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John Wesley's Liturgical Theology: His Sources, Unique Contributions and Synthetic Practices

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(Word Count: 77,890)

Abbreviations

(BE)	Frank Baker, editor in chief, <i>The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley</i> (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1975-).
(Curnock)	Nehemiah Curnock, editor, <i>The Journal of Rev. John Wesley</i> . 8 vols. (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1909-1916).
(Jackson)	Thomas Jackson, editor. <i>The Works of John Wesley</i> . 14 vols. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, reprinted 1978).
(Letters)	John Telford, editor, <i>The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.</i> , 8 Vols (London: The Epworth Press, 1931).
<i>BCP</i>	<i>Book of Common Prayer</i> (1662 version unless otherwise noted).
<i>Collection</i>	John Wesley, <i>A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week</i> . The third ed. Library of Methodist Classics. (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1992).
<i>ENNT</i>	John Wesley, <i>Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament</i> . 2 nd Edition (London, 1757).
<i>Instructions</i>	John Wesley, <i>Instructions for Children</i> , (Newcastle Upon Tyne, John Gooding, 1746).
<i>Sunday Service</i>	John Wesley, <i>The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America: With Other Occasional Service</i> (Nashville, Tenn: United Methodist Pub. House, 1992).

John Wesley's Liturgical Theology: His Sources, Unique Contributions and Synthetic Practices

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Steve Johnson

Abstract

John Wesley was an eighteenth century priest in the Church of England who was best known for his leadership of the Methodist movement. His ministry was filled with tension, as he sought to maintain his affinity for the worship of the Church of England while introducing liturgical innovations such as the watchnight, lovefeast, covenant renewal and preaching services. A question emerges: How did he hold these very diverse patterns of worship together? Why was it so important to him? What was it about his liturgical theology that encouraged and enabled him to lead the Methodists in both traditional and innovative liturgical patterns? Wesley refused to be confined to either his inherited liturgical practices or his innovative liturgies. This thesis seeks to offer a solution as to why.

This thesis will assess Wesley's liturgical texts in their historical and pastoral context in light of Wesley's commitment to a 'religion of the heart.' Chapter one will seek to establish 'heart religion' and the restoration of the image of God as foundational for Wesley, and establish that this foundation was worked out through his liturgical theology and practice. With 'heart religion' or Wesley's 'affectional' theology as a hermeneutical lens, this thesis will evaluate the sources, texts and contributions of each part of Wesley's worship corpus, making specific reference to the way each aspect of Methodist worship contributed to the restoration of the Image of God in humanity. Wesley's incorporation of the traditional liturgical resources of the Church of England, specifically the *Book of Common Prayer*, and his own adaptation of the *BCP*, the *Sunday Service*, will be examined in chapters two and three. Chapter four will explore Wesley's own unique form of catechism, *Instructions for Children*, and its use in character formation. Largely unexplored, Wesley's *Instructions* emerges as an integral piece of his liturgical theology. Chapter five will consider the watchnight, lovefeast, covenant and preaching services, specifically addressing how each service was developed and how it contributed to the formation and manifestation of Christian affections among the Methodists.

Wesley's ultimate goal in worship was the honouring of God and the edification of the Church. He believed that God was honoured when the Church was edified, and the church was best edified when God's people began to manifest Christian affections such as love, joy, humility and gratefulness. When these affections were practiced consistently, they were habituated into holy tempers. This development of holy tempers was the objective of the Christian life for Wesley. This was the goal and purpose of John Wesley's liturgical theology.

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or institute of learning.

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And to the One who would not let me run, who always found me when I did and who believed in me when I could not believe in myself, thanks is not nearly enough. I offer this simple pledge: 'Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.' (Phil. 3:12)

John Wesley's Liturgical Theology: His Sources, Unique Contributions and Synthetic Practices

Introduction

In the formation of his Methodist worship practices John Wesley's sources were incredibly diverse. He borrowed from the Moravians and the Puritans, and used the Primitive Church as authoritative for much of his practice. He also advocated his own tradition, and insisted that those born into the Church of England continue to use her resources through his whole ministry.

John Wesley's liturgical theology has been interpreted in many ways. Some have attempted to use Wesley as support for a stronger sacramental theology, such as Ernest Rattenbury, a Methodist scholar, and W.E. Dutton, an Anglican. Both used published studies of the Wesleys' *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (hereafter *HLS*) to advocate a stronger emphasis on the use of the Lord's Supper in their respective traditions.¹ Others were quick to advocate Wesley as an evangelical revivalist, such as J.H. Rigg, one of the earliest and most outspoken champions of the idea that Wesley left his High Church ways behind him in the days following Aldersgate. He describes this belief in vivid and poetic language:

The grave-clothes of ritualistic superstition they say still hung about him for a while, even after he had come forth from the sepulchre, and had, in his heart and soul, been set loose and free, and he cast them off gradually; but the new principle he had embraced led, as they affirm, before long, to his complete emancipation from the principles and prejudices of High-Church ecclesiasticism.²

Other proponents of this view of Wesley as having left behind these 'grave-clothes' to take on the mantle of revivalism were Luke Tyerman, W.H. Fitchett, Henry Bett and

¹ See Aaron K. Kerr, 'John and Charles Wesleys' *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745): Their Meaning for Methodist Ecclesial Identity and Ecumenical Dialogue, Unpublished Thesis (McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts, Duquense University, 2007), 101-122.

² J. H. Rigg, *The Churchmanship of John Wesley and the Relations of Wesleyan Methodism to the Church of England* (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1886), 61.

Nehemiah Curnock.³ However, there are many who have found in Wesley a balance between these two poles. Horton Davies advocates this view:

This combination of a convinced High Churchman's appreciation of liturgy and the Eucharist with a practical if reluctant recognition of the value of extemporary preaching, free prayer, and hymns made Wesley's liturgical contributions the most important single fact in the history of English Christianity in the eighteenth century.⁴

This position of balance between these two poles will be the baseline assumption of this thesis. However, it is this point of balance that brings us to the main problem this thesis seeks to explore – *why* did Wesley hold the liturgical tradition of the Church of England in tension with the liturgical innovations he brought to his Methodist societies? Did he seek to synthesize them into one liturgical whole, or did he simply guide them in conjunctively living in the tension between the liturgical traditions of the Church of England and his liturgical innovations for the Methodist Societies? And if he did guide them into this conjunctive tension, for what purpose did he lead them in such a way?

A further problem lies in the fact that almost all of the scholarship on Wesley's liturgical theology falls into two categories. The first category includes Methodist scholars who study a particular facet of Wesley's liturgical theology or practice, seemingly with the goal of returning to some aspect of his liturgy in the contemporary Church. For instance, in 1957 Frank Baker produced *Methodism and the Love Feast*, which examined the lovefeasts development and usage in the Methodist tradition. Over half of the book is spent on Baker's reconstruction of the history of the lovefeast in the Methodist Church *after* Wesley's death. This pattern is

³ See Paul S. Sanders, 'An Appraisal of John Wesley's Sacramentalism in the Evolution of Early American Methodism' Unpublished Thesis (Union Theological Seminary, NY, 1954), 30-37 and Raymond J. Billington, *The Liturgical Movement and Methodism* (London: Epworth Press, 1969), 109-111.

⁴ Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England, Vol. III: From Watts to Wesley* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 184-185.

prominent among Methodist scholars studying Wesley's worship patterns.⁵ The second category is represented by significant research on Wesley's sacramental theology.⁶ These studies have done much to help us understand the importance of the sacraments for Wesley, and have increased awareness of the depth of Wesley's study and consideration regarding Baptism and the Lord's Supper. However, these studies do little to help us answer the questions above regarding Wesley's purpose for the diversity of his liturgical theology.

This thesis will seek to provide answers to these questions by positing that Wesley's pastoral aim, and the mission of the Methodists, was 'to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land.'⁷ This thesis will argue that Wesley sought to lead the Methodists in worship in such a way that this 'scriptural holiness' would become the abiding disposition and pervasive habit-pattern of their lives, both individually and corporately. This thesis will also submit that in order to engender this set of habits and dispositions, Wesley needed to offer a wide variety of opportunities for his Methodists to hear of God's love, receive it by faith and love others through the Spirit. It is therefore the contention of this thesis that it was Wesley's desire to promote 'heart religion' in his Methodists that inspired him to maintain liturgical diversity.

This proposed solution has been advanced in recent years by scholars who have applied the work of George Lindbeck to the theology of John Wesley. Gregory Clapper summarizes Lindbeck in a helpful fashion:

⁵ For other examples of this pattern, see David H. Tripp, *The Renewal of the Covenant in the Methodist Tradition* (London: Epworth, 1969); and William N. Wade, 'A History of Public Worship in the Methodist Episcopal Church and Methodist Episcopal Church, South from 1784 to 1905' Unpublished Thesis (University of Notre Dame, 1981).

⁶ See, for example, Brent Peterson, 'A Post-Wesleyan Eucharistic Ecclesiology: The Renewal of the Church as the Body of Christ to Be Doxologically Broken and Spilled Out for the World', Unpublished Thesis (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, 2009); and Lorna Lock-Nah Khoo, *Wesleyan Eucharistic Spirituality: Its Nature, Sources and Future*, (ATF Press Adelaide, 2005).

⁷ *Minutes* (Jackson) 8.299.

In his book *The Nature of Doctrine*, Lindbeck lists three ways of defining a religion. First of all, one can differentiate among religions by comparing their cognitive assertions and belief systems, and by defining absolute religious truths in propositional statements. One could also judge religions on the basis of how well they express a presumed single religious impulse of humanity, assuming that there is one universal experience which is expressed in a variety of ways. Lindbeck's third method defines religion as a set of linguistic and behavioural practices. This option takes seriously the real differences between religious communities.

After suggesting that it would be easy to classify Wesley and those who focus on his affectional theology into the second category, he goes on to suggest that he believes they fit more appropriately into the third category:

These affectional views...are best placed in Lindbeck's third category, the cultural-linguistic. They see Christianity not as the welling up of an instinct, but as a disciplined form of life distinguished by a certain pattern of affections. Unless belief engenders a specific set of affections, and leads to certain kinds of behaviour...the gospel has been misunderstood. Opposing both rationalism (assent to correct beliefs) and pietism (Christianity as a matter of felt experience), these thinkers (those who attempt to see Wesley's theology as an "affectional theology") aim to show that theological integrity and a rich emotional life are connected.⁸

In his chapter entitled, 'True Affections: Biblical Narrative and Evangelical Spirituality', Henry Knight enters the discussion with Lindbeck and his followers and suggests that, 'The cultural-linguistic model understands "the means of communication and expression as a precondition...for the possibility of experience." That is, each religion has a distinctive language and set of practices that enable its participants to have a distinctive experience of God.'⁹ This is all the more interesting because of Knight's statement in *The Presence of God in the Christian Life*, in which he claims, 'We cannot properly evaluate Wesley's understanding of the Christian life—his call to Christian perfection—if we examine it outside the liturgical,

⁸ Gregory Clapper. 'Finding a Place for Emotions', <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=310> - (Accessed on 15 August 2013). This article originally appeared in *The Christian Century*, April 29, (1987), pp. 409-411.

⁹ Henry Knight. 'True Affections: Biblical Narrative And Evangelical Spirituality' in Timothy R. Phillips and Dennis L Okholm, eds., *The Nature of Confession: Evangelicals & Postliberals in Conversation*. Intervarsity Press, 1996, 197.

communal, and devotional contexts within which Wesley himself understood it.’¹⁰

In her evaluation of Lester Ruth’s *A Little Heaven Below: Worship at Early Methodist Quarterly Meetings*, Karen Westerfield Tucker suggests that there are two different ways to approach the study of liturgy. She says that Ruth’s method was to view ‘people’ as the primary liturgical document. The other method is to evaluate the liturgical texts themselves, which Westerfield Tucker acknowledges as the primary way to evaluate liturgical history and theology. The method of this thesis will be to examine the liturgical documents that are available, and for those services for which there is no written liturgy, to examine Wesley’s own journal accounts, hymns and other materials to attempt a reconstruction of his intentions for these unwritten services.¹¹

Much of the evaluation of Wesley’s liturgical theology to follow will be seen through the lens of his most detailed description of worship. In response to a question concerning what language ought to be used in the conducting of the liturgy, Wesley wrote:

In divine worship (as in all other actions) the first thing to be considered is the end, and the next thing is the means conducing to that end. The end is the honour of God, and the edification of the Church; and then God is honoured when the Church is edified. The means conducing to that end, are to have the service so administered as may inform the mind, engage the affections, and increase devotion: But that cannot be done, where the tongue it is celebrated in is not understood.¹²

Wesley’s description reminds us that though worship is theological in focus, it must engage the human worshippers in such a way as to transform them. It is the latter aspect which concerns us here. Therefore, this thesis will focus on the edification of

¹⁰ Henry Knight. *The Presence of God in the Christian Life: A Contemporary Understanding of John Wesley’s Means of Grace*. (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1987), 2.

¹¹ For instance, there is no written liturgy for the lovefeast or the covenant service. However, Wesley said much regarding each service in his journal, and there are a number of hymns, especially for the watchnight, from which we attempt to glean an understanding of Wesley’s desire for these services. See chapter five of this thesis for a detailed analysis of these unwritten liturgies.

¹² ‘A Roman Catechism’ (Jackson), 10.102.

the Church through worship in the Wesleyan model. This study will emphasize the edification of the Church specifically through the ‘means conducing to that end’, that is, through examining Wesley’s liturgical theology as one that intends to be balanced in its shaping and forming of people. To seek to inform the mind, engage the affections and increase devotion is Wesley’s model for a balanced approach to the edification of the Church. Through this approach, communal worship becomes the place where the understanding might be challenged, strengthened and healed, affections such as love, joy and peace might be evoked and evinced, and the motivation for God might be deepened through a constant exposure to God’s love, mercy and grace. It should also be pointed out that, according to this description, to conduct the service in such a way that the mind is informed, the affections engaged and devotion increased *is* to honour God, because the edifying of the Church *leads* to the glory of God.

What follows is a study of Wesley’s liturgical documents from the vantage point of Wesley as a pastoral theologian. This thesis will first seek to demonstrate Wesley’s belief that developing Christian affections is the supreme goal for which every Christian ought to strive. With this in mind, chapter one will provide the background in theological anthropology for Wesley’s affectional theology. The affections are, as Wesley suggests, ‘the will exerting itself in various ways.’¹³ The will, for Wesley is a facet of the natural image, part of a very sophisticated pastoral construction of the *Imago Dei* in humanity. This view of the Image of God in humanity provides the theological foundation for Wesley’s view of affections and tempers, which will be covered in the second half of chapter one, along with an investigation of Wesley’s affectional theology within the framework of the

¹³ John Wesley, ‘The End of Christ’s Coming’ (BE) 2.474.

description of worship offered above. This will place the affections, along with informing the mind and increasing devotion, at the centre of Wesley's liturgical theology.

Chapter two will examine Wesley's use of traditional liturgical forms of worship. This examination will seek to point to how Wesley's use of these traditional forms of worship helped his Methodists develop holy tempers. Chapter three will evaluate Wesley's *Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*, his abridgement of the *Book of Common Prayer*. This chapter will give historical background for the development of the *Sunday Service*, then provide analysis of those sections to which Wesley made changes, either by addition or subtraction, and how those changes may have contributed to the development of holy tempers among Wesley's Methodists.

Chapter four examines Wesley's use of catechetical materials. In particular, we will seek to determine what kind of catechism Wesley endorsed for his Methodists in America in conjunction with the distribution of the *Sunday Service* in 1784. Once this has been examined, the text of Wesley's chosen catechism will be evaluated as to its ability to inform the mind, engage the affections and increase devotion. Finally, chapter five will consider a number of Wesley's liturgical innovations, namely the watchnight, the lovefeast, the renewal of the covenant and the preaching service. These services will be studied in light of themes of this thesis, in hope that the sources for Wesley's innovations, his intentions for each service and their interaction with and propagation of the affections and tempers might be revealed.

The purpose of this thesis will be to examine Wesley's varied and eclectic liturgical theology from an anthropological perspective. This thesis will seek to identify Wesley's sources for his liturgies, particularly his liturgical innovations. This

thesis will also strive to demonstrate his conjunctive practices, and how these practices led to the formation of the fruits of the Spirit in his Methodists. Finally, this thesis will establish Wesley's unique contribution to the field of liturgical theology as being his desire to form worship in such a way as to be conducive to the formation of strong Christian character.

Chapter 1 – John Wesley’s Liturgical Theology – the Integration of Sanctification and Worship

Introduction

Much has been written about John Wesley’s theology of sanctification.¹ Many have also endeavoured to write about Wesley’s liturgical theology, although most of these authors tend to focus more on the Methodist movement’s practice and history of worship than about Wesley exclusively.² However, few writers have brought the two subjects together, and fewer still have attempted to suggest how Wesley’s theology of sanctification and practice of worship are designed to shape and form his Methodists. The aim of this thesis is to show how Wesley’s theology of sanctification was put into practice through a wide and diverse array of liturgical practices, and that these practices, for Wesley, had an end goal of honouring God through the edification of the Church. Wesley’s theology of sanctification was highly nuanced. It will be the purpose of this thesis to show that the implementation of Wesley’s theology of sanctification required a great variety of liturgical practices, from traditional *Book of Common Prayer* worship on one hand and innovative elements of worship such as the

¹ See for example Harald Lindström, *Wesley and Sanctification: A Study in the Doctrine of Salvation*, reprint, (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press of Zondervan Publishing House, 1946, 1980); and A. Skevington Wood, *Love Excluding Sin: Wesley’s Doctrine of Sanctification* (Derbyshire: Moorley’s Bookshop, 1986). Neither of these classic treatments of Wesley’s theology of sanctification mention worship.

² See Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, *American Methodist Worship*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001; John Bishop, *Methodist Worship in Relation to Free Church Worship*, (New York: Scholars Studies Press, 1975); Lester Ruth, *A Little Heaven Below: Worship at Early Methodist Quarterly Meetings*, (Nashville, Tenn: Kingswood Books, 2000); Raymond Billington, *The Liturgical Movement and Methodism*, (London: Epworth P., 1969); Edwin Voigt, *Methodist Worship in the Church Universal*, (Nashville: Graded Press, 1965); and Lawrence A. Lacher. ‘John Wesley’s Liturgical Revision A Pattern for Reshaping Worship for Post-Christian America,’ Unpublished Thesis, (Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO2011). All of the above are fine studies of Wesley’s theology of worship, but none of them seek to describe Wesley’s theology of sanctification. Brian Selleck’s thesis, ‘The Book of Common Prayer in the Theology of John Wesley’ Unpublished Thesis, (Drew University, 1985) gives space to some of Wesley’s more important doctrinal concerns, but barely mentions Wesley’s liturgical innovations. This list does not include studies on Wesley’s theology of the sacraments, or in-depth studies on Wesley’s theology as found in his hymns. None of the authors who specialize in Wesley’s Sacramental theology give much space to worship in general, Wesley’s overall concern for character development or Wesley’s liturgical innovations.

watchnight, lovefeast, covenant and preaching services on the other. Then, in the chapters to come, we will examine the diversity and variety in the liturgical practices of Wesley's Methodists.

Wesley's own statement on the purpose of worship will shed light on the importance of holding his theology of holiness and the practice of worship together. His most complete statement on worship is in answer to a question concerning the use of Latin in the administration of the Roman Catholic liturgy:

In divine worship, (as in all other actions,) the first thing to be considered is the end, and the next thing is the means conducing to that end. The end is the honour of God, and the edification of the Church; and then God is honoured, when the Church is edified. The means conducing to that end, are to have the service so administered as may inform the mind, engage the affections, and increase devotion: But that cannot be done, where the tongue it is celebrated in is not understood.³

This description offers some clarity regarding Wesley's view of worship and why his theology of sanctification must be taken into consideration. First, if we are to Honour God, we must know who He is in his fundamental character. Also, if God is honoured when the Church is edified, then the Church glorifies God by emulating God and inhabiting God's character, or by *reflecting* God's character in the world. Therefore, if one is to understand Wesley's liturgical theology, it would seem best to begin with a summary of his understanding of God, then proceed to how he believed worship should shape us in God's character and likeness.

Wesley's View of God⁴

In his *Instructions for Children* Wesley tells us who God is:

God is an Eternal Spirit, without Beginning and without End...He is Good, and all Good comes from him. He has Power to do whatever he will. He is Wise, knowing all Things and doing all Things well. He is happy, and cannot

³ 'A Roman Catechism' (Jackson) 10.102.

⁴ For a complete study of Wesley's doctrine of God, see David Rainey, 'John Wesley's Doctrine of Salvation in Relation to his Doctrine of God.' Unpublished Thesis, (King's College, London 2006).

want any Thing. He loves all Things which he has made, and Man above all. He is Just, to give to every Man according to his Works. He is True, in his Promises, and in his Threatenings. He is merciful, forgiving the sins of those who truly repent and believe.⁵

At the end of this same section he says,

Do you know what your soul is? You have in you (tho' you cannot see it) a Soul that will never die. God made this, that he might come and dwell in it. If God lives and dwells in your Soul, then he makes it like himself. He makes the Soul in which he dwells, Good, Wise, Just, true, full of Love, and of Power to do well. He makes it happy. For it is his Will, that your Soul should rejoice in him forever. He made it for this very Thing.⁶

Notice that Wesley suggests God will *make* the soul of the believer 'like himself.'

Here follows a list of characteristics, which are exactly the same as the characteristics of God mentioned in Lesson II above, and that this transformation into God's image is that for which we were made.

Finally, Wesley answers the question 'What do you believe of God?' by quoting the Apostle's Creed. In his answer, he indicates that there are things the student should learn from the Apostle's Creed, and he includes a very brief Trinitarian summary, which is instructive:

You may learn from these Words (1) To believe in God, the Father, who is Powerful, and Wise and Good, who made you and all Things, Visible and Invisible, Temporal and Eternal.
You may learn, (2) To believe in God the Son, who lived and died to redeem you and all Mankind.
And (3) To believe in God the Holy Ghost, who restores fallen Man to the Image of God in which he was made.⁷

In the last line Wesley makes an important connection to one of the main images we will be dealing with in this chapter. He submits that the, 'Holy Ghost...restores fallen Man to the Image of God in which he was made.' The restoration of the Image of God is a very important theological concept for Wesley. However, in order to set up

⁵ John Wesley, *Instructions for Children*, Section II, Lesson II (Newcastle Upon Tyne, John Gooding, 1746), 10. See chapter four for the importance of *Instructions for Children* to Wesley's overall theology and pastoral ministry.

⁶ *Instructions*, Section II, Lesson VI, 12.

⁷ *Instructions*, Section IV, Lesson VI, 22.

this look at the Image of God in Wesley, we must return to the original question: How does humanity glorify or honour God, particularly in worship? Wesley says that God is honoured ‘when the Church is edified.’ Perhaps the two ideas become one and God is honoured best and the Church is edified most when the Church seeks to emulate God. Wesley suggests that the Methodists pursue this very thing:

By Methodists I mean a people who profess to pursue (in whatsoever measure they have attained) holiness of heart and life, inward and outward conformity in all things to the revealed will of God; who place religion in an uniform resemblance of the great Object of it; in a steady imitation of him they worship in all his imitable perfections; more particularly in justice, mercy, and truth, or universal love filling the heart and governing the life.⁸

As seen in the previous paragraphs, the restoration of the Image of God in humanity is both the work of God (God making the soul like himself) and the result of our constant desire to imitate Him we worship. This balance between God’s grace and our grace-infused activity in worship is a cornerstone for Wesley’s theology. This balance is exhibited quite clearly in his sermon ‘On Working out Our Own Salvation’: ‘First, God worketh in you; therefore you can work—otherwise it would be impossible...Stir up the spark of grace which is now in you, and he will give you more grace...Second, God worketh in you; therefore you *must* work.’⁹ This divine/human synergism will be on display throughout the remainder of this thesis.

Wesley’s Anthropology – The Image of God in Humanity

Wesley’s understanding of the Image of God holds an important place in his theology.¹⁰ It is also intimately linked with his liturgical theology. For instance, Wesley reminds us that we were *created* to worship:

⁸ ‘Advice to the People Called Methodist’ (BE) 9.123-124

⁹ ‘On Working Out Our Own Salvation’ (BE) 3.206, 208

¹⁰ The three facets of the Image of God in humanity for Wesley were the natural, political and moral image. For the purpose of this thesis, the political image has little value, and will be treated accordingly. See Kenneth Collins, *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 23-24, 30; Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today*. (Nashville, TN:

God is Power, Wisdom, Goodness itself. Therefore we should desire, to praise and honour him as he deserves, and to please him in everything. The End for which we are born, is to praise and honour God. And this we may do without ceasing, by continually lifting up our Hearts to him.¹¹

Wesley clarifies further how he believes humanity was created and specially designed to worship God:

‘What is it to worship God, a Spirit, in spirit and in truth?’ Why, it is to worship him with our spirit; to worship him in that manner which none but spirits are capable of. It is to believe in him as a wise, just, holy being, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; and yet merciful, gracious, and longsuffering; forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; casting all our sins behind his back, and accepting us in the beloved. It is to love him, to delight in him, to desire him, with all our heart and mind and soul and strength; to imitate him we love by purifying ourselves, even as he is pure; and to obey him whom we love, and in whom we believe, both in thought and word and work.¹²

As we examine Wesley’s understanding of the natural Image of God in humanity we will see a direct link between the Image of God in humanity and worship.

The Natural Image

In his sermon ‘On the Fall of Man,’ Wesley described the natural image in the following way:

‘So God created man in his own image: in the Image of God created he him!’ Mark the emphatic Repetition! God did not make him mere matter, a piece of senseless, unintelligent clay, but a spirit like himself (although clothed with a material vehicle). As such he was endued with understanding, with a will, including various affections, and with liberty, a power of using them in a right or wrong manner, of choosing good or evil. Otherwise neither his understanding nor his will would have been to any purpose; for he must have been as incapable of virtue or holiness as the stock of a tree.¹³

Abingdon Press, 1998).16-17; and esp. Young Taek Kim, ‘John Wesley’s Anthropology: Restoration of the Imago Dei as a Framework for Wesley’s Theology’ Unpublished Thesis (Drew University, Madison NJ, 2006) 39-44.

¹¹ *Instructions*, Section III, Lesson V., 15. The last phrase, ‘by continually lifting up our Hearts to him,’ is surely an echo of the Sursum Corda, the communal prayer at the beginning of the Eucharist in both the *Book of Common Prayer* (hereafter *BCP*) and in Wesley’s version of the *BCP*, *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*, which he sent to America in 1784. The Sursum Corda, and these two worship resources, will be referred to at length in the following chapters.

¹² ‘Upon our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, IV’ (BE) 1.544.

¹³ ‘On the Fall of Man’ (BE) 2.409-410.

Ted Runyon explains that the natural image consists of those endowments, by which they are ‘capable of God’. He says that, as spirits, Christians are ‘able to enter into conscious relationship with God. Just as God is Spirit, so the Image of God is spirit. And as spirit the Image is endued with understanding (or reason), will (or volition), and freedom (or liberty).’¹⁴ Wesley believed humanity was created for worship, and the tools God gave His creation, by which we were to accomplish this created purpose, were understanding, will and liberty. We will now assess each of these tools and how they fit in Wesley’s understanding of the restoration of the Image of God.

Understanding was the first capacity mentioned in Wesley’s sermon ‘The Image of God,’ and he described it as ‘a power of distinguishing truth from falsehood.’¹⁵ In an interesting and powerful expression of this capacity, Wesley describes Adam as ‘our first father’ and describes the process of Adam’s naming of the animals. Wesley notes that, along with his understanding being just and clear, the swiftness and greatness of Adam’s intellect could be noted,

...in how short a space he ‘gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air, and to every beast of the field.’ And names not arbitrarily imposed, but expressive of their inward natures...Sufficiently showing thereby not only the swiftness, but likewise the greatness of his understanding. For how extensive a view must he have had who could command so vast a prospect!¹⁶

Interestingly, as important as the mind and understanding are for Wesley, he said that the understanding was ‘the least part of that Image of God wherein man was originally made.’¹⁷

Wesley said that the will, the second of the faculties in the natural image, was ‘far greater and nobler’ than the understanding. In his description of the will in the sermon, ‘What is Man?’ he says:

¹⁴ Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation*, 14.

¹⁵ ‘The Image of God’ (BE) 4.293.

¹⁶ ‘The Image of God’ (BE) 4.294.

¹⁷ ‘The Image of God’ (BE) 4.294.

This inward principle...is capable not only of thinking, but likewise of love, hatred, joy, sorrow, desire, fear, hope, etc., and a whole train of other inward emotions which are commonly called 'passions' or 'affections'. They are styled, by a general appellation, 'the will', and are mixed and diversified a thousand ways. And they seem to be the only spring of action in that inward principle I call 'the soul'.¹⁸

This relationship between emotions and the will is very important for Wesley, as is their close relationship with the understanding. Indeed, for Wesley, the will could scarcely survive without the understanding: 'A will every man must inevitably have, as long as he has an understanding.'¹⁹ For Wesley, the will remained perfect only 'while it followed the dictates of understanding.'²⁰

As we move to liberty, the final component of the natural image for Wesley, it is important to note its unique place in the development of his understanding of the Image of God in humanity. Kenneth Collins says, 'the later Wesley repeatedly underscores the importance of liberty...The consideration of liberty especially after 1770 probably grew out of Wesley's fear of Calvinist determinism in the form of irresistible grace, a teaching which could undermine human responsibility.'²¹ Wesley combats this fear of determinism and irresistible grace by giving liberty a critical role in human self-determination:

Only suppose the Almighty to act *irresistibly*, and the thing is done; yea, with just the same ease as when 'God said, Let there be light, and there was light.' But then man would be man no longer, his inmost nature would be changed. He would no longer be a moral agent, any more than the sun or the wind, as he would no longer be endued with liberty, a power of choosing or self-determination. Consequently he would no longer be capable of virtue or vice, or reward or punishment.²²

¹⁸ 'What is Man' (BE) 4.22.

¹⁹ 'The Repentance of Believers' (BE) 1.337.

²⁰ 'The Image of God' (BE) 4.294.

²¹ Kenneth J. Collins, 'John Wesley's Topography of the Heart: Dispositions, Tempers, and Affections,' *Methodist History* 36:3, (April 1998): 173.

²² 'The General Spread of the Gospel' (BE) 2.488.

In 'The End of Christ's Coming' Wesley says that these three (understanding, will and liberty) are 'inseparably united in every intelligent nature.'²³ He says in 'On the Fall of Man' that Adam was 'endued with understanding, with a will, including various affections, and with liberty, a power of using them in a right manner, of choosing good or evil. Otherwise neither his understanding nor his will would have been to any purpose...'²⁴ Liberty, then, plays a very critical role in Wesley's conception of the Image of God in humanity, as well as his liturgical theology. For Wesley, liberty enables us to *choose* to worship God and glorify Him with our will and understanding.

The Moral Image

The moral image is, as Kenneth Collins points out, the 'principle image' of the three ways of imaging God found in humanity. Collins suggests that the moral image is the most important for three reasons. First, the Image of God distinguishes us from the rest of creation. Because the Image of God is created in us, we are able to worship, able to love and know God. Secondly, Collins points out that the moral image is crucial because it is the context for the possibility of sin. In his interaction with Collins in his dissertation on Wesley's anthropology, Young Taek Kim adds further insight to Collins' point:

The moral image is significant because it is a clue to the origin of sin. Wesley asks, 'Why is there sin in the world?' His answer is 'because man was created in the Image of God.' That is, the moral image is the expression of God's relation to humanity, a relation that can be corrupted and twisted through the destructive effects of sin.²⁵

Finally, the moral image is related to the moral law. Wesley makes a direct connection between the moral image and humanity being made in 'righteousness and true holiness.' This is important because, according to Wesley,

²³ 'The End of Christ's Coming' (BE) 2.475.

²⁴ 'On the Fall of Man' (BE) 2.409-10.

²⁵ Young Taek Kim, 'John Wesley's Anthropology' 46-47.

This righteousness was the conformity of all the faculties and powers of his soul to the moral law, which implied three things. First, His understanding was a lamp of light. He was made after God's image...Secondly, His will lay straight with the will of God. There was no corruption in his will, no bent or inclination to evil; for that is sin properly so call...Thirdly, his affections were regular, pure, and holy.²⁶

This last aspect of the moral image points to one of the ways in which the moral and natural image is intertwined. They are not the same, yet in many ways they are inseparable. Young Taek Kim points out the differences:

At this point it is important to note that Wesley's understanding of the moral image is dynamic or relational, not static. In this sense, the natural Image of God in humanity - the static image - is not decisive. The real image is the moral--human being's relationship to God in terms of righteousness and holiness. In other words, the moral image is not a function which can be present apart from God the Creator and it is neither a capacity within humanity. The moral image resides in a relationship which humanity receives continuously from God the Creator...²⁷

This relational aspect in the moral image is essential, and is also recognized by Runyon:

This (moral image) is the chief mark of the human relationship to God, according to Wesley, but also the one most easily distorted. The natural image consists of endowments most of which are retained in humanity, albeit in adulterated form, after the Fall...But the moral image is neither a capacity within humanity nor a function that can be employed independently of the Creator, because it consists in a relationship in which the creature *receives* continuously from the Creator and mediates further what is received.²⁸

It is at this juncture that several authors, in their discussion of Wesley's understanding of the moral image, use one of his most familiar quotes to describe the dependent nature of humanity upon the constant provisioning which is necessary from God:

The Spirit or breath of God is immediately inspired, breathed into the new-born soul; and the same breath which comes from, returns to, God: As it is continually received by faith, so it is continually rendered back by love, by prayer, and praise, and thanksgiving; love, and praise, and prayer being the breath of every soul which is truly born of God. And by this new kind of

²⁶ 'The Doctrine of Original Sin' (BE) 12.448-449.

²⁷ Young Taek Kim, 'John Wesley's Anthropology', 47.

²⁸ Runyon, *The New Creation*, 18.

spiritual respiration, spiritual life is not only sustained, but increased day by day, together with spiritual strength, and motion, and sensation...²⁹

God's original intention in the creation of humanity was to bring about this 'spiritual respiration', to enable and inspire every human to worship God with every breath.

But what happens when this respiration is cut off or interrupted? Randy Maddox summarizes the problem:

The essence of the first sin was the severing of this relationship, the desire to be independent of God. When Adam and Eve separated from God's Presence the result was their spiritual death—their loss of the Likeness of God (moral Image of God) and the corruption of their basic human faculties (natural Image of God).³⁰

The interruption of humanity's worship is directly related to this loss of the likeness and Image of God. We will now examine how Wesley viewed sin as a corruption of the faculties (understanding, will and liberty), and a total destruction of our relationship with the God who is worthy of our worship.

The Fall and the Moral Image

Sadly, the beauty and intimacy of the spiritual respiration mentioned above was destroyed in the Fall. The most immediate effect of Adam and Eve's disobedience in the Garden was the complete destruction of the moral image. Adam's relationship with God was severed. Wesley maintained that the moral image was the most important image,³¹ and that the result of original sin was that 'the life of God was extinguished in his soul. The glory departed from him. He lost the whole moral

²⁹ 'The Great Privilege of Those That Are Born of God' (BE) 1.434-435.

³⁰ Randy Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 81.

³¹ In his sermon 'The New Birth' Wesley writes "So God created man in his own image...not *barely* in his natural image...nor *merely* in his political image...but *chiefly* in his moral image." (BE), 2.188.

