

License for
Pastoral Ministry School
Theology of John Wesley

Slides are available...

- See Dr. John Hatton
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Who Needs Theology?

- All I need to believe is just the Bible!
 - All I need to believe comes from my own experience of God!
 - All I need to believe comes from my own church tradition!
 - All I need to believe comes from what makes the most sense!
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Think about it...

- How do you understand the Scriptures
 - Matthew 5:28-29... "But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out or throw it away..."
 - How many people have torn their eyes out?
 - How do you understand why bad things happen to good people if a loving/merciful God is in control...
 - Human free will, Evil feeds on that which is good, God is in control but chooses to limit himself...
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Theology...

- It's where faith and understanding meet...
 - Theos = God
 - Ology = to study
 - So then theology then is really the study of God so that we may perfectly know and love God...
 - There are many different kinds of theology...
 - Folk, Lay, Clergy, Academic,
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So...

- Everyone has a theology. Whether they want to call it a high-minded seminary exercise...
 - Or...something made up by people...
 - Or...a big bunch of mess...
 - Everyone has a theology.
 - Everyone.
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But Where Does Wesleyan
Theology Come From?

Early Fathers: 100-600 AD

- Apostolic Fathers
Clement, Ignatius,
Polycarp
- Greek Fathers:
Irenaeus, Origen,
- Latin Fathers:

Church Split: East/ West: 1054

- Eastern Orthodox
Three-ness of
Trinity, Icons,
Holy Spirit,
Experience
- Roman Catholic
(West)
Oneness of God,

Anglicanism

– Wesleyanism /Methodism

- Eastern Orthodoxy
- Henry the 8th starts
Anglican Church in
1534
- John Wesley starts
Methodist Revival
in 1738 after

Wesleyan Theology

- Not Systematic Theology
 - But Practical Divinity
 - How does it help people know Jesus Christ?
 - How does it help people grow in Jesus Christ?
 - How does it help people share Jesus Christ with others?
 - Scripture – Our Source
 - Theology: The way we interpret and apply the source
 - Tradition
 - Reason
 - Experience
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Distinctives of Wesleyan Theology

- More from the Eastern Church – focuses on the three-ness of God and on relationship, grace, and
 - Anglican Influence – sources of Book of Common Prayer, 39 Articles of Religion, Homilies of Church of England
 - Scripture is the key source, with experience, tradition, and reason as its sources of interpretation
 - The Presence and Activity of the Holy Spirit – God indwelling the heart to sanctify, empower, and release for ministry
 - The necessity and beauty of grace
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Basic Methodist Theology

All Can Be Saved

All Can Know They Are Saved

All Can Be Saved To The Uttermost

Social Application

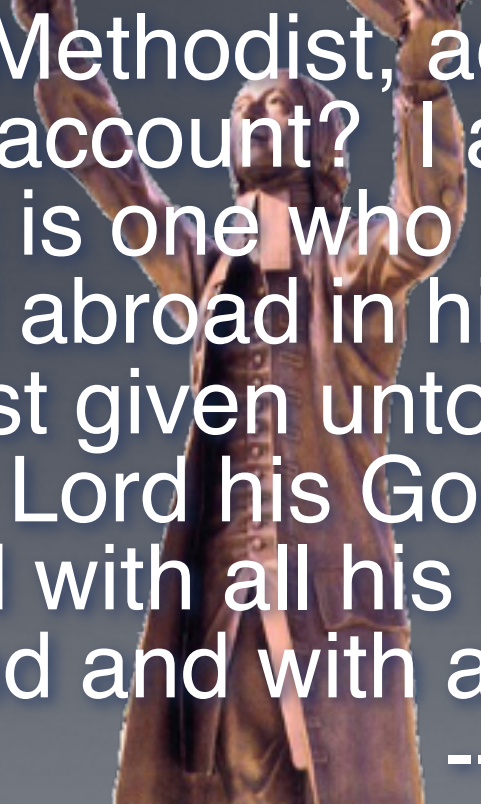
Ecumenical Spirit

World Parish



The Essence of Methodism

Who is a Methodist, according to your own account? I answer: A Methodist is one who has 'the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him;' one who 'loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind and with all his strength.



