine,
   Through these dazzling worlds above,
All confers the Source Divine,
The Almighty God of love!

What is man, that Thou, O Lord,
   Hast such respect to him?
Comes from heaven the incarnate Word,
   His creature to redeem:
Wherefore wouldst Thou stoop so low?
   Who the mystery shall explain?
God is flesh, and lives below,
   And dies for wretched man.

Jesus his Redeemer dies,
   the sinner to restore,
Falls that man again may rise,
   And stand as heretofore;
Foremost of created things,
   Head of all Thy works he stood,
Nearest the great King of Kings,
   And little less than God!

Him with glorious majesty,
   Thy grace vouchsafed to crown;
Transcript of the One-in-Three,
   He in Thine image shone;
All Thy works for him were made,
   All did to his sway submit,
Fishes, birds, and beasts obey'd,
   And bow'd beneath his feet.\(^5\)

Psalm 8 is a vital psalm for understanding Wesley's doctrine of man in relation to God. This is also a psalm-text that Wesley preached on a couple of occasions.\(^6\) In


\(^6\) See footnote 1 of Chapter Two of this study. The long quote there is in fact the introduction to Wesley's sermon on Psalm 8, "What is Man" See also *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 4, *Sermon IV*, 115-151, pp. 19-27--the other occasion in which
this versification of Psalm 8, we see explicitly his view of God as the Source of love divine. We see clearly, too, the doctrine of Christ's incarnation and his redemptive work to restore the image of God to the fallen man. Christ is to be exalted in the final consummation, and that everyone shall confess that Jesus Christ is the great King of kings, the great Lord of all.

3. Psalm 51

Psalm 51 is definitely one of the most significant Psalms for understanding Wesley's teaching on Original sin and God's cleansing power through the blood of Jesus Christ. Wesley's sermons often times have scriptural allusions from this Psalm. It has 3 parts which are too long to be quoted in full. For a sample of its beauty, though, it reads:

God of unfathomable love!
Whose bowels of compassion move
Towards Adam's helpless race;
See, at Thy feet, a sinner see!
In tender mercy look on me,
And all my sins efface.

Surely Thou wilt Thy grace impart,
Sprinkle the blood upon my heart
which did for sinners flow;
The blood that purges every sin,

Wesley preached on Ps. 8:4, "What is man?"

See The Works of John Wesley, Sermons I-IV, 4 Volumes. Edited by Albert C. Outler. The Index of scripture reference will provide a quick access to all sermons with Psalm 51 scriptural allusions.
The blood that soon shall wash me clean,
And make me white as snow!

My wretchedness to Thee convert;
Give me a humble, contrite heart,
My fallen soul restore:
Let me the life Divine attain,
The image of my God regain,
And never lose it more.  

4. Psalm 116

What shall I render to my God
For all His mercies store?
I'll take the gifts He hath bestow'd,
And humbly ask for more.
The sacred cup of saving grace
I will with thanks receive,
And all His promises embrace,
And to His glory live.

The God of all-redeeming grace
My God I will proclaim,
Offer the sacrifice of praise,
And call upon His name;
Render my vows unto the Lord,
My gratitude approve,
And in His people's ears record
The wonder of His Love.  

Psalm 116 is indisputably the choice for the most
beautiful and touching eucharistic psalm. It overflows with
the Wesleyan theme of God's all-redeeming grace, and a life
of gratitude and praise. Many thought it more like a hymn,
which in fact is a versification of a Psalm. It seems that
the dividing line is difficult to draw at times between what

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49 Ibid., pp. 200-203. I quoted stanzas 7 and 10 here. Source: Collection of Psalms and Hymns 1743.
is a psalm or a hymn.

5. Psalm 133

Behold how good a thing
   It is to dwell in peace!
how pleasing to our King
   This fruit of righteousness,
When brethren all in one agree!
Who knows the joy of unity?

When all are sweetly join'd
   True followers of the Lamb,
The same in heart and mind,
   And think and speak the same,
And all in love together dwell,
Thy comfort is unspeakable.