Image of God, righteousness and true holiness.’³² This destruction of relationship with God, according to Wesley,

Not only deprived of the favour of God, but also of his image; of all virtue, righteousness, and true holiness; and sunk partly into the image of the devil, in pride, malice, and all other diabolical tempers; partly into the image of the brute, being fallen under the dominion of brutal passions and grovelling appetites. Hence also death entered into the world, with all his forerunners and attendants, pain, sickness, and a whole train of uneasy as well as unholy passions and tempers.³³

In stark contrast to the life of Adam and Eve before the fall, Wesley says that ‘everyone descended from him (Adam) comes into the world spiritually dead, dead to God, wholly ‘dead in sin;’ entirely void of the life of God, void of the Image of God, of all that ‘righteousness and holiness’ wherein Adam was created. Instead of this every man born into the world now bears the image of the devil, in pride and self-will...’³⁴ According to Kenneth Collins, this exchange of *Imago Dei* for *imago diablo* amounted to a dispositional change, which he describes using very important language from Wesley’s vocabulary: ‘Accordingly, the change in Adam’s relationship to God, which was now a perverted one, affected the tempers of his heart, tempers that together constituted his basic orientation, his predisposition, toward thought and action.’³⁵ The importance of words like ‘tempers’ for Wesley will be expounded in a later section.

The Fall and the Natural Image

While Wesley believed that the loss of the moral image was complete, he suggested that the natural image was only lost ‘in part.’³⁶ For instance, Wesley said ‘The liberty of man necessarily required that he should have some trial; else he would

³² ‘The End of Christ’s Coming’ (BE) 2.477.

³³ ‘God’s love to Fallen Man’ (BE) 2.423.

³⁴ ‘The New Birth’ (BE) 2.190.

³⁵ Collins, *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, 30.

³⁶ ‘On the Fall of Man’ (BE) 2.410.

have had no choice whether he would stand or no, that is, no liberty at all.³⁷ But, as Wesley describes, when the Image of God was lost, ‘Liberty went away with virtue; instead of an indulgent master it was under a merciless tyrant. The subject of virtue became the slave of vice.’³⁸ And so, all of humanity must now suffer the same fate as Adam and Eve:

He hath bound him with a thousand chains, the heavy chains of his own vile affections. For every inordinate appetite, every unholy passion, as it is the express image of the god of this world, so it is the most galling yoke, the most grievous chain, that can bind a free-born spirit. And with these is every child of Adam, everyone that is born into this world, so loaded that he cannot lift up an eye, a thought to heaven; that his whole soul cleaveth unto the dust.³⁹

Wesley says that after the fall humanity's understanding faltered. ‘It mistook falsehood for truth, and truth for falsehood. Error succeeded and increased ignorance.’⁴⁰ This is to be contrasted with the beautiful image of Adam in the Garden, who according to Wesley was able to ‘find out the natures of ten thousand creatures almost in a moment,’ yet after the fall were ‘unable to trace out fully the nature of any one in many years.’⁴¹ This blindness extends to spiritual things as well, as Wesley laments in ‘The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption’:

For his soul is in a deep sleep. His spiritual senses are not awake; they discern neither spiritually good nor evil. The eyes of his understanding are closed; they are sealed together, and see not...Hence, having no inlets for the knowledge of spiritual things, all the avenues of his soul being shut up, he is in gross, stupid ignorance of whatever he is most concerned to know...Because he is blind...The darkness which covers him on every side keeps him in a kind of peace...He sees not that he stands on the edge of the pit; therefore he fears not.⁴²

³⁷ ‘The Image of God’ (BE) 4.295.

³⁸ ‘The Image of God’ (BE) 4.298.

³⁹ ‘The One Thing Needful’ (BE) 4.354.

⁴⁰ ‘The Image of God’ (BE) 4.298.

⁴¹ ‘The Image of God’ (BE) 4.298.

⁴² ‘The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption’ (BE) 1.251.

Wesley believed humanity's self-knowledge was so corrupted after the Fall that without God's gracious intervention we could never know him or have any knowledge of good or truth. Regarding this self-knowledge, Gregory Clapper says,

...Self-deception is always a possibility for Wesley, and this is a theme we see in his writings again and again. It is because the heart is quite fallible (not to mention the fact that we can, and often do, go against the leadings of our heart) that the act of repentance is so important, both liturgically and personally, for Wesley. This fact of human nature also necessitates the character traits of humility, which is a quality we will see Wesley recommend on many occasions.⁴³

This subject will be revisited later in the thesis, as it will be important to examine Wesley's use of certain practices to exercise affections such as humility, as well as to combat self-deception, which is a problem of both the understanding and the will.

Concerning the effects of the fall on the will, Young Taek Kim says, 'Wesley affirmed that several kinds of earthly will developed from the heart of natural humanity after the fall. Nevertheless, human beings in the fallen state are unable to will to love God and pursue heavenly affections, since the faculty of the will is perverted.'⁴⁴ He quotes Wesley from 'The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption':

From the same ignorance of himself and God there may sometimes arise in the natural man a kind of joy in congratulating himself upon his own wisdom and goodness. And what the world calls joy he may often possess. He may have pleasure in various kinds, either in gratifying the desires of the flesh, or the desire of the eye, or the pride of life.⁴⁵

Kim concludes this by summarizing, 'The fallen human beings rely upon their own will to be happy...The faculty of will remains in the fallen or natural man, but its direction is inclined towards earthly enjoyment.'⁴⁶

⁴³ Gregory Clapper, *The Renewal of the Heart is the Mission of the Church*, (Eugene, Or: Cascade Books/Wipf and Stock Pub, 2010), 20. For a few examples of Wesley's treatment of humility and self-deception, see chapter two – humility in 'Collection of Forms of Prayer'; and chapter five – humility and poverty of spirit in the Renewal of the Covenant service.

⁴⁴ Young Taek Kim, 'John Wesley's Anthropology,' 76.

⁴⁵ 'The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption' (BE) 1.253.

⁴⁶ Young Taek Kim, 'John Wesley's Anthropology,' 76-77.

Consequences of Original Sin

For Wesley, Original Sin was constructed in the following way: ‘But what is that corruption of nature which the Scripture terms ‘flesh’? There are two branches of it: (1) A want of original righteousness. (2) A natural propensity to sin.’⁴⁷ Kenneth Collins states that ‘depravity, so understood, is not simply a privation, a lack of goodness (as it has emerged in some Augustinian theologies), but it is also an active power that predisposes the tempers of our hearts toward sin and disobedience.’⁴⁸ From Wesley’s sermon ‘Original Sin’ we derive a picture of humanity in its natural state, which he says leaves us in a state where men and women ‘are all gone out of the way of truth and holiness; there is none righteous, no, not one.’⁴⁹ In the remainder of this sermon, Wesley provides his description of the effects of original sin on humanity. The first level of corruption Wesley discusses corresponds to the devil mentioned earlier in this section. Wesley says that we are all atheists in that ‘we...have no knowledge of God...no acquaintance with him.’⁵⁰ This is a problem related to the natural understanding in that, as Wesley puts it, ‘...having no knowledge (of God) we can have no love of God, for we cannot love him we know not.’⁵¹ Second to atheism is the issue of idolatry, which leads to pride. Wesley insinuates that we practise idolatry when we set up idols in our hearts: ‘We worship ourselves when we pay that honour to ourselves which is due to God only. Therefore all pride is idolatry; it is ascribing to ourselves what is due to God alone.’⁵² The final feature of the ‘image of the devil’ in humanity as a result of original sin is idolatry leading to self-will. Concerning this self-will Wesley says, ‘Satan has stamped his own image

⁴⁷ ‘The Doctrine of Original Sin’ (BE) 12.414.

⁴⁸ Collins, *Scripture Way*, 38.

⁴⁹ ‘Original Sin’ (BE) 2.176.

⁵⁰ ‘Original Sin’ (BE) 2.177.

⁵¹ ‘Original Sin’ (BE) 2.178.

⁵² ‘Original Sin’ (BE) 2.179.

on our heart in *self-will*...I will do my own will and pleasure, independently of that of my Creator...The will of God meantime is not in his thoughts, is not considered in the least degree.’⁵³ It is clear in this description that, for Wesley, the consequence of original sin concerns the target of our worship, the orientation of our hearts.

Toward the end of ‘Original Sin’, Wesley offers some hope by proposing that the proper nature of the ‘religion of Jesus Christ’ is the ‘therapy of the soul’, a phrase used by Plato, which Wesley called ‘God’s method of healing a soul which is *thus diseased*.’⁵⁴ Wesley continues by showing how God heals all of the ills he has previously listed in his sermon:

Hereby the great Physician of souls applies medicine to heal *this sickness*; to restore human nature, totally corrupted in all its faculties. God heals all our atheism by the knowledge of himself, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; by giving us faith, a divine evidence and conviction of God and of the things of God—in particular of this important truth: Christ loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*. By repentance and lowliness of heart the deadly disease of pride is healed; that of self-will by resignation, a meek and thankful submission to the will of God. And for the love of the world in all its branches the love of God is the sovereign remedy. Now this is properly religion, ‘faith thus working by love’, working the genuine, meek humility, entire deadness to the world, with a loving, thankful acquiescence in and conformity to the whole will and Word of God.⁵⁵

For our purposes, it is important to relate this recital of God’s gracious activity in fallen humanity to the overall goal in Wesley’s soteriological vision:

Ye know that the great end of religion is to renew our hearts in the Image of God, to repair that total loss of righteousness and true holiness which we sustained by the sin of our first parent. Ye know that all religion which does not answer this end, all that stops short of this, the renewal of our soul in the Image of God, after the likeness of him that created it, is no other the a poor farce and a mere mockery of God, to the destruction of our own soul.⁵⁶

⁵³ ‘Original Sin’ (BE) 2.179.

⁵⁴ ‘Original Sin’ (BE) 2.184. For more on Plato’s use of this phrase, see (BE) 2.184, footnote 63.

⁵⁵ ‘Original Sin’ (BE) 2.184.

⁵⁶ ‘Original Sin’ (BE) 2.185. Wesley also says, in response to the question of what it is to be sanctified, that it is “To be renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.” *The Methodist Societies: The Minutes of Conference*, (BE) 10.131 - The Minutes from the Foundry, 1744.

So we turn now to a detailed look at how this ‘repair’ takes place through the bestowal of God’s grace. We will begin with a look at prevenient grace as the beginning of the restoration of the Image of God in humanity.⁵⁷

Prevenient Grace and the Restoration of the Image of God

What is the role of prevenient grace in the restoration of the Image of God in humanity? In his sermon ‘On Working out our own Salvation’ Wesley begins to answer this question:

Salvation begins with what has usually termed (and very properly) ‘preventing grace’; including the first wish to please God, the first dawn of light concerning his will, and the first slight, transient conviction of having sinned against him. All these imply some tendency toward life, some degree of salvation, the beginning of a deliverance from a blind, unfeeling heart, quite insensible of God and the things of God.⁵⁸

Earlier in the same sermon he says that ‘God breathes into us every good desire, and brings every good desire to good effect.’⁵⁹ Wesley points out that the obedience and death of Christ has now made possible the recovery of a ‘capacity of spiritual life’, which is the reviving of the understanding, will and liberty, and the ‘seed or spark thereof’ which insinuates that the seed of Christ’s righteousness is now beginning to awaken the individual, through these capacities, to God’s availability and desire for relationship.⁶⁰ For Wesley, prevenient grace was at work in the world, drawing persons *to* worship, while also being perceived frequently in *corporate* worship. However, as Wesley reminds us, this work is accomplished through worship *by the Holy Spirit*:

⁵⁷ It should also be noted here, at the end of this section on original sin, that Wesley believed that along with the understanding, will and liberty, the human body was also corrupted or infected by sin. David Rainey emphasizes how important this is for Wesley’s understanding of holiness because Wesley ‘has now asserted that the physical is corrupted but not sinful.’ As we move into examining specific acts of worship involving the body and human movement, this will be important to bear in mind. See Rainey, ‘John Wesley’s Doctrine of Salvation in Relation to his Doctrine of God,’ 262-268.

⁵⁸ ‘On Working out our own Salvation’ (BE) 3.203-204.

⁵⁹ ‘On Working out our own Salvation’ (BE) 3.202.

⁶⁰ *The Methodist Societies: The Minutes of Conference*, The Minutes from the Foundery, 1744 (BE) 10.129.

All our Reading, and the things we hear either at Church, or anywhere else, cannot reveal God unto us. All the Men in the World cannot give us the least Spark of the True Knowledge of God, or of the Things of God. Only God himself can do this, by giving us his good Spirit.⁶¹

It is this spark, and the work of the Spirit in the restoration of the image of God, to which we now turn.

In a poignant description of the restoration of our understanding by the prevenient grace of God Wesley says:

Our understanding or Reason, without the Grace and Supernatural Light of God, is like a blind man, who draws wild, random Pictures of Things he never saw, nor can see. The Natural Man discerneth not the Things of the Spirit of God. They are Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. No one knoweth the Things of God but the Spirit of God and he to whom God revealeth them by his Spirit.⁶²

Maddox says that for Wesley, the second aspect of the restoration of understanding ‘is a rudimentary discernment of the difference between moral good and evil providing a standard by which our conscience can assess our lives.’⁶³ Collins, approaching prevenient grace in a slightly different way, suggests that humanity, because they are spiritually dead apart from the grace of God, ‘have neither the ability nor the inclination to comprehend the dictates of God’s holy law, the same law that was inscribed on their hearts at creation and that is expressive of the Image of God.’⁶⁴ He points to Wesley’s solution to this problem and allows Wesley to speak for himself: ‘And yet God did not despise the works of his own hands; but being reconciled to man through the Son of his love, he in some measure re-inscribed the law on the heart of his dark, sinful creature.’⁶⁵ Wesley suggests that this re-inscription goes one step further: ‘It is His Spirit who giveth thee an inward check, who causeth thee to feel

⁶¹ *Instructions for Children* - Section II, Lesson III, 11.

⁶² *Instructions for Children*, Section IV, Lesson IV, 21.

⁶³ Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 88.

⁶⁴ Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace*, 77.

⁶⁵ ‘The Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law’ (BE), 2.7.

uneasy, when thou walkest in any instance contrary to the light which He hath given thee.’⁶⁶

Wesley believed liberty was also partially restored by prevenient grace, and was far more important to Wesley’s scheme than it might appear. Wesley said:

Without this (liberty) both the will and the understanding would have been utterly useless. Indeed without liberty man had been so far from being a free agent that he could have been no agent at all. For every unfree being is purely passive, not active in any degree.⁶⁷

In line with his interpretation of Wesley’s theological agenda being one of ‘responsible grace’, Maddox says,

It is not enough to be graciously made aware of our need for God’s forgiving and healing grace, we must be able to respond to this awareness in some way. As such, at least a minimal degree of liberty must be universally restored in Prevenient Grace; the only alternative, a very unacceptable one, is unconditional election and irresistible grace.⁶⁸

Also in need of restoration was the will, which Wesley variously equated to desire, the heart and the affections.⁶⁹ He believed that ‘The Gate by which God and his holy Grace comes into us is the Desire of the Soul...Unless our Desire be toward God, we cannot please him. All our Knowledge, without this, does but make us more like the Devil.’⁷⁰ So, we cannot please God, have a relationship with Him or worship Him unless our desire is for him. Wesley points to the fact that it is the animating presence of the Spirit that begins (and completes) the restoration of the will in humanity:

The Son of God was made Man, lived and died and rose again, to buy Forgiveness for us, and to show us how we ought to renounce our own Will and Desires, and to give ourselves up to the holy Will of God. Thus the Holy Ghost works in us, enlightening our Understanding, and filling our Souls with

⁶⁶ ‘On Conscience’ (BE) 3.483.

⁶⁷ ‘The End of Christ’s Coming’ (BE) 2.47.

⁶⁸ Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 88.

⁶⁹ See *Instruction for Children*, Section III, Lesson I; ‘On the Fall of Man’ (BE), 400-401; ‘The End of Christ’s Coming’ (BE) 2.474; and ‘Of Good Angels’ (BE) 3.6.

⁷⁰ *Instructions*, Section III, Lesson I, 13.

a divine Peace and Joy. Hereby we are joined again with all that is holy, either in Earth or Heaven.⁷¹

Both Maddox and Collins suggest that a distinction should be made between God's *healing* work in the restoration of the faculties of understanding, will and liberty and the *calling* of sinners to salvation *through* these faculties. Collins says, '...it is one thing to have (partially) renewed faculties; it is yet another thing to hear the call of God through these same faculties.' Maddox concludes that it is as we respond to God's overtures 'that we experience further depths of God's forgiving and empowering grace, not before.'⁷² These overtures, once again, would have been heard by the Methodists in both the traditional and innovative liturgies Wesley made available. Wesley's liturgical theology anticipated both the participation of the worshipper in these liturgies, and the Spirit's work in empowering and enabling them to hear and respond to this call to healing.

Repentance, Faith and Spiritual Senses

Experiencing this forgiving, empowering grace required several more steps in the journey. Wesley describes a vital step in answer to the question 'What is faith?' by answering,

Faith, in general, is a divine supernatural *elenchos* of things not seen, i.e., of past, future, or spiritual things; it is a spiritual sight of God and the things of God. Therefore repentance is a low species of faith, i.e., a supernatural sense of an offended God. Justifying faith is a supernatural inward sight of God in Christ reconciling the world to himself. First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost, Christ loved me and gave himself for me; this is that faith by which he is justified, or pardon, the moment he receives it. Immediately the same Spirit bears witness, Thou art pardoned, thou hast redemption in his blood; and this saving faith, whereby the love of God is shed abroad in his heart.⁷³

⁷¹ *Instructions*, Section IV, Lesson VII, 23.

⁷² Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 89.

⁷³ 'Minutes of the London Conference', 25 June 1744 (BE) 10.126.

Here, Wesley makes a direct comparison between faith and spiritual senses. But what are these spiritual senses and how do they function in the restoration of the Image of God?

In ‘On the Discoveries of Faith’, Wesley says ‘There is nothing in the understanding which was not first perceived by some of the senses.’ This is, according to Outler, a ‘scholastic maxim derived from Aristotle...and discussed at length by Aquinas.’⁷⁴ Wesley suggests, for example, that a person cannot have knowledge of colour if one is blind. He gives a fuller description of the same illustration in *Instruction for Children*:

A blind man, though he could reason ever so well, yet could not by this Means, either know or see the Things of the World. And with all his Reason he could have only very dark, gross, nay and false Conceptions of them. In like Manner, though all the Men in the World should reason with all their Might concerning them, yet could they not by this Means know either God or the Things of God. Nay, with all their Reason they could only have dark, foolish, false Conceptions of them. Before God can be known, he must give other Eyes to the Soul, and other Light than a Man can give.⁷⁵

It is with this description that Wesley plainly depicts the value and necessity of ‘spiritual senses.’ It is clear to Wesley that our ‘natural senses’ have limits and that ‘they furnish us with no information at all concerning the *invisible world*.’ It is through faith, as Wesley equates it with ‘spiritual sense,’ that we gain the insights that change our lives. Wesley says,

By faith I know that the Holy Spirit is the giver of all spiritual life; of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; of holiness and happiness, by the restoration of that Image of God wherein we are created. Of all these things faith is the evidence, the sole evidence to the children of men.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ ‘On the Discoveries of Faith’ (BE) 4.29, see footnote 1.

⁷⁵ *Instructions*, Section IV, Lesson III, 20.

⁷⁶ ‘On the Discoveries of Faith’ (BE) 4.32

Wesley's rejection of innate ideas and his embracing of the idea of the natural senses as the pathway to understanding the external world place him in league with John Locke and his method of empiricism. While being deeply impacted by empiricism, Wesley departed from Locke by embracing the idea of spiritual senses that may be found in many of the traditions with which Wesley was familiar.⁷⁷

Spiritual senses were, for Wesley, the spiritual equivalent of the natural senses:

Faith is that divine evidence whereby the spiritual man discerneth God, and the things of God. It is with regard to the spiritual world, what sense is with regard to the natural. It is the spiritual sensation of every soul that is born of God.⁷⁸

Wesley further amended Locke's version of empiricism by suggesting that religious experience, as received by the spiritual senses, must be transformational. As Runyon interprets, 'Religious knowledge either makes a difference to one's whole orientation or it is not genuine knowledge...For Wesley, the paradigmatic religious experience is the impression made on the mind and heart by the love of God.'⁷⁹ Runyon goes on to suggest that the classic example of this truth is to be found in Wesley's own experience at Aldersgate. In Wesley's own words, '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.'⁸⁰ Runyon says,

Although he describes the impressions registering on him from the standpoint of the knowing subject, it is clear that for Wesley the primary actor at Aldersgate is Christ by means of the Spirit. Through the awakened spiritual senses Wesley is grasped by his own incorporation into the divine action.⁸¹

⁷⁷ See Runyon, *The New Creation*, 74ff and Mark Mealey, 'John Wesley', 241-256 in *The Spiritual Senses: Perceiving God in Western Christianity*, Paul Gavrilyuk and Sarah Coakley, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

⁷⁸ 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (BE) 11.46.

⁷⁹ Runyon, *New Creation*, 78.

⁸⁰ May 24, 1738, (BE) 18:250. See footnote 169, pg 57 below for reference to the role corporate worship played in Wesley's Aldersgate experience.

⁸¹ Runyon, *New Creation*, 78.

Wesley's testimony of his heart-warming experience is a confirmation of another very important aspect of his interpretation of empiricism. In speaking of the importance of holiness he says 'we must love God before we can be holy at all; this being the root of all holiness. Now we cannot love God till we know he loves us; 'We love him, because he first loved us.'⁸² In the context of a discussion of salvation by faith Wesley makes a similar point:

Without faith we cannot be thus saved. For we can't rightly serve God unless we love him. And we can't love him unless we know him; neither can we know God, unless by faith. Therefore salvation by faith is only...the love of God by the knowledge of God, or the recovery of the Image of God by a true spiritual acquaintance with him.⁸³

Both these references suggest that we cannot love God unless we *experience* His love for us first. This is a very important point for Wesley, further cemented by the fact that perhaps the most important verse in the Bible for him was 1 John 4:19: 'We love him, because he hath first loved us.'⁸⁴ Maddox points out that the Empiricists of Wesley's day taught that humans 'are moved to action only as we are experientially affected...that it is only in response to our *experience* of God's gracious love for us, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, that our love for God and others can be awakened and grow.'⁸⁵ Wesley once more brings this truth to light for us when he says 'For where there is no love of God there is no holiness, and there is no love of God but from a sense of his loving us.'⁸⁶ Worship was the means by which this sense of God's love was cultivated. As the hymns were sung during the love feast, the early morning preaching service and the watchnight services, to the hearing of the comfortable words in the liturgy for the Lord's Supper, a steady presentation of God's

⁸² 'The Witness of the Spirit, I' (BE) 1.274.

⁸³ 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (BE) 11.106.

⁸⁴ Wesley equates 1 John 4:19 with 'the sum of the whole gospel' in his editorial comments on *Sermons on Several Occasions* vol. 5 – (BE), 2.357.

⁸⁵ Maddox, 'Wesley's Prescription for "Making Disciples of Jesus Christ": Insights for the 21st Century Church' *Quarterly Review* 23.1 (2003), 20.

⁸⁶ 'Justification by Faith' (BE), 1.191.

love was available through both Scripture and participation within the community in liturgical ritual. Wesley's liturgical practices made God's love perceptible for his Methodists to experience.⁸⁷

The New Birth

Justification and the new birth each had distinctive functions for Wesley, especially in relation to the restoration of the Image of God. In addressing the differences between them Wesley says,

But though it be allowed that justification and the new birth are in point of time inseparable from each other, yet are they easily distinguished as being not the same, but things of a widely different nature. 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 favour, the other to the Image of God.⁸⁸

As suggested above, justification was a relative change, something God does *for* us. While justification changes our relationship with God, transforming us from His enemies to His children, it is in the new birth that we find the *real* change, the *inward* transformation by which the faculties of the natural image are healed. We will now examine how the new birth restores each aspect of the Image of God in humanity, beginning with understanding.

Regarding our corrupted understanding, Wesley relies on analogies that resonate with his beliefs concerning Empiricism, as is demonstrated in 'The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption':

⁸⁷ For example, after the confession of the congregation and a pastoral prayer on their behalf, the Elder would proclaim one of several 'comfortable words' prior to the reception of the Lord's Supper. To hear 'So God loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life' immediately after confessing sins, and prior to receiving Christ's body and blood, would certainly have been a poignant moment in which to experience and embrace the love of God. For the importance of the concept of 'perceptibility' see Joseph Cunningham, *John Wesley's Pneumatology: Perceptible Inspiration* (Ashgate, 2014), esp. 27-54.

⁸⁸ 'The Great Privilege of Those that are Born of God' (BE) 1.431-432.

For his soul is in a deep sleep. His spiritual senses are not awake; they discern neither spiritually good nor evil. The eyes of his understanding are closed; they are sealed together, and see not. Clouds and darkness continually rest upon them; Hence, having no inlets for the knowledge of spiritual things, all the avenues of his soul being shut up, he is in gross, stupid ignorance of whatever he is most concerned to know....Because he is blind...The darkness which covers him on every side keeps him in a kind of peace...He sees not that he stands on the edge of the pit; therefore he fears not.⁸⁹

Having discussed the idea of the spiritual senses in an earlier section, we know the healing of the understanding commences as prevenient grace begins to awaken the spiritual senses and makes us aware of our deficiencies and sins. Once this work is begun, Wesley says,

And here is a remedy for all our disease, all the corruption of our nature. For 'God hath also', through the intercession of his Son, 'given us his Holy Spirit', to 'renew' us both 'in knowledge', and his natural image, 'opening the eyes of our understanding, and enlightening' us with all such knowledge as is requisite to our pleasing God...⁹⁰

This restoration of our 'spiritual sight', and the gift of the requisite knowledge necessary for pleasing God is the benefit of the work of Christ and His Spirit. However, Wesley alludes to a deeper work that precedes this gracious activity. In 'The Image of God' Wesley declares 'the first step to this glorious change is humility, a knowledge of ourselves, a just sense of our condition.'⁹¹ Humility is an important virtue for Wesley and will be examined at length in our next section. However, humility is important in this context because, beyond its role as a virtue or affection for Wesley, it also answers a difficult question about the totality of the healing available to us now:

But it may be observed that the Son of God does not destroy the whole work of the devil in man, as long as he remains in this life. He does not yet destroy bodily weakness, sickness, pain and a thousand infirmities indecent to flesh and blood. He does not destroy all that weakness of understanding which is the natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in a corruptible body; so that

⁸⁹ 'The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption' (BE) 1.251.

⁹⁰ 'On the Fall of Man' (BE) 2.410-411.

⁹¹ 'The Image of God' (BE) 4.299.

still...both ignorance and error belong to humanity. He entrusts us with only an exceeding small share of knowledge in our present state, lest our knowledge should interfere with our humility, and we should again affect to be as gods. It is to remove from us all temptation to pride, and all thought of independency (which is the very thing that men in general so earnestly covet, under the name of 'liberty') that he leaves us encompassed with all these infirmities—particularly weakness of understanding—till the sentence takes place, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return!'⁹²

And so, it is necessary, so as to 'remove from us all temptation to pride,' to limit our knowledge and understanding. The contrast, then, is significant - God gives us all the knowledge we need to please Him, but not enough for us to be overcome with pride.

In 'On the Fall of Man,' Wesley reminds us that without liberty, understanding and the will cannot properly function:

As such he was endued with understanding, with a will, including various affections, and with liberty, a power of using them in a right or wrong manner, of choosing good or evil. Otherwise neither his understanding nor his will would have been to any purpose...⁹³

Liberty is essential because, as Wesley says in 'Thoughts upon Necessity,' 'Certain it is, that no being can be accountable for its actions, which has not liberty, as well as will and understanding.'⁹⁴

In the Fall, our will is corrupted and we choose our will over God's will. In the new birth, this course is reversed and our understanding and will are restored:

The understanding, thus enlightened by humility, immediately directs us to reform our will by charity...to put away all malice, uncleanness, intemperance, 'all bitterness, wrath, and evil-speaking'; to collect the scattered beams of that affection which is truly human, truly divine and fix them on that Sovereign Good 'in whom we live, move, and have our being'; for his sake, lastly, and after his example, to be 'kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us'.⁹⁵

⁹² 'The End of Christ's Coming' (BE) 2.482.

⁹³ 'On the Fall of Man' (BE) 2.409-410. See also 'The General Deliverance' (BE) 2.439; 'The End of Christ's Coming' (BE) 2.474-475; 'On Divine Providence' (BE) 2.540-541; 'The Image of God' 4.300-301 and 'Thoughts Upon Necessity' (Jackson) 10.468.

⁹⁴ 'Thoughts on Necessity' (Jackson) 10.468.

⁹⁵ 'The Image of God' (BE) 4.300.

Notice that, for Wesley, understanding and the will work together. Wesley further describes this relationship by proposing that ‘He was endued also with a will, with various affections (which are only the will exerting itself in various ways) that he might love, desire, and delight in that which is good; otherwise his understanding had been to no purpose.’⁹⁶ Not only do understanding and the will work together, but the close relationship between the will and affections is important for Wesley:

Far great and nobler was his second endowment, namely, a will...His affections were rational, even, and regular—if we may be allowed to say ‘affections’, for properly speaking he had but one: man was what God is, Love. Love filled the whole expansion of his soul; it possesses him without a rival. Every movement of his heart was love: it knew no other fervour. Love was his vital heat; it was the genial warmth that animated his whole frame. And the flame of it was continually streaming forth, directly to him from whom it came, and by reflection to all sensitive natures, inasmuch as they too were his offspring, but especially to those superior beings who bore not only the superscription, but likewise the image of their Creator.⁹⁷

Seeing affections and the will described in this way reminds us that we began this chapter by suggesting that humanity was created to worship God. We also suggested at the outset of this chapter that, for Wesley, we become like that which we worship. The quote above points out that ‘man was what God is’ in the beginning, and implies that it is this perfect love to which we ought to return.

In ‘A Plain Account of Christian Perfection,’ Wesley articulates his view of perfection, the goal toward which all Christian thought and practice should aim:

It is the doctrine of Jesus Christ...“Ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”...Look at it again; survey it on every side, and that with the closest attention. In one view, it is purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God. In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all filthiness, all inward as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole Image of God, the full likeness of Him that created it. In yet another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves.

⁹⁶ ‘The End of Christ’s Coming’ (BE) 2.474.

⁹⁷ ‘The Image of God’ (BE) 4.294-295.

Now, take it in which of these views you please, (for there is no material difference,) and this is the whole and sole perfection, as a train of writings prove to a demonstration, which I have believed and taught for these forty years, from the year 1725 to the year 1765.⁹⁸

The restoration of the Image of God in humanity is the process by which the Church is edified, and as the Church is edified, God is honoured. This is the end, as Wesley reminds us, of divine worship, and all other actions.

It is here that we return to the part of Wesley's description of worship most pertinent to our thesis: 'God is honoured...when the Church is edified. The means conducing to that end, are to have the service so administered as may inform the mind, engage the affections and increase devotion.' In the first half of this chapter we have discussed Wesley's doctrine of God as it relates to worship, and have established that God is honoured as the Church is glorified. We analysed Wesley's view of the restoration of the Image of God in humanity as a way of perceiving the edification of the Church. In the following section we turn to the actual process of this edification, the 'means conducing' to the end, or the way by which God is honoured through the edification of the Church.

In the previous section, we concluded with two quotes from Wesley that emphasized love of God and neighbour, which for him was the culmination of the Christian faith. Wesley discusses this love of God and neighbour at length in a tract he released in 1753 entitled 'A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity.' This tract was a part of a much larger work in which Wesley responded to Conyers Middleton's scathing deistic denouncement of much of the Apostolic Church and the New Testament. This larger work, 'A Letter to the Reverend Doctor Conyers Middleton, Occasioned by His Late Free Enquiry,' was essentially inaccessible to most of

⁹⁸ 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (Jackson) 11.444.

Wesley's Methodists. However, Wesley believed that the most important part of his response to Middleton was his defence of genuine Christianity, so he released his tract, which circulated extensively for the next century. The first two sections are of the greatest value for our purposes, as they answer to questions two very important questions: 'Who is a Christian?' and 'What is real, genuine Christianity?'

In answer to the first question, Wesley says in order to properly consider who a Christian *is*, we must rescue the term from 'the hands of wretches that are a reproach to human nature,' those who have sought to make Christianity 'a cloak for the vilest hypocrisy, for the grossest abominations and immoralities of every kind...' ⁹⁹ Wesley continues by suggesting that a Christian is one who exercises extreme humility and debasement before God, willingly resigning oneself to God and giving God their 'every natural and...moral endowment.' Wesley enlarges upon the character of a Christian:

The ruling temper of his heart is the most absolute submission and the tenderest gratitude to his sovereign benefactor. And this grateful love creates filial fear, an awful reverence toward him and an earnest care not to give place to any disposition, not to admit an action, word or thought which might in any degree displease that indulgent power to whom he owes his life, breath and all things... ¹⁰⁰

Continuing to address the question of "What is a Christian?", Wesley says:

He has the strongest affection for the fountain of all good...It causes him to put forth all his strength in obeying him in whom he confides...And as he knows the most acceptable worship of God is to imitate him he worships, so he is continually labouring to transcribe into himself all his imitable perfections: in particular, his justice, mercy and truth... ¹⁰¹

Wesley continues describing the Christian by proclaiming, 'Above all, remembering that God is love, he is conformed to the same likeness. He is full of love to his

⁹⁹ Albert Outler, *John Wesley*, 'A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity,' 183.

¹⁰⁰ Outler, *John Wesley*, 184.

¹⁰¹ Outler, *John Wesley*, 184.

neighbour...'¹⁰² Just as we heard above when Wesley declared that we were created with one affection, that of love, and that 'man was what God is, Love',¹⁰³ so here we are called to imitate the God we worship. Therefore, in order to properly worship a God of love we must ultimately become a people of love, loving God and neighbour as God has first loved us. This is our ultimate act of worship.

The second question Wesley seeks to answer is 'What is real, genuine Christianity?' and his answer is important in many respects. First, Wesley qualifies his question concerning the nature of 'real, genuine Christianity' in a very particular way, differentiating between genuine Christianity 'as a principle in the soul *or* as a scheme or system of doctrine.' In referring to the latter he says 'Christianity...is that system of doctrine which describes the character above recited, which promises it shall be mine (provided I will not rest till I attain) and which tells me how I may attain it.'¹⁰⁴ So, the first of these components, according to Wesley, is that Christianity as doctrine *describes* the characteristics mentioned in the previous section. Doctrine for Wesley functions as a kind of grammar for the life of the Christian, giving his people a way to see, understand and appropriate the characteristics of a Christian, such as love, joy, peace, holiness and happiness. Next, Christianity 'promises this character shall be mine if I will not rest till I attain it' because 'every command has the force of a promise...it is not only a direction what I shall do, but a promise of what God will do in me.'¹⁰⁵ Finally, Christian doctrine 'tells me how I may attain the promise, namely, by faith.' By faith, Wesley is not suggesting an opinion, a creed or assent to the Old and New Testament. Rather, Wesley describes Christian faith as:

A power wrought by the Almighty in an immortal spirit inhabiting a house of clay, to see through that veil into the world of spirits, into things invisible and

¹⁰² Outler, *John Wesley*, 184.

¹⁰³ 'The Image of God' (BE) 4.294-295.

¹⁰⁴ Outler, *John Wesley*, 188.