--John Wesley

The “Order of Salvation”

(according to Wesley)

1. *Prevenient Grace*

- Present in all persons. An unconditional benefit of the atonement.
 - Linked with the faculty of conscience.
 - Gives to all *not* moral ability but moral awareness.
 - Restores a measure of free will. We can choose to stifle or listen to the voice of conscience.
 - By responding to prevenient grace, we open ourselves to receive more grace.
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Prevenient Grace

- “Stir up the spark of grace which is now in you and he will give you more grace.”
 - “No man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath.”
 - John Wesley
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2. Repentance

- Results in larger measure of self-knowledge in terms of our awareness of our sinfulness. (Romans 7)
 - Caused by “convincing grace” - hence repentance is a gift of God.
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- Associated with the preaching of the law. “The faith of a servant”
 - Is “remotely necessary” to justification in that it leads to faith but not “immediately necessary”.
 - Involves both genuine sorrow for sin and turning from sin to the ways of God.
 - Drives us to despair.
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- “Now he truly desires to break loose from sin, and begins to struggle with it. But though he strive with all his might, he cannot conquer it: sin is mightier than he....Thus he toils without end, repenting and sinning, and repenting and sinning again, till at length the poor, sinful, helpless wretch is even at his wit’s end, and can barely groan, ‘O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death.’”

John Wesley

3. Faith

- The “faith of a son.”
 - “A sure trust in the mercy of God,”
“confidence in a pardoning God.” “The conviction that the Son of God loves me and has given himself for me.”
 - Is a gift of God.
 - Human cooperation is necessary. We can choose to accept or reject the divine creation of faith in us.
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4. Justification

- To bring in a verdict of “not guilty”.
 - “To be pardoned and received into God’s favor”
 - A change in our standing before God.
 - A change in our legal status before God.
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- not merely a “legal fiction”
 - includes release from a guilty conscience and assurance of acceptance before God.
 - What God does *for* us.
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5. Regeneration or the New Birth

- What God does in us.

“Justification implies only a relative, the new birth a real change. God in justifying us does something for us; in begetting us again, he does the work in us. The former changes our outward relation to God, so that of enemies we become children; by the latter our inmost souls are changed so that of sinners we become saints. The one restores us to the favor, the other to the image of God. The one is the taking away the guilt, the other the taking away the power of sin.”--
John Wesley

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- Moral renewal - from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.
 - Change in heart, mind, will & action.
 - Enables us to live a life pleasing to God.
 - Linked closely to the work of the Holy Spirit.
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6. Adoption

- Brought into the family of God.
 - Privileges of being a child of God - heirs (Gal 3:26)
 - Confident access before God (Rom 8:15).
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7. Assurance - The Witness of the Spirit

- “An inward impression of the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my Spirit that I am a Child of God.”
 - An inner intuitive awareness.
 - May bring about feeling reactions, but not necessarily.
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8. Sanctification (initial)

- Growth in Christlikeness which begins with regeneration.
 - The result of the operation of the indwelling Spirit.
 - Involves our active cooperation.
 - An ongoing process.
 - Effects inward character and outward conduct (produces holiness of heart *and* life).
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Wesley's "Order of Salvation"

- Prevenient Grace
- Repentance
- Faith
- Justification by Faith
- Regeneration
- Adoption
- Witness of the Spirit + Assurance
- Initial Sanctification



Conversion

New Life in Christ
(II Corinthians 5:17)

- A New Standing - Justification
 - A New Heart - Regeneration
 - A New Family - Adoption
 - A New Confidence - Assurance
 - A New Calling - Sanctification
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9. Repentance of Believers

- Necessary for continuance & growth in grace.
 - “A conviction of all the sin remaining in their heart”
 - “inward sin”
 - A conviction of their guiltiness - they deserve condemnation.
 - A conviction of their utter helplessness.
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10. Entire Sanctification

- Purity of intention.
 - A perfection of the Heart.
 - The heart is “the innermost spring of the individual life, the ultimate source of all its physical, intellectual, emotional, and volitional energies, and consequently the part through which humanity normally achieve contact with the divine”
Bible Dictionary --Interpreter’s
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- Made perfect in love - love expelling sin and governing both the heart and life.
 - A gift to be received.
 - A definite experience.
 - “Ask that it may be done now, today, while it is still called today. Today is His time, as well as tomorrow. Make haste, man, make haste”
 - “Expect it by faith, expect it as you are, and expect it now”
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11. Growth in Love

- Growth in self-awareness.
 - Maturity.
 - Closing the gap between intention & action.
 - Process.
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The Distinction Between Purity and Maturity

Purity

- the crisis of entire sanctification
- heart cleansed from inner dividedness
- a new starting point (threshold)
- a completed act

Maturity

- an ongoing process
 - perfect love being expanded to every area of our lives
 - perfect love as a habit of life
 - until we attain the stature of Christ
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12. *Glorification*

- Occurs at death.
 - Resurrected humanity.
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A Word On Trinity & Wesleyan Theology...