Where unity takes place,
   The joys of heaven we prove;
This is the gospel-grace,
   The unction from above,
The Spirit on al believers shed,
Descending swift from Christ our Head.

Even now our Lord doth pour
   The blessing from above,
A kindly, gracious shower
   Of heart-reviving love,
The former and the latter rain,
The love of God and love of man.

The riches of His grace
   In fellowship are given,
To Zion's chose race,
   The citizens of heaven;
He fills them with His choicest store,
He gives them life for evermore.\(^\text{50}\)

Wesleyan spirituality is not just individualistic devotions but also corporate fellowship and worship. The

\(^{50}\) Ibid., pp. 250-252. I quoted stanzas 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10. Source: Hymns and Sacred Poem, 1742. Again this psalm is considered as a hymn! In this psalm, we also see Wesley's remarkable ability to weave together other scriptural allusions from books such as Philippians and Matthew.
importance of meeting in societies, classes, and bands is obvious. What better psalm than the Psalm 133 to stress the unity of fellowship? Instead of Aaron being the high priest, Christ is the head of the body, and he bestows his Spirit and grace abundantly. Our response is therefore to exercise, "the love of God and love of man."

6. Psalm 150

Psalm 150 in the Book of Psalms is considered by many to be the climax of the whole book. It ends with the ceaseless doxologies and praises. Wesley's versification of Psalm 150 achieves the same orchestration. It invites everyone that has breath to join in the full concert, to bring all the power of music, especially the very music of the heart! Only then the music is true, authentic, and inconceivably pleasing to the One to whom the music is rendered and sung.

Praise the Lord, who reigns above,
And keeps His court below;
Praise the holy God of love;
And all His greatness show!
Praise Him for His noble deeds,
Praise Him for His matchless power;
Him, from whom all good proceeds,
Let earth and heaven adore.

Publish, spread to all around
The great Jehovah's name;
Let the trumpet's martial sound
The Lord of hosts proclaim!
Praise Him in the sacred dance,
Harmony's full concert raise;
Let the virgin-choir advance,
And move but to His praise.
Celebrate the eternal God
With harp and psaltery;
Timbrels soft, and cymbals loud,
In His high praise agree;
Praise Him every tuneful string,
All the reach of heavenly art;
All the power of music bring,
The music of the heart.

Him in whom they move and live,
Let every creature sing;
Glory to their Maker give,
And homage to their King!
Hallow'd be His name beneath,
As in heaven on earth adored;
Praise the Lord in every breath;
Let all things praise the Lord!\(^{51}\)

"All the power of music bring, the music of the heart."
"Praise the Lord in every breath; Let all things praise the Lord!" --This is the music, and message of Wesley's heart. This is the way in which Wesley lived his life, to the very end and in eternity!

**Evaluation: Review of Related Literature**

As in the evaluation of the previous Chapter, my task in this section is to review some related secondary resources for the purpose of evaluating and broadening my perspective.

Don Saliers, Professor of Theology and Worship at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, is one current Methodist scholar who has done extensive thinking, studying and

\(^{51}\) *Ibid.*, p. 262. This psalm is often times sung as a hymn too! Source: *Collection of Psalms and Hymns, 1743.*
writing on the intrinsic relationship between prayer, liturgy, theology, religious affections, spiritual formation and even ethics. His systematic analysis is shown most thoroughly in the work, The Soul in Paraphrase: Prayer and the Religious Affections. In this book, he is involved in a search for a language by which to describe and understand, so far as possible, the intricate connections between self, world, and God which are the heart of Christian prayer. Put in another way, we are concerned with the grammar of the religious affections in the context of prayer and life.52

By religious affections he means, "a pattern of particular affections which constitutes and governs the life of the Christian."53 In other words, they are the "dispositions of the heart," "the affections of gratitude, holy fear and penitence, joy and suffering, and love of god and neighbor."54

In this work, Saliers sees "the language of prayer and worship" as primarily "the language of faith" or "the language of the heart."55 As such, it indicates "matter of passionate conviction and commitment."56 To illustrate that

53 Ibid., p. 8.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid., pp. 21-22.
56 Ibid., p. 22.
relationship, he turns to the language of the Psalms in the Scripture:

\[
\text{Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy steadfast love; according to thy abundant mercy blot out my transgression (Ps. 51:1)}
\]

I give thee thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the Gods I sing and praise, and give thanks to thy name for they steadfast love and thy faithfulness. (Ps. 138:1-2)

As a hart longs for flowing streams, So longs my soul for thee, O God (Ps. 42:1).