¹⁰⁵ Outler, *John Wesley*, 188-189.

eternal; a power to discern those things which with eyes of flesh and blood no man hath seen or can see, either by reason of their nature, which...is not perceivable by these gross senses...¹⁰⁶

He is here speaking of the spiritual senses, which we discussed at length earlier in this chapter. Wesley also alludes to humanity as ‘an immortal spirit inhabiting a house of clay,’ which, as mentioned earlier, is why we are able to worship God, who is Spirit.¹⁰⁷

As Wesley mentioned, genuine Christianity is both a ‘scheme or system of doctrine’ *and* a ‘principle in the soul.’ We have described, in Wesley’s words, how doctrine supplies a grammar for the Christian life, how it manifests itself in ‘covered promises’¹⁰⁸ and how these promises are attained. In speaking of the ‘principle of the soul,’ Wesley says that ‘Christianity, considered as an inward principle, is the completion of all those promises. It is holiness and happiness, the Image of God impressed on a created spirit; a fountain of peace and love springing up into everlasting life.’¹⁰⁹ The way Wesley lays it out, it would seem that Christian doctrine forms and shapes the inward principle, and the inward principle is best described as a set of tempers or affections. This way of viewing genuine Christianity will provide the substance of our next section.

Doctrine as Grammar

Following Wesley’s lead, we will explore what it means for him to understand doctrine as a grammar by which his Methodists might receive, explore and come to know and practice the life of Christ. Let us take, for example, the doctrine of Justification by faith alone. Wesley gives us a description of this doctrine, as he understands it:

¹⁰⁶ Outler, *John Wesley*, 189.

¹⁰⁷ See above, footnote 12, ‘Upon our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, IV’ (BE) 1.544.

¹⁰⁸ See ‘Upon our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, V’ (BE) 1.554, n. 18.

¹⁰⁹ Outler, *John Wesley*, 191.

All the blessings which God hath bestowed upon man are of his mere grace, bounty, or favour; His free undeserved favour, favour altogether undeserved, man having no claim to the least of his mercies...The same free grace continues to us, at this day, life, and breath, and all things. For there is nothing we are, or have, or do, which can deserve the least thing at God's hand...whatever righteousness may be found in man, this also is a gift of God.¹¹⁰

Mark Horst explains how Wesley's belief in doctrine as grammar works in response to this description:

Acknowledgment of this truth about God and the believer entails a variety of dispositional change in the believer. In that way the doctrine structures a fundamental attitude in the believer...For Wesley, believers understand the doctrine when they respond to it in clear and distinct ways. Included in these characteristic responses are attitudes of trust, humility, gratitude, and wonder.¹¹¹

This certainly seems to resonate with Wesley's statement in 'Genuine Christianity' above, making clear that doctrine should lead to certain expressions of Christianity such as humility or gratitude. It also complies with Wesley's own statement regarding doctrine and experience: 'Experience is sufficient to *confirm* a doctrine which is grounded in Scripture.'¹¹² Many of the liturgies that will be examined in this thesis reflect this relationship between doctrine and experience, and point to the intentional effort to create or stimulate characteristics such as trust, humility and wonder. Several of the Wesleys' *Hymns on the Lord's Supper (HLS)*, for instance, point to the wonder and mystery experienced in Holy Communion. The Renewal of the Covenant service offered opportunities to cultivate trust in God's wisdom and guidance. Humility and gratitude were both engendered and expressed in a number of Wesley's prescribed liturgies, in particular the love feast and the Lord's Supper.

¹¹⁰ 'Salvation by Faith' (BE) 1.117-118.

¹¹¹ Mark Horst, 'Christian Understanding and the Life of Faith in John Wesley's Thought' Unpublished Thesis, (Yale University, 1985), 75 This idea of doctrine as grammar is a major point of emphasis in Horst's thesis, and also a major feature of his mentors at Yale, Paul Holmer and George Lindbeck, as well as Don Saliers of Emory University.

¹¹² 'The Witness of the Spirit, II' (BE) 1.297.

This idea of doctrine as grammar finds, perhaps, its best expression for Wesley in the hymns he and his brother Charles provided for the Methodists. We have already mentioned the *HLS*, but all of the hymns ‘gave expression’, as some have suggested, to the Methodist revival by ‘providing a language by which believers could describe their experiences.’¹¹³ Aaron Kerr expresses this same idea in a more technical way:

In a sense, the production of hymns became the theological media for memory, as well as an expression of faith. For those common persons the Wesleys sought to revive, hymns would be able to be sung, but not necessarily read. In this way hymns and hymn singing are analogous to the regular practice of Eucharistic ritual. For in the Eucharistic liturgy and in the singing of hymns, there is a participatory *noetic* dimension. And both contain a poesis that involves the affective/emotional dimension, as well. Hymns on the Eucharist, therefore, are an especially rich deposit of theological meaning and experience.¹¹⁴

We will now turn our attention to some of the very specific vocabulary that will play an essential role in the remainder of this thesis.

Affections and Tempers

Kenneth Collins suggests that Wesley’s ‘affective’ language, by which Collins means tempers or affections, ‘is so extensive, ranging from Wesley’s early career to his old age, that it is virtually impossible to discuss his practical theology without it.’¹¹⁵ Mark Horst echoes this opinion: ‘Any attempt to understand Wesley’s theological positions which does not take his analysis of the holy tempers into account cannot hope to form a balance or an accurate conception of it.’¹¹⁶ Although this affectional language was largely ignored by Wesleyan scholars in the first half of the twentieth century, it has seen a revival of late among those seeking to understand

¹¹³ Brett C. McNelly, *Textual Warfare and the Making of Methodism* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 122.

¹¹⁴ Kerr, ‘John and Charles Wesleys’ *Hymns on the Lord’s*, 57-58.

¹¹⁵ Kenneth J. Collins, ‘John Wesley’s Topography of the Heart: Dispositions, Tempers, and Affections’, 166.

¹¹⁶ Mark Horst, ‘Christian Understanding,’ 122.

Wesley's pastoral and theological heart.¹¹⁷ While students of Wesley's affectional theology are agreed as to its centrality in Wesley's thought, they are not so united in understanding his preferred vocabulary. Some believe 'affections' is his preferred term¹¹⁸, while others use 'tempers' exclusively.¹¹⁹ There is also considerable debate about how these two terms relate, specifically whether they mean the same thing, or whether there could be a difference in how they are understood.

The most important example of the possible difference between affections and tempers comes from interpretations of Wesley's comments on 1 Thessalonians 2:17:

In this verse we have a remarkable instance, not so much of the transient affections of holy grief, desire, or joy, as of that abiding tenderness, that loving temper, which is so apparent in all St. Paul's writings towards those he styled his children in the faith. This is the more carefully to be observed, because the passions occasionally exercising themselves, and flowing like a torrent, in the apostle, are observable to every reader; whereas it requires a nicer attention to discern those calm, standing tempers, that fixed posture of his soul, from whence the others only flow out, and which more particularly distinguish his character.¹²⁰

Clapper interprets what Wesley is saying in the following way,

Here Wesley straightforwardly states it is the "calm, standing tempers, that fixed posture of the soul" that is indicative of character. These standing "tempers" (an eighteenth-century equivalent of "affections"), and not the transient affections or "passions," are what indicate the "posture of the soul." If one is to be a Christian, then one will have the kind of temper or character or affectional make-up from which the particular Christian affections will occasionally "flow out".¹²¹

While Clapper seems to accept the fact that Wesley is making a distinction between affections and tempers in this passage, he goes out of his way to attempt to prove that

¹¹⁷ Authors such as Maximin Piette, George Croft Cell, William Cannon and Colin Williams rarely, if ever, make mention of the affections and tempers. Contemporary authors who have made a substantial contribution to our understanding of Wesley's affectional theology include Gregory Clapper, Kenneth Collins, Mark Horst, Henry Knight, Randy Maddox, Don Saliers and Richard Steele.

¹¹⁸ Gregory Clapper is particularly insistent on this point - see, for example, 'John Wesley's Language of the Heart', *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, vol. 44, No. 2, (2009), 94-102.

¹¹⁹ Mark Horst, *Christian Understanding*. Horst almost exclusively uses the term tempers throughout his thesis.

¹²⁰ John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament*, 2nd Edition (London, 1757), 553.

¹²¹ Gregory S. Clapper, 'Orthokardia: The Practical Theology of John Wesley's Heart Religion' *Quarterly Review* (Vol. 10, No. 1, Spring 1990), 56.

this is the exception rather than the rule.¹²² On the other hand, Collins and Maddox both see this passage as license to apply this distinction as a universal one for Wesley, and they each build much of their understanding of tempers and affections upon it.¹²³

Collins says,

Thus Wesley's use of the term temper (and disposition for that matter) indicates that it, unlike the affections, depicts a "fixed posture of the soul"...That is, the tempers are standing orientations towards behaviour that are not easily shaken. Moreover, though the tempers can be distinguished from the will itself, they are nevertheless intimately related to it, for they indicate the "direction" of the will, the "objects" towards which it aims.¹²⁴

The affections are contrasted with the tempers for Collins in the following way: 'The affections...are less enduring and habituated than the tempers. They are, to use Wesley's own words, "*transient*.'" ¹²⁵ As to the will and the affections being similar but different, Wesley said that the affections are simply 'the will exerting itself in various ways.'¹²⁶ Collins also suggests that, while the affections seem to be 'the expressions of the will,' the tempers seem to be more foundational and may even inform the affections themselves since Wesley seems to indicate in the excerpt above that the affections flow from the tempers.

While this debate is interesting and must be acknowledged, it does not need to be resolved for our purposes. However, Clapper makes an interesting comment on the matter that *does* need to be addressed. He says 'I admit that it would be a great conceptual help for all in the Wesleyan tradition if the affection/temper distinction was observed by Wesley as some interpreters suggest. He needed such distinction, and I think the distinction he was groping for is best made today by the distinction

¹²² Clapper, 'John Wesley's Language of the Heart', 94-102.

¹²³ See Collins, 'Topography of the Heart', 162-175; and Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 69-70.

¹²⁴ Collins, 'Topography,' 171.

¹²⁵ Collins, 'Topography,' 171.

¹²⁶ Collins, 'Topography,' 171.

between having a “feeling” and having an “emotion”.’¹²⁷ This is an important qualification for us to acknowledge as we attempt to understand Wesley’s affectional language.

What is the difference between a feeling and an emotion? What is the difference between affections and emotions? Answering the second question first, Wesley does seem to equate affections and emotions as he does in ‘On Zeal’,

And first, what is the nature of zeal in general, and of true Christian zeal in particular? The original word, in its primary signification, means *heat*, such as the heat of boiling water. When it is figuratively applied to the mind it means any warm emotion or affection.¹²⁸

However, Clapper correctly suggests that, due to the increasingly complex nature of the word ‘emotion,’ when studying Wesley it is best to use his own, distinctively eighteenth century vocabulary.¹²⁹ The most essential difficulty with the word emotion in studying Wesley is that people in Wesley’s day tended to separate emotion from intellect, feelings from thinking. It is to this division that we now turn.

Wesley was caught in a theological vice between enthusiasm on one end and formalism on the other.¹³⁰ Those who saw Wesley as an enthusiast tended to do so because of the emotionalism frequently found in Methodist worship. Henry Knight gives us a very helpful framework in which to consider this predicament when he says ‘For Wesley, an enthusiast is not someone who has religious emotions, but rather one who lacks certain emotions or tempers appropriate to the Christian life while possessing inappropriate emotions.’¹³¹ In this same vein, Don Saliers says,

¹²⁷ Clapper, ‘John Wesley’s Language of the Heart’, 101.

¹²⁸ ‘On Zeal’ (BE) 3.311.

¹²⁹ See “How the ‘Present Age’ Can Help us Fulfill Our Calling: a Comparison of Contemporary Philosophical Theories of Emotion and John Wesley’s Vision of Christian Vocation as a Renewed Heart” delivered to the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies, Christ Church College, Oxford University, August, 2007.

¹³⁰ Wesley’s encounter with formalism and enthusiasm will be dealt with at greater length toward the end of this chapter.

¹³¹ Knight, *Presence of God*, 23-24.

Whatever else it may include, the Christian faith is a pattern of deep emotions. It is gratitude to God for creation and redemption, awe and holy fear of the divine majesty, repentant sorrow over our sins, joy in God's steadfast love and mercy, and love of God and neighbour. To confess faith in God is to live a life characterized by these emotions. The relation between being a Christian and possessing a pattern of such emotions is so intimate that anyone who lacks this particular gratitude, fear, penitence, joy and love, can be said to be Christian in name only. To say that one loves God while dwelling in hatred for one's neighbour is to misunderstand who God is.¹³²

So, this line of thinking would seem to change the conversation from 'Should a Christian have or show emotion?' to 'What *kind* of emotion should a Christian have/show?' And Wesley certainly seems to concur:

The very thing which Mr. Stinstra calls fanaticism is no other than heart-religion; in other words, 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' These must be felt, or they have no being. All, therefore, who condemn inward feelings in the gross, leave no place either for joy, peace, or love in religion; and consequently reduce it to a dry dead carcass.¹³³

Before we explore further the question of what *kinds* of emotions Christians should have or display, we need to ask where these 'feelings' or emotions come from. Are they internally generated, or are they accumulated, reflected and/or emulated from the outside? Those who would place Wesley in the enthusiast camp would say that these emotions or feelings came from some internal impulse or impression, or by way of some extraordinary revelation from God via dreams or visions. In his sermon 'The Nature of Enthusiasm' Wesley resists these categories. He does not deny that God has worked this way in the past, nor that God can do so in Wesley's day, but rather that there is a more biblically consistent way of understanding God's direction. He says that if a 'sober Christian' desires to know God's will he or she should seek it,

Not by waiting for supernatural dreams; not by expecting God to reveal it in visions; not by looking for any particular impressions or sudden impulses on his mind: no; but by consulting the oracles of God. 'To the law and to the

¹³² Saliers, *Soul in Paraphrase, Prayer and the Religious Affections*. (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 9.

¹³³ 12 August, 1771, (BE) 22.287.

testimony!’ This is the general method of knowing what is ‘the holy and acceptable will of God.’¹³⁴

By way of example, in his journal entry for 22 June, 1743, Wesley says that while he is persuaded that Mr Simpson does everything ‘in the uprightness of his heart,’ he is also ‘led into a thousand mistakes by one wrong principle (the same which many either ignorantly or wickedly ascribe to the body of the people called Methodists), the making inward impressions his rule of action, and not the written word.’¹³⁵ So, for Wesley, the emotions/affections he wanted his Methodists to experience do not come first from an internal impulse or impression, but rather must be received from an external source.

This is a good place to begin exploring exactly how the affections and tempers function, and Knight gives us a description that will lead us into this discussion: ‘True religion consists in having certain affections which are both capacities (enabling us to love) and dispositions (inclining us to love).’¹³⁶ Knight is indicating that there is a two-fold dynamic at work in the affections, which we will now explore.

Clapper helps us begin our exploration by suggesting that ‘First...Affections arise from the person’s being directed, focused, or fixed on some object. Second, ‘having an affection’ means being disposed to behave in certain ways.’¹³⁷ We will begin with the idea of affections being directed or focused on an object, which Clapper describes as ‘transitive’, while Henry Knight describes them as relational. Regarding the relational nature of the affections, Knight says ‘when one is talking of the heart and life, words such as “love” and “trust” do not in and of themselves determine meaning; rather their actual content is determined by the object to which

¹³⁴ ‘The Nature of Enthusiasm’ (BE) 2.54, §22.

¹³⁵ (BE) 19.279.

¹³⁶ Knight, *Presence of God*, 19.

¹³⁷ Clapper, ‘Orthokardia,’ 51.

they are related.’¹³⁸ Wesley gives numerous examples of this very idea, including several from his *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament*. In Romans 1:7 he says, ‘Our trust and prayer fix on God, as He is the Father of Christ; and on Christ, as He presents us to the Father.’¹³⁹ A little later in the same book, he comments on Romans 4:24: ‘If we believe on Him who raised up Jesus—God the Father is therefore the proper object of justifying faith.’¹⁴⁰ Adding a dimension in ‘Salvation by Faith,’ Wesley says: ‘It is faith in Christ—Christ, and God through Christ, are the proper object of it...it is not barely a speculative, rational thing, a cold, lifeless assent, a train of ideas in the head; but also a disposition of the heart.’¹⁴¹ Knight uses Wesley’s own experience at Aldersgate to illustrate how important this idea of faith or the affections taking an object is for Wesley. As Knight explains:

Wesley does not simply say he now trusts, but that he trusts *in Christ*. That is, his trust is directed toward an object...This means that when one is talking of the heart and life, words such as “love” and “trust” do not in and of themselves determine meaning; rather their actual content is determined by the object to which they are related.¹⁴²

Gregory Clapper suggests that ‘Whatever is the object of our attention will determine the form of our heart, the posture of our soul, the nature of our affections.’¹⁴³ Richard Steele adds that ‘a person’s moral worthiness is determined largely by the value of what he desires. Morally, one *is* as one *wants*.’¹⁴⁴ Clapper completes his examination of the ‘transitive’ aspect of affections by saying that ‘Religious affections, then, result from the soul turning to God. If God is not their object, they are not Christian

¹³⁸ Henry Knight III. “The Role of Faith and the Means of Grace in the Heart Religion of John Wesley”. in Steele, Richard B. “Heart Religion” in the Methodist Tradition and Related Movements. *Pietist and Wesleyan Studies*, no. 12 (Lanham, Md:Scarecrow Press, 2001), 277.

¹³⁹ *ENNT*, 382.

¹⁴⁰ *ENNT*, 395.

¹⁴¹ ‘Salvation by Faith’ (BE) 1.120.

¹⁴² Knight, “Role of Faith”, 277.

¹⁴³ Clapper, *John Wesley on Religious Affections*, 78.

¹⁴⁴ Steele, “Gracious Affection” and “True Virtue” According to Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley, 133.

affections.’¹⁴⁵ As we consider God as the object of our affection we will allow

Wesley to help us refocus on the task of this thesis:

By Methodists I mean a people who profess to pursue (in whatsoever measure they have attained) holiness of heart and life, inward and outward conformity in all things to the revealed will of God; who place religion in an uniform resemblance of the great Object of it; in a steady imitation of him they worship in all his imitable perfections; more particularly in justice, mercy, and truth, or universal love filling the heart and governing the life.¹⁴⁶

Knight says ‘The central feature of religious affections is that they are, at one and the same time, dispositional, relational and interpretive of the world.’¹⁴⁷ Knight’s addition of the idea of affections as ‘interpretive of the world’ implies that they are tied to a story or way of seeing the reality around us. Richard Steele calls this element of the affections ‘narrativity,’ and says that ‘to understand what an emotion is about and how it affects our conduct, we must tell a story. An emotion is a by-product of an experience, and to understand the emotion one must be able to narrate the relevant experience.’¹⁴⁸ He goes on to suggest that in order to be a people with stable ‘passions’ (which he equates with affections and tempers) we must be a people with a ‘master narrative’ strong enough to form and shape us and make us emotionally healthy and sound. He says that we do, of course, have such a narrative: ‘the central narrative of the Christian Scripture...called “the Passion Narrative”.’¹⁴⁹ We have already pointed this theme out in several places in Wesley, such as his reference to Mr. Simpson’s dependence on ‘inward impressions’ when Wesley desired to direct him to ‘the written word.’¹⁵⁰

The final element of affections, according to Knight, is that when they take

¹⁴⁵ Clapper, ‘Orthokardia,’ 52.

¹⁴⁶ ‘Advice to the People called Methodists’ (BE) 9.123-124.

¹⁴⁷ Henry Knight III, ‘True Affections’, 195.

¹⁴⁸ Richard B. Steele. ‘The Passion and the Passions’. *“Heart Religion” In The Methodist Tradition And Related Movements*. Richard Steele. 1st ed. Scarecrow Press, 2001. 250.

¹⁴⁹ Steele, ‘The Passion and the Passions,’ 251.

¹⁵⁰ 22 June, 1742 (BE) 19.279.

root in the heart of the believer, ‘they become abiding dispositions (or) tempers. Christian affections that are fixed in the heart are “holy tempers”.’¹⁵¹ He goes on to suggest that to understand the Christian life in this way is to focus more on ‘who we are’ than on ‘what we do.’ It might also be said that the Christian life is more about *who we are* than *how we feel*, which returns us to an earlier question of the difference between feelings and emotions.

It has been established that affections are not simply internal feeling-states for Wesley. But how did he actually *feel* about feelings, and did he distinguish between feelings and dispositions? What did he prefer, and which did he desire his Methodists to seek? In regards to feelings, Wesley makes a fairly definitive statement in his comment on Acts 17:27 in his *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament*: ‘They might feel after him--This is in the midst between seeking and finding. Feeling, being the lowest and grossest of all our senses, is fitly applied to that low knowledge of God.’¹⁵² Comparing this to Wesley’s comment on Discourse II on the Sermon the Mount that evil actions might not ‘spring from the settled temper of the heart, but from a start of passion, or from some vehement temptation,’¹⁵³ seems to imply that there is a significant difference for Wesley between a momentary, fleeting feeling and a deep, abiding temper or settled disposition. Knight clarifies this distinction for us by suggesting that, because ‘affection’ is an experiential term it is easy to confuse affections with ‘having a feeling.’ He goes on to offer a very helpful analysis of this problem:

To be sure, we can be “affected” without an affection taking root in the heart. This affection...becomes transient, and, like a feeling, it comes and goes. But affections and tempers are fundamentally distinct from feelings in that they characterize our lives...Affections and tempers are experiential terms in that

¹⁵¹ Knight, ‘Role of Faith,’ 275.

¹⁵² *ENNT*, 343.

¹⁵³ ‘Upon our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, II’ (BE) 1:506.

they are evoked and sustained by our experiencing God.¹⁵⁴

In this regard, Knight reminds us that ‘to be a loving person does not mean one always ‘feels’ loving—although love as an affection or temper may well give rise to a feeling of love.’¹⁵⁵

Wesley gives a beautiful description of the expected character of a Methodist in which this idea is evident:

A Methodist is one who has ‘the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost’...God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul...Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of the heart to him who orders it for good...his heart is ever lifted up to God, at all times, and in all places. In this he is never hindered, much less interrupted, by any person or thing. In retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord.¹⁵⁶

So, for Wesley, the character of a Methodist is not dependent upon constantly *feeling* loving toward God, but upon nurturing the affection of love as first received from God into a hardened disposition. This disposition of love toward God inclines Wesley’s Methodists to turn to God, trust in God, follow God all because they have been loved *by* God and because of the worthiness of God, not because we constantly *feel* loving toward God.

In an earlier section we pointed toward Wesley’s belief that we cannot love others, or even return love to God, until we have *genuinely experienced* God’s love for us. This is seen clearly in Wesley’s ‘heart warming’ experience at Aldersgate: ‘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

¹⁵⁴ Knight, ‘Role of Faith’, 275-276.

¹⁵⁵ Knight, ‘Role of Faith’, 276.

¹⁵⁶ ‘The Character of a Methodist’ (BE) 9.35-37.

me from the law of sin and death.’¹⁵⁷ In conjunction with this experience of trusting assurance, Wesley reminds us of the importance of experiencing God’s love: ‘We must love God before we can be holy at all; this being the root of all holiness. Now we cannot love God till we know he loves us; “We love him, because he first loved us”.’¹⁵⁸ In this context, Maddox says ‘The affections are not self- generating springs of motive power, they incite us to action only when they are affected.’¹⁵⁹ This simply means that the affections do not come from, nor are they generated by, a deep well of internal, intrinsic experiences. We are moved to love because we *have been loved*, and as a consequence of this love, we can love others. Wesley’s desire was to see his Methodists move from feeling and experiencing God’s love to allowing these ‘affections’ to be shaped into abiding dispositions, or, as Knights suggests, ‘Affections...are dispositional, and tempers are settled dispositions.’¹⁶⁰ Maddox gives us a great visual expression of this idea when he points out that the root idea in Wesley’s word ‘temper’ is conveyed in the process of tempering metal,

...which has been strengthened and given a characteristic shape...While our affections are responsive, he was convinced that they need not be simply transitory, they can be focused and strengthened into enduring dispositions. Thus, in his terminology the capacity for simple responsive love is an affection, while a developed enduring disposition to love (or to reject love!) is a temper.¹⁶¹

Wesley saw this pattern in the Sermon on the Mount. In summarizing Jesus’

¹⁵⁷ May 24, 1738, (BE) 18:250. It is important to remember that both immediately before and after this reference to Wesley’s heart-warming experience he references worshipping in St. Paul’s Cathedral and specifically mentions two anthems/psalms as meaningful to him at the time. The first, on the afternoon of 24 May, is from Ps. 130 in which the Psalmist gives thanks to God for His mercy. The second, which he heard on 25 May, was from Ps. 89:1, ‘My song shall be always of the loving-kindness of the Lord...’ This heart-warming experience was nurtured and reinforced by BCP worship.

¹⁵⁸ “The Witness of the Spirit, I’ (BE) 1.274.

¹⁵⁹ Randy Maddox, “A Change of Affections: The Development, Dynamics, and Dethronement of John Wesley’s “Heart Religion”. In *“Heart Religion” in the Methodist Tradition and Related Movements*, 3-31. Edited by Richard Steele. (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 2001), 13. Maddox gives an excellent treatment of Wesley’s progression from a habituated rational control method of moral psychology as seen in Plato to a moral psychology more in line with Aristotle and Aquinas which emphasized the habituation of Christ-centred virtues.

¹⁶⁰ Knight, “Role of Faith”, 276.

¹⁶¹ Maddox, “Change of Affections”, 15.

comments on chapter five of Matthew he suggests that as Jesus describes ‘inward religion’ he has ‘laid before us those dispositions of soul which constitute real Christianity; the tempers contained in that ‘holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord;’ the affections which...are good and acceptable to God.’¹⁶² Wesley also equates the tempers with ‘true religion’ in ‘A Short Address to the Inhabitants of Ireland’, saying, ‘religion does not consist (as they imagined once) either in negatives or externals, in barely doing no harm or even doing good; but in the tempers of the heart, in right dispositions of mind towards God and man, producing all right words and actions.’¹⁶³ Finally, in ‘On Charity’, Wesley speaks to those who emphasize works without love, ‘O that they were wise! That all those who are zealous of good works would put them in their proper place! Would not imagine they can supply the want of holy tempers, but take care that they may spring from them!’¹⁶⁴ So, right words and right actions, as well as right thoughts, come from a right disposition, a right heart.

We have examined the major elements of what Wesley called ‘the means conducting’ to the end of worship. These means, namely the informing of the mind, the engaging of the affections and the increase in devotion, are the pathway to the honouring of God and the edifying of the Church. In the process of establishing this pathway, Wesley constantly battled opponents, both internal and external to the Methodist movement, which attempted to lead the Methodists down divergent pathways. These divergent pathways (formalism and enthusiasm) threatened to diminish or destroy the ability of the Methodists to honour God and be edified as the people of God. It will give us a greater insight into Wesley’s pastoral task to consider

¹⁶² ‘Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, VI’ (BE) 1.572-573.

¹⁶³ ‘A Short Address to the Inhabitants of Ireland’ (Jackson) 9.175.

¹⁶⁴ ‘On Charity’ (BE) 3.305.

these divergent paths and evaluate how Wesley sought to contend with them. We turn our attention now to Wesley's encounter with formalism and enthusiasm.

Formalism and Enthusiasm

Wesley addresses the issue of formalism by admitting that for years he, like many, attended the 'public offices' only because he would be punished for non-attendance.¹⁶⁵ He continues by suggesting that many attended these services 'because they confounded the means with the end, and fancied this *opus operatum* would bring them to heaven.'¹⁶⁶ Wesley's comment alerts us to the fact that for him, this view is insufficient. He sought to answer the problem of formalism by encouraging a stronger and more regular attendance on the prudential means of grace which would enliven the formalist, and encourage them to battle the inevitable dissipation that comes with a lifeless religion by putting their faith to work through love by engaging in works of mercy.¹⁶⁷ Knight, in summarizing the essence of formalism, says that it 'presupposes an institution created by God to provide forgiveness for sins and dispense divine favour. Grace is conceived mechanistically; the activity of the Holy Spirit is automatic, inextricably tied to the means of grace.'¹⁶⁸ Wesley strongly advocated avoiding this particular pathway, and suggests that even though outward dependence upon the 'means' may have existed among the formalists, they should not forego, but rather re-examine their motives:

I allow that you and ten thousand more have thus abused the ordinances of God, mistaking the means for the end, supposing that the doing these or some other outward works either was the religion of Jesus Christ or would be accepted in the place of it. But let the abuse be taken away and the use

¹⁶⁵ 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (BE) 11.122.

¹⁶⁶ 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (BE) 11.122.

¹⁶⁷ The prudential means of grace will be addressed in an up-coming chapter. The prudential means include, but are not limited to covenant services, watchnight services, lovefeasts, class and band meetings and visiting the sick. For an extensive treatment of the works of mercy in Wesley see Hunter Dale Cummings, *John Wesley's Sources and Theology for Works of Mercy*. Unpublished Thesis, (University of Manchester, 2014).

¹⁶⁸ Knight, *Presence of God*, 30.

remain. Now use all outward things; but use them with a constant eye to the renewal of your soul in righteousness and true holiness.¹⁶⁹

Worshipping with a right *heart*, with a desire for God and His honour and glory, was more essential even than right *technique* or *practice* for Wesley.

In ‘The Nature of Enthusiasm’ Wesley described enthusiasm as ‘a religious madness arising from some falsely imagined influence or inspiration of God; at least from imputing something to God which ought not to be imputed to him, or expecting something from God which ought not to be expected from him.’¹⁷⁰ Wesley’s critique of enthusiasm is wide-ranging and leaves no room for doubt about his opinion. One further comment from the end of ‘The Nature of Enthusiasm’ will serve to summarize his thoughts:

Beware, lastly, of imagining you shall obtain the end without using the means conducive to it. God *can* give the end without any means at all; but you have no reason to think he *will*. Therefore constantly and carefully use all these means which he has appointed to be the ordinary channels of his grace. Use every means either reason or Scripture recommends as conducive (through the free love of God in Christ) either to the obtaining or increasing any of the gifts of God. Thus expect a daily growth in that pure and holy religion which...is the wisdom of God and the power of God, the glorious image of the Most High, righteousness and peace, a fountain of living water, springing up into everlasting life!¹⁷¹

There is a clear call here to attend to the means of grace, and Wesley is thinking particularly of the Instituted means of grace in answer to enthusiasm. These means provide story, context and content to the ‘experience’ of the enthusiast. The Instituted means of grace, also described as works of piety, provide the answer to Wesley’s cry for the Identity of the One He serves to be revealed: ‘What a miserable drudgery is the service of God unless I love the God whom I serve! But I cannot love one whom I know not...The whole creation speaks that there is a God. Thus far is

¹⁶⁹ ‘Sermon on the Mount, IV’ (BE) 1.545.

¹⁷⁰ ‘The Nature of Enthusiasm’ (BE) 2.50.

¹⁷¹ ‘The Nature of Enthusiasm’ (BE) 2.59-60.

clear. But who will show me what that God is?’¹⁷² This question reminds us, especially in the context of formalism and enthusiasm, that it is not enough to simply desire to know God, or to study about Him.

We began this chapter by proposing that, for Wesley, we become like that which we worship. It was suggested that, for Wesley, the identity of God gives shape and character to who it is that we believe we are to become. It is as we come to know God as a God of steadfast love, and as we experience His love for us that we can truly imitate Him and reflect His love and beauty in the world. We also pointed to Wesley’s teaching on ‘spiritual senses’, indicating that without the animating presence of the Spirit, no one would be able to ‘experience’ God or God’s love. It is the presence of the Spirit which brings about the new birth, resurrecting the moral image in us and reviving and restoring the capacities for God, the understanding, will and liberty. It is also the Presence of the Spirit that produces the fruit of love, joy and peace in the life of the believer. So, as we experience God, we come to know, love and enjoy God, through the reviving Presence of the Spirit. Both the Identity and Presence of God were made known to Wesley’s Methodists through the use of the means of grace.¹⁷³

It seems that the practice of the means of grace, as they reveal the Identity and Presence of God, are essential in avoiding the extremes of formalism and enthusiasm. It also seems apparent that neither formalism nor enthusiasm are what Wesley would consider the end or purpose for religion, or what we often called ‘true religion.’ Therefore, we will take a closer look at the means of grace in order to understand both how they help us avoid formalism and enthusiasm and also how they might point us

¹⁷² ‘A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part II’ (BE) 11.268.

¹⁷³ For an deeper exploration of the themes of identity and presence and the means of grace in Wesley, see Henry Knight’s excellent thesis, ‘The Presence of God in the Christian Life’, especially pp. 50-167.

toward what Wesley considers to be ‘true religion’, and thus make possible for us the worship of God is spirit and truth.

The Means of Grace

For Wesley, the means of grace are ‘...outward signs, words, or actions ordained of God, and appointed for this end—to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace.’¹⁷⁴ More specifically, the means of grace have a purpose, a mission to accomplish:

But we allow that the whole value of the means depends on their actual subservience to the end of religion; that consequently all these means, when separate from the end, are less than nothing and vanity; that if they do not actually conduce to the knowledge and love of God they are not acceptable in his sight...¹⁷⁵

Wesley categorized the means of grace in several different ways, but he often spoke of them in terms of ‘instituted’ and ‘prudential’ means. Wesley considered the ‘instituted’ means of grace to be anything he believed was instituted by Christ or implicitly commanded by Scripture. The prudential means are more difficult to codify, but Ole Borgen offers the following description; ‘Prudential means may vary according to the person’s needs and the circumstances, thus showing Wesley’s implicit concern for man’s particular historical situation.’¹⁷⁶

Wesley uses another typology for the means of grace (which has been briefly addressed above), this one based upon the object of the human activity in the implementation of the means. As Knight explains, “‘Works of mercy’ are directed toward persons, which “works of piety” are directed toward God.”¹⁷⁷ The best

¹⁷⁴ ‘The Means of Grace’ (BE) 1.381.

¹⁷⁵ ‘The Means of Grace’ (BE) 1.381.

¹⁷⁶ Ole E. Borgen, *John Wesley On the Sacraments: A Theological Study*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), 105.

¹⁷⁷ Henry Knight, ‘The Role of Faith and the Means of Grace in Wesley’, ch. 10 in *“Heart Religion” the Methodist Tradition and Related Movements*, (The Scarecrow Press, Inc. Metuchen, N.J., & London 2001), 278.

example of how these means of grace function in Wesley's pastoral theology may be found in his sermon *On Zeal*:

In a Christian believer love sits upon the throne, which is erected in the inmost soul; namely, love of God and man, which fills the whole heart, and reigns without a rival. In a circle near the throne are all holy tempers: long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, goodness, fidelity, temperance—and if any other is comprised in 'the mind which was in Christ Jesus'. In an exterior circle are all the works of mercy, whether to the souls or bodies of men. By these we exercise all holy tempers; by these we continually improve them, so that all these are real means of grace, although this is not commonly adverted to. Next to these are those that are usually termed works of piety: reading and hearing the Word, public, family, private prayer, receiving the Lord's Supper, fasting or abstinence. Lastly, that his followers may the more effectually provoke one another to love, holy tempers, and good works, our blessed Lord has united them together in one—the church, dispersed all over the earth; a little emblem of which, of the church universal, we have in every particular Christian congregation.¹⁷⁸

This balanced treatment of the means of grace is also at the heart of this thesis. In attempting to discern how Wesley was able to hold in tension the inherited liturgical tradition of the Church of England and liturgical innovations such as the love feast, watch night, covenant renewal and preaching services it is the purpose of this thesis to assert that this balance is maintained by a call to the religion of the heart. The religion of the heart is manifested in Wesley's Methodists as a call to love and the development of the holy tempers, as seen in 'On Zeal,' with love in the middle, enthroned on the heart. Listen as Wesley describes his hopes and expectations of the goal of the Christian life:

By salvation I mean, not barely (according to the vulgar notion) deliverance from hell, or going to heaven, but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the Image of God in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly tempers...¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ 'On Zeal' (BE) 3.313.

¹⁷⁹ 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (BE) 11.106.