- God as relational community...3 persons and 1 God.
 - Not 1 God functioning in three modes...(modalism)
 - Not the Father as head and Son, Spirit in subordinate roles (arianism – Jesus is less than fully God)
 - Not God as three disconnected persons (tritheism)
 - Not God and Jesus as an adopted Son, a purely human Son, or a Son who is anything less than fully God/fully human (adoptionism)
 - So why does this matter?
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Trinity & Wesleyan Theology Contd.

- Focus on Divine Love shared between Father, Son, and Spirit
 - While God's sovereignty is important (God is all powerful/ immanent/ruler/etc.) the focus on invitation to live in relationship with God as part of the divine community...(see John 14:1-6)
 - Greater room for the ongoing and personal relational work of the Spirit in us (an often forgotten person of the Trinity) and it is through the Spirit that we know Father and Son (versus knowing the Father and Spirit through Christ which is more objectivistic/ and less personal form of salvation)
 - Realization of sanctifying grace and becoming perfect in love as our goal for it mirrors Trinity (Father loves the Son through Spirit)
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Wesley's Emphasis on the Holy Spirit

- Wesley placed great emphasis on person + work of the Holy Spirit...
 - Prevenient Grace – the Spirit calls and convicts...
 - Justifying Grace – the Spirit imparts the work of Jesus Christ...
 - Sanctifying Grace – The Spirit continues the work of making us holy as the Lord our God is holy
 - In the Sacraments – outward and physical signs of inward and spiritual grace which the Holy Spirit graces with real presence
 - In the Gifts/Graces for ministry – we are called to be God's servants in the world, filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit
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Wesley's Emphasis on Personal Holiness

- Means of Grace
 - Scripture, Prayer, Fasting, Sacraments, Christian Conferencing,
 - The Expectation of Being Made Perfect in Love or Entire Sanctification
 - Not without all sin, but willful transgressions
 - In the sense of “perfect” in love for God and Neighbor
 - “Repentance is the porch of religion, faith is its door, but holiness is the house.” (John Wesley)
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Wesley's Emphasis on Social Holiness

- “...there is no personal holiness without social holiness...”
 - Wesley designed more ministries than anyone else in his day, calling them works of piety
 - Schools
 - Orphanages
 - Works in Medicine
 - Working with the Poor
 - Working With Government
 - Financial Giving was also a teaching point (“Make all you can to save all you can to give all you can.”)
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Some Differences in Wesleyan Theology vs. Baptists, Presb., Etc.

- Doctrine of Justification balanced with Doctrine of Sanctification: being saved, then the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to transform
 - The believer is actually made righteous through power of the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer
 - Sanctification as intention – God wants this for us and intends for us to become holy as he, the Lord our God, is holy.
 - Sanctification is the believer's outflow of his/her love for God
 - Doctrine of Justification: being saved as the end goal
 - Consider righteous through faith in Christ
 - Sanctification is performance – a human act more than God's act in/through us
 - Sanctification is good works
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- Sanctification is the believer's outflow of his/her love for God
- Emphasis on the indwelling Holy Spirit who seals and imprints the believer with the image of Christ
- Wesley highlighted the Trinity of the One God who exists as a community of Three Persons in a fellowship of pure love for each other (God as Community of Relational Love)
- Emphasis on intimacy which transforms the believer into the image of Christ
- Loving God with the same quality of love that the Father loves the Son through the power of the Spirit is possible here and now
- Emphasis on Christ as the objective Word of God – Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh
- Highlights the Oneness of God who is sovereign and gives grace to the believer in forgiveness (God as King)
- Emphasis on the new standing the believer has in Christ
- Humanity cannot achieve sanctification here and now.

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