Consequently, he shows from the above examples that "the manner in which descriptions and ascription of God are intrinsic features of the language as repentance, desire, praise and longing," and "the language of prayer--in this liturgical prayer--evokes and educates us in certain specific emotions by ascribing to God what is believed about God, in the vocative mode." Thus, repeatedly in the work, Saliers emphasizes that prayer, "particularly in its communal forms, both shapes and expresses persons in fundamental emotions," "gives utterance to the Christian affections."

In summary, Saliers points out:

1. Prayer is a logically required context for the utterance of theological truths.

\[\text{57 Ibid., p. 28.}\]

\[\text{58 Ibid.}\]

\[\text{59 Ibid., p. 29.}\]

\[\text{60 Ibid., p. 36.}\]
2. Prayer is the most fitting context for asserting things religiously about God.
3. Theological understanding of the Christian faith depends partly on a person's being habituated in the "liturgical" use of religious language.
4. The vocative use of language about God "shows" something about the logic of religious beliefs.
5. The vocative mode shows the relation between the life of one who prays and the words about God.61

In a separate article, "David's Song in Our Land," Saliers demonstrates an even more explicit feature of this thought--his love for the Psalms coming from his professional training as an organist and choir director. He thinks that the Book of Psalms is rightly called "a school of prayer."62

For we find and experience anew the ongoing liturgy of call and response between Israel and the Lord God. In every age the Psalms provide models and images of authentic faith and honest prayer.63

In the same tone as the previous work, Saliers sums up his thought:

1. The Psalms are the language of the human heart at full stretch before God.
2. They are integral to the Church's prayer, season upon season and throughout the ages.
3. The Psalms provide an ever-fresh

61 Ibid., pp. 82-84.
63 Ibid.
place of encounter between God and 
God's people, a crucible of faith 
experience.  

Finally, in another article still advocating 
practically the same theme, Saliers investigates "the 
relations between the explicit music we make when we gather 
to worship and the deeper, implicit music of all our liturgy 
and life before God." He offers a deep insight that 

the very pattern of the gathering for 
prayer, praise, reading, proclamation, 
responding, feeding, feasting, embracing 
in peace, and blessing is itself the 
dance and the song—even if there is 
relatively little explicit music. 

What makes Saliers say that? He evidently has understood 
and experienced "the secret of the formative power of 
liturgy." He testifies that 

the speaking, listening, movement, 
gesture, and silence, all create 
rhythm and possess pitch, 
intensity and tonal register. 

Consequently, as in all his other works., he drives home the 
same message, sounds the same music about the formative and 
expressive power of the sung prayer of Christian liturgy.

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64 Ibid., p. 25.
65 Ibid., Don E. Saliers, "When in our Worship God is 
Glorified: The Music of Liturgy and Life," in Weavings, Vol. 4, 
No. 4, July/August 1989, p. 8.
66 Ibid., p. 10.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
The very shape, language, and hidden music of liturgical assembly, then, is the language of the human heart and soul and mind tutored by the Word of God and given meaning and depth by the Holy Spirit. This is why the Psalms and canticles of the whole Scripture are crucial to our experience of liturgy—they should permeate our prayer and action... The power of gathering to acknowledge God, to confess, to hear, to remember, and to take to heart what God in Jesus has to say and do with us goes well beyond our beliefs or our cognitive assent to doctrine. The liturgy, well celebrated over time, forms us in the way of living signified by the words: to repent, to love, to be thankful, to see justice and mercy, to hope, to love and serve the neighbor, and to look for what is yet to come from the promises of God to this world cosmos.\textsuperscript{69}