Here we see Wesley pointing to the holy tempers as the ‘end of religion,’ the daily way in which we determine if we are living the life that God has created us to live. Wesley offers us his own summary on the idea of the end of religion: ‘We conclude from the whole, that true religion, in the very essence of it, is nothing short of holy tempers.’¹⁸⁰

Hunter Cummings strengthens this tie between Wesley’s use of the works of mercy with the development of heart religion by suggesting five ways in which Wesley used the works of mercy:

There are at least five ways in which Wesley uses mercy and works of mercy in his interpretation of the vision of God and how it impacts human life. First, works of mercy are a consistent factor in Wesley’s articulation of salvation and sanctification or Christian perfection. Secondly, and related to sanctification, is Wesley’s use of works of mercy in producing holy tempers. Thirdly, works of mercy are a means of grace that make the other means of grace more productive. Fourthly, works of mercy allow us to participate in the *opus Dei*. Fifthly, works of mercy allow us to reflect the *Imago Dei*.¹⁸¹

Here, Cummings has touched on the centrality of the works of mercy for Wesley for many of his most enduring pastoral pursuits – salvation, sanctification, growth in grace and participation in the life of God. Right in the middle of all of these pastoral pursuits is the production of holy tempers.

So, the goal or purpose of religion for Wesley is sanctification, heart religion, love of God and man, the development of holy tempers. These terms are each essential to understanding Wesley’s theology and practice.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have reviewed Wesley’s use of the means of grace as a way to contend with the dangers of formalism and enthusiasm. In examining the use of the means of grace we have come to recognize that, for Wesley, the means of grace made known both the identity and the presence of God, allowing Wesley’s Methodists to

¹⁸⁰ ‘On Charity’ (BE) 3.306.

¹⁸¹ Cummings, ‘Works of Mercy,’ 165.

experience the richness of intimate fellowship with, as well as to know more clearly the unique character of, the God they worshipped. We have also reviewed his understanding of doctrine as grammar and taken an in-depth look at the tempers and affections. In this chapter we also analysed what Wesley described as the ‘means conducting’ to the end of worship, the honouring of God and the edification of the Church. We examined Wesley’s understanding of the Image of God in humanity, from creation through the fall, redemption and restoration. In this examination we were able to see the restoration of the Image of God in humanity as a way by which the Church was edified. Through this restoration of God’s image, Wesley believed that humanity was led to perfection in the love of God and neighbour. Wesley taught that as humanity loved God and neighbour they perfectly imitated God, the ultimate act of worship. Wesley’s Methodists came to know the love of God, and found ways of expressing that love, through the various liturgical practices, the ‘means conducting’ to the honouring of God and the edification of the Church. As we seek to determine how Wesley used different liturgical practices to inform the mind, engage the affections and increase devotion, we will gain a greater understanding of how the Church was edified. We turn now to Wesley’s use of the liturgical traditions of the Church of England.

Chapter 2 – Wesley’s Use of Inherited Liturgical Tradition

Introduction

Leslie Church tells a story about the early days of the Methodist revival in which John Wesley observed behaviour in a worship service that deeply offended his High Church sensibilities:

The first services (of the Methodists) were not always marked by reverence, for many of the people were unaccustomed to worship, either publicly or in private. In Nottingham, in 1741, John Wesley was distressed because “not one person who came in used any prayer at all; but every one immediately sat down and began either talking to his neighbour or looking about to see who was there”. When he began to pray “there appeared a general surprise, none once offered to kneel down, and those who stood choosing the most easy, indolent posture which they conveniently could”.¹

Wesley’s response is integral to this chapter, as it reveals something deeply significant about his belief regarding the formal elements of traditional *Book of Common Prayer* worship. Concerning the way we conduct ourselves in the worship of a holy God, Wesley says,

THE...duty we owe to God is worship; This is to be performed, first, by our souls; secondly, by our bodies: the soul's part is praying...The other is that of the body; and that is such humble and reverent gestures in our approaches to God as may both express the inward reverence of our souls, and also pay him some tribute for our very bodies, with which the apostle commands us to glorify GOD...whensoever, therefore, you offerest thy prayers unto GOD, let it be with all lowliness, as well of body as of mind.²

Wesley is advocating a heart-centred view of bodily worship. In the Nottingham situation mentioned above, Wesley’s concern was not the lack of ‘formality’, but rather the absence of a proper reverence, humility and awe, which he believed was due to God. He believed, as mentioned in chapter one of this thesis, that worship was, first and foremost, the honouring of God, who is worthy of all our adoration. What

¹ Leslie Church, *More About the Early Methodist People* (The Epworth Press: City Road London, 1949), 219-220.

² ‘An Extract on The Whole Duty of Man,’ *A Christian Library*, vol. XII (London: T. Cordeux, 1820), 71, 79-80. For more on ‘The Whole Duty of Man’ and Wesley’s views on worship, see below.

we see in this call to bodily worship is an example of Wesley's desire to wed the external with the internal for the purpose of both honouring God and edifying the people.

Formal or external worship for Wesley, understood primarily in this chapter as the official written prayers, liturgies and homilies of the Church of England, was comprised of what he (and the *BCP*) called means of grace.³

For Wesley, as mentioned previously, the means of grace are 'outward signs, words, or actions ordained of God, and appointed for this end—to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace.'⁴ The means which Wesley mentions in his sermon 'The Means of Grace' were all elements of public worship:

The chief of these means are prayer, whether in secret or with the great congregation; searching the Scriptures; (which implies reading, hearing, and meditating thereon;) and receiving the Lord's Supper, eating bread and drinking wine in remembrance of Him: And these we believe to be ordained of God, as the ordinary channels of conveying his grace to the souls of men.⁵

The concern of this chapter will be to demonstrate that Wesley advocated the use of these formal elements, that he insisted upon their use by his Methodists as they 'waited on the Lord' and that they served as the foundation upon which he built the practices of his Methodist revival. However, it will also be the purpose of the chapter to point out that Wesley did not wish for his Methodists to practice the means of grace for the wrong reasons, against which he offers these words of caution:

³ It should be noted that, while Wesley does not name bodily posture among his lists of means of grace, the bodily worship as described above would be a natural extension of acts of worship such as prayer and the Lord's Supper. Therefore, while not being means of grace themselves, they would have been a part of God's use of external means to convey internal grace. It should also be noted that the phrase 'means of grace' is found in 'A General Thanksgiving' in the *BCP*, which Wesley quotes in his sermon 'The Means of Grace' (BE) 1.381.

⁴ 'The Means of Grace', (BE) 1.381.

⁵ 'The Means of Grace' (BE) 1.381.

First, always...retain a lively sense that God is above all means. Have a care therefore of limiting the Almighty...Secondly, *before* you use any means let it be deeply impressed on your soul: there is no *power in this*...But because God bids, therefore I do; because he directs me to wait in this way, therefore here I wait for his free mercy, whereof cometh my salvation.⁶

Wesley felt compelled to offer these words of caution because many had begun using the means as ends in themselves:

But in process of time, when "the love of many waxed cold," some began to mistake the means for the end, and to place religion rather in doing those outward works, than in a heart renewed after the Image of God. They forgot that "the end of" every "commandment is love, out of a pure heart," with "faith unfeigned;" the loving the Lord their God with all their heart, and their neighbour as themselves.⁷

It must be stated that Wesley did not desire to abolish the practice of outward religion, but rather that they might enter into their use properly, for the right reasons, and to accomplish the ultimate goal of the means:

...outward religion is nothing worth, without the religion of the heart; that 'God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth;' that, therefore, external worship is lost labour, without a heart devoted to God; that the outward ordinances of God then profit much, when they advance inward holiness, but, when they advance it not, are unprofitable and void, are lighter than vanity; yea, that when they are used, as it were in the place of this, they are an utter abomination to the Lord.⁸

As we shall see in the remainder of this chapter, the advancement of inward holiness (holy tempers) was always Wesley's goal, and he believed that external worship, when engaged in with a right heart, led to the Methodist's maturity and perfection.

In this desire to lead his Methodists in external, outward forms of worship with a pure and right heart, Wesley was in good company. Brian Selleck points to several Anglican divines who expressed the same aspiration such as Hooker,

⁶ 'The Means of Grace' (BE) 1.395-396.

⁷ 'The Means of Grace' (BE) 1.378.

⁸ 'The Means of Grace' (BE) 1.379.

Beveridge, Henry More and Archbishop Laud, who said that ‘external worship was the greatest witness to the reality of inward worship.’⁹ This idea is in line with a theme that will reoccur throughout this thesis, as expressed by Mark Horst, ‘Liturgical practices cultivate and express the piety of each member.’¹⁰ It is to the liturgical practices of Wesley’s Methodists, and the cultivation and expression of their piety to which we now turn our attention.

Four Grand Parts of Public Prayer

Wesley believed, as has been mentioned, that there were certain forms or essentials required for the public worship of the Church. Regarding Methodist worship services such as the lovefeast, watchnight, renewal of the covenant and the preaching service, Wesley agreed that they were worship, but qualified his answer:

But some may say, ‘Our own service is public worship.’ Yes; but not such as supersedes the Church Service; it presupposes public prayer, like the sermons at the University. If it were designed to be instead of the Church Service, it would be essentially defective; for it seldom has the four grand parts of public prayer, deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving.¹¹

These ‘four grand parts of public prayer’ formed the basis of ‘the Church Service’ for Wesley, along with the Lord’s Supper.¹²

Wesley never cited his source for these parts of prayer, but his list closely parallels a section in ‘The Whole Duty of Man’, a prominent devotional guide of his

⁹ Brian J. Selleck, ‘The Book of Common Prayer in the Theology of John Wesley’, 297-298.

¹⁰ Horst, ‘Christian Understanding’, 4.

¹¹ ‘Minutes’ (BE), 10.326. Wesley never intended his innovations to replace *BCP* worship. Wesley believed it would be detrimental for his Methodists to participate exclusively in Methodist worship: ‘But if the people put ours (Methodist worship) in the place of the Church service, we *hurt* them that stay with us and *ruin* them that leave us.’ ‘Minutes’ (BE) 10.326.

¹² Wesley follows the above statement on the four grand parts of worship with an ominous forecast and a challenge: ‘But if the people put ours in the place of the Church service, we *hurt* them that stay with us and *ruin* them that leave us...I advise therefore all the Methodists in England and Ireland who have been brought up in the Church, constantly to attend the service of the Church, at least every Lord’s day.’ ‘Minutes’ (BE), 10.326.

era, a resource he included in his *Christian Library*.¹³ ‘Whole Duty’ begins with a treatment of the duties of humanity toward God. The particulars of our duty toward God include faith, hope, love, fear, trust, humility, honour and worship. It is this last characteristic, according to ‘Whole Duty’, which may be broken down into the several parts of prayer which Wesley believed to comprise proper public worship.¹⁴ In ‘Whole Duty’ there are five parts of public prayers. The list includes petition, deprecation, intercession and thanksgiving, just as Wesley’s did, but also adds confession. As confession was such a prominent part of the liturgy of the *Book of Common Prayer*, it is unlikely that Wesley rejected it as irrelevant.¹⁵ It may be that Wesley believed it was integrated into these other four parts, or that it was a given because confession was deeply embedded in the liturgy for the Lord’s Supper in which he insisted his Methodists partake weekly. Whatever the reason for this slight variation between Wesley and ‘Whole Duty’, it seems very likely that this was Wesley’s source for this form for public worship.¹⁶

These characteristics of public prayer were necessary for Wesley primarily because he believed they laid down a solid foundation for a well-balanced believer, which would enable them to develop holy tempers. Prayer Book worship was essential because it helped believers become balanced and rooted and grounded in love. Selleck says,

¹³ ‘Whole Duty’ was published anonymously in 1658. Richard Allestree has been suggested as a possible author – for more see ‘Richard Allestree and the Whole Duty of Man,’ *The Library*, 5th series, 6 (1951), 19-27.

¹⁴ This characteristic of worship was mentioned above in reference to bodily worship. As Wesley says in the quote used in the introduction of this chapter, ‘THE...duty we owe to God is worship; This is to be performed, first, by our souls; secondly, by our bodies.’ ‘Whole Duty’, *A Christian Library*, 71.

¹⁵ It should be noted that anyone could be a Methodist and not every Methodist would have participated in *BCP*. However, confession was a normal practice in the classes and bands. See *Rules of the Band Societies* (BE) 9.79.

¹⁶ ‘Whole Duty of Man’, *Christian Library*, XII.71–75. See also Selleck, ‘The Book of Common Prayer,’ 23, 177, 308; and Lawrence A. Lacher, ‘John Wesley’s Liturgical Revisions’, 187-188.

Wesley strongly reaffirmed the prayer book understanding of the means of grace, which wedded the external and internal aspects of religion. Against formalism he took the prayer book position that the internal dimension governs the external. True Christianity is a religion of the heart not of external actions. Externals are valued as they express the internal.¹⁷

To this we might add that, for Wesley, ‘externals’, such as *BCP* worship and written prayers, were valued as they *express* and engender heart religion. ‘Whole Duty’, in highlighting the relationship between public and private prayer, proclaims:

And private prayer is a duty which will not be excused by the performance of public. They are both required, and one must not be taken in exchange for the other. And whoever is diligent in public prayers, and yet negligent in private, it is much to be feared he rather seeks to approve himself to men than to God.¹⁸

In agreement with this, Selleck underscores the need for balance between public and private prayers for Wesley: ‘Wesley’s theology of the Church influences his concept of prayer. Private prayer is a continuation of the corporate liturgy in the private devotions of the individual.’¹⁹

Collections of Forms of Prayer

Wesley’s very first publication was a collection of prayers for his students at Oxford.²⁰ He describes it, along with his sermon ‘The Circumcision of the Heart’, in a letter to John Newton:

January 1, 1733, I preached the sermon on ‘The Circumcision of the Heart’, which contains all that I now teach concerning salvation from all sin and loving God with an undivided heart. In the same year (the first time I ventured to print anything) for the use of my pupils, *A Collection of Forms of Prayer*. And in this I spoke explicitly of giving *the whole heart and the whole life to God*. This was then, as it is now, my idea of perfection...²¹

¹⁷ Selleck, ‘Book of Common Prayer’, 342.

¹⁸ ‘Whole Duty’, *A Christian Library*, 76.

¹⁹ Selleck, ‘Book of Common Prayer’, 181.

²⁰ 14 May 1765 (BE), 510-511. For background on Wesley’s *Collection*, see Geordan Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, 32 and 40. For an interesting instance of Wesley’s suggested pastoral use of *Collection*, see , ‘On Visiting the Sick’ (BE), 3.392.

²¹ 14 May 1765 (BE), 510-511.

For Wesley to have included *Collection* in this letter as representative of his position on Perfection and to have equated it with ‘Circumcision of the Heart’, demonstrates not only his regard for the importance of this collection of prayers but also for its place in both prompting and exhibiting a heart made perfect in love. We will now examine the purpose, structure and content of *A Collection of Forms of Prayer* in an effort to determine its possible contribution to Wesley’s desire for the formation of holy tempers.

In his Preface to *Collection*, Wesley gives instructions for use and a summary of users who would find maximum benefit in the use of these daily prayers.²² In identifying his purpose for this *Collection*, Wesley suggests that each of the daily forms of prayer ‘contained something of Deprecation, Petition, Thanksgiving, and Intercession’.²³ These four ‘parts’ of prayer have already been identified in this chapter as being essential for corporate worship for Wesley. Thus, identifying these components as intrinsic to this daily form of prayer calls us to recognize this *Collection* as part of Wesley’s pastoral plan (along with the *Book of Common Prayer*) for equipping his Methodists with a firm, balanced foundation in the formation of holy tempers. Brian Selleck suggests that it is the use of these basic components of prayer as the outline for the structure of *Collection* which ties together the two basic elements of worship for Wesley: ‘In these prayers Wesley related objective religion to personal faith...The “Forms of Prayer” as a whole...express their “corporateness” in that they contain the four elements which the Anglican Church considers essential to

²² See *A Collection of Forms of Prayer For Every Day in the Week*, (The Third Edition, London: Printed for James Hutton at the *Bible and Sun* without *Temple-Bar*. 1738.) Preface, iii. Wesley suggests that this collection was written for those who would ‘set apart at least half an Hour twice a day’ for private prayer, and was written for those who would value ‘the Ancient Christian Church’.

²³ *Collection*, Preface iv.

common prayer or corporate worship.²⁴ He says another way the personal and corporate elements are present in these prayers is in the way Wesley was able to incorporate key phrases from the *Book of Common Prayer* into the daily prayers found in *Collection*.²⁵

In the survey to follow, we will examine how these prayers contribute to Wesley's call to holy tempers. The selected prayers are indicative of the quality, content and intention of the entire *Collection*. The first prayer for our consideration comes from the form for Tuesday morning:

O blessed Lord, enable me to fulfil thy commands, and command what thou wilt. O thou Saviour of all that trust in thee, do with me what seemeth best in thine own eyes; only give me the mind which was in thee; let me learn of thee to be meek and lowly. Pour into me the whole Spirit of humility; fill, I beseech thee, every part of my soul with it, and make it the constant, ruling habit of my mind, that all my other tempers may arise from it; that I may have no thoughts, no desires, no designs, but such as are the true fruit of a lowly spirit.²⁶

In this prayer we begin with a petition for God to supply whatever He commands, and a humble willingness in the heart of the petitioner to go, do and be whatever God commands. The prayer continues in an appeal for the mind of Christ, meekness, lowliness and humility. This prayer for humility is an invocation for the Spirit of humility to be made the 'ruling habit' of the petitioner, and that 'all my other tempers' may arise from this Spirit of humility. This prayer is very much in line with Wesley's belief that Christians should be characterized, first and foremost, by humility.

The prayer for Friday morning centres on the sacrificial work of Christ. In the midst of a powerfully evocative prayer detailing the heavy price Jesus paid for our

²⁴ Selleck, 'Book of Common Prayer,' 315-316.

²⁵ Selleck, 'Book of Common Prayer', 316, see esp. footnote 99.

²⁶ *Collection*, 33-34. The opening petition for God to 'fulfill thy commands, and command what thou wilt' is not only a paraphrase of Augustine (*Confessions*, Book 10, XXIX, 171), it is also very similar to petitions we will see later in chapter four in this thesis in Wesley's *Instructions for Children*.

salvation, Wesley guides his audience in this plea:

O Saviour of the world, God of Gods, light of light, thou that art the brightness of thy Father's glory, the express image of his person; thou that hast destroyed the power of the devil, that hast overcome death, "that sittest at the right hand of the Father;" thou wilt speedily come down in thy Father's glory to judge all men according to their works: Be thou my light and my peace; destroy the power of the devil in me, and make me a new creature. O thou who didst cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene, cast out of my heart all corrupt affections. O thou who didst raise Lazarus from the dead, raise me from the death of sin. Thou who didst cleanse the lepers, heal the sick, and give sight to the blind, heal the diseases of my soul; open my eyes, and fix them singly on the prize of my high calling, and cleanse my heart from every desire but that of advancing thy glory.²⁷

This prayer contains many themes important to Wesley's pastoral vision of the sanctification of his Methodists. The proclamation of Christ as the destroyer of the power of the devil, the overcomer of death is significant in its naming of aspects of Christ's Kingly victory over sin and death and hell, leading to the petitioners request for freedom from these enemies. The cry to be made a new creature, the deliverance from 'all corrupt affections', and a call for a God-directed heart, all are affectional prayers, with the development of holy tempers as their aim.

The pattern of the forms Wesley prescribes in this *Collection* seem to conform, if not chronologically then at least in totality, to the 'five heads' of 'the whole System of Christian duty' Wesley says may be found in the Bible and the ancient church. These 'five heads', according to Wesley, are 1. Renouncing ourselves; 2. Devoting of ourselves to God; 3. Self-denial; 4. Mortification; 5. Christ Liveth In Me.²⁸ Wesley visits all of these themes throughout the *Collection*, and demonstrates an overlapping pattern in the evening prayers with focusing questions based on certain themes: Sunday evening on love of God; Monday evening, love of

²⁷ *Collection*, 65.

²⁸ *Collection*, preface iv.-viii.

neighbour; Tuesday evening, humility; Wednesday (and Friday) evening, mortification; Thursday evening, resignation and meekness; and Saturday evening is spent in Thankfulness before returning to the love of God on Sunday. This weekly revolution encompasses the ‘five heads’ several times over and does so in a way that keep the petitioner grounded in God and practicing proper Christian affections such as humility and thanksgiving. This pattern also begins not only in God, but in a participation in and a thankfulness for the *means* of experiencing God’s love, as seen in this prayer for Sunday morning:

Let thy Holy Spirit, who, on the first day of the week, descended in miraculous gifts on thy Apostles, descend on me thy unworthy servant, that I may be always “in the spirit on the Lord’s day.” Let his blessed inspiration prevent and assist me in all the duties of this thy sacred day, that my wandering thoughts may all be fixed on thee, my tumultuous affections composed, and my flat and cold desires quickened into fervent longings and thirstings after thee. O let me join in the prayers and praises of thy Church with ardent and heavenly affection, hear thy word with earnest attention and a fixed resolution to obey it. And when I approach thy altar, pour into my heart humility, faith, hope, love, and all those holy dispositions which become the solemn remembrance of a crucified Saviour.²⁹

In this prayer we see not only an affectional tone, but a marriage between the nurturing of the affections, the reception of the Lord’s Supper and the ‘prayers and praises of the Church’ – internal and external religion joined together, working in harmony for the perfection of the human heart. We also see in this petition the anamnetic appeal for the remembrance of a crucified Saviour’ *and* the epicletic invocation of the Spirit to ‘pour into my heart humility, faith, hope, love and all those holy dispositions’, demonstrating through the Lord’s Supper both the Identity and Presence of God. Then, in the Sunday evening prayer we see a thankfulness, once

²⁹ *Collection*, 11.

again, for the privilege of participating in the life of the Church, and for the external means to lead to internal blessing and maturity:

I magnify Thee for granting me to be born in thy Church, and of Religious Parents; for washing me in thy Baptism, and instructing me in thy Doctrine of Truth and Holiness; for sustaining me by thy gracious Providence; and guiding me by thy Blessed Spirit: for admitting me with the rest of my Christian Brethren, to wait on Thee at thy Publick Worship: And for so often feeding my soul with thy most precious Body and Blood, those Pledges of Love, and sure Conveyances of Strength and Comfort. O be gracious unto all of us, whom Thou hast this Day admitted together to thy Holy Table. Strengthen our Hearts in thy Ways against all our Temptations, and make us more than Conquerors in thy Love.³⁰

At the end of each prayer in the *Collection* is a simple prompt, ‘Our Father, &c.’, call for the Lord’s Prayer to conclude each of these daily forms of prayer. This call to pray the Lord’s Prayer is significant for several reasons, the first of which is that it is a reminder that even Jesus himself established the need for the use of forms of prayer. It is also significant that Wesley called for the Lord’s Prayer to begin and end each day of personal prayer because the Lord’s Prayer also effectively forms both the beginning and the ending of the liturgies for Holy Communion, Morning and Evening Prayers in the *Book of Common Prayer*; thus tying together personal and communal prayers together once again. It is to Wesley’s use of the *Book of Common Prayer* that we now direct our attention.

The *Book of Common Prayer* and Heart Religion

One of the petitions in the Lord’s Prayer reminds us that confession, both individual and corporate, was sanctioned by Jesus himself as he taught his disciples to pray ‘and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us’. As noted above, while Wesley did not include confession in his list of the ‘four grand parts of prayer’, confession *does* appear in *The Whole Duty of Man* and the *Book of*

³⁰ *Collection*, 18.

Common Prayer, which Wesley wholeheartedly endorsed.³¹ He also includes confession in abundance in his *Collection of Forms of Prayer*. In pointing out the need for repentance in 'The Scripture Way of Salvation,' Wesley is clear in saying that sin must be named and God must be petitioned for forgiveness and mercy if one is to continue to grow in grace:

Hence may appear the extreme mischievousness of that seemingly innocent opinion, that there is no sin in a believer, that all sin is destroyed, root and branch, the moment a man is justified. By totally preventing that repentance, it quite blocks up the way to sanctification. There is no place for repentance in him who believes there is no sin either in his life or heart: Consequently, there is no place for his being perfected in love, to which that repentance is indispensably necessary.³²

Wesley believed that the practice of confession would enhance the Methodist understanding of God as merciful and gracious, as well as developing a hearty sense of humility, meekness and love for God's provision of forgiveness and salvation. This led to Wesley's insistence on the continual exposure to *BCP* worship, which would have engaged the Methodists (and all participants) in prayers like the following confession from the *BCP* Morning Prayers:

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father; We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou them, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.³³

³¹ As it is beyond the scope of this thesis to chronicle Wesley's extensive use of the *BCP* in his pastoral career, please refer to one of several excellent works which deal extensively with this topic, including Frank Baker, *John Wesley and the Church of England* (London: Epworth Press, 1970); Selleck, 'Book of Common Prayer'; and Kenneth Alexander Wilson, 'The Devotional Relationships and Interaction between the Spirituality of John Wesley, the Methodist Societies and the Book of Common Prayer.' Unpublished Thesis (Queens University of Belfast, 1984).

³² 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (BE) 2.166.

³³ *BCP* (1662)

Confessing opened the way for God to complete His work in them, and their confession prior to receiving the Eucharist was a powerful way to engage the affections.

Balancing out the confessing of sins and the pleading for mercy in the liturgy for the Lord's Supper is the persistent theme of thanksgiving. In the beginning of the anaphora, as the worshipper is called in the *Sursum Corda* to lift their hearts to the Lord, the participants are implored by the Priest, 'Let us give thanks unto our Lord God', to which the worshippers declare together 'It is meet and right so to do'. After the *Sursum Corda*, a seasonal Proper would expound upon some character of God and the *Sanctus* would then declare the glory of the Trinity. During the *anamnesis* or Remembrance and Fraction, the worshipper receives the Bread and Wine while hearing 'Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving', and 'Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.' In the post-communion *Gloria*, thanksgiving is to be found in the midst of the praise of the Church to God: 'Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good-will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thee thanks for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty'. As thanksgiving was an essential part of public prayer, as well as a core affection for Wesley, it was essential that this affection be practiced repeatedly, resulting not only in thankful hearts, but leading also to a genuine offering by Wesley's Methodists of themselves in service to God through acts of mercy.³⁴ Tying these two strands of the liturgy of the *BCP* together, Brian Selleck returns us to the topic of sanctification: 'The Anglican cultus clearly understands sanctification sacramentally and liturgically. The Christian life is

³⁴ All references to the Liturgy for the Lord's Supper are from the 1662 version of the *BCP*. For more on the oblation or offering of the Church in the Lord's Supper, see section on Hymns and Forms of Worship below.

both a process of self-mortification and of thanksgiving; both processes are embodied throughout the prayer book services and are especially important to the Communion, which is Eucharist or Thanksgiving.’³⁵

Wesley believed that the doctrine of perfection, perfect love or purity of heart and life could be found in the *BCP*. In a sermon written in 1741 Wesley suggests that everything he believed and taught about sanctification could be found in the *BCP*:

All the liturgy of the Church is full of petition for that holiness without which the Scripture everywhere declares, no man shall see the Lord. And these are summed up in those comprehensive words which we are supposed to be so frequently repeating, “Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name.” It is evident that in the last clause of this petition all outward holiness is contained; neither can it be carried to a greater height, or expressed in stronger terms. And those words, “cleanse the thoughts of our hearts,” contain the negative branch of inward holiness, the height and depth of which is purity of heart by the inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit. The remaining words, “that we may perfectly love thee”, contain the positive part of holiness, seeing this love, which is the fulfilling of the law, implies the whole mind that was in Christ.³⁶

In referring to Wesley’s dependence upon the *BCP* for doctrines such as perfection and sanctification, Selleck rightly observes, ‘This quest for purity as the goal of the Christian life provides the motivation behind confession from the heart, hearty thankful response to the Scripture readings, petitions to obey God’s commandments from the heart, and the communion charge, “Feed on him to thy heart with thanksgiving.” In all things we request that the Holy Spirit direct and rule our hearts.’³⁷ The role of the Holy Spirit in the worship of the Church and in the formation of holy tempers in the lives of Wesley’s Methodists will be considered next

³⁵ Selleck, ‘Book of Common Prayer,’ 273-274.

³⁶ ‘Hypocrisy in Oxford’ (BE) 4.398. Wesley also states in his response to ‘Mr. Rowland Hill’s Tract, Entitled “Imposture Detected”, that this prayer for perfection was prayed by Clergymen in the Church of England every Sunday in the forms of the Collect for Purity, and that the doctrine of perfection was, in fact, to be found in the *BCP*. See JW (Jackson) 10.450.

³⁷ Selleck, ‘Book of Common Prayer’, 288.

as we examine Wesley's use of an innovative tool to enliven and affectively communicate the liturgy.

Hymns, the Liturgical Tradition and Affections

John and Charles Wesley are perhaps as well known for their hymns as they are for any other contributions they made to the Church. Many who may have never participated in *Prayer Book* worship, a lovefeast or a watchnight service have joyously sung 'O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing', 'And Can it Be' or 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.' Evelyn Underhill has suggested that the hymns are the Wesleys' most unique contribution to the worship of the Church:

They (the hymns) constitute the true liturgy of Methodism; and in them, as in other liturgies, its essential spirit can still be found. They were, and are, greatly used both in public worship and private devotion...they are both theological and personal; charged with dogma yet so penetrated by the spirit of adoring and confident love that the firm outlines of the doctrinal framework are not at first observed.³⁸

The Wesleys were innovators in the use of hymns in worship. Beginning with Wesley's publication of his first hymnal in Charlestown, Georgia, his use of hymns in worship ran throughout the course of his ministry.³⁹ Rattenbury confirms this view of the uniqueness of Wesley's use of hymns in worship, specifically in the context of the Eucharist:

The introduction of hymns into Holy Communion was a novelty in the eighteenth century, however much it may have been a revival of ancient practice. They introduced a note often of ecstatic joy. When there were sometimes more than a thousand communicants, attention and reverence would have been difficult to sustain without some such device. Charles Wesley not only gave opportunity for expression to hearts full of thanksgiving – the true Eucharist – but also made the people realize that the service was not the performance of a separate priest on their behalf, but of the whole priestly community, the Body of Christ.⁴⁰

³⁸ Evelyn Underhill, *Worship* (Guildford, Surrey: Eagle, 1991), 233.

³⁹ See Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, 103-107.

⁴⁰ J. Ernest Rattenbury, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley* (OSL Publications: Akron Ohio, 2006), 147. Frank Baker offers a similar perspective on the innovative use

John Bowmer refers to a journal entry from 28 August, 1743 by Howell Harris, a contemporary of Wesley's who attended the Lord's Supper at the West Street Chapel. In his journal entry, Harris describes his experience of the Eucharist, and was particularly moved by the use of music, suggesting that, 'in his singing the hymns between every company of communicants, I was much humbled.'⁴¹ This view of the use of the hymns as both utilitarian and at times evocative of such emotions as 'ecstatic joy' could lead to a one-sided view of the hymns as unnecessary and even dangerous emotional embellishment to the otherwise stately and sombre liturgy of the Lord's Supper in the *BCP* format. Randy Maddox helps us maintain a more balanced view of the hymns:

Wesley's assumption that hymns both empower and shape Christian discipleship is particularly evident in the 1780 Hymns, which he structured around the various dimensions of the Way of Salvation. To be sure, this structure could spark a rebuttal that one should organize around the liturgical year rather than the life of the believer, to provide an objective pattern for Christian life. The actual content of the hymns should allay this fear. Moreover, one must remember that this was only one collection of hymns, designed specifically for society worship. The Wesleys kept several other collections in publication related to the Christian seasons and liturgical worship.⁴²

Not only is Maddox correct in pointing to the Wesleys' collections of seasonal and liturgical materials, he also provides an important reminder that even many of the hymns in the *Collection of Hymns for Use of The People Called Methodist* were rooted in *BCP* worship. A brief survey of Wesley's hymns in relation to the liturgy for the Lord's Supper in the *BCP* will provide examples of the diversity and content of hymns and traditional forms of worship.

of hymns during the partaking of the Eucharist, especially in the fact of unusually large crowds. See Frank Baker, *John Wesley and the Church of England*, 86.

⁴¹ John C. Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodist* (Dacre Press: Westminster, 1951), 87.

⁴² Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 208.

The Hymns and the Lord's Supper Liturgy

Having already surveyed Wesley's treatment of confession,⁴³ we will move to the next stage of the *BCP*'s Liturgy, the 'Comfortable Words'. After the communal confession, the priest offers Absolution, then chooses from a collection of verses from Scripture to offer comfort to the worshipping congregation. The first verse is Matthew 11:28, and in *A Collection of Hymns* Wesley offers this lyrical rendition of these Comfortable words:

Come, ye weary sinners, come,
All who groan to bear your load;
Jesus calls his wanderers home,
Hasten to your pardoning God.
Come, ye guilty spirits oppressed,
Answer to the Saviour's call:
'Come, and I will give you rest;
Come, and I will save you all.'⁴⁴

The second verse provided for the priest to read as 'Comfortable words' was John 3:16, and again Wesley provided a poetic counterpart:

O believe the record true,
God to you his Son hath given!
Ye may now be happy too,
Find on earth the life of heaven;
Live the life of heaven above,
All the life of glorious love.⁴⁵

Immediately following these 'Comfortable words' the priest leads the people in the *Sursum Corda* (mentioned above) and then into the *Sanctus* – 'Therefore with Angels and Arch-angels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of

⁴³ For examples hymns dealing with confession see *HLS*, 87.4-5 and *Collection of Hymns* 105.1-2.

⁴⁴ *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of The People Called Methodists* (BE), 7.115. This hymn was first published in 1747 in a collection entitled *Redemption Hymns*.

⁴⁵ *Collection of Hymns* (BE), 7.104. This hymn was also first published in 1747 in *Redemption Hymns*.

hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory; Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.

Amen.’ Wesley offers his own version of the Sanctus in *HLS*:

Thee to laud in songs Divine
Angels and archangels join;
We with them our voices raise,
Echoing Thy eternal praise:
‘Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
Live by heaven and earth adored!’
Full of Thee, they ever cry,
‘Glory be to God most High!’⁴⁶

The Words of Institution are lyrically captured by the Wesleys in the words of Jesus himself:

Take, eat, this My body, given
To purchase life and peace for you,
Pardon and holiness and heaven;
Do this My dying love to show,
Accept your precious legacy,
And thus, My friends, remember Me.⁴⁷

The Wesleys also provided a hymn that would have clearly reminded the Methodists of praying the post-communion Gloria, sung to the Glory of the Father, Son and Spirit.⁴⁸

Two other aspects of the liturgy bear consideration concerning Wesley’s engagement of them through hymns. First, Wesley was enamoured, from as early as his Oxford days, by the ancient liturgies of the Church, particularly as they were revealed to him through the NonJurors.⁴⁹ While in Georgia Wesley, following the NonJurors, preferred the first prayer book published by Thomas Cranmer in 1549, judging it to be more in line with the Primitive Church. The 1549 *Prayer Book*

⁴⁶ Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Hymns*, #161.2-3, 253.

⁴⁷ Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Hymns*, #1.2, 195.

⁴⁸ See Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Hymns*, #163.1-7, 253.

⁴⁹ Geordan Hammond conducted the first full-length study of the impact the Nonjurors had on Wesley. In his study he describes the Nonjurors as ‘Anglicans who declined to take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy to William and Mary.’ Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, 4, 13.

offered an invocation to the Holy Spirit, prior to the words of Institution: ‘Hear us (O Merciful Father) we beseech thee; and with thy holy Spirit and word vouchsafe to bless and sanctify these thy gifts, and creatures of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the body and blood of thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ.’⁵⁰ Wesley incorporates a hymn of *epiclesis* in his *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*:

Come, Holy Ghost, Thine influence shed,
And realize the sign;
Thy life infuse into the bread,
Thy power into the wine.

Effectual let the tokens prove,
And made, by heavenly art,
Fit channels to convey Thy love
To every faithful heart.⁵¹

Rather than attempt to explain the mysteries involved in this change, Wesley seems content to rejoice in the grace imparted.⁵² This hymn of *epiclesis* concludes by imploring God the Holy Spirit to shape and form the heart of the petitioner/singer to convey the Spirit’s love ‘to every faithful heart’. This prayer/hymn offers a reminder that the purpose of the Lord’s Supper is to communicate God’s love to humanity, with the express purpose that the one who is loved will love others in turn.

The other aspect of the liturgy that bears further consideration is the oblation, or self-offering. John Wesley’s theology of the Lord’s Supper was impacted in a profound way by Dr. Daniel Brevint, a Caroline Divine from the Channel Islands. He

⁵⁰ See Geordan Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, 25-27 on the Nonjurors Usagers and their impact on Wesley. The four ‘usages’ that these Usagers, particularly Thomas Deacon, advocated were 1) The mixture of water and wine in the sacramental Cup; 2) The oblation of the elements as representative of Christ’s sacrifice; 3) An *epiclesis* or invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the elements; and 4) prayer for God’s faithfully departed. For more on Wesley’s post-Georgia response to these Usages, see chapter three in this thesis.

⁵¹ Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Hymns*, 219.

⁵² See *HLS* 57 where Wesley says ‘Sure and real the grace, the manner be unknown; Only meet us in Thy ways, and perfect us in one. Lord, we ask for nothing more: Thine to bless, ‘tis only ours to wonder and adore.’ Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Hymns*, 214. For opinions on the purpose and function of the *epiclesis* see Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Hymns*, 48-49 and Ole Borgen, *John Wesley on the Sacraments: A Theological Study* (Abingdon Press: Nashville and New York, 1972), 72-76.

was a Fellow at Oxford until the Civil War, pastored in France until after the Restoration at which point he became Dean of Lincoln.⁵³ Rattenbury summarizes Brevint's impact on Wesley's Eucharistic theology:

Where then can we find a satisfactory account of the early Methodist teaching on the Eucharist? The answer is plain: in the hymns of John and Charles Wesley on the Lord's Supper, and in the extract from Dr. Brevint...the extract from Brevint and the hymns of the Lord's Supper...do contain the true Methodist doctrines on the Eucharist.⁵⁴

Brevint's major work on the Eucharist, *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*, was extracted and included by Wesley in his publication of *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*. This extract of Brevint's material provided Wesley with his outline for the structure of *HLS*, and the two main categories – Lord's Supper as a *sacrament*, and Lord's Supper as a *sacrifice*. These two categories, obviously a reflection of Brevint's title and overall structure, broken down even further, with Wesley suggesting that as a sacrament the Lord's Supper 1) *represented* the past sufferings of Jesus, providing a memorial; 2) functioned as a present *means* of grace; and 3) provided a *pledge* of heaven. As a *sacrifice*, the Lord's Supper is an oblation of both the Son to the Father, affected by our remembrance, and also our own oblation to the Father, through the Son in the power of the Spirit. It is this second aspect of Brevint's work, and Wesley's use thereof, which we will now examine.

Brevint said that the Lord's Supper brought together the two great themes of Christ's atoning work on behalf of sinners and that same sinner's response to the

⁵³ Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Theology*, 12.

⁵⁴ Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Theology*, 10. See also Joseph Wood, 'Tensions Between Evangelical Theology and the Established Church: John Wesley's Ecclesiology' Unpublished Thesis, (University of Manchester, 2012), 176, where he concurs with Rattenbury's suggestion that Brevint, along with the Nonjurors, were Wesley's primary influences in the development of his Eucharistic theology.

atonement, their 'acceptable duty to God'.⁵⁵ These two themes are apparent in hymn 137 from *HLS*:

Ye royal priests of Jesus, rise,
And join the daily sacrifice,
Join all believers in his name
To offer up the spotless Lamb.

Your meat and your drink-offerings throw
On him who suffer'd once below,
But ever lives with God above,
To plead for us his dying love.

Whate'er we cast on him alone
Is with his great oblation one,
His sacrifice doth ours sustain,
And favour and acceptance gain.

On him, who all our burthens bears,
We cast our praises and our prayers,
Ourselves we offer up to God,
Implung'd in his atoning blood.

Mean are our noblest offerings,
Poor feeble unsubstantial things;
But when to him our souls we lift,
The altar sanctifies the gift.

Our persons and our deeds aspire
When cast into that hallow'd fire,
Our most imperfect efforts please
When join'd to Christ our righteousness.

Mixt with the sacred smoke we rise,
The smoke of his burnt sacrifice,
By the eternal Spirit driven
From earth, in Christ we mount to heaven.

In this hymn the worshippers offer themselves as living sacrifices, and as they do so, they join their sacrifice with that of Christ's offering of Himself. But in the opening verse, Bowmer reminds us that it is the Church's offering: 'The Eucharistic Sacrifice, according to Wesley, is not one offered by an individual priest as a propitiation for the

⁵⁵ Rattenbury, *Eucharistic Hymns*, 167.

sins of himself and others. It is celebrated by the Church, a company of faithful believers, through its duly appointed officers.⁵⁶ He continues by stating that as the Church, as ‘His Body’, *offers* His Body, over time there evolves a change in the desires of the Church to self-sacrifice – sacrifice of self and possessions. So it is that, in the climax of this Liturgy, as we pray the prayer of Oblation, we recall that prior to the beginning of the anaphora the worshipper heard the Priest proclaim the words that begin the Offertory:

Whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? (I John 3.17)

He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord: and look, what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again. (Proverbs 19.17)

Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy: the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble. (Psalm 41.1)

The worshipper remembers the basin being passed, the alms and oblations for the poor being collected, and this prayer offered: ‘We humbly beseech thee most mercifully to accept our alms and oblations...which we offer unto thy Divine Majesty.’ The words of these scriptures and prayers, combined with the lyrics of hymn 137, potentially being sung as the Methodist sees the breaking of the Bread and hears the words ‘Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving’, and tastes the grace which has been offered – all the senses alive in this encounter with the Christ who died and was raised. This kind of experience would certainly create a sense of *zeal*. Wesley prepared and led his people to take this *zeal*, which he equated with love, and use it correctly. Wesley reminded his people that they should be zealous for the Church and the ordinances of Christ, but most of all he taught them that they should be zealous for *works of mercy*. In his sermon ‘On Zeal’ Wesley reminded his Methodists that God

⁵⁶ Bowmer, *Lord’s Supper in Early Methodism*, 183.

preferred mercy to sacrifice, and that ‘whenever...one interferes with the other, works of mercy are to be preferred’ to works of piety.⁵⁷ Of course, even beyond this, there is an even higher goal:

But as zealous as we are for all good works, we should be still more zealous for holy tempers; for planning and promoting both in our souls, and in all we have intercourse with, lowliness of mind, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, contentedness, resignation unto the will of God, deadness to the world and the things of the world, as the only means of being truly alive to God. For these proofs and fruits of living faith we cannot be too zealous...but our choicest zeal should be reserved for love itself...⁵⁸

Wesley uses a number of images somewhat interchangeably to describe this pursuit, this goal of the Christian life. In the above quote from ‘On Zeal’, Wesley points to love and holy tempers as the ultimate goal for the Christian. In his sermon ‘On Perfection’, Wesley once again points to love of God and humanity as containing ‘the whole of Christian Perfection’.⁵⁹ He incorporates other images such as ‘the mind of Christ’, ‘the fruit of the Spirit’, and ‘the new man, renewed after the image of him that created him’ as seemingly equivalent to love of God and humanity.⁶⁰ One final image from this sermon which we will address comes from Wesley’s use of Romans 12:1 in calling his Methodists to offer themselves to God as living sacrifices.

This reference to living sacrifice, again used as an equivalent image with Perfection and love of God and humanity in his sermon ‘On Perfection’, is here described in greater detail by Wesley,

We cannot show this sanctification in a more excellent way than by complying with that exhortation of the Apostle, “I beseech you brethren...that ye present your bodies...a living sacrifice unto God;” to whom ye were consecrated many years ago in baptism. When what was then devoted is actually presented to God, then is the man of God perfect.⁶¹

⁵⁷ ‘On Zeal’ (BE) 3.314.

⁵⁸ ‘On Zeal’ (BE) 3.314-315.

⁵⁹ ‘On Perfection’ (BE) 3.74.

⁶⁰ ‘On Perfection’ (BE) 3.74-75.

⁶¹ ‘On Perfection’ (BE) 3.75-76.

First, we see again the call to sacrifice, which takes on added significance when we see it paraphrased in the Oblation following the Lord's Supper in the *BCP*: 'And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that all we, who are partakers of this holy Communion, may be fulfilled with thy grace and heavenly benediction.' This sacrifice of our lives, this self-oblation, is offered with Christ's own sacrifice to the Father and is thus made perfect. In this same context we see the full magnitude of the sacramental life Wesley desired for his Methodists, as he also points to baptism as the beginning of the sacrifice, which the worshipper makes perfect by again presenting themselves to God in and through Christ's own sacrifice. Brent Peterson upholds this view:

Wesley affirmed that a person's covenant made to God at baptism is not a commitment made only once in your life. But at the Table, as Christians offer themselves as a living sacrifice, *what they consecrated many years ago in baptism is offered again to God*. It is at baptism that God graciously births Christians into the church and in the Lord's Supper God sustains and nurtures Christians.⁶²

Conclusion

It is with this theme of sacrifice, and all its many components, that we return to the overall focus of this chapter, namely Wesley's insistence on the use of external forms of religion, not to the exclusion of, but rather co-operant with, the internal experience of the heart made right with God. Wesley summarizes this focus well, incorporating for us this theme of sacrifice as a unifying theme:

It is also true, that bare outside religion, which has no root in the heart, is nothing worth; that God delighteth not in such outward services, no more than in Jewish burnt-offerings; and that a pure and holy heart is a sacrifice with which he is always well pleased. But he is also well pleased with all that

⁶² Brent Peterson, 'A Post-Wesleyan Eucharistic Ecclesiology: The Renewal of the Church as the Body of Christ to Be Doxologically Broken and Spilled Out for the World', Unpublished Thesis (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, 2009), 230.

outward service which arises from the heart; with the sacrifice of our prayers (whether public or private,) of our praises and thanksgivings; with the sacrifice of our goods, humbly devoted to him, and employed wholly to his glory; and with that of our bodies, which he peculiarly claims, which the Apostle beseeches us, "by the mercies of God, to present unto him, a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God."⁶³

This life of sacrifice, lived out in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, surrounded by the prayers of the Church and challenged and encouraged by Scripture, these ingredients of formal, external worship served as the foundation for worship for Wesley's Methodists. With this scheme in mind, it is significant to hear Wesley elucidate his plan for how his Methodists should work out their salvation featuring these very elements:

If ever you desire that God should work in you that faith whereof cometh both present and eternal salvation, by the grace already given, fly from all sin as from the face of a serpent; carefully avoid every evil word and work; yea, abstain from all appearance of evil. And "learn to do well:" Be zealous of good works, of works of piety, as well as works of mercy; family prayer, and crying to God in secret. Fast in secret, and "your Father which seeth in secret, he will reward you openly." "Search the Scriptures:" Hear them in public, read them in private, and meditate therein. At every opportunity, be a partaker of the Lord's Supper. Do this in remembrance of him: and he will meet you at his own table.⁶⁴

⁶³ 'Sermon on the Mount, IV' (BE) 1.542.

⁶⁴ 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation' (BE) 3.205-206. For a similar plan where, in Wesley's words, we see the 'order wherein God himself is generally pleased to use these means in bringing a sinner to salvation' see 'The Means of Grace' (BE) 1.393.

Chapter 3 - The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America

Context for Liturgical Change

The century before John Wesley was born was a period of upheaval, debate and experimentation for the Church of England concerning the *Book of Common Prayer*. Voices from within expressed various concerns with the *BCP* and many reforms were submitted, suggested and discussed. This period of liturgical experimentation was not unknown to Wesley, and these discussions and debates continued into Wesley's day. A brief review of the sources and issues surrounding Prayer Book reform in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries will set the context for Wesley's own revision.

Many of the suggestions for a change to the *BCP* came from the Puritans who wished for greater freedom and what they considered to be a more biblical form of worship. The problem for the Puritans was not primarily the formality of the liturgy. Kenneth Wilson expresses it well when he summarizes: 'One is left with the impression that, in the main, the Puritans were not opposed to set liturgies as such, but to their arbitrary imposition as the only form of public worship.'¹ Karen Westerfield Tucker summarizes their position: 'Generally the concern of the Puritans was not to abandon set forms, but rather to eradicate what were perceived as Romish remnants and non-scriptural forms and theologies in the Book of Common Prayer.'² One of the earliest and most important Puritan complaints was an 'Admonition to the Parliament', published in 1572 by two Puritan Clergy, Thomas Wilcox and John Field. Westerfield Tucker describes 'Admonition' by suggesting that it 'formed a foundation for later Puritan critique while providing fodder for an increasingly bitter

¹ Wilson, 'Devotional Relationship,' 30.

² Westerfield Tucker, 'Prayer Book Revision', 235.

debate between supporters of the Prayer Book and the Puritans.’³ Many of the critiques found in ‘Admonition’ are very similar to some of the changes Wesley made in the *Sunday Service*, such as the use of the title ‘priest’, the signation and use of godparents in infant baptism, private communion, holy days, and the reading of services rather than preaching. A. Elliott Peaston suggests that prior to 1588 suggested prayer book reform by the Puritans was received with little censure. He says the reasons for this may have been a general feeling of toleration for the Puritans, and the rather mild alterations that had been suggested.⁴ Whatever the reason for the light handling of the Puritans prior to 1588, this attitude of tolerance would soon change.

The ‘Millenary Petition’ of April 1603 restated the concerns of the ‘Admonition’ and was received by James I, who subsequently convened a conference at Hampton Court in January 1604 to discuss the concerns addressed by the ‘Petition’. This conference was preceded, not coincidentally, by a statement from James I that declared that doctrine and constitution of the Church of England was in harmony with scripture and the Primitive Church. As might be expected after such a statement, the Puritans at Hampton Court gained few concessions. In fact, after this conference there was a decreased toleration for dissent, and the Laudians, the party most at odds with the agenda of the Puritans, gained even more power and influence during this period.

The Puritans produced their own guide for worship when, in 1644, in the midst of civil war and on the brink of Revolution, a *Directory for the Publike Worship of God* was published. In 1645 the *Directory* was imposed upon the nation when the use of the *BCP* was forbidden. The *Directory* was a combination of John Calvin’s

³ Westerfield Tucker, “Prayer Book Revision”, 235

⁴ A. Elliot Peaston, *The Prayer Book Tradition in the Free Churches*, (The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge 1964). 25-26.

form of service and John Knox's *Book of Common Order*. All this was precipitated by Parliament's *Root and Branch* petition of 1640 which sought to abolish the episcopal system. Interestingly, Kenneth Wilson postulates that the *BCP* actually grew in popularity and authority for the Royalists during the Interregnum and in 1660, when Charles II was declared King, the *BCP* regained preeminence as the liturgy of the Church of England. Wilson says, 'The Prayer Book now wore the halo of a persecuted and therefore doubly sacred book, which could only be altered after very serious deliberation.'⁵

The Restoration dawned with a desire on the part of the Puritans to push for a new settlement that would produce a liturgy more to their liking. As Westerfield Tucker says, 'Comprehension, and not simply toleration, was their theological and liturgical goal.'⁶ This push for comprehension began with the Savoy Conference in 1661. Convened by Charles II, and having appointed twelve bishops and twelve Presbyterians, the conference began with a declaration by the bishops that they had no proposals for change. The Presbyterians offered two forms of critique; the first was a list of 'Exceptions against the *Book of Common Prayer*', the second a liturgy composed by Richard Baxter and suggested as a legitimate alternative to the *BCP*. Westerfield Tucker says 'the "Exceptions" reiterated much of what had been condemned in the 'Admonition' and the 'Millenary Petition' and commended in the 'Proceedings'''.⁷ 'The Reformed Liturgy' by Richard Baxter, also known as the 'Savoy Liturgy', along with the 'Exceptions', were rejected by the Savoy conference. Westerfield Tucker suggests that the 'Savoy Liturgy' was 'little more than a set form of the *Directory* with an expansion and formalization of the rubrics.'⁸ This Liturgy

⁵ Wilson, 'Devotional Relationship' 39.

⁶ Westerfield Tucker, 'Prayer Book Revision', 237.

⁷ Westerfield Tucker, 'Prayer Book Revision', 237.

⁸ Westerfield Tucker, 'Prayer Book Revision', 238.

was abridged and edited by Edmund Calamy and published in 1713.

After this series of suggestions for liturgical comprehension the acceptance of the official BCP in 1662 put a hold on public suggestions for liturgical change. From the *Toleration Act* in 1689 and the complete absence of Convocation after 1717 caused a surge in the production of unofficial liturgies by people within the Church of England in the years that followed.⁹ Wesley was influenced by several of these, including and especially works by William Whiston and Thomas Deacon. Wesley first studied Whiston's *Primitive Christianity Revived* in 1732 with other members of the Holy Club.¹⁰ Wesley met with Whiston in person in 1734 (before Georgia) during which time they discussed 'stations' and 'feasting'. Whiston actually assisted Wesley in writing his 'Essay upon Stationary Fasts', which Deacon later published in the appendix of his *Compleat Collection of Devotions*.¹¹

Thomas Deacon was also very involved in the rewriting of the *Book of Common Prayer*. In 1734 he published *A Compleat Collection of Devotions*, his revision of the BCP, which advocated what he felt were points of departure in the BCP from the *Apostolic Constitutions*. As one of the leaders of the Manchester sect of non-Juror Usagers, Deacon's desire was to reform the 1662 BCP in ways that would restore the four usages as found in the AC and the 1549 BCP.¹² Wesley came into contact with Thomas Deacon through his friend and fellow Oxford Methodist John Clayton. Clayton had been mentored by Deacon in Manchester. Wesley had a great deal of respect for Deacon's knowledge of early Church liturgical practices, and

⁹ Peaston notes that around fifty-four published liturgies emerged from 1713 to 1854, not including Wesley's *Sunday Service*, which Peaston fails to mention.

¹⁰ Hammond, *John Wesley in America*. 35.

¹¹ Westerfield Tucker, *Prayer Book Revision*, 240.

¹² Deacon's representation of the four usages of the Nonjurors are as follows: 1)mixture of water and wine in sacramental cup; 2)oblation of Eucharistic elements as representative sacrifice of Christ's body and blood; 3)Blessing or invocation of Holy Spirit upon elements; 4)prayers for the 'faithful departed' during Eucharist. See Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, 25-27 and chapter three of this thesis.

it would seem that respect was reciprocated. Deacon actually included in his *Complete Collection of Devotions* a portion of Wesley's 'Essay upon the Stationary Fasts.'

Whiston and Deacon both placed an immense amount of value upon the authenticity and apostolicity of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Early in his ministry Wesley believed the Constitutions to be genuine. However, later in his life when he became sceptical about the validity of the Constitutions Wesley may have, as a consequence, placed less value upon the liturgical texts of Whiston and Deacon.¹³ While there are a few similarities between the Sunday Service and the works of Whiston and Deacon it is unlikely that either provided a substantial influence over Wesley's final revisions.

In 1749, the *Free and Candid Disquisitions* were published. This publication, an anonymous collection of essays typically attributed to John Jones, suggested that if Convocation was unable to bring about acceptable revisions to the *BCP* that perhaps the task should be turned over to private individuals. Wesley read *Disquisitions* in 1750, and his reaction was somewhat mixed. *Disquisitions* made some concrete suggestions for revision that Wesley agreed with (excision of 'unchristian' psalms, inclusion of more hymnody in public worship, elimination of wedding ring and restriction of Christian burial for unbelievers), and he suggested that the work was well written. However, Wesley also said 'about one objection in ten appears to have weight, and one in five has plausibility.'¹⁴ He was concerned about the indiscriminate revision of the *BCP*, prompting him to ask the question: 'Who would supply us with a Liturgy less exceptionable than that which we had before.'¹⁵ These comments suggest that Wesley believed any changes to the *BCP* should be carefully considered

¹³ See footnote 18 below on Wesley's post-Georgia views of early Church liturgical resources.

¹⁴ Wednesday, 15 August (BE) 20.357.

¹⁵ JW, *Journals* Wednesday, 15 August, 20.357.

and conservative. We will now examine the development of Wesley's own willingness to edit the prayer book.

Wesley's Revision - Development and Sources

Wesley showed a willingness to edit and add to the *BCP* as early as the 1730's during his time in Georgia. He began to edit his own personal copy of the *BCP* as early as March 5, 1736.¹⁶ This is critical because it shows a willingness and ability to demonstrate critical distance from the *BCP*. Wesley's editing of the *BCP* at such an early juncture in his ministry shows his recognition that it was not beyond improvement. It is an attitude that he carried with him throughout the remainder of his ministry. Karen Westerfield Tucker says,

Although it is possible that his active engagement with the revision of the Prayer book was confined to the year 1784, it is clear that his liturgical work was anticipated by a lifetime of pastoral experience, of studying ancient writers and the ritual texts of antiquity when available, of scrutinizing the liturgy of the Church of England which he believed was unsurpassed in "solid, scriptural, rational Piety," and of engagement with the liturgical issues and debates of his own day.¹⁷

This 'engagement with the liturgical issues' will be discussed at length throughout this chapter, as it relates both to the content and purpose of the Sunday Service. As to Wesley's pastoral experience and his study of the liturgy of the Primitive Church, the trip to Georgia provides a compelling example of how these two factors interacted. Shortly after his return from Georgia, Wesley wrote a brief account of his spiritual condition in which he confessed that he had too strong a reliance on the Primitive Church:

1. By making antiquity a co-ordinate rather than subordinate rule with Scripture. 2. By admitting several doubtful writings as undoubted evidences of antiquity. 3. By extending antiquity too far, even to the middle or end of the fourth century. 4. By believing more practices to have been universal in the

¹⁶ March 5, 1736 (BE)18.363.

¹⁷ Karen Westerfield Tucker, "John Wesley's Prayer Book Revision: The Text in Context." *Methodist History* 34.4 (2006), 230.

ancient Church than ever were so. 5. By not considering that the decrees of one Provincial Synod could bind only those provinces whose representatives met therein. 6. By not considering that the most of those decrees were adapted to particular times and occasions; and consequently, when those occasions ceased, must cease to bind even those provinces.¹⁸

Wesley's suggestions for revision appear again in 1755 in an essay entitled 'Ought we to Separate from the Church of England?' Among the issues discussed in this essay was a list of nine things in the BCP that Wesley would not 'undertake to defend,':

(1) In the *Athanasian Creed* though we firmly believe the doctrine contained therein, the *damnatory clauses*, and the speaking of this faith (that is, these opinions_ as if it were the ground term of salvation. (2) That expression, first used concerning King Charles the Second, 'our most religious king'. (3) The answers in the *Office of Baptism* which are appointed to be made by the Sponsors. (4) The *Office of Confirmation*. (5) The *absolution* in the Office for Visiting the Sick. (6) The thanksgiving in the *Burial Office*. (7) Those parts of the Office for *Ordaining Bishops, Priests, and Deacons*, which assert or suppose an essential difference between bishops and presbyters. (8) The use of those words in *Ordaining Priests*, 'Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted.' (9) One might add (though these are not properly a part of the common Prayer) Hopkins' and Sternhold's *Psalms*.¹⁹

Interestingly, he later omitted or changed all these in the Sunday Service. It is also important to note that in spite of his recognition of these "blemishes" in the BCP, he did not consider these to be sufficient cause to separate from the Church of England.

John Fletcher also believed that Wesley should try his hand at editing the prayer book, and stated his case in a letter he wrote in 1775. He suggested Wesley not only revise the "liturgy and homilies", but also that he rework the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* so that they might be 'rectified according to the purity of the gospel.'²⁰ Fletcher also suggested that Wesley's edited Prayer Book, including the *Thirty-Nine Articles* and the minutes from the conferences (which he called the

¹⁸ January 25, 1738, (BE) 18.212-213.

¹⁹ 'Ought We to Separate from the Church of England?' (BE) 9.571-572.

²⁰ 'The Benson-Fletcher Correspondence,' *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock, 8 vol. (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1909-1916), 8:328-334.

“Methodist canons”) might formulate, ‘next to the Bible, the *vade mecum* of the Methodist Preachers.’²¹ This suggests that, at least for Fletcher, this liturgical material should be accepted as a Doctrinal standard among early Methodists.

One final motivation underlying Wesley’s willingness to edit the *BCP* resulted in the *Sunday Service* may be seen in some of his personal feelings toward the ejection brought on by the Act of Uniformity (1662). In *Thoughts upon Liberty* (1772) Wesley discloses his disdain:

So, by this glorious Act, thousands of men guilty of no crime, nothing contrary either to justice, mercy, or truth, were stripped of all they had, of their houses, lands, revenues, and driven to seek where they could –or beg—their bread. For what? Because they did not dare to worship God according to other men’s consciences! So they and their families were, at one stroke, turned out of house and home, and reduced to little less than beggary, for no other fault, real or pretended, but because they could not assent and consent to that manner of worship which their worthy governors prescribed...By virtue of the Act of Conventicles, if any continued to worship God according to their own conscience, they were first robbed of their substance, and, if they persisted, of their liberty; often of their lives also.²²

Though it may be true that Wesley exhibited a ‘lifelong distaste for Dissent’²³, he still clearly harboured strong feelings, as late as 1772, concerning the way those who were ejected from the Church by the *Act of Uniformity* were treated. This personal, heated reaction was undoubtedly exacerbated by the ejection of Wesley’s own ancestors.²⁴

Perhaps prompting Wesley’s willingness to change the prayer book was his underlying presupposition concerning the purpose of ‘ecclesiastical order’. In 1746, in response to accusations by ‘John Smith’ that he did ‘a great deal of harm by breaking or setting aside order’ by asking a legitimate and important question: ‘What do you mean by “order”?’ A plan of Church discipline? What plan? The scriptural?

²¹ ‘Benson-Fletcher Correspondence’, (Curnock) 8.334

²² JW, ‘Thoughts upon Liberty’, (Jackson), 11.39, §17.

²³ Henry Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism*. (London, Epworth Press, 1992), 38.

²⁴ Wesley’s grandfather and great-grandfather on both his father’s and mother’s side of the family were clergy in the Church of England who were ejected by the Act of Conformity.

The primitive? Or our own?' In continuing to answer Smith's charge Wesley assumes that it is the Church order of the *BCP* that Smith is inferring, and continues to respond by proposing an enlightening perspective: 'What is the end of *ecclesiastical order*? Is it not to bring souls from the power of Satan to God? And to build them up in his fear and love? *Order*, then, is so far valuable as it answers these ends; and if it answers them not it is nothing worth.'²⁵ Wesley insinuates that the people of places like Cornwall and Kingswood never responded to 'the most orderly preaching' or came to the Church until he and his Methodist preachers began preaching in the fields and praying extemporaneously. Wesley draws his letter to a close by saying:

It was not therefore so much the *want of order* as of the knowledge and love of God which kept those poor souls for so many years in open bondage to a hard master. And, indeed, wherever the knowledge and love of God are, *true order* will not be wanting. But the most *apostolic order* where these are not is less than nothing and vanity.²⁶

This exchange between Wesley and Smith demonstrates Wesley's concern that communication of the 'knowledge and love of God' be held in proper relationship with Church order, apostolic or otherwise. This concern resonates with Wesley's pastoral agenda in leading his people in the pursuit of holy tempers and a heart set completely on God. In the remainder of this chapter, Wesley's changes to the *BCP* as found in *The Sunday Service* will be examined. We will also assess these changes in light of the purpose of this thesis, namely, to view this liturgical document through the lens of Wesley's affectional theology and his pastoral desire to help his Methodists develop holy tempers.

The Sunday Service

There have been a number of works dedicated to an overview of Wesley's

²⁵ 25 June 1746 (BE), 26.206.

²⁶ 25 June 1746 (BE) 26.205-206.

Sunday Service, many of which employ unique strategies for treating Wesley's changes.²⁷ Frederick Hunter suggested that Wesley's Preface to the *Sunday Service*, as it related to and emulated Edmund Calamy's abridgment of Richard Baxter's liturgy, served as an outline of Wesley's changes.²⁸ Karen Westerfield Tucker acknowledged that, 'Throughout his life, several concerns appear to have been central for him in the shaping and practice of worship which, in turn, may have determined, at least in part, the theological criteria by which Wesley made his 1784 revision.'²⁹ Using Wesley's 'Farther Thoughts on Separation from the Church' as her resource, she draws her list of Wesley's concerns:

Herein can be located five fundamental criteria: The primacy of *Scripture*; the normativity of Christian *antiquity*, especially the first three centuries of the Church's life; the example of the Church of England and its *liturgy*; the use of human *reason*...and the necessity of evangelical *experience* or 'experimental' religion...³⁰

She uses these criteria to provide the format for her summary of Wesley's *Sunday Service*. Lawrence Lacher engages the subject of Wesley's editorial modification of the *BCP* with a two-fold approach. He proposes that Wesley's worship is distinctive because of both its *structure* and its *character*. For Lacher,

Wesley's worship structure is attentive to worship being historic, liturgical, scriptural, Eucharistic, and shaped by preaching and prayer. The character of Wesleyan ordered worship includes experience, participation, exuberance, formation, and music.³¹

²⁷ See James F. White and John Wesley, *John Wesley's Prayer Book: The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*, (OSL Publications, Cleveland, Ohio), 3-4 for an introduction to the physical reception of *The Sunday Service* in America. See also J. Hamby Barton 'The Two Versions of the First Edition of John Wesley's "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America"' *Methodist History* 23, 3 (April 1985): 153-62 for an investigation of the mystery involving changes in the first edition of *The Sunday Service* upon its reception.

²⁸ Hunter, 'Sources', 125. William Nash Wade also uses the same resource (the Cover Letter and the Preface) as an outline for Wesley's revision, but disagrees with Hunter as to the extent of Wesley's dependence on Calamy.

²⁹ Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, *The Sunday Service of the Methodists* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1996), 18.

³⁰ Westerfield Tucker, *Sunday Service*, 19.

³¹ Lawrence A. Lacher, 'John Wesley's Liturgical Revision', 155.

Lacher's focus on both the *structure* and the *character* of Wesley's way of worship is insightful and instructive for the focus of this thesis. A more nuanced understanding of his two-fold assessment will be provided to give contour to our analysis of the *Sunday Service*.

As noted above, Lacher believes that there are two essential components to Wesley's worship, both being essential. He provides us with a more thorough explanation for why he believes both components are necessary:

The analysis of Wesley's *Sunday Service* given below is aware of this tension between form and passion in worship. To gain a full understanding of Wesley's liturgical vision (Ordered Worship) one must give attention both to the structure and the character of worship. While the structural elements can be easily extracted from an analysis of the *Sunday Service* itself, an understanding of the character by which that worship was expressed requires a broader understanding of Wesley's own counsel on worship as well as the practice of worship by first generation Methodists. Wesley's unique contribution to the practice of worship was his ability to imagine worship that was spirited that did not have to sacrifice historic structure at the same time...To be consistent with Wesley's liturgical imagination, one must maintain both halves of fully-formed worship, its structure and character.³²

Lacher's emphasis on structure is not unlike Westerfield Tucker's first four 'fundamental criteria' listed above. However, Lacher's treatment of *character* in worship is a very useful expansion of Westerfield Tucker's last fundamental, evangelical experience or experimental religion. Lacher's criteria for the *character* of worship include experience, participation, exuberance, formation, and engaging music. He garners this list primarily from Wesley's 'Letter to a Friend' from September 20, 1757. In this letter, Wesley describes what he calls the 'unspeakable advantage' of Methodist worship.³³ This 'advantage' is captured well in Lacher's summary of *character*: 'Wesley considered authentic worship to be the expression of the hearts of a congregation and clergy who had an authentic personal encounter with

³² Lacher, 'Wesley's Liturgical Revision,' 156.

³³ 'A Letter to a Friend,' (September 20, 1757), Works, (Jackson) 13.216-218.

God through Christ and expressed the joy of that encounter through the rites and rituals of the worship service.’³⁴

The primary focus of the following analysis of Wesley’s *Sunday Service* will be on Wesley’s editing of the *BCP*. An effort will be made to show how Wesley attempted to guide his Methodists in worship in ways that would usher them more deeply into an experience of heart religion. This focus will, by necessity, need tight parameters. Paul Blankenship offers three possible criteria for the changes Wesley made to the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*: 1)Deletions Occasioned by the New Situation in America, 2)Deletions Which Reflect Possible Doctrinal Differences 3)Other Deletions for the Sake of Clarity and Preciseness.³⁵ For the purpose of the following analysis, a similar list of criteria will be applied. First, it should be noted that Wesley made many *additions* to the remainder of the *Sunday Service*, so we will be examining *changes* rather than simply noting *deletions*. As to the rest 1)The new American situation – This criteria will primarily be dealt with in the preface letters and will form the background to the rest of the *Sunday Service* analysis; 2) Brevity – which will also be addressed in the preface and thereafter only as necessary; 3)Pastoral/Theological – this final criteria will be shaped by our understanding of Wesley as a Pastoral Liturgist. His primary focus was to lead his Methodists into a deep, abiding relationship with Jesus Christ – one that has been described in this thesis as the restoration of the Image of God in humanity and as the manifestation of holy tempers. This final criterion will occupy the majority of our attention as we analyse the various components of the *Sunday Service*.

³⁴ Lacher, ‘Wesley’s Liturgical Revision,’ 193.

³⁵ Paul F. Blankenship, ‘The Significance of John Wesley’s Abridgement of the Thirty-Nine Articles as Seen from His Deletions.’ *Methodist History* 2, no. 3 (1964): 38-44.

The Preface Letters

Wesley included two letters that were to function as the introduction of his *Sunday Service* (hereafter referred to as Letter #1 and Letter #2 for clarity). The first was a cover letter dated 10 September, 1784, the second a 'preface', dated 9 September of the same year. We will treat each letter independently, beginning with the cover letter (Letter #1) which has six 'points', but really speaks decisively of only two: the liberty of the Americans and ordination.

Letter #1

Liberty of the Americans

With the dispersal of *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies* John Wesley entered into the public conversation surrounding the escalating conflict between Britain and the Colonies in America. Wesley released 'Calm Address' in September of 1775 and almost immediately began to receive a backlash from those in support of the American cause.³⁶ Wesley had borrowed liberally from Samuel Johnson's *Taxation No Tyranny* to create 'Calm Address', much to the delight of the English government. Glen O'Brien points out that the government bought out the entire first edition of Wesley's tract and distributed it to every church in London.³⁷ O'Brien also suggests that, 'The "Calm Address" is probably the best known of John Wesley's political tracts and is usually considered the primary source for ascertaining his views on the American Revolution.'³⁸ In this tract, Wesley chides the American colonists for desiring liberty from taxation, and for their assumed desire for a republican form of government:

³⁶ See Donald H. Kirkham, 'John Wesley's "Calm Address": The Response of the Critics,' *Methodist History* 14 (October 1975): 13-23.

³⁷ Glen O'Brien, "John Wesley's Rebuke to the Rebels of British America: Revisiting the *Calm Address*", *Methodist Review* 4 (2012): 36.

³⁸ O'Brien, "Wesley's Rebuke," 32. For more on Wesley's 'Calm Address', see Frank Baker, "Shaping of John Wesley's 'Calm Address' (1775)." *Methodist History* 14 (October, 1975): 3-12.