The implication of Saliers' thought is obvious: "We must draw deep from the wells of tradition, yet not fear to employ our imaginative arts in the assembly."\textsuperscript{70}

From the above, it is adequate to see the extensive effects that the devotional, liturgical use of Psalms had on Wesley's life and spirituality. Wesley is infinitely well-trained in the "school of prayer" of the psalms and canticles and hymns. He is in fact raised in the liturgical church. He goes through the "rhythm of prayer, praise, reading, proclamation, responding, feeding, feasting, embracing in peace and the giving of blessing." The psalms become not only the music sung or prayed, but they also

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p. 12
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., p. 14.
become the hidden music of his heart, the dispositions of his soul! They are also the context and means in which he has so effectively and affectively articulated the major tenet, the overarching theme of his faith! Wesley's lifelong immersion in the Psalms and liturgy provides an essential link for understanding Wesley, his personality, his spirituality and even his theological system and presentation. This introduces us then to the works of Gregory S. Clapper, which are greatly influenced by Don E. Saliers, yet open up more grounds for investigation.

In his work, John Wesley On Religious Affections, Clapper advocates the same basic emphasis. He views Wesley's definition of Christianity as "a disciplined form of life distinguished by a certain pattern of affectivity."

However, he comes to such a view by studying Wesley's abridgement of Jonathan Edward's Treatise on Religious Affections. He sees that the task of theology is "to provide the paradigm, the defining vision, of the essential features of the Christian life, including speech, actions, and emotions."

Undoubtedly, Wesley's psalmic spirituality has all the potential to be the best paradigm of the defining vision of

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72 Ibid., p. 158.
who God is, and the instruction of the essential features of
the Christian life. The use of Psalms certainly will
provide the right channel and expressions of our faith and
theology, which includes speech, actions and appropriate
emotions or religious affections.

One thing is almost certain--Wesley Studies in the
twentieth Century will be very exciting. Hopefully, more
will also discover that "Wesley used affection language to
express many of his important theological concepts and
doctrines."\(^3\) I see the primary reason for this could well
be the psalmic dimension of Wesley's spirituality.

Last, but not least, I introduce the work of an
Episcopal priest for interaction. John H. Westerhoff in his
article provides us a unique kindred insight that

Methodism at its best is properly
understood as a movement in the history
of the spiritual life, a school of
spirituality and an understanding of
and method for guiding the spiritual
growth of persons in community.\(^4\)

He also sees Wesley's most significant and lasting
contribution as being that of a spiritual educator.

Surely, no one in the history
of Protestantism cared more about
spiritual formation and education
than he. Indeed, Wesley sought to
describe the process and develop

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 45.

Having established the qualities of the spiritual educator, Westerhoff goes on to suggest the processes of spiritual formation and education. Seemingly, he must have derived these from his own Anglican tradition, which is also Wesley's. Some examples of the processes are:

1. To provide help for persons in their establishment of a fourfold spiritual discipline comprising meditation, praying the Scripture, communal life, and caring.
2. To provide opportunities for persons to use all their senses and to encourage their participation in the arts.
3. To provide opportunities for an engagement with the spiritual experiences and wisdom of those in the past who in some way have exemplified the spiritual life.
4. To provide opportunities for a critical examination of the language and images used in our life of prayer and worship.
5. To provide resources for the life of prayer.
6. To provide for daily morning and evening common prayer.
7. To provide for meaningful weekly participation in the Eucharist.
8. To provide for small group to aid us on our journey.\(^76\)

As one goes through the list of processes, one can be absolutely certain that they explain most of the factors which prepare and make Wesley so good in his role as spiritual director, since he has been raised in that unique heritage. It is from such a perspective, one begins to see the many dimensions of Wesley's spirituality and ministry.

\(^{75}\) Ibid., p. 44.