Can you hope for a more desirable form of government, either in England or America, than that which you now enjoy? After all the vehement cry for liberty, what more liberty can you have? What more religious liberty can you desire, than that which you enjoy already? May not every one among you worship God according to his own conscience? What civil liberty can you desire, which you are not already possessed of? Do not you sit, without restraint, 'every man under his own vine?' Do you not, every one, high or low, enjoy the fruit of your labour? This is real, rational liberty, such as is enjoyed by Englishmen alone; and not by any other people in the habitable world. Would the being independent of England make you more free? Far, very far from it. It would hardly be possible for you to see clear, between anarchy and tyranny. But suppose, after numberless dangers and mischiefs, you should settle into one or more republics, would a republican government give you more liberty, either religious or civil? No governments under heaven are so despotic as the republican; no subjects are governed in so arbitrary a manner as those of a commonwealth.³⁹

In much the same vein, in his 1776 publication, 'Some Observations on Liberty', Wesley, responding to Richard Price's 'Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty', said:

The greater share the people have in the Government, the less liberty, either civil or religious, does the nation enjoy. Accordingly, there is most liberty of all, civil and religious, under a limited monarchy, there is usually less under aristocracy and least of all under a democracy.⁴⁰

In this same dialog with Price, Wesley provides some interesting background for our subject when he suggests that it is not the people of any particular government that should provide 'liberty', but rather another, much more important source: 'It (government) is a trust, but not from the people: "There is no power but of God." It is a delegation, namely, from God; for 'rulers are God's ministers", or delegates.'⁴¹ To prove this point, Brian Turley quotes Wesley as saying that Oliver Cromwell's rise to power as 'Protector of the Commonwealth of England' could only be seen as an act of divine providence:

Thus an obscure and vulgar man, at the age of fifty-three, rose to unbounded power, first by following small events in his favour, and at length by directing

³⁹ 'A Calm Address to Our American Colonies,' (Jackson), 87.

⁴⁰ 'Some Observations on Liberty', (Jackson), 11.105.

⁴¹ 'Some Observations on Liberty', (Jackson), 11.105.

great ones. A striking proof, that it is God, who according to his own will casteth down one and setteth up another!⁴²

It is fascinating to consider Wesley's thoughts on the American situation in this context. In seeing Oliver Cromwell as 'striking proof' that it is God who decides who rules and who does not, Wesley is left with the American situation as a remarkably similar situation. His first sentence in his cover letter reads, 'By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of *North-America* are totally disjoined from their mother-country, and erected into Independent States.'⁴³ He goes on to recognize that England no longer had any authority of these Independent States, including ecclesial authority. This recognition led Wesley to reject the idea that the Church of England should ordain preachers for America, as he says in the cover letter:

It has indeed been proposed, to desire the English Bishops, to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object...if they (the Church of England) would ordain them now, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this intangle us? As our American brethren are now totally disentangled both from the State, and from the English Hierarchy, we dare not intangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty, simply to follow the scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty, wherewith God has so strangely made them free.⁴⁴

Just as he had done in the case of Cromwell, Wesley seemed adamantly resolved to follow the course set by God's own providence.

Ordinations for America

It is important to note, at this point, that along with the sending of the *Sunday Service* came another significant change for Wesley and his American Methodists. Wesley ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey on 1 September 1784, first as

⁴² Briane K. Turley, "John Wesley and War." *Methodist History* 29, no. 2 (January 1991), 99. Turley is quoting Wesley's *A Concise History of England: From the Earliest Times o to the Death of George II* (London: R. Hawes, 1776), Vol. 1 Preface.

⁴³ White, *John Wesley's Prayer Book*, Cover letter, i.

⁴⁴ White, *Wesley's Prayer Book*, Cover letter, iii.

deacons and then as presbyters/elders, and he set apart Thomas Coke as superintendent and sent them to America. These actions were the result of a long and difficult time of deliberation for Wesley as well as what he considered to be untenable circumstances for the Methodists in America. Due to the war between America and Britain the number of priests of the Church of England in America by 1783 had been greatly reduced. According to Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury wrote to Wesley in that same year, reporting on the ‘extreme uneasiness of people’s minds...for want of the sacraments: that thousands of their children were unbaptized, and the members of the society in general had not partaken of the Lord’s Supper for many years.’⁴⁵ In ‘A Plain Account of Christian Perfection’ Wesley said that one of the ways his Methodists were to wait for the sanctification was by ‘a close attendance on all the ordinances of God.’⁴⁶ Gwang Seok Oh argued, ‘The need for administering sacraments to the Methodists people in America was the actual cause for which Wesley considered ordinations.’⁴⁷ But was he in *violation* of Church order by ordaining these leaders for America?

As mentioned above, as early as 1755, in ‘Ought we to Separate from the Church of England?’ Wesley mentioned many issues in the *BCP* he would not ‘undertake to defend’. One of those issues was the sections in the Office for Ordaining Bishops, Priests and Deacons, which, as Wesley puts it, ‘assert or suppose an essential difference between bishops and presbyters.’⁴⁸ Even before 1755 Wesley had concerns about this distinction between bishops and presbyters. In fact, Wesley’s readings of Richard Hooker, Lord Peter King and Bishop Edward Stillingfleet led him

⁴⁵ Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, etc. (London: G. Paramore, 1792). 351.

⁴⁶ ‘A Plain Account of Christian Perfection’, (Jackson) 11.402.

⁴⁷ Gwang Seok Oh, *John Wesley’s Ecclesiology: A Study in its Sources and Development* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2008). 235

⁴⁸ ‘Ought We to Separate from the Church of England?’ (BE) 9.571-572.

to believe, as early as 1745, that bishops and presbyters were essentially of the same order, even if to a differing 'degree' of that office.⁴⁹ The essence of what Wesley distilled from these Divines is summarized well by David Rainey:

The significant point of their (Stillingfleet and King) studies was that there was evidence that priests had officiated at the ordination of bishops and priests, and that priests were (therefore) of the same order as bishops. Wesley had never before put into practice ordination by priestly act because it had never been necessary.⁵⁰

He adds, concerning Richard Hooker's perspective: 'Hooker acknowledged the possibility (ordination by priest), stating directly that "there may be sometimes very just and sufficient reason to allow ordination (to be) made without a bishop."' He gives two cases, as explained by Hooker, in which ordination may be performed without a bishop, the second being 'necessity,' of which Hooker says 'the exigence of necessity doth constrain to leave the usual ways of the Church, which otherwise we would willingly keep.'⁵¹ This last line is especially important, given that Wesley did not use this particular provision until 1784, even though, as mentioned before, he had been implored to do so prior to 1784. He did not act on this provision in 1755 when he wrote that he would not defend certain portions of the *BCP*. He did not do so in 1775, even on the brink of war with the American Colonists. Only when, 'by a very uncommon train of providences' America found themselves liberated from English authority did he seek to use the power which he believed Hooker, Stillingfleet and King had made available to him through their writings.⁵²

⁴⁹ For a complete survey of Wesley's rationale for ordination, and for a detailed examination of Wesley's reading of Hooker, Stillingfleet and King, see Wood, 'Tensions Between Evangelical Theology and the Established Church: John Wesley's Ecclesiology'. For Wesley's readings of Stillingfleet and King, see Henry Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, Epworth 1992, 292ff. See also David Rainey, 'The Established Church and Evangelical Theology: John Wesley's Ecclesiology,' *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, Volume 12, Number 4 (October 2010): 421-434.

⁵⁰ Rainey, 'Wesley's Ecclesiology', 430.

⁵¹ Rainey, 'Wesley's Ecclesiology,' 430.

⁵² Both David Rainey and Joseph Wood validate this in their respective studies on Wesley's ecclesiology, mentioned above. See Rainey, 'Wesley's Ecclesiology,' 424; and Wood, 'Tensions,' 236-237.

Wood's conclusion to his argument concerning Wesley's justification for ordination in 1784 runs contrary to the traditional narrative in which some Methodist scholars such as Frank Baker, suggest that Wesley was simply an opportunistic pragmatist.⁵³ Seeking better language to describe Wesley's actions, Wood appropriates a phrase Rowan Williams used to describe Richard Hooker. Wood, using Williams' term, says 'the phrase "contemplative pragmatist" expresses Wesley's deep desire to balance both tradition and new trajectories in the Church of England.'⁵⁴ Wood completes this idea by suggested that Wesley's 'orthopraxy was informed by his orthodoxy.'⁵⁵ It is the proposal of this thesis that it was Wesley's *orthokardia*, his theology of the heart that informed, enlightened and empowered both his orthopraxy and his orthodoxy.⁵⁶ David Rainey summarizes Wesley's ordinations, offering perhaps the best summary of Wesley's pastoral and theological practice:

Wesley did not act according to populist opinion or through a strictly functional ecclesiology. In fact, by 1784, it was his sacramental theology that propelled him into action in North America...I am proposing that Wesley was primarily a *sacramental theologian* and that the context played a secondary role to the sacraments.⁵⁷

To return then, to a theme that has been interwoven through this whole chapter thus far, Wesley's methodology, appropriately described as 'theologically conditioned pragmatism,'⁵⁸ guided him to ordain presbyters for the American Methodist Church *so that they might be strengthened and nourished in their faith by receiving the Lord's*

⁵³ Wood, 'Tensions', 238. Regarding this conclusion by Baker, see Joseph Wood, 'William White, John Wesley, and the 'Sheep without a Shepherd': Towards a New Understanding of Wesley's Ecclesiology' in *Wesley and Methodist Studies*, vol 4 (2012). Wood notes that there was a potentially influential relationship between William White and Thomas Coke. He also notes that the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, under White's leadership, had also revised the *BCP* for their Church.

⁵⁴ Wood, 'Tensions,' 239.

⁵⁵ Wood, 'Tensions,' 239.

⁵⁶ See Clapper, 'Orthokardia,' 49-66 for an insightful article on this subject.

⁵⁷ Rainey, 'Wesley's Ecclesiology,' 434.

⁵⁸ Deirdre Brower-Latz 'A Contextual Reading of John Wesley's Theology and the Emergent Church: Critical Reflections on the Emergent Church Movement in Respect to Aspects of Wesley's Theology, Ecclesiology and Urban Poverty', Unpublished thesis (University of Manchester, 2010), 19.

Supper and that this might be accompanied by the spreading of scriptural holiness throughout newly and providentially liberated America. He did not flout the canonical laws of the Church of England because of his desire to keep growing his own movement. He worked, to the best of his knowledge, within the boundaries of his beloved Church in order to perpetuate what he believed he had received in the *Book of Common Prayer* and the Elizabethan Homilies. He believed that the purpose of the Order of the Church was to 'brings souls from the power of Satan to God...and to build them up in his fear and love...' ⁵⁹

In this cover letter to the *Sunday Service* we see characteristics that are central to Wesley's understanding of holiness. As demonstrated in chapter one of this thesis, virtues such as humility, meekness and faith/trust are essential components of a life characterized by holy tempers. In particular, we see Wesley's own definition of meekness being put into practice in this cover letter:

Meekness, therefore, seems properly to relate to ourselves[.] But it may be referred either to God or our neighbour. When this due composure of mind has reference to God, it is usually termed resignation; a calm acquiescence in whatsoever is his will concerning us, even though it may not be pleasing to nature; saying continually, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." ⁶⁰

This 'calm acquiescence' to God's will is clearly seen in Wesley's recognition of God's providential manifestation in the American situation. It may not have been 'pleasing to nature' in Wesley's mind, but he was willing to trust in God's will. For Wesley, 'no disposition...is more essential to Christianity than meekness.' This is a strong affirmation of the importance of meekness to Wesley's scheme of religion. Wesley sees meekness as the means by which we balance our affections, the tool we use to bring and keep them 'under due regulation.' He explains further that meekness

⁵⁹ 25 June, 1746 (BE), 26.206.

⁶⁰ 'Sermon on the Mount, II' (BE) 1.489.

‘holds an even scale with regard to anger and sorrow, and fear; preserving the mean in every circumstance of life...’ Sorrow, fear and anger would have all been understandable emotions or affections Wesley might have experienced as he dealt with the American Methodists through the midst of the American Revolution. Meekness would have been a precious commodity in this situation. From this vantage point Wesley, in sending the *Sunday Service* and ordaining elders, demonstrated the ‘faith which worketh by love’ in a very tangible way.⁶¹ Rather than turning his back on America he exercised his faith that this was, indeed, an act of divine providence, and he chose to participate in this providence by not only *not* ‘intangling’ them with English Hierarchy, but rather by advising ‘the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord’s day.’

In understanding how affections like meekness, humility and faith relate to the Sunday Service in particular, and Wesley’s Methodist worship in general, it is important to recognize that there is a two-fold pattern. As Lawrence Lacher suggests, ‘The liturgy should embody and enact the faith of the community.’⁶² Dwight Vogel states the same idea in a slightly different way, ‘The liturgy both manifests and engenders the faith of the Church. It speaks both to us and for us’.⁶³ For Wesley, in his letter which he attached to the *Sunday Service*, this is a demonstration of humility, meekness, faith and trust being *embodied* or *manifested*. Later, we will see places in the *Sunday Service* and other acts of worship, where affections and tempers are being *engendered* or *enacted*. This format of describing ways in which different virtues or affections are either demonstrated or initiated in the lives of Wesley’s Methodists will

⁶¹ The phrase ‘faith which worketh by love’ is found in Galatians 5:6 and is one of Wesley’s most frequently used descriptions of the integration of faith and works. For more on Wesley’s use of this phrase, see footnote 58 in Wesley’s sermon ‘The Almost Christian,’ (BE) 1.139-140.

⁶² Lacher, ‘Wesley’s Liturgical Revision,’ 165.

⁶³ Dwight W. Vogel, *Primary Sources of Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 8.

be seen frequently throughout the remainder of chapter three, as well as the rest of this thesis.

Preface (Letter #2)

Frederick Hunter's strong belief was that Wesley was almost exclusively dependent upon Calamy's Savoy Conference edition of Richard Baxter's liturgy for his changes to the *BCP*. However, it should be added here that Hunter's model for this argument, and the outline for the first part of his article on the matter, comes directly from Wesley's letter of preface, dated September 9th, 1784.⁶⁴ William Wade agrees with Hunter as to the importance of this letter of preface:

These two letters give not only Wesley's directions as to how the worship life of American Methodists should be observed using his revision of the Book of Common Prayer, but also include the justification of his action in authorizing and encouraging the founding of an autonomous ecclesiastical body in America, free from supervision by the Anglican hierarchy.⁶⁵

Wade does not agree, however, with the extent to which Hunter stresses Wesley's dependence upon Calamy as a guide for the *Sunday Service*. Wade points to other scholars, including J.E. Rattenbury, Wesley Swift and Frank Baker, who disagree with Hunter's position and asserts his own belief that Wesley was far too eclectic, in both his general method of writing and editing, and in the actual text, to have been influenced so drastically by one source as was suggested by Hunter.⁶⁶

Most of the notes offered by Wesley in this letter will either be covered in the remainder of this chapter or are irrelevant to the overall purpose of this thesis. Nevertheless, there are two notes which will be singled out, which prove to be important in discussing Wesley's emphasis on the restoration of the Image of God in humanity and the cultivation of holy tempers. The first of these is Wesley's

⁶⁴ Hunter, 'Sources', 125.

⁶⁵ Wade, 'Public Worship', 2.

⁶⁶ Wade, 'Public Worship', 6.

insistence on the importance and value of the *BCP*. Wesley states, ‘I believe there is no Liturgy in the World, either in ancient or modern language, which breathes more of a solid, scriptural, rational Piety, than the Common Prayer of the Church of England.’⁶⁷ So, for Wesley, in his desire to lead his Methodists in the construction of holy tempers, this resource was invaluable and irreplaceable. As he says in Letter #1, ‘If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way, of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.’⁶⁸ This repetition of the combined themes of scripture and rationality which Wesley found in abundance in the *BCP* is important to the theme of this thesis. As suggested in chapter two, many of Wesley’s critics viewed his focus on affections and tempers as a form of enthusiasm or emotionalism. However, in an illustration of the importance of the relationship between reason and scripture and the affections and tempers, we return to a quote in which Wesley describes a ‘Mr. Simpson’:

I had a long conversation with Mr. Simpson. And of this I am fully persuaded, that whatever he does is in the uprightness of his heart. But he is led into a thousand mistakes by one wrong principle (the same which many either ignorantly or wickedly ascribe to the body of the people called Methodists), the making inward impressions his rule of action, and not the written word.⁶⁹

The ‘inward impressions,’ Wesley references here are the equivalent to the illogical ‘feelings’ that his opponents were accusing him of being dependent upon. In this description of Mr. Simpson, Wesley is suggesting that it is instead the ‘solid, scriptural, rational Piety’ found in the *BCP* upon which his Methodists should be depending when cultivating affections such as love, joy and peace.

⁶⁷ White, *Sunday Service*, no page number is assigned, but this quote comes from the letter of preface found at the beginning of the actual text of the *Sunday Service*, facing page A2.

⁶⁸ White, *Sunday Service*, iii.

⁶⁹ 1 June 1777 (BE), 23:52.

The second note of interest in this letter of preface corresponds to the ‘service of the Lords’ day,’ of which he notes, ‘the length of which has been often complained of, is considerably shortened.’⁷⁰ In fact, it was not only the service of the Lord’s Day which was shortened. William Wade comments, ‘In the 1784 *Sunday Service* we find his alteration to be in fact quite significant both in content and in quantity. Wesley reduced the size of the contemporary edition of the *BCP* by almost half.’⁷¹ Simplicity is a core affection for Wesley. He summarizes simplicity frequently as having a ‘single eye’. In ‘The Witness of our Own Spirit’ Wesley gives a very useful description of simplicity:

We are then simple of heart when the eye of our mind is singly fixed on God...this is simplicity: when a steady view, a single intention of promoting his glory, of doing and suffering his blessed will, runs through our whole soul, fills all our heart, and is the constant spring of all our thoughts, desires, and purposes.⁷²

Returning to the earlier reference in which it has been suggested that the liturgy both embodies and enacts the faith of the Church, this is another place where Wesley’s ‘single-eyed’ faith in God is manifested in his desire to clear away the clutter and distractions for his Methodists. This desire for simplicity, coupled with the bare beauty of an elegant message, may also be seen in another of Wesley’s collections. He describes the poetry used in *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodist* in such a way as could have been applied to the Sunday Service: ‘Here are (allow me to say) both the purity, the strength, and the elegance of the English language—and at the same time the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to

⁷⁰ White, *Sunday Service*, letter of preface, facing A2. Earlier, in his comments on Wesley’s changes to the *BCP*, White says, ‘A major problem was the Anglican practice of actually reading three services each Sunday morning: morning prayer, the litany, and the first portion of the holy communion or ante-communion (known then as the “second service”).’ See White, *Sunday Service*, 7.

⁷¹ Wade, ‘Public Worship’, 24. See also Baker, *John Wesley and the Church of England*, (London: The Epworth Press, 1970), 244.

⁷² ‘The Witness of Our own Spirit’ (BE), 1.307.

every capacity.’⁷³ His editorial desire to remove any barriers to a clear-eyed, simplistic vision of God is displayed in many of his liturgies, including the hymns and this truncated version of the *BCP*.

Lessons, Collects, Epistles and Gospels

The first example of this editorial theme of simplicity is found in Wesley’s revision of the *Proper Lessons to be Read at Morning and Evening Prayer, on the Sundays throughout the Year*. Even the title of this section reveals a simplification of the *BCP*. The title in the 1662 *BCP* includes the phrase ‘and other Holy Days’ after ‘Sundays’. But, as stated in the preface, Wesley all but eliminated Holy Days from his *Sunday Service*, leaving the additional phrase unnecessary. Wesley also removed ‘The Order How the Rest of Holy Scripture is Appointed to be Read,’ a rather lengthy set of instructions on the use of the Lessons. Following the spirit of his edict in the preface concerning the abbreviation of the service of the Lord’s Day Wesley reduces the number of pages dealing with the Propers from twenty to three. Also following his guideline from the preface, he reduces the number of Holy Days from thirty three down to three, and the three that remain are referred to as ‘particular Days’ rather than ‘Holy Days.’⁷⁴ In his effort to simplify the Church Calendar Wesley may have inadvertently complicated things. Moving to a continuous numbering of the fifteen Sundays after Christmas Wesley leaves out Lent Five, leaving him a Sunday short in years when Easter is later than mid-April.

A somewhat surprising change in this section is his removal of the season of Lent, which seems to be very much in line with his practices liturgically. However, this may be the very reason why he believed lent to be superfluous. Wesley believed and taught that fasting was a primary means of grace, and challenged his people to

⁷³ ‘Preface’ (BE) 7.74.

⁷⁴ White, *Sunday Service*, A3.

fast at least twice a week. In fact, while preaching on Matthew 5:20 and Jesus' challenge for his disciples' righteousness to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees he challenges his Methodists in 'Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Discourse the Fifth':

A Pharisee...used all the means of grace. As he fasted *often* and *much*, 'twice in every week', so he attended all the sacrifices...Do you go as far as this? Do you fast much and often? Twice in the week? I fear not! Once, at least: 'On all Fridays in the year.' (So our church clearly and peremptorily enjoins all her members to do, to observe all these as well as the vigils and the forty days of Lent as 'days of fasting, or abstinence'.)⁷⁵

This parenthetical insertion seems to imply that Wesley believed, as early as 1748 when he wrote this sermon, that the *BCP* suggestion of fasting once a week was a *minimal* expectation. He seems to have had nearly identical views on the matter even after he sent the *Sunday Service* to America, because in 1789 he says almost the same thing:

I fear there are now thousands of Methodists...who are so far from fasting twice in the weeks (as all the stricter Pharisees did) that they do not fast twice in the month...But what excuse can there be for this? I do not say for those that call themselves members of the Church of England, but for any who proves to believe the Scripture to be the Word of God? Since, according to this, the man that never fasts is no more in the way to heaven than the man that never prays.⁷⁶

Just prior to this quote Wesley points out that for many years all the Methodists followed the rule of the Primitive Church and fasted every Wednesday and Friday. He seems alarmed by the fact that, as stated above, many Methodists were now abandoning the practice. Wesley made an intricate connection between fasting and the development of affections in 'Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Discourse the Seventh,'

⁷⁵ 'Sermon on the Mount, V' (BE), 1.566. This same requirement is place on members of the Band Societies – see 'Directions given to the Band Societies' (BE), 9.79. For background on Wesley's insistence on fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, see Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, 31.

⁷⁶ 'The Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity' (BE), 4.94.

A...more weighty reason for fasting is that it is an help to prayer; particularly when we set apart larger portions of time for private prayer. Then especially it is that God is often pleased to lift up the souls of his servants above all the things of earth, and sometimes to rap them up, as it were, into the third heaven. And it is chiefly, as it is an help to prayer, that it has so frequently been found a means, in the hand of God, of confirming and increasing, not one virtue, not chastity only, (as some have idly imagined, without any ground either from Scripture, reason, or experience,) but also seriousness of spirit, earnestness, sensibility and tenderness of conscience, deadness to the world, and consequently the love of God, and every holy and heavenly affection.⁷⁷

Fasting was a means of grace by which ‘every holy and heavenly affection’ might be cultivated. Therefore, if Wesley had already imposed this expectation of fasting twice a week upon his people, it may have made the season of lent expendable in his mind.

Wesley’s treatment of Collects, Epistles, and Gospels is very similar to the Lessons in the changes that were made. Most of the changes are made in the calendar section, where Wesley again made sweeping reductions in saint’s days and feasts. Only Christmas day, Good Friday and Ascension Day remain. In describing Wesley’s editorial work in this section, James White says, ‘Except for the removal of holy days and saints days, this is the most conservative part of Wesley’s service book and shows his love of the Cranmerian collects and traditional lections.’⁷⁸ Wesley did indeed have a love for these collects, and it is worth noting that while he removed Holy days and simplified in many other areas, this section is largely untouched. This is important in light of the addition of rubrics for extemporaneous prayer all through the *Sunday Service*. It seems Wesley wished for these collects, as well as the Litany and Prayers and Thanksgivings, to provide the grammar for the extemporaneous prayers he invited his Methodists to pray. In that light, the collect for the Fourth Sunday after Easter provides us with some insight into how these collects may have shaped Wesley and his people:

⁷⁷ ‘Sermon on the Mount, VII’ (BE), 1.600.

⁷⁸ White, *Sunday Service*, 19.

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord.⁷⁹

This prayer calls for God to change our affections, redirect our desires and refocus our love on God as the ultimate object of our heart and will. This is directly in line with Wesley's call to cultivate holy tempers and to centre in on God with a 'single eye.'

The Litany, Thanksgiving and Prayer – Written and Extemporaneous

The fourth entry in Wesley's cover letter reads, 'And I have prepared a liturgy little differing from that of the church of England...which I advise all the travelling-preachers to use, on the Lord's day, in all their congregations, reading the litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days.'⁸⁰ We will follow Wesley's lead with this unique and diverse pairing of instructions for the use of the Litany on alternating days with extemporaneous prayer. This pattern again demonstrates Wesley's desire for both prayer forms, written and unwritten, to be used in conjunction with one another. Horton Davies points out this juxtaposition of written and free forms of prayer with a poetic flourish:

The essence of Methodist worship as it germinated in the fertile mind of its founder was the combination of the advantages of liturgical forms and of free prayers. John Wesley was unique...in being the bridge that crossed the chasm between the worship of Anglicanism and Dissent...His Catholic mind ranged through the centuries of Church history and raided its devotional treasures like an avid Christian Pirate.⁸¹

Wesley's willingness and ability to hold written and unwritten prayers in tension is surely a hallmark of his ministry. The changes to this section are minimal, and are mainly either clerical or political in nature, so the remainder of our treatment will be

⁷⁹ White, *Sunday Service*, 73-77.

⁸⁰ White, *Sunday Service*, ii.

⁸¹ Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England, From Watts and Wesley to Maurice*, 1690-1850 (Princeton, New Jersey, 1961), 184.

focused on a brief analysis of the actual content of a few of the sections of the litany which Wesley surely treasured for their focus on the development of affections and tempers.

The Litany is comprised of a series of prayer petitions, prayed antiphonally by the Elder and the congregation. The first petition we will look at is a prayer for deliverance:

Good Lord, deliver us.

From all blindness of heart; from pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness...⁸²

This prayer reminds us that all our affections take an object, and the object determines the character of the affection. In ‘The Signs of the Times’ Wesley offers us a pertinent example of what an ungodly orientation can produce. In describing those who cannot discern the ‘signs of the times’ Wesley suggests that they are blinded by darkness:

If their eye was single, their whole body would be full of light. But suppose their eye be evil, their whole body must be full of darkness. Every evil temper darkens the soul; every evil passion clouds the understanding. How then can we expect that these should be able to discern the things of the times who are full of all disorderly passions, and slaves to ever evil temper...They are full of pride; they think of themselves far more highly than they ought to think...They cherish hatred and malice in their hearts; they give place to anger, to envy, to revenge.⁸³

Thus, this petition for God to deliver us from pride, envy and hatred is, at its core, a prayer for God to change the target of our affections from selfishness and evil, to ‘deliver us...from all blindness of heart’. This is a prayer for a re-orientation of our affections from ourselves to God. When this re-orientation begins to take place, we offer another petition in the Litany for God to continue this work:

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

⁸² White, *Sunday Service*, 20.

⁸³ ‘The Signs of the Times’ (BE), 2.527-528.

That it may please thee to give to all the people increase of grace, to hear meekly the Word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.⁸⁴

This petition for the fruits of the Spirit to be brought forth is to re-direct our hearts and our intentions, to refocus our ‘single eye’ toward God and to repent, to turn our backs on the self-centred mind-set. These two petitions are well-defined examples of why Wesley believed the *BCP* liturgy could be of great service in developing holy tempers in the lives of his Methodists.

The section immediately following the Litany in the 1662 *BCP* is called ‘Prayers and Thanksgivings, Upon Several Occasions.’ In the *BCP* this section was comprised of nineteen prayers, only two of which were retained by Wesley in the *Sunday Service*. Most of the prayers in the *BCP* were of a rather generic nature, petitions for things like rain, safety during war and protection from plagues and sickness. The two prayers Wesley kept were both meant for more salvific purposes. The first, ‘A Collect or Prayer for all Conditions of Men,’ was a prayer intended to be prayed on days when the Litany was not in use. It was a petition for the health of the nations, the unity of the Church and the happiness of humanity. The second prayer is entitled ‘A General Thanksgiving,’ and as its content is of great importance to the subject of our thesis, we will quote it in full:

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men... We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all they blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may shew forth thy praise not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ White, *Sunday Service*, 22.

⁸⁵ White, *Sunday Service*, 27.

This particular prayer meets both of the prongs of the two-fold pattern mentioned above by Lacher. As the prayer opens, the Elder prays on behalf of the worshipper ‘we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness...’, thereby expressing the *embodiment* of thankfulness or gratefulness or gratitude. Toward the end of the prayer, the worshipper is led in this following petition, ‘that we may shew forth thy praise...by giving up ourselves to thy service’, thus enacting or engendering their faith that God might bring about this change and desire in them. This, of course, is an expression of the heart of the gospel for Wesley, who said, ‘True religion is right tempers toward God and man. It is, in two words, gratitude and benevolence; gratitude to our Creator and supreme Benefactor, and benevolence to our fellow creature. In other words, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves.’⁸⁶ Once again we see a prayer from the *BCP* forming the foundation for Wesley’s own understanding of holiness.

Wesley was not always in favour of extemporaneous prayer. He seems to have been shocked to hear it in America in 1737: ‘We came to a Scotch settlement at Darien...where I was surprised to hear an extemporary prayer and a written sermon. Are not then the words we speak to God to be set in order at least as carefully as those we speak to our fellow-worms!’⁸⁷ While still in America, Wesley subjected August Spangenberg to a series of questions (this was done at Spangenberg’s behest, to satisfy Wesley’s questions concerning the Moravians, according to Wesley’s journal), several of which dealt with prayer. Wesley’s questions, and Spangenberg’s answers, prove useful in further understanding Wesley’s early thoughts on prayer:

26. Do you prefer extemporary to set forms of prayer in public? ‘Our hymns are forms of prayer. For the rest, everyone speaks as he is moved by the Holy Ghost.’

⁸⁶ ‘The Unity of Divine Being’ (BE), 4.66-67.

⁸⁷ Sunday 2 January 1737 (BE), 18.460.

28. Do your Public Prayers contain the four parts required by St. Paul (1 Timothy, chap. 2, ver. 1)? ‘No.’⁸⁸

Wesley was clearly grappling with an experience he was not yet ready to fully accept. Nevertheless, he did accept it, as we see in a letter to a ‘Mr. Walker’ in 1758: ‘Neither dare I confine myself wholly to forms of prayer, not even in the church. I use, indeed, all the forms; but I frequently add extemporary prayer, either before or after sermon.’⁸⁹ Wesley and many of his Methodists practiced extemporary prayer even in the face of great criticism, till it became such a central part of his ministry that he was compelled to add it to the *Sunday Service* as a regular aspect of Methodist worship.⁹⁰ True to his roots till the end, however, he never lost his love for the written prayers of his beloved *BCP*, as demonstrated by his comments in 1778: ‘I myself find more life in the Church prayers than in the formal extemporary prayers of Dissenters.’⁹¹

Morning and Evening Prayer

The first change in this section in the *Sunday Service* is regarding usage – Wesley changes the directions from ‘Daily Throughout the Year’ to ‘Every Lord’s Day.’ He also changes the titles of the presiding clerics from ‘priest’ to ‘minister’ or ‘elder.’ A great number of traditional prayers, collects and confessions disappear, but

⁸⁸ Sunday 31 July 1737 (BE), 18.533. Question 28 points to 1 Timothy 2:1 which contains a reference to what Wesley calls ‘the four grand parts of public prayer.’ As stated earlier in this thesis, Wesley cautions his Methodists against abandoning *BCP* worship for the services of the societies by suggesting that they are not worship ‘such as supersedes the Church service because they seldom contain ‘the four grand parts of public prayer: deprecation, petition, intercession and thanksgiving.’ ‘Annual Minutes 1766 (BE) 10.326. For more on this, refer back to chapter two of this thesis.

⁸⁹ ‘To The Reverend Mr. Walker’ October 1758 (Jackson), 13.206.

⁹⁰ Wesley had numerous conflicts with those who insisted that, because of his practice of extemporary prayer he was declaring his departure from the Church of England. Wesley tells of one particular instance in which a gentleman came to him and pleaded with Wesley not to leave the Church or use extemporary Church which, as Wesley said ‘was the same thing in his mind.’ 28 November 1740 (BE), 19.173.

⁹¹ ‘To Mary Bishop’ 18 October 1778 (Letters), 6.326. The remainder of this thought is of interest to us as well – Wesley goes on to say, ‘Nay, I find more profit in sermons on either good tempers or good works than in what are vulgarly called “gospel sermons”... Surely the Methodists have not so learnt Christ. We know no gospel without salvation from sin.’ Wesley makes a definitive connection here between ‘good tempers’ and ‘salvation from sin’ and points to both as the focus for his Methodists – nothing less would suffice.

whether for content or clarity and conciseness, Wesley does not say. William Wade offers interesting insight into these changes:

It is ironic that although Wesley claimed to hold Scripture and the Early Church as normative, he chose to eliminate all the classic biblical canticles or hymns of the classic daily office, the Venite, Benedictus, Benedicite, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis, retaining only the Te Deum and selections from the Psalter. In so doing Wesley radically departed from the classical tradition of the daily office.⁹²

It seems like bare speculation to postulate any reason other than a quest for brevity and simplicity for the rather severe changes Wesley made in this section.

Administration of the Lord's Supper

In summarizing the thoughts of some leading scholars concerning Wesley's changes in the Administration of the Lord's Supper William Wade makes an interesting observation, stating that, 'any innovation upon Wesley's part was not so much in the realm of speculative sacramental theology but...in the practical approach to and appreciation of the place of the Lord's Supper in the worship life of the Church.'⁹³ He is even more precise in restating this point just a few paragraphs later: 'The revolutionary thrust of Wesley's approach to the Lord's Supper was, therefore, not theological so much as it was practical.'⁹⁴ The two most visible changes Wesley made in the *Sunday Service* for the Lord's Supper were very practical indeed. Wesley made tangible changes to the *BCP* order for communion in the areas of *frequency* of reception and *preparation*, to which we will now turn our attention.

In 'The Duty of Constant Communion,' Wesley admonishes his Methodists to 'receive the Lord's Supper as often as he can.'⁹⁵ This was a long-standing theme for

⁹² Wade, 'Public Worship', 34.

⁹³ Wade, 'Public Worship', 77.

⁹⁴ Wade, 'Public Worship', 79.

⁹⁵ 'The Duty of Constant Communion' (BE), 1.428. This sermon is actually an abridged version of Wesley's extract from Robert Nelson's *Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church*

Wesley, so it may not be surprising to see him edit the *BCP* and bring it to conformity to this practice. For instance, just before and just after the Sermon was to be given, there were instructions in the *BCP* for the possibility of a service that did not include Communion. The statement immediately after the sermon in the *BCP* reads, ‘And when there is a Communion, the Priest shall then place upon the Table so much Bread and Wine as he shall think sufficient.’ Wesley removes this rubric, an editorial move in line with his statement in the cover letter advising ‘the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord’s Day’, which we mentioned earlier. Wesley believed that receiving communion ‘constantly’ was a command of God, and thereby to be obeyed. He set up his American liturgy with this command, and its corporate obedience, in mind.

The second practical issue Wesley addressed in ‘The Duty of Constant Communion,’ and the *Sunday Service* was the practice of *preparation*. As David Rainey notes, ‘After 1738 there is a discernable shift (by Wesley) to a more open table without the priestly investigation into people’s behaviour.’⁹⁶ Returning to ‘Constant Communion’ we see Wesley address this in a way which is startlingly relevant for this thesis:

It is highly expedient for those who purpose to receive this, whenever their time will permit, to prepare themselves for this solemn ordinance by self-examination and prayer. But this is not absolutely necessary. And when we have not time for it, we should see that we have the habitual preparation which is absolutely necessary, and can never be dispensed with on any account tor any occasion whatever. This is, first, a full *purpose* of heart to keep all the commandments of God. And secondly, a sincere *desire* to receive all his promises.⁹⁷

of England, which Wesley published in 1732. ‘Constant Communion’ was published in 1787, three years after Wesley sent the *Sunday Service* to America.

⁹⁶ David Rainey, ‘The Future of Wesleyan Theology with a Missional Agenda: Reconciliation and the Eucharist’, Lecture presented at the One-Day Theology Conference (Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, June 2011), 3.

⁹⁷ ‘The Duty of Constant Communion’ (BE), 1.430.

We see here a clearly *affectional* theme, with the ‘purpose of the heart’ and the ‘desire to receive’ being the principle actions or intentions Wesley is calling for in his Methodists. There is also, behind this call to a constant state of preparation, the assumption on Wesley’s part that his Methodists are living within the system he had created for them, complete with participation in bands and societies, regular participation in love feasts, watchnight services, Covenant renewals, preaching services and other special times of devotional practice. William Wade confirms this assumption:

...Wesley expected those who desired to continue in communion with Methodists to observe the rigors of Wesleyan discipline. Thus, if one were to be daily seeking earnestly after Christian perfection in the context of a Wesleyan society with its frequent band and class meetings...one would be constantly in a proper state to receive communion without the exhortation found in the 1662 Prayer book.⁹⁸

This assumption is revealed in a very practical way in Wesley’s removal of the call for prior notice of intention to commune. This is obviously a departure from his practice in Georgia, but one in line with his theology at this stage in his ministry.⁹⁹ We will return, at the end of the next section, to this theme of Wesley’s theology as it relates to the use of the means of grace and constant preparation.

Administration of Baptism of Infants

In 1756 Wesley published a tract entitled ‘A Treatise on Baptism’ which was his revised edition of a work previously written by his father in 1700. In this treatise he mentioned five benefits of baptism: 1) the washing away the guilt of original sin; 2) entering into covenant with God; 3) admittance into the Church, made

⁹⁸ Wade, ‘Public Worship’, 83.

⁹⁹ See Geordan Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, 111 for an example of Wesley’s rigid compliance with this rubric.

members of Christ; 4) regeneration or being born again; and 5) being made heirs of the kingdom of heaven.¹⁰⁰ These benefits formed the theological foundation for the continued use of infant baptism among the American Methodists.

In Wesley's *Sunday Service* he retained much of the original rite for infant baptism. Wesley's liturgy prior to the actual baptism maintained all of the language of regeneration. However, after the infant was baptised, there was a noticeable shift in the rite, as Wesley removed much of the language that implied regeneration as a completed act. For example, in the *Sunday Service*, the minister's proclamation after the baptism is as follows: 'Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning.'¹⁰¹ Wesley only removes two words from the *BCP* rite, but they are important words. The *BCP* rite says, 'this child is *regenerate and* grafted into the body.' The proclamation from the *BCP* says, 'We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this Infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own Child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy Church.' Wesley's *Sunday Service* again removes the language of regeneration, saying instead, 'that it hath pleased thee to receive this Infant for thine own Child by adoption...'¹⁰² These changes have been the cause of concern and confusion for many interpreters of Wesley. Some have claimed that by these changes Wesley has renounced baptismal regeneration completely, while others

¹⁰⁰ See 'A Treatise on Baptism' (Jackson) 10.190-192. It should be noted that in 1776 Wesley implied that prevenient grace covered the infant's guilt. See 'Letters to Mr. John Mason' 21 November, 1776 (Jackson), 12.453. This did not diminish the importance of Infant Baptism for Wesley, but did show an integration of the benefits of Infant Baptism with prevenient grace, and forms a reminder of the important role of prevenient grace for Wesley in the restoration of the Image of God in humanity.

¹⁰¹ White, *Sunday Service*, 142.

¹⁰² White, *Sunday Service*, 143.

have viewed these changes as minimal and have chosen to interpret them as a non-factor in Wesley's overall understanding and practice of infant baptism.¹⁰³ This thesis has provided a way of understanding Wesley's liturgical theology that may offer clarity concerning these changes.

By the removal of the language of regeneration after the baptismal act, Wesley has changed the dynamic of the rite of infant baptism. Maddox interprets these changes by suggesting that 'his apparent purpose was not to reject the possibility of regeneration, but to avoid the impression of its inevitability—apart from our responsiveness.'¹⁰⁴ Returning to chapter one of this thesis we recall that Wesley was deeply concerned with the effects of formalism on the Church of England. He believed that many had come to rest in the idea that they were saved by the bare performance of the ritual of baptism on their behalf. In order to combat this idea, Wesley insisted on evidence of a change of heart, a renewed and reoriented will rather than simply relying on ritual and outward signs alone. As stated in chapter one, Wesley does not suggest that his Methodists abandon outward signs, but rather that they engage in them for the right reasons and with a right heart:

I allow that you and ten thousand more have thus abused the ordinances of God, mistaking the means for the end, supposing that the doing these or some other outward works either was the religion of Jesus Christ or would be accepted in the place of it. But let the abuse be taken away and the use remain. Now use all outward things; but use them with a constant eye to the renewal of your soul in righteousness and true holiness.¹⁰⁵

Wesley's inclusion of infant baptism in the *Sunday Service* is in line with this challenge. He was calling his Methodists to engage in this act, this rite, not because it regenerated them or their children automatically or magically, but because it was a

¹⁰³ See Paul Sanders, 'John Wesley and Baptismal Regeneration' *Religion in Life* 23 (1954), 599-600

¹⁰⁴ Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 224.

¹⁰⁵ 'Sermon on the Mount, IV' (BE) 1.545.

Biblically instituted *means* of grace which could lead to the renewal of their souls in righteousness and true holiness.

In order to avoid the pitfalls of formalism, Wesley emphasized the responsibility of the individual to appropriate the grace God made available through the means of grace, both instituted and prudential. Wesley clarified his understanding of the role of all parties involved in infant baptism in *Serious Thoughts Concerning Godfathers and Godmothers*. In this tract, Wesley answered the unnamed critics of the practice of using godfathers and godmothers by agreeing that they were ‘not mentioned in Scripture’,¹⁰⁶ but suggested that they may still provide a valuable service in support of the baptised infant and their parents. He also conceded with these same critics that many entered into the role of godparents without thoughtful consideration of the role. However, it was when a third objection was registered that Wesley arrived at the point most important for our current consideration. Regarding whether any ‘serious man would undertake it, because it is impossible to perform it’ Wesley suggested that these critics may not understand exactly what is being undertaken in the first place. He said that godparents ‘neither undertake nor promise’ that the child will ‘renounce the devil and all his works, constantly believe God’s holy word, and obediently keep his commandments.’¹⁰⁷ Wesley said this is the responsibility of the one being baptised: ‘Whatever is then promised or undertaken, it is not by them (godparents), but by the child.’¹⁰⁸ Wesley was insistent that it was the personal responsibility of the baptised infant to appropriate the grace given in baptism.¹⁰⁹ Wesley goes on to suggest that the proper role for godparents is to play

¹⁰⁶ ‘Serious Thoughts Concerning Godfathers and Godmothers’ (Jackson) 10.507.

¹⁰⁷ ‘Serious Thoughts Concerning Godfathers and Godmothers’ (Jackson) 10.508.

¹⁰⁸ ‘Serious Thoughts Concerning Godfathers and Godmothers’ (Jackson) 10.508.

¹⁰⁹ It should be noted that, while Wesley removed the role of godfathers and godmothers in the *Sunday Service*, the advice he gives in this tracts tells us much of what he believed was the role of sponsors and parents in the life of the infant, especially after the baptism was performed. It should also

the role laid out for them in the *BCP* liturgy: ‘You shall call upon him to hear sermons, and shall provide that he may learn the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul’s health.’¹¹⁰ While this exhortation is removed from the *Sunday Service*, it is clearly in line with Wesley’s call to both parents and his preachers to catechize the children in their care with diligence and persistence.

This emphasis on catechism will be examined in-depth in the next chapter.

However, one more note concerning the importance of catechism must be made at this juncture. Regarding the importance of educating children, Wesley says,

In the name of God, then, and by the authority of His word, let all that have children, from the time they begin to speak or run alone, begin to train them up in the way wherein they should go; to counterwork the corruption of their nature with all possible assiduity; to do everything in their power to cure their self-will, pride, and every other wrong temper.¹¹¹

Wesley points to the necessity of training a child in such a way as to ‘counterwork the corruption of their nature.’ Just prior to this urgent appeal to parents, Wesley gives a more complete call to work for the transformation of children through a synthesis of education and the grace of God, with the goal of changing their affections:

By all means. Scripture, reason, and experience jointly testify that, inasmuch as the corruption of nature is earlier than our instructions can be, we should take all pains and care to counteract this corruption as early as possible. The bias of nature is set the wrong way: Education is designed to set it right. This, by the grace of God, is to turn the bias from self-will, pride, anger, revenge, and the love of the world, to resignation, lowliness, meekness, and the love of God.¹¹²

be noted that Wesley somewhat detaches himself from the place of godparents in the *BCP* while offering a reason for why they were included in the liturgy of the Church of England. This is another example, in the tract written in 1752 of Wesley’s mixture of loyalty to the *BCP* with his willingness to show separation from it. It is significant that ‘Serious Thoughts Concerning Godfathers and Godmothers’ was published by Wesley in 1788, four years after *The Sunday Service* was first sent to America.

¹¹⁰ *BCP* Exhortation to Godparents following baptism of the child.

¹¹¹ ‘A Thought on The Manner of Educating Children’ (Jackson) 13.477.

¹¹² ‘A Thought on The Manner of Educating Children’ (Jackson) 13.476.

This compelling invitation enforces our understanding of the role of sponsors and parents, as Wesley says in his sermon ‘On the Education of Children’ to ‘Habituate them to make God their end in all things, and inure them in all they do to aim at knowing, loving and serving God.’¹¹³

Wesley’s plan for the nurture of the baptised child takes shape when we balance this traditional liturgical practice of infant baptism with his emphasis on heart religion and the restoration of the Image of God in humanity. Wesley strongly urged parents, sponsors and his preachers to catechize and train children in such a way that the child’s understanding and will might be shaped and healed by God’s grace. He also placed the responsibility of receiving and implementing God’s grace on the baptised child, so that *as they responded* to God’s work, they may experience more and more of His empowerment and strength as they matured. In line with the contention of this thesis then, it appears as if Wesley wished for the emphasis of infant baptism to be on the benefits of admission into the Church and into an active covenant with God in which the child could participate in the on-going redemptive purposes of the Father through the nurture of Christ in the power of the Spirit.

The Psalter

As mentioned earlier in our comments on the preface to the Sunday service, Wesley says, concerning the Psalms, ‘Many Psalms left out, and many parts of the others, as being highly improper for the mouths of a Christian Congregation.’¹¹⁴ Indeed, Wesley ‘left out’ many of the Psalms entirely (thirty four completely removed) and cut verses from fifty-eight others. Overall, the number of total verses went from 2502 in the *BCP* Psalter to 1625 in Wesley’s ‘Select Psalms’.¹¹⁵ While this may seem drastic, Wade reminds us that of the 314 totals pages in Wesley’s *Sunday*

¹¹³ ‘On the Education of Children’ (BE) 3.359.

¹¹⁴ White, *Sunday Service*, preface facing A2.

¹¹⁵ White, *Sunday Service*, 10.

Service, 117 are devoted to the Psalter, the largest portion of Wesley's adaptation of the *BCP* by far.¹¹⁶ Rather than going into details about all of the changes and why Wesley may have made them, for the purposes of this thesis it is helpful instead to consider again Wesley's insistence upon the development of Christian affections. In his detailed analysis of Wesley's view of the affections, Gregory Clapper considered all of Wesley's work of Scripture. In his study of Wesley's use of the Psalms, particularly those used (and *not* used) in the *Sunday Service*, Clapper makes the following observation:

Wesley is here saying that having certain affections is enough to make a person unchristian. Indeed, the common element in the psalms which Wesley edited out of the American prayerbook is their largely imprecatory character. The presence or absence of certain affections is a test case of Christianity for Wesley.¹¹⁷

In another place, Clapper makes a useful clarifying remark: 'Religious affections, then, result from the soul turning to God. If God is not their object, they are not Christian affections.'¹¹⁸ Wesley is looking for scripture that either manifests or engenders the faith of the Church, and it would seem that, for him, the Psalms he removed from the *Sunday Service* do not qualify. It does appear, however, that he missed out on some opportunities to encourage or express thankfulness and joy in some of the 'instrumental' psalms he deletes, such as Psalm 108 (esp. vv 1-6) and Psalm 149 (esp. vv 1-5).

A Collection of Psalms and Hymns

This group is largely comprised of Hymns and metered Psalms that Wesley

¹¹⁶ Wade, 'Public Worship', 55. For a very detailed and useful survey of the pattern of Wesley's reductions and deletions of the Psalms in the *Sunday Service*, see Wade, 'Public Worship', 61-68.

¹¹⁷ Gregory S. Clapper, *John Wesley on Religious Affections: His Views on Experience and Emotion and Their Role in the Christian Life and Theology* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1989), 38.

¹¹⁸ Clapper, 'Orthokardia,' 52.

had been collecting since 1737. Hymns were a rich and intricate part of all Methodist worship, and it seems likely that this was not the only collection of hymns that would have been available to the American Methodists. It is not apparent, in that light, why Wesley chose this collection, these hymns, or this format to send along with the *Sunday Service*. However, given that these hymns were in fact an intentional part of the liturgical resources Wesley sent them, we will briefly analyse the content of a few of the hymns contained therein to gather an idea of how they might have been challenged to allow the Image of God to be restored and the affections and tempers enlivened within themselves.

It should be noted that Wesley did not include directions for hymn singing in the rubrics of the *Sunday Service*. These hymns could have been used in various ways, at various places in the service. We referred in our last chapter to the fact that using hymns during the Eucharist was a Wesleyan innovation, and hymns from this Collection could certainly have been used for that purpose as well. It is not known, however, when or where Wesley or his Methodists would have deemed it appropriate to use these hymns. The *why* of their use is less of a mystery, as Maddox implies:

Once introduced, hymns became integral to Methodist worship, opening and closing every major gathering. Some have characterized the purpose of this use of hymns as “romantic;” i.e., to allow expression of intense feelings. This claim need not be totally disavowed, since such expression can be an empowering event.¹¹⁹

While some (chiefly Wesley’s critics determined to lump him with the Enthusiasts) would have seen this ‘romantic’ element as unnecessary emotionalism, Wesley used it as a primary means by which his Methodists could both ‘embody and enact’ their faith. These powerful emotional experiences would have allowed the American

¹¹⁹ Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 208.

Methodists to encounter in both personal and communal ways the power, presence, love and mercy of God as they participated in the *Sunday Service*.

Two examples from these hymns provide a glimpse at how they might have functioned in compelling and empowering Wesley's Methodists to cultivate holy tempers. The first of these hymns, entitled 'Hymn to the Holy Ghost,' was part of Wesley's original *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, published in 1737. This collection was printed by Wesley to provide hymns for his congregants in Georgia as a devotional supplement. The fifth verse of 'Hymn to the Holy Ghost' calls the Methodists to a joyous recollection of the work of the Spirit:

God's image which our sins destroy,
Thy grace restores below;
And truth, and holiness, and joy,
From thee, their fountain, flow.¹²⁰

In one eloquent phrase we are reminded that God's glorious image was designed to reside in humanity, yet through humanity's sinfulness it was destroyed, the moral image lost and the natural image corrupted. Through God's gracious restoration, not only were we saved from our sins, but we were invited to share in God's truth, bask in and reflect His holiness and share in His joy. All of these fruits flow from God into the believer when the moral image is renewed and the natural image healed.

Another example, with a rather strange title of 'The Comparison and Complaint,' was published a year after the first, in Wesley's second *Collection of Psalms and Hymns* which he put into print upon his return to England from Georgia. Affectional images abound in this hymn:

Great God, create my soul anew, Conform my heart to thine,
Melt down my will, and let it flow, And take the mould divine.
Seize my whole frame into thy hand, Here all my powers I bring;
Manage the wheels by thy command, And govern every spring.

¹²⁰ *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America: With Other Occasional Service* (Nashville, Tenn: United Methodist Pub. House, 1992). *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day*, 90.

Then shall my feet no more depart, Nor my affections rove;
Devotion shall be all my heart, And all my passions love.¹²¹

In this image-rich set of verses, Wesley directs his Methodists to allow God to create them anew, conform their hearts to His own, constrain their affections from roaming and accept the whole devotion of their hearts and their passionate love. We see the Methodists invited both to embody and enact their love-filled hearts in radical ways in this hymn. In this way, emblematically through this small sample, this Collection of Psalms and Hymns compelled and enabled Wesley's Methodists to have God's image restored in their hearts.

Conclusion

We have examined Wesley's motives and sources for changes made to the *Book of Common Prayer*. We have pointed to the unique climate in which he operated, working in an era filled with liturgical innovation. We examined many of the changes Wesley made in his production of the *Sunday Service* and we have analysed those changes in light of his affectional theology and pastoral desire to produce mature, complete Christians whose lives were characterized by the fruit of the Spirit. We will now move to the penultimate chapter of this thesis in which we will survey the landscape of Methodist worship.

¹²¹ *Sunday Service – Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, 36-37.

Chapter 4 – Catechism, Worship and Heart Religion

Introduction

It must be recognized that a chapter on catechism may seem out of place in a thesis entitled ‘John Wesley’s Liturgical Theology.’ What do catechetical materials have to do with worship? Before we delve into the history and theology of the catechism in Wesley’s ministry it must be stated clearly that the catechism, as Wesley used it, was vital to participation in public worship. Most traditional catechisms not only included the Apostle’s Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Lord’s Prayer, they also contained careful instructions on what these writings mean and how they apply to our lives. In *BCP* worship in particular, each of these writings were used frequently. So, without the catechism, worshippers, especially young worshippers, would be engaging in parts of the liturgy that they didn’t necessarily have a spiritual grasp on, which would diminish their ability to experientially embrace and enact the truth therein. Through catechism, young and new Christians were introduced to the language of the liturgy.

Wesley spent a significant amount of his time in Georgia ministering to children. He tutored them in many subjects, did individual and group discipling sessions and taught them hymns. The most common method of teaching that Wesley employed was the use of a catechism. He experimented with several different variations of catechisms but predominantly used the version found in the *BCP*. In fact, when he returned to England and gave a report of his time in Georgia, his ministry to the children there was one among the highlights Wesley pointed out: ‘Many children have learned “how they ought to serve God”, and be useful to their neighbour’, which appears to be a paraphrase from the catechism in the Book of

Common Prayer.¹ The catechism was the cornerstone of Wesley's ministry to children.

Almost fifty years later, John Wesley sent *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America* to his followers in America. *The Sunday Service*, as mentioned in the previous chapter of this thesis, was Wesley's version of the *Book of Common Prayer*, tailored to fit the American situation. Among the changes Wesley made was the removal of the catechism. In light of this, a number of questions may be raised. Did this mean that in the intervening fifty years Wesley had decided the catechism was no longer a valid method of education for children? Did Wesley simply overlook the need to educate children in his desire to simplify and shorten the *Sunday Service*? Or is it possible that there was already another resource available to the American Methodists that might have met these needs and negated the necessity of a catechism in the *Sunday Service*? An investigation of these questions will help us determine whether Wesley had found (or created) a resource that provided the method and content of teaching Methodist children about holiness in the manner he desired.

Finding the Missing Catechism

Upon initial review of the standard writings on the Sunday Service, there is little made of the fact that Wesley does not include a catechism. In fact, much more has been written concerning the absence of a liturgy for confirmation. Most treat the missing catechism much as James F. White: 'Two significant omissions occur in subsequent pages: Wesley's removal of "A Catechism" and that for which it prepared, "The Order of Confirmation."'”² Even as he suggests that these two omissions were significant, he also insinuates that the only purpose for the catechism is to prepare for Confirmation. Therefore, his conclusion is that if Wesley does away

¹ February 3, 1738 (BE) 18.222.

² White, *Wesley's Prayer Book*. 24.

with Confirmation, there is no longer any need for a catechism. This, however, does not prove to be the case for Wesley.

The question remains, why did Wesley delete the catechism from the Sunday Service? It would seem unlikely that someone who put so much emphasis on education, especially for children, would summarily dismiss one of the most important tools for the shaping of young minds that the church had ever developed. So, perhaps there is another answer. As is the case in other instances for Wesley, perhaps there was already a resource in existence at the time that diminishes the necessity for a catechism in the Sunday Service.

One need look no further than the Christmas Conference in Baltimore, 1784 for the first clue. The meeting in which the Sunday Service was ratified as the official liturgy of the American Methodist Church was also the place where we find the following injunction under the heading ‘business of an Assistant’: ‘take care that every Society be duly supplied with...the *Instructions for Children*.’³ Just a few years later, in the Book of Discipline for 1787, under the heading ‘duty of Deacons’, we see a similar order: ‘take care that every Society be duly supplied with books: particularly with the...*Instructions for Children*...which ought to be in every house.’⁴ This *Instructions for Children* seems to carry a great deal of weight for the early American Methodists.

A cursory glance through Wesley’s corpus reveals more about *Instructions for Children*. Wesley, in a Journal entry for 4 July 1743, says that he ‘had time to finish *Instructions for Children*’, although it was not published until 1745.⁵ We see that

³ Methodist Episcopal Church (U.S.), *Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, (Philadelphia: Solomon W. Conrad, 1785), Question 60, Answer 7.

⁴ *Discipline*, 1787, Section XI, Question 2, Answer 8.

⁵ February 3, 1738 (BE) 18.222 (Jackson), 1:423. This thesis will refer to the 1746 edition of *Instructions for Children*, the third edition of *Instructions*, which may also be found in Appendix 1 in this thesis.

Instructions was used at Kingswood for various purposes in the education of the children there in Wesley's 'Short Account of the School in Kingswood.'⁶ We also find that Wesley instructs his preachers to go to each of the houses in their societies and 'give the children the 'Instructions for Children,' and encourage them to get it by heart.'⁷ Hereafter, Wesley gives extensive instructions for how the preachers should work with the children and their parents in using *Instructions* to its fullest extent. Later he tells his preachers again, in answer to the question 'In what particular method should we instruct them?' Wesley recommends *Instructions* as a resource and demands that they meet with the children of every society 'at least an hour every week'.⁸ Wesley clearly faced resistance from some preachers who did not feel that children's ministry was their calling, and he quotes them as saying 'But I have no gift for this.' His response to them was blunt and to the point, 'Gift or no gift, you are to do it; else you are not called to be a Methodist Preacher. Do it as you can, till you can do it as you would. Pray earnestly for the gift, and use the means for it. Particularly, study the "Instructions" and "Lessons for Children."'⁹ In a letter to 'a Young Disciple' Wesley suggests that in *Instructions* there might be found 'the best matter that we can possibly teach them.'¹⁰ Finally, in his tribute to John Fletcher, Wesley suggested that he did not regret that Fletcher had not lived to complete 'various little tracts for the use of the schools' because Wesley despaired 'of seeing any in the English tongue superior to those extracts from Abbe Fleury and Mr. Poiret, published

⁶ 'Short Account of the School in Kingswood.' (Jackson), 13.283 – "In the first class the children read 'Instructions for Children' and 'Lessons for Children;' and begin learning to write." In the second class, teachers are to have the children translate *Instructions* into Latin, "part of which they transcribe and repeat."

⁷ 'Minutes' (Jackson), 8.305.

⁸ 'Minutes' (Jackson), 8.316.

⁹ (Jackson) 8.316.

¹⁰ (Jackson), 12.450.

under the title of “Instructions for Children.”¹¹ However, in spite of these observations there is still no indication as to what is contained in *Instructions for Children* or how they relate to our quest for the missing catechism.

In a letter written to Mary Bishop in 1776 we find the beginning of an answer to our quest: “Our Church Catechism is utterly improper for children of six or seven years old. Certainly you ought not to teach it them against your own judgment. I should imagine it would be far better to teach them the short Catechism, prefixed to the ‘Instructions for Children.’¹² This letter, written in 1776, is important for several reasons, first because he acknowledges that, at least for a certain age group, he feels that his *Instructions* is superior to the *BCP* catechism; second because he essentially equates *Instructions* with a Catechism and also because it implies that even 30 years after its publication *Instructions* is still *very much* in circulation. So, *Instructions* was indeed a catechism, at least in Wesley’s mind. But was *Instructions* held in high enough esteem that it diminished the need for a catechism in the Sunday Service?

Much has been written concerning the place of *Instructions for Children* both educationally and doctrinally.¹³ However, concerning the theological centrality of *Instructions* we may simply allow Wesley to speak for himself. In a letter in February 17, 1761 Wesley responded to accusations from a Mr. G.R.:

“Until you publish, in plain, intelligible words, your scheme of principles, it is impossible to say what you are.” I have done it, ten times over, particularly in “The Principles of a Methodist,” the “Appeals to Men of

¹¹ (Jackson), 11.339. Wesley completed his thoughts concerning *Instructions* in this context by saying, “I have never yet seen anything comparable to them, either for depth of sense, or plainness of language.”

¹² (Jackson), 13.33

¹³ See esp. *The Methodists*, ed. Kirby, Richey and Rowe, ch. 10, 165-176; William P. McDonald, “What Shall We Do for the Rising Generation?: Methodist Catechisms, 1745-1928,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 43, no. 2 (2008): pg. 177; Addie Grace Wardle, *History of the Sunday School Movement in the Methodist Episcopal Church*, thesis (New York; Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1918), pg. 44-45; Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Mirror and Memory: Reflections on Early Methodism* (Nashville, Tenn.: Kingswood Books, 1989), pp. 189-204; Thomas B. Neely, *Doctrinal Standards of Methodism, including the Methodist Episcopal Churches*, (New York, Chicago [etc.]: Fleming H. Revell, 1918), 233-240.

Reason and Religion,” and (what I am not without hope might be intelligible even to you) “Instructions for Children.”¹⁴

So, Wesley believed that *Instructions for Children*, his catechism, was not only a plain example of his “scheme of principles”, but that it was comparable for such a purpose with ‘The Principles of a Methodist’, and ‘The Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion’. Therefore, it seems justified to say that Wesley believed *Instructions* to be a good sampling of his ‘scheme of principles’, far more so than the Catechism found in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Having established that *Instructions for Children* was Wesley’s preferred catechism for the Methodist movement when he sent his Sunday Service to the Methodists in America, it seems likely that including a catechism in the Sunday Service was deemed unnecessary. As Wesley was aiming at simplicity and brevity as much as possible, the inclusion of an “extra” catechism would have been redundant. But were there other reasons why Wesley did not include the standard ‘Church Catechism’ in the Sunday Service? Is it possible that the contents of *Instructions* were not only superior to the Church Catechism in Wesley’s mind in regard to the instructions of 6 to 7 year old children, but also that this catechism aided the cause of Methodist worship in ways that the Church Catechism could not? A further examination of the sources, contents and purpose of Wesley’s *Instructions for Children* is necessary to procure answers to these questions.

Sources of Wesley’s Catechism

As is the case with so many of Wesley’s publications, *Instructions* is an abridgement of catechetical material from two authors which he used to create his own distinct work. The first section of *Instructions* is an abbreviated and heavily edited translation of Claude Fleury’s *Grand Catechisme historique* (1683), while the

¹⁴ (Jackson) 13.394.

rest is a reworking of Pierre Poiret's *Les Principes Solides de la Religion et de la Vie Chretienne, appliqué a l'Education des enfans* (1705). Wesley's indebtedness to these two French clerics is important, as each brings his own distinct contribution to Wesley's theology. Fleury is most well known for his work on the early Church, by which Wesley had been deeply affected. As William McDonald points out, 'Wesley and Fleury shared a common interest in the early church's practices as models for their own times.'¹⁵ McDonald also makes clear the theological connection between Wesley and Poiret: 'It was (a) concern for right desiring that first motivated Poiret to compose his lessons and so supplement the doctrinal catechesis of the Reformation tradition with a suitable religion of the heart. Wesley shared this aim.'¹⁶

Purpose and Structure

Wesley used *Instructions* in the early years in two primary ways. First, he used it as a lesson book for writing and reading at the Kingswood school. However, the primary means of its usage was always intended to be in the homes of the Methodists as the main theological primer of the Methodist movement. In his letter of preface to *Instructions for Children* Wesley elaborates on the primary purpose of this resource. In the preface, he encourages Parents and Schoolmasters to realize that, even as their students are learning to read and think, 'They will grow wiser and better every day. And you will have the comfort of observing, that by the same steps they advance in the Knowledge of these poor Elements, they will also grow in Grace, in the Knowledge of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ.'¹⁷ So we see that spiritual growth, coming to full maturity in Christ, is the ultimate purpose of Wesley's

¹⁵ McDonald, *Generation*, 180.

¹⁶ McDonald, *Generation*, 181.

¹⁷ *Instructions For Children*, 4.

catechism.¹⁸ As will also be shown through the following analysis, the development and deepening of Christian affections and tempers is Wesley's constant and abiding focus throughout *Instructions*.

The structure of *Instructions* is, in some ways, as important for our purposes as the content. Section I, which Wesley borrows from Fleury, is a very straightforward introduction, in question and answer format, of God, salvation history, the means of grace and eschatology. This first section is very similar to many of the Reformation-era catechisms. When Wesley moves to Section II he switches to Poiret's material and his format changes dramatically as he adopts more of a proverbial style, formulated in short, pithy statements. In Section II he sets the remainder of *Instructions* with his subject – 'Of God, and of the Soul of Man'. In this section he presents a clear picture of who God is and how the Life of God might be formed in the life of Humanity. Sections III through VI are built upon this foundation and form an important unity. In successive sections Wesley presents instructions for how to regulate our Desires, Understanding, Joy and Practice. Within these Sections Wesley uses the standard catechetical resources of The Lord's Prayer (Desires), the Apostle's Creed (Understanding) and the Ten Commandments (Practice). The remainder of this chapter will be an exploration and analysis of Wesley's *Instructions for Children*. In this analysis, we will focus on the development of themes which lie within the purview of the rest of this thesis – namely, the restoration of the Image of God, the promulgation of heart religion and the cohesiveness of Wesley's catechism to his overall liturgical agenda.

¹⁸ It is worth noting that this emphasis on spiritual growth does not seem to be limited to or targeted solely upon children. In the preface, Wesley introduces *Instructions* as material that may be "easily understood, either by the Teacher or the Learners. And altho' the great Truths herein contained, are more immediately address'd to Children, yet are they worthy the deepest Consideration, both of the oldest and wisest of men." (*Instructions*, iii-iv.)

Wesley's Catechism: Section I – Traditional and Foundational

This section is considerably different than the remainder of *Instructions* in format. In Section I Wesley, following Fleury uses the question and answer style so prevalent in catechisms from the Reformation era. Wesley begins with a brief description of God as Triune, Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Loving. In the next five Lessons Wesley follows the same essential outline as that of the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Both demonstrate a Creation-Fall-Redemption pattern in their opening sections. McDonald points out an important and enduring feature of this catechism:

In a persistent feature of later Methodist catechisms, Section I succinctly outlines salvation history. The opening questions about God's nature are a staple of later Methodist catechisms. There follows a concise narrative of creation-fall-redemption... By outlining an *ordo salutis* at this point the catechist stimulates the youth to think of their own faith. Contemplation of redemptive events was to stimulate right desires, emotions, beliefs, and practices in the youth.¹⁹

This suggestion of McDonald's concerning the stimulation of right desires, emotions, beliefs and practices provides the structure for the remainder of Wesley's *Instructions*, and will be discussed in detail when Sections II-VI are addressed. Lessons VIII and IX cover the means of grace with a very different approach than the Catechism in the 1662 *BCP*. In the *BCP* Catechism, the focus is on the Lord's Supper and Baptism. In question/answer format, the Catechism instructs the student in what a sacrament *is* ('an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace') and what a sacrament *does*. The differentiation is made, with both Baptism and the Lord's Supper, between the outward sign (water for Baptism and bread and wine for the Lord's Supper) and the inward and spiritual grace (death to sin and new birth to righteousness in baptism and the Body and Blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper). The Lessons on the Means of Grace in Wesley's *Instructions* are far less technical and much more diverse.

¹⁹ McDonald, *Generation*, 179.

Wesley names the chief means of grace: ‘The Lord’s Supper, Prayer, Searching the Scriptures, and Fasting.’²⁰ He does not include Baptism among these *chief* means of grace, presumably because it is not repeatable and not, therefore, a *chief* means of growth, which is (as mentioned earlier) the purpose of *Instructions for Children*. The remainder of Lessons VIII and IX are spent invoking the tradition of the early church regarding the practice of the chief means of grace, and encouraging the student to participate in each of the means as often as possible ‘till his Life’s End.’²¹ Wesley was much more interested in promoting the *practice* of the means of grace than he was defining the content of the Sacraments in *Instructions for Children*. Finally, in Lessons X-XII Wesley offers a vivid description of Hell contrasted with the hope of Heaven.

As mentioned earlier, the format for the remainder of *Instructions* is much different than Section I. Gone is the question and answer format so reminiscent of the Reformation Period. Instead, Wesley adopts the style of Pierre Poiret, his source for Sections II-VI. The result is a series of Lessons gathered around five specific topics, formulated in short, pithy statements, much like a series of Christian proverbs. As suggested earlier, each of these Sections explores God’s relationship to humanity using material very common to previous catechisms – the Lord’s prayer, the Apostle’s Creed and the Ten Commandments – but as McDonald suggests: ‘The Instructions place these texts in the wider contexts of desire, understanding, and practice, respectively, using them as exhibits of true desiring, true believing, and right conduct.’²² McDonald frames the second part of the *Instructions*, saying, ‘They may

²⁰ *Instructions*, 7.

²¹ *Instructions*, 8.

²² McDonald, *Generation*, 180.

be said to be typically Wesleyan examples of orthokardia and orthopraxis, the life of the ‘right heart’ and ‘right practices.’²³

Section II – Of God, and of the Soul of Man

The first and shortest of the remaining Sections treats the subject of God and the Soul of Man. Wesley uses the phrase ‘the life of God in the Soul of Man’ in several places in his writing.²⁴ It is a phrase he borrows from Henry Scougal and is appropriately described in these six lessons in his catechism. To demonstrate Wesley’s use of this phrase, as well as to make a few very important connections to some other themes in *Instructions* with the rest of Wesley’s work, I have included a rather lengthy quote from Wesley’s sermon, ‘Awake, Thou That Sleepest,’

Yet, on the authority of God’s word, and our own Church, I must repeat the question, “Hast thou received the Holy Ghost?” If thou hast not, thou art not yet a Christian. For a Christian is a man that is “anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power.” Thou art not yet made a partaker of pure religion and undefiled. Dost thou know what religion is? that it is a participation of the divine nature; the life of God in the soul of man; Christ formed in the heart; “Christ in thee, the hope of glory?” happiness and holiness; heaven begun upon earth? “a kingdom of God within thee; not meat and drink,” no outward thing; “but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost?” an everlasting kingdom brought into thy soul; a “peace of God, that passeth all understanding;” a “joy unspeakable, and full of glory?”²⁵

This quote from Wesley ties him in with a rich spiritual heritage, connecting him to a long line of Church Fathers who taught, preached and lived the idea of a ‘participation of the divine nature.’²⁶ And *Instructions* falls in line with these writers by first describing the nature and character of God in Lesson II, and later, in the last lesson in this section, suggesting that these very characteristics might be ‘made’ in the life of the believer. Wesley, in Lesson II, describes God as being good, powerful, wise,

²³ McDonald, *Generation*, 181.