\(^{76}\) Ibid., pp. 48-51.
Wesley indisputably has fulfilled his tasks as spiritual director well. He shall continue to serve as a model for our learning in spiritual education or direction.

Wesley is indeed a person who is well-trained in the "school of prayer" of the Psalms and the Anglican liturgy. They provide the primary context and means by which his spirituality is formed and shaped. The content of his spirituality is in his ruling tempers, the disposition of the heart, manifested as the religious affections of gratitude, holy fear, pentinence, joy, and love of God and neighbor. This same spirituality in turn, brings him back continuously to find in the language of the Psalms, the language of his prayer, praise and faith. The Psalms have become the melody and message of his heart, soul and mind. He wants to sing them, share them and make them known to his people, to the Church. The psalms and hymns also provide a kind of liturgical model in which Wesley is able to exercise his role as a spiritual director to give the essential instruction of scriptural Christianity and to guide the people in the path of perfection. Consequently, the Psalms have affected Wesley in both the cognitive and affective levels, consciously and subconsciously. They give rise to the wholeness of his theological system, in which there is much integration between faith and experience, reasons and affections, individualism and corporateness, worship and service!
CONCLUSION

How can one understand Wesley's spirituality? The approach in this study has been to examine Wesley's devotional use of the Psalms. It is the thesis of this study that the use of Psalms provides us with a good port of entry for understanding the depths and heights of Wesley's spirituality. The study shows the use of Psalms in the various stages of Wesley's life as being normative and formative. It is normative because Wesley uses the Psalms practically every day of his entire life. He reads them, studies them, sings them, and cherishes them as the music of his heart--his personal appropriation of the language of the Psalmists as the language of prayer and praise. It is also formative because, not only does Wesley love or cherish the Psalms, but they begin to fill his thoughts and life deeply--they actually shape his very thoughts, words and deeds. They cultivate the kind of religious affections that enable him to relate to God, the world and others. In turn, he collects them, publishes them, preaches them, and has them sung as the music of the hearts of the people called Methodists. Subsequently, we are able to see that the relationship between Wesley's spirituality and the Psalms is very much reciprocal. On one hand, the Psalms shape Wesley's spirituality, and on the other hand, Wesley's
spirituality shapes the further use of the Psalms among the Methodists and the Christian Church.

Apparently, what Wesley does with the Psalms and to the Psalms is in fact nothing extraordinary. He, like the many saints of old, have drunk deeply from this important well of spirituality. That is to say, the Psalms as prayers and songs of praise have served as an important model and focus of spiritual concerns through the ages, and they shall continue to do just the same. The prayers and songs of praise are infinitely the music of the hearts.

Since Wesley uses the Psalms devotionally, liturgically, and pastorally, we, as his Methodist heirs, also the heirs of the common Christian faith, will certainly do well to learn from this important practice. We must learn to treasure the Psalms as "a rich treasury of devotion, which the wisdom of God has provided to supply the wants of his children in all generations."¹ We must see to it that the Psalms be used in our private devotion, in the family, and in public worship. We must learn to grow up together with the Psalms, from a stage of infancy to a stage of full maturity "in the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."² No model seems to be more appropriate to aid us in the practice of the presence of God than the

¹ See footnote 1 of Chapter Two.
² Ibid., Footnote 1, Chapter Two.
praying, singing and studying of the Psalms. Indeed over and extended time, we shall also see and experience the formative power of the Psalms in cultivating within us the kind of religious affections that enable us to love God with singleness of heart, mind and soul, and to love our neighbors as ourselves!

Praise the Lord, who reigns above,  
And keeps His court below;  
Praise the Holy God of love;  
And all His greatness show!  
Praise Him for His noble deeds,  
Praise Him for His matchless power;  
Him, from whom all good proceeds  
Let earth and heaven adore.

Celebrate the eternal God  
With harp and psaltery;  
Timbrels soft, and cymbals loud,  
In His high praise agree;  
Praise Him every tuneful string,  
All the reach of heavenly art;  
See the power of music bring,  
The music of the heart.  
Amen!
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