²⁴ See for example, ‘Awake, Thou That Sleepest’ (BE) 1.150; and ‘Sermon on the Mount, IV’ (BE) 1.541.

²⁵ ‘Awake, Thou that Sleepest’, (BE) 1.150-151.

²⁶ See ‘Awake, Thou that Sleepest’, (BE) 1.150-151, ft note 105, and *John Wesley*, ed. Albert Outler, 9-15.

happy, as loving all things He has made, as just, true and merciful. He concludes Section II in Lesson VI by suggesting that ‘If God lives and dwells in your Soul, then he makes it like himself. He makes the Soul in which he dwells, Good, wise, Just, true, full of Love, and of Power to do well.’ Further dovetailing with the above excerpt from ‘Awake, Thou that Sleepest’, Wesley ties in the themes of happiness and joy: ‘He makes it (the soul of the believer) happy. For it is his Will, that your Soul should rejoice in him forever. He made it for this very Thing. When a Soul desires God, and knows and enjoys him, then it is truly happy.’²⁷ Thus, this theme of God and the Soul of Man is very much in harmony with Wesley’s theology as seen elsewhere.

Section III – How to Regulate our Desires

Wesley makes clear exactly what he means by desires with his first two sentences in Lesson I: ‘The Gate by which God with his holy Graces comes into us is the Desire of the Soul. This is often called, the Heart, or the Will.’²⁸ So, by equating Desire with Heart, Wesley has again tapped into a rich vein in the history of the Church. The first chapter of this thesis focused on Wesley’s theological foundations of the restoration of the Image of God in humanity and the religion of the heart – deep-seated theological convictions to which Wesley routinely returns in *Instructions for Children*.

There is also a directional thrust to Wesley’s language in this section, and in *Instructions* in general: ‘Unless our Desire be toward God, we cannot please him.’²⁹ This orientational view of humanity’s relationship with God is behind another important thought from Wesley:

²⁷ *Instructions*, 12.

²⁸ *Instructions*, 13.

²⁹ *Instructions*, 13

Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts and words, and actions; being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil. Can any serious person doubt of this, or find a medium between serving God and serving the devil?³⁰

Wesley also uses a helpful analogy in describing the relationship of desire and the Soul.

The Desire is to the Soul, what the Mouth and the Stomach are to the Body. It is by the Mouth and the Stomach that the Body receives its Nourishment, whether good or bad. That our Body may live, we must take care to put nothing but what is good into our Mouth or Stomach. And, that our Soul may live, we must take care to desire nothing but what is good.³¹

Again, there is a directional impetus to his imagery, also leading to a ‘Two Paths’ construction much like we see in wisdom literature such as Psalm 1 and in Paul’s use of Vice and Virtue lists, as well as Augustine’s *concupiscentia* and *caritas*.³²

In lesson two Wesley makes it explicit that Desire was made for Good and that only God is good. Therefore, to desire anything other than God or His will is to desire evil. He deepens the divide between our desires and God’s by suggesting that ‘As the will of God is the spring of all good, so our own will is the Spring of all Evil.’³³ He calls for the renunciation of our own will and desires by using a scriptural phrase previously used by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane: ‘Father, let not my

³⁰ ‘A Plain Account of Christian Perfection’ (Jackson) 11.366. This quote comes from the opening section of *Plain Account* as Wesley recalls the beginning of his pursuit of perfection, namely, his reading of Bishop Jeremy Taylor’s *Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying*. This theme of orientation, as noted, will be discussed throughout the remainder of this chapter as examples present themselves.

³¹ *Instructions*, 13.

³² See, for example, Peter O’Brien, 1982. *Colossians, Philemon*. (Waco, Texas: Word, 1982). O’Brien, in commenting on Colossians 3:5-11, points out that the background to Paul’s use of virtue/vice lists was most likely the Jewish proselyte catechism and its contrasts between the way of light and the way of darkness. See also Thomas A. Noble, *Holy Trinity ; Holy People: The Historic Doctrine of Christian Perfecting*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2013. 59-63. Noble, regarding the importance of Augustine’s teaching on *concupiscentia* and *caritas*, said “It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this analysis of human motivation for shaping the subsequent Western understanding of sin and sanctification, and particularly (through this long tradition) in shaping the thought of John Wesley. The key is this concept of love.” *Holy Trinity*, 62.

³³ *Instructions*, 13.

Will be done, but Thine.’³⁴ Wesley illustrates this in Lesson three by pointing to the fact that humanity ought to shun praise and esteem, and avoid the ‘Pride of Heart which is an Abomination to the Lord.’³⁵ He suggests in this Lesson, in poignant fashion, that ‘they who teach children to love Praise, train them up for the Devil’, and that ‘praise is a deadly poison for the Soul.’³⁶ And once again, he uses equally colourful language in Lesson four when discussing parents giving gifts of wealth and extravagance to our children: ‘They that give you fine cloaths, are giving your Soul to the Devil...If your Father or Mother giving you every Thing that you like, they are the worst Enemies you have in the World.’³⁷

At the beginning of Lesson Five Wesley offers a contrast between the hollow things of the world and the true beauty of God. Wesley identifies God with characteristics seen throughout the *Instructions*, namely Power, Wisdom and Goodness. He also points out that humanity ought to ‘desire to praise and honour him as he deserves, and to please him in every thing.’³⁸ Wesley then makes a vital link to Westminster *Shorter Catechism* by suggesting that ‘the End for which we are born, is to praise and honour God.’³⁹ This statement harkens the answer to the first question in the Shorter Catechism, which answers the question ‘What is the chief end of man?’ with the answer ‘to glorify God, and enjoy him forever.’ Wesley also makes another connection with his next statement, ‘And this we may do without ceasing, by continually lifting up our hearts to him.’⁴⁰

The image of lifting up our hearts to God would have been thoroughly engrained in Wesley, as he would have joined with the congregation in the ‘Sursum

³⁴ *Instructions*, 13.

³⁵ *Instructions*, 14.

³⁶ *Instructions*, 14.

³⁷ *Instructions*, 14.

³⁸ *Instructions*, 15.

³⁹ *Instructions*, 15.

⁴⁰ *Instructions*, 15.

Corda' every time he received communion – 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them up unto the Lord.'⁴¹ In concluding the fifth lesson in Section III Wesley employs language drawn directly from the Book of Revelation, while also paying tribute once again to the Book of Common Prayer by drawing upon the Sanctus – 'Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God of Hosts!'⁴² Wesley's call is to worship the Creator rather than His creation, a subtle reminder of the God-ward orientation of his message in *Instructions*.

In Lesson Six, Wesley continues his appeal to his audience by reminding them that God is the source of all our help, blessings, relationships and provisions. Listing vital things such as soul, body, life, parents, friends, angels, earth, air, sun, food and clothing, Wesley calls for a spirit of thanksgiving to God. He continues in this regard by suggesting (again) that God is the author and giver of all good, even good we do not understand or notice. Using powerful imagery, Wesley reminds of God's unseen intervention: 'We are just like a brittle vessel, which, if it were not always upheld, would fall at once and break into pieces.'⁴³ What should our response have been for these blessings, both seen and unseen? Wesley readily supplies the answer, 'Therefore, it should be our Desire to be always thanking God, because he is always blessing us.'⁴⁴

Lesson Seven leads us to another persistent theme not only in *Instructions*, but also in the whole of Wesley's work. 'Above all, if we would be happy, we have Need of his blessings upon our souls.'⁴⁵ The link between happiness and holiness, as referenced in chapter 1 of this thesis, is one of Wesley's most abiding themes, seen more than thirty times in his sermons alone.⁴⁶ Additionally, the tie that bound

⁴¹ *BCP*, 1662.

⁴² *Instructions*, 15.

⁴³ *Instructions*, 16.

⁴⁴ *Instructions*, 16.

⁴⁵ *Instructions*, 16.

⁴⁶ See 'Justification by Faith', (BE) 1.185, footnote 18.

happiness and holiness together also tied Wesley to a long line of thinking in the tradition of moral theology.⁴⁷ Wesley's suggestion that our happiness comes only from God is a recurring theme in *Instructions*. In lesson six of Section II Wesley makes the connection far more explicit: 'When a Soul desires God, and knows and enjoys him, then it is truly happy. But when a Soul does not desire God, nor know and enjoy him, then it is truly miserable.'⁴⁸ From this point, Wesley again returns to the theme of desire and disposition: 'Therefore, let us desire of God, to give us his Grace, his good Spirit, and the Knowledge of himself. Let us ask of him, a meek and quiet, Spirit, a contented, humble, thankful heart.'⁴⁹

In lesson eight Wesley begins to make a more visible connection to the linchpin for Section III. He commences by reminding the reader that all have offended God and are unworthy of His grace and blessings. He then submits that, with earnest Desire, one should ask God for forgiveness of past sins, for the Sake of Jesus. What comes next is a very careful and important connection to what follows hereafter:

- These Desires,
1. To praise God, and his Power, Wisdom and Goodness;
 2. To thank him for all his Benefits;
 3. To ask his Grace, that so we may please him; and
 4. To beg his Mercy, for the Pardon of our sins;
- Are what we commonly call *Prayer*.⁵⁰

By making the link between right desiring and prayer, Wesley is paving the way to his own interpretation (with Poiret's influence, of course) of one of the classic pieces of Reformation catechetical resources, the Lord's Prayer. But before we get there,

⁴⁷ See D. Stephen, Long, *John Wesley's Moral Theology : The Quest for God and Goodness* (Nashville, Tenn.: Kingswood Books, 2005). Long makes a strong link between Wesley and the Thomistic and Augustinian schools of moral theology, along with an insightful reminder of Wesley's indebtedness to Aristotle's idea of happiness as the ultimate goal for humanity.

⁴⁸ *Instructions*, 12.

⁴⁹ *Instructions*, 16.

⁵⁰ *Instructions*, 16-17.

Wesley makes sure we stay on track: ‘We never pray, but when we have really these desires in our Heart. If we say ever so many words, without having these Desires, we are but like Parrots before God.’⁵¹ After this poignant picture of prayer from a wrong heart, he concludes this lesson with a phrase he has used many times already in *Instructions*: ‘Beware of this: of drawing nigh unto God with your Lips, while your heart, (that is your desire) is far from him.’⁵²

Lesson Nine begins with a the question, ‘What do you mean, when you pray to God, in the name of Jesus Christ?’⁵³ Wesley points out that the bare use of Jesus’ name means nothing ‘if you do not know what you say.’⁵⁴ He reminds the reader that we were all ‘under the Wrath and under the Curse of God, when Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for us. And for his Sake, if we truly believe in him, God is now reconciled to us.’⁵⁵ Wesley returns us to the language of desire by suggesting that ‘our desires should all spring from his Grace, and be agreeable to his Desires. Then he offers our Desires, as his own, to God his Father, before whose Throne he stands: and God can refuse nothing to the Desires and the Merits of his well-beloved Son.’⁵⁶ Belief in Jesus then, and the giving of our desires to Him and allowing him to conform them to His own desires and to offer them to the Father, will result in the Father’s glory and our own salvation.⁵⁷

Lesson Ten is mostly a prayer, which Wesley suggests as a model prayer, an example of a prayer ‘from your heart.’ This prayer, in form, is based on the pattern

⁵¹ *Instructions*, 17.

⁵² *Instructions*, 17.

⁵³ *Instructions*, 17.

⁵⁴ *Instructions*, 17.

⁵⁵ *Instructions*, 17.

⁵⁶ *Instructions*, 17.

⁵⁷ It is important here to remember Wesley’s suggestion that the means by which the end (God’s glorification and the Church’s edification) is accomplished is by the engaging of the affections, which is another way of talking about the sanctifying of our desires in Christ. This “circle” of engaging the affections/sanctifying desires which brings about God’s glorification and our edification is the very essence of Wesley’s liturgical theology.

demonstrated in lesson eight, in which Wesley suggests that desire is demonstrated in praising God, thanking him for his benefits, asking for grace to please Him and begging for Mercy for the pardon of sins; this Wesley says, is what we commonly call prayer. So here, Wesley gives us a demonstration of a prayer from the heart based on this format. It is in this way that we see a unique aspect of Wesley's pastoral ministry – the ability to weave together written forms of prayer with the extemporaneous practice of prayer. Wesley's suggested prayer in lesson Ten begins with praise – 'Thou art Wise. Thou art Powerful...', then moves to thanksgiving; 'My God, I thank thee for making and for redeeming me...' Wesley next directs us, in this suggested prayer, to ask for Grace – 'Let me believe with all my heart, and love thee with all my Strength.' Finally, a call for mercy through the reminder of our need for a broken and contrite heart: 'Give me, O my Lord, a lowly Heart. Let me not think myself better than any one; Let me despise myself...'.⁵⁸

The call for a prayer from the heart with a suggested form in Lesson X leads us naturally in Lesson XI to reflect upon the best Prayer in the World...the Prayer which our Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us.' After praying the prayer with his readers, Wesley returns to a familiar theme in *Instructions*: 'Do you understand what you have said now? How dare you say to God, you know not what? Do you not know, that this is no Prayer, unless you speak it from your Heart?' Wesley finishes Lesson XI (and Section III) with a rather comprehensive list of desires the reader should have in their hearts if they are to pray this prayer affectively:

God is not pleased with your saying these Words, unless there is in your Heart at the same time a real Desire, that God should be 1. Known and esteemed, 2. Honoured and praised, 3. Obeyed by all Men: 4. that he should feed your Souls with his Grace and his Love; 5. That he should forgive you your past

⁵⁸ *Instructions*, 18.

Sins; and 6. That he should keep you for the Time to come, from all Sin and from all Snares of the Devil.⁵⁹

The practice and exercise of these things, according to Wesley's catechism, will enable the reader to regulate their desires.

Section IV – How to Regulate our Understanding

In Section IV Wesley gives guidance to his readers concerning the regulation of their understanding. He begins by instructing the reader that their understanding was made for truth, which He equates to God, His Word and Works.⁶⁰ As a practical outcome of this internal longing for the truth as found in God, Wesley stresses the enmity that seekers of the truth must have with the Devil, the Father of lies, and he further suggests that lying 'is the most abominable of all things.'⁶¹ Wesley's pupils should have no desire for what men say and do, which is folly, and should avoid curiosity, which fills the mind with darkness. In sum, 'what a loss is this, to fill those Vessels with Filth and Dung, which were made to receive the pure Light of God!'⁶²

Lesson Two leads us to understand that the Eye of our understanding is 'quite shut' as a result of the Fall, and that we are born 'quite blind to God and the Things of God.' It is God alone who can open the Eyes of our Soul and help us to see and know spiritual things. Even things in the natural world, such as the Sun and Earth, would not be seen unless God had 'given us bodily eyes.'⁶³ Wesley says that God opens the eyes of 'those and those only, who flee from Evil, and learn to do Good.' Not surprisingly, these are, in rough paraphrase, the first two General Rules of Methodism, with which most of Wesley's students would have no doubt been

⁵⁹ *Instructions*, 19.

⁶⁰ See chapter one where understanding is seen as the Natural image of God in humanity. In Wesley's sermon *The Image of God*, Wesley described understanding as "a power of distinguishing truth from falsehood." JW, (BE) 4.293.

⁶¹ *Instructions*, 19.

⁶² *Instructions*, 19.

⁶³ See chapter one, Spiritual Senses and the description from 'On the Discoveries of Faith' of the blind man having 'not the least knowledge or conception of light or colours' for another example of this idea in Wesley. 'On the Discoveries of Faith', (BE) 3.29.

familiar. Wesley follows this with important advice for the young, aspiring believer: ‘But we must not believe what the World tells us about the Things of God; for all Men who have not his Spirit, are blind and Liars.’⁶⁴ He concludes this lesson by imploring his students again to trust in God for the things they cannot understand and to ‘wait and desire’ that He might open the Eyes of their understanding that they might see clearly.

In Lesson Three Wesley uses a series of analogies to illustrate the inability of reason to effectively reveal the fullness of God to humanity.⁶⁵ A blind man, says Wesley, cannot see the world around him through reason alone. Indeed, ‘with all his reason he could have only a very dark, gross, nay and false conceptions’ of the things of the World.⁶⁶ Wesley compares this blind man to humanity in the World, trying to see the things of God with their reason. God must give humanity ‘other Eyes to the Soul’ in order for humanity to see God. He continues along this analogy by suggesting that a painting of the sun gives neither light nor warmth, and a painting of fruit cannot nourish or strengthen. These images are equated to a drawn picture of God, which gives no light and offers neither nourishment nor strength to the soul. Wesley extends the analogy of the blind man into Lesson Four, again pointing out that when a blind man attempts to draw pictures of things he has never seen, his portraits are ‘wild, random pictures’. He switches metaphors slightly to suggest that a natural man ‘desireth not the things of the Sprit of God. They are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.’⁶⁷ It is only through the Sprit of God that we come to know God, so Wesley implores his student to pray and offer their understanding to God so that he might open the eyes of their Soul.

⁶⁴ *Instructions*, 20.

⁶⁵ A lengthy quote from this Lesson is used in chapter 1 to describe Wesley’s conception of the Spiritual Senses.

⁶⁶ *Instructions*, 20.

⁶⁷ *Instructions*, 21.

Lesson Five calls the student to redirect their desire away from their own reason and toward God, to see God in all things.⁶⁸ He then follows up with several questions to which he supplies a theocentric answer:

Why was the World made? To shew the Goodness, and Wisdom, and power of God. Why do Men die? Through the Justice of God...Why ought we not to return Evil for Evil? Because God would have us do like him: who is continually doing good to us, even when we ourselves do evil.⁶⁹

We see in this call a return to a continual theme in *Instructions*, a directional call to a God-ward orientation which, as Wesley goes on to remind us, will change the way we see. ‘Thus everything may shew us the Power, wisdom and Goodness, the Truth, Justice or Will of God. And so everything may shew us, the weakness, ignorance, folly and wickedness of Men.’⁷⁰ We will come to see these things if we ‘see God in all things’ and he opens the Eyes of our Souls.

Lesson Six begins with a simple question: ‘What do you believe of God?’ Then, the answer is supplied for the student in the form of the Apostle’s Creed. Wesley suggests, at the end of the Creed, that from these Words his student may learn three things:

To believe in God, the Father, who is Powerful, and Wise and Good; who made you and all things, Visible and Invisible, Temporal and Eternal...2. To believe in God the Son, who lived and died to redeem you and all Mankind; and 3. To believe in God the Holy Ghost, who restores fallen Man to the Image of God in which he was made.⁷¹

This Trinitarian summary provides an easily remembered rehearsal of the roles of the Godhead. Wesley also provides us with an overt connection to one of his major themes – the restoration of the Image of God in humanity – and assigns this role to the Holy Spirit.

⁶⁸ *Instructions*, 21.

⁶⁹ *Instructions*, 21.

⁷⁰ *Instructions*, 22.

⁷¹ *Instructions*, 22.

Lesson Seven is an almost hymnic rehearsal of salvation through Trinitarian lenses. God the Creator created humanity in His Image so that He might fill them with His knowledge, love, joy and glory forever. Humanity, however, ‘turned his Desire from God and his Will, and so became both guilty, wicked and miserable.’⁷² The remedy for this turning from God came in the form of the Son of God who ‘was made Man, lived and died and rose again, to buy forgiveness for us.’⁷³ Through these self-less actions the Son showed us how to renounce our own Will and Desires and give ourselves totally up to God. And emphasizing the theme of participation Wesley reminds us that these saving actions of God are worked in us by the Holy Spirit who enlightens our understanding and fills our Souls with peace and joy. It is here that Wesley ties in the communion of the Saints by suggesting that we are, ‘joined again with all that is holy, either in earth or heaven. We rejoice together with them in the common salvation, in the benefits and graces of Jesus Christ. And after the Body is dead and risen again, we shall live together in eternal glory.’⁷⁴

Albert Outler, in a note on Wesley’s sermon “On the Trinity”, says that “for Wesley as for pietists generally, abstruse doctrines are better believed devoutly than analysed rationally.”⁷⁵ Outler’s observation is somewhat misleading, as his comment makes no distinction between an immanent and an economic view of the Trinity. Wesley was not concerned, any more than anyone else in the eighteenth century, with the precision involved in the description of the internal life of the Trinity. What he *was* concerned about was the way God was revealed in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This may be seen in *Instructions for Children*, as Wesley is far more interested in leading his students to come to a devout belief in the Trinity than he is in

⁷² *Instructions*, 22.

⁷³ *Instructions*, 23.

⁷⁴ *Instructions*, 23.

⁷⁵ ‘On the Trinity’ (BE) 2.373, Introduction.

dissecting the inner-workings of the Godhead. Wesley begins the final lesson in Section IV with a recognition that we cannot comprehend how the three are one, ‘yet we believe it, because God has said it.’⁷⁶ However, Wesley then points out that true knowledge is brought about in our Souls by the Holy Spirit, and that this is ‘saving knowledge, when it works by Love, and brings us to imitate God.’⁷⁷ Working out a very simple yet biblically accurate view of the Trinity in action, Wesley uses a series of quotes from Apostles Paul and John to demonstrate this pattern as found in Scripture.⁷⁸ In a powerful finish to Section IV, Wesley poignantly demonstrates for his student the grace-infused synergism at the heart of his call to holiness with a series of three ways in which we may ‘savingly know’ God. First, Wesley suggests that we may ‘savingly know’ God the Father, by loving him reverently, by confidently giving ourselves into His hands, and by imitating his goodness in all things and toward all humanity. Secondly, Wesley says we may ‘savingly know’ God the Redeemer when we live like those who have been redeemed and, ‘when all our Tempers, and words, and Actions shew, that he has redeemed us from the present evil World.’⁷⁹ Finally, we may ‘savingly know’ God the Sanctifier when we are holy as He is holy and ‘when he hath purified both our Hearts and lives by Faith, so that we continually see and love God.’ Wesley always points to God’s grace as the source, yet demands fruit by which we may ‘savingly know’ the Giver of all good Gifts.

⁷⁶ *Instructions*, 23.

⁷⁷ *Instructions*, 23. Two more very important themes in Wesley – the “faith that worketh by love” (See ‘Awake, Thou that sleepest’, (BE) 1.151, §II.11 and, ‘On Dissipation’, where Wesley calls it “the radical cure of all dissipation”. (BE) 3.122) and the imitation of God, mentioned in the introduction section of Chapter 1 of this thesis as an essential characteristic of a Methodist.

⁷⁸ Ephesians 5:1 (KJV); 1 John 4:7-8 (KJV); 1 John 2:4 (KJV).

⁷⁹ *Instructions*, 24. This phrase “Tempers, and words, and actions” is used, in some form or another, dozens of times in Wesley’s sermons. The best example comes from Sermon 85, “On Working out our Own Salvation”, when Wesley, referring to Philippians 2:13 suggests that *to will* includes “every good desire, whether relating to our tempers, words, or actions, to inward or outward holiness”, and *to do* “implies all that power from on high; all that energy which works in us every right disposition, and then furnishes us for every good word and work.” (BE) 3.203, §I.3.

Section V – How to Regulate our Joy

Treating the subject of how to regulate our Joy, Wesley is operating outside of the typical catechetical structure as seen in the Reformation. Section V is different in the fact that it seems to disrupt the flow of Sections III, IV and VI which all have one of the three main catechetical sources (Lord's Prayer, Apostle's Creed and Ten Commandments) as the focus of each section. It will be posited that, given the inner logic of the *Instructions*, and the unifying theme of the life of God in the Soul of man and the appeal for a God-ward orientation, Section V is less disruptive and out-of-place than it may seem.

Lesson One begins with a comparison that will dominate the remainder of this Section. Wesley sets humanity - poor, ignorant, foolish and sinful, soon to rot upon the Earth - in stark contrast with God, who alone is Great, good, and the giver of all good things. Again, two definitive paths are represented here, one leading to joy, the other to destruction, and Wesley will work relentlessly throughout this Section to persuade his students to focus their Desire on the Creator rather than the creation. Lesson One sets the tone for the rest of the Section by pointing to God as the only One worthy of rejoicing and delighting in, and Wesley concludes this lesson by using an interesting variation on a now-familiar theme: 'And we should now accustom ourselves to this: to rejoice and delight in God and his holy Will.'⁸⁰

Having established the contrast between the weakness and transient nature of humanity and the God of glory and goodness Wesley seeks to deepen this divide by giving multiple examples of things within which one may rejoice and delight. He begins by suggesting that we should rejoice that we have a Father who is Eternal and Almighty God. We should also rejoice that God created us to fill us with joy. But

⁸⁰ *Instructions*, 24.

there is a contingency, a contingency that is important and frequently applied in *Instructions*. We have these things in which we rejoice, ‘If we will believe in Jesus, and do his holy Will: If we will love and obey him, and not love either the Honours, Riches or Pleasures that pass away like a Dream.’ But even as Wesley qualifies God’s gifts to us, suggesting that there is a requirement we must fulfil in order to receive these blessings, he also reminds us that even our obedience is grace-infused: ‘And this we may do, by the Power of his grace, by the Holy Ghost which he is ready to give unto us.’⁸¹

Wesley continues Lesson Two by giving his students even more reasons to rejoice, reminding them that God is ‘happy and glorious in himself...that he knows every thing, and can do everything; that he is just and good...that he is true in all his promises...wise to teach and govern us well, (and) that God alone deserves to be desired.’⁸² He concludes Lesson Two by asserting a powerful theological claim on behalf of Jesus Christ: ‘We should rejoice that the Son of God took our Nature upon him, in order to take us with him to Heaven forever; and that even now, he will come and dwell in our Heart, if we desire it, and believe in him and do his will.’⁸³ Here Wesley communicates the idea of Christ taking on our nature in order to be with us, both now and eternally.

Lesson III continues to build on the contrast between the two pathways when Wesley says that his students should rejoice when anything is done according to God’s will, and that we should be sorry when anything is done to ‘our own will’. He continues by admonishing them to be ‘greatly troubled and deeply sorry’, for sins committed against God by anyone, ‘For in sinning we follow our own Will, and

⁸¹ *Instructions*, 24.

⁸² *Instructions*, 25.

⁸³ *Instructions*, 25.

despise the holy Will of God.’⁸⁴ Taking a slightly different path, Wesley says that we should be ashamed when anyone should praise us, and offers a prayer that should be said to help us combat our desire to be praised: ‘O Lord, thou art good, and thou alone. Thou alone art worthy to be praised. O Lord, it is a shameful theft for a poor Creature to take to itself, the Esteem and Praise which belong to thee only’. He then offers yet another ‘on the contrary’ and suggests that when we are hated or poorly treated we should rejoice and believe it is coming from God’s own hand. Wesley then leads his student in another prayer in which he directs the student to acknowledge before God that they deserve nothing but pain and contempt and to rejoice that God’s justice is giving the student what they deserve. Then they are to be thankful and rejoice that God’s holy will is done upon them. In the prayer, they are called upon to rehearse the characteristics of Christ, and recognize that if they are called to be Christ-like, then they must be despised and hated, treated with contempt and rejected. However, there is a glimmer of hope at the very end of the Lesson: ‘Let me be content, let me rejoice to suffer with him, that I may reign with him.’⁸⁵

Lesson IV points out that if one is sick it is wise to take medicine prescribed by a wise physician, even if it is bitter, so that his health might be restored. So also, Wesley points out, should we, if we are wise, rejoice to take what God sends us, be it ever so bitter.’⁸⁶ He elaborates by suggesting that it would be ‘folly and madness’ for a sick man to ‘take the things that pleased his taste, tho’ they would kill him.’⁸⁷ The analogy continues in obvious fashion with the suggestion that ‘to rejoice in taking the things that please our corrupt will’ is also folly and madness and will lead to the

⁸⁴ *Instructions*, 25.

⁸⁵ *Instructions*, 26. This theme of contentment will be seen clearly in Chapter five in this thesis in the section on the Renewal of the Covenant.

⁸⁶ *Instructions*, 26.

⁸⁷ *Instructions*, 26.

‘destroying both Body and Soul in Hell.’⁸⁸ Disease and healing are common metaphors for Wesley when speaking about the work of Christ. In his sermon, ‘The One Thing Needful’ he makes a strikingly similar point:

Whether he gives us joy or sorrow of heart, whether he inspires us with vigour and cheerfulness, or permits us to sink into numbness of soul, into dryness and heaviness, ‘tis all with the same view, viz., to restore us to health, to liberty, to holiness. These are all designed to heal those inbred diseases of our nature, self-love, and the love of the world.⁸⁹

Lesson Five begins with Wesley encouraging his students to be mindful of the origin of all gifts: ‘When you are glad of any Thing that is given you, be sure to remember, that all this comes from God.’⁹⁰ Therefore, we should thank Him and realize that he has ‘a thousand and a thousand Times more’⁹¹ to give to those who love and obey Him. At this point, Wesley offers a caution that sets up the remainder of the Lesson: ‘And be ready to leave all these little Things, whenever it is his Will.’⁹² From this point forward, Wesley warns to be watchful against falling in love with the things of the world, revenge and lying, and wary of those who would lead them along such paths. His closing admonition in the lesson is also an adequate summary for the whole: ‘And whoever they are that teach their Children Lying, Pride, or Revenge, they offer theirs Sons and theirs Daughters unto Devils.’⁹³ It is helpful to recall at this juncture that the method of teaching this material was for Wesley’s preachers AND the parents of each child in the Societies to teach the *Instructions*.

⁸⁸ *Instructions*, 26.

⁸⁹ (BE) 4.357. In a footnote to his sermon ‘On Sin in Believers,’ in reference to another allusion to healing, it is pointed out that ‘The metaphors here of Christ the physician and of salvation as healing are significant; they distinguish Wesley’s essentially interpersonal, therapeutic views of justification, regeneration, and sanctification from all their forensic alternatives.’ (BE), 1.323. Lorna Khoo points to the fact that, while this theme of ‘Christ as a doctor who offers medicine to release Christians from the power of sin’ is one found predominantly in the Easter Church, she suggests that there could have been variety of individuals in whom Wesley might have derived the metaphor – among them Johann Arndt, in him this theme is prevalent and whom Wesley featured in his *Christian Library*. See Lorna Lock-Nah Khoo, *Wesleyan Eucharistic Spirituality : Its Nature, Sources, and Future* (Adelaide: ATF Press, 2005), 118-119.

⁹⁰ *Instructions*, 26.

⁹¹ *Instructions*, 26.

⁹² *Instructions*, 26.

⁹³ *Instructions*, 27.

Thus, parents would have been teaching their own children that it was wrong for parents to teach their children to lie, seek revenge and foster a love of wealth. This surely would have been a strong motivation to avoid even the hint of such behaviour.

The love of money is the target Wesley attacks in Lesson VI. This is a familiar foe for Wesley among his Methodists, as he spent the better part of his ministry attacking its spread among his flock.⁹⁴ The strong rebuttal to a love of money that he places here, in his primary catechetical tool is a strong indicator that he desired to eradicate its existence at an early age if at all possible. Continuing to use the now-familiar methods of directional language to contrast to entirely different objects of our affections and desires, Wesley says ‘Money is now the God of this World. The Aim of Men is to get and keep this. And herein they place their Welfare and Joy.’⁹⁵ He bluntly counteracts this observation with another, ‘There would be little or rather no Use for Money, if Love governed the World.’⁹⁶ From here he sets out to point to the only practical and God-pleasing uses of money - to buy what is needful, then give the rest to the poor. In a careful balance of judgment and joy Wesley reminds his students that God will demand a strict account of the way they used their money, but that they should rejoice when they used their money to care for the needs of others, ‘because this is for the Glory of God.’⁹⁷

Lesson Seven introduces an interesting balance between what seem to be two distinct extremes – joy and fear. However, on further review, Wesley’s call to a balance between joy and fear not only demonstrates a certain pastoral wisdom, he also points to the biblical nature of his counsel in this regard. He begins by stating that ‘joy was made for God’ and that as a result we should rejoice in the Lord always. He

⁹⁴ See ‘On a Single Eye’, (BE) 4.130.

⁹⁵ *Instructions*, 27.

⁹⁶ *Instructions*, 27.

⁹⁷ *Instructions*, 27-28.

continues by suggesting that ‘we should look upon God and his Grace as a great Treasure; and thence we may learn, how to rejoice in him.’⁹⁸ This call to view God’s grace as a ‘great treasure’ necessitates a certain paradigm that is formulated through the practices that have been encouraged in the last several lessons – training ourselves to see God as author and giver of good, and to engage in the practice of thankfulness for all His blessings. He concludes these introductory remarks by acknowledging that ‘when we possess a vast Treasure, so that we cannot possibly lose it, then our joy is perfect. Such will be the joy of the Saints in Heaven, because then they cannot possibly lose this Treasure any more.’⁹⁹ Thus it is that, in this moment of foreshadowing, we see the introduction of the possibility of fear. This treasure cannot be lost ‘any more’ by the Saints who have passed on to their eternal reward. But what about us? Can we lose our great treasure?

And so Wesley introduces the seeming enemy of joy to his students. But is there a spiritual use for this fear? Is there an unseen benefit to fear that will add depth to the joy that is possible in God? Wesley first paints the stark reality of the fear that comes from the loss of our great treasure:

But when we possess a vast Treasure in such a manner that we may lose it every Moment, it is plain that our Joy therein should be tempered with a very serious Fear. And so it is with us. We may lose the Grace of God, yea every Moment, by divers ways.¹⁰⁰

So Wesley not only illuminates the possibility of this loss, but also points out the ways and means by which it might take place. Using familiar biblical metaphors Wesley speaks of ‘malicious and subtle Enemies’ who surround us always and in all places. He also speaks of the Devil as a roaring lion, ready to devour us. And it is because of these enemies and their ferocity that Wesley points to the positive

⁹⁸ *Instructions*, 28.

⁹⁹ *Instructions*, 28.

¹⁰⁰ *Instructions*, 28.

application of fear: ‘Therefore blessed is the Man that feareth always.’¹⁰¹ But is this call to a balance between fear and joy biblical? Wesley points to both Peter and Paul as demonstrating this same balance. The Apostle Paul says that we should work out our salvation with fear and trembling in the same letter as he suggests that we ought to rejoice in the Lord always.¹⁰² The Apostle Peter speaks of loving a God we have never seen with joy unspeakable, yet also to remember this God who will judge them with fear.¹⁰³ Thus Wesley has built this call to a balance between fear and joy upon a solid biblical foundation.

Having established that this treasure may be lost, suggesting ways this might take place and giving a scripture foundation for his call to balance between joy and fear, Wesley next moves to an explanation of how one might regain the ‘great treasure’ once it has been lost. Wesley reminds his student that once the treasure is lost ‘by our own fault, we have nothing in its place but Poverty and Misery. But God has promised, to give it to us again, if we are thoroughly sensible of our Loss.’¹⁰⁴ He then suggests that this may be accomplished through repentance, the production of ‘fruit meet for Repentance’, and true belief in Jesus Christ. And because it is possible to regain our ‘great treasure’, we may therefore rejoice. Wesley concludes this lesson with a scriptural call to humility, fear and a broken and contrite heart.

In Lesson VIII Wesley continues the theme of fear, humility and contrition with a reminder that even “religious joy” can lead to trouble without the proper inward disposition:

Even Religious Joy, if it be not thus mix’d with Fear, will soon be a mere Nest of Self-Love. It will cover the greatness of our Corruption , and so hinder us

¹⁰¹ *Instructions*, 28.

¹⁰² Philippians 2:12 and Philippians 4:4.

¹⁰³ I Peter 1:8, 17.

¹⁰⁴ *Instructions*, 29.

from seeking to be cured of it. It will make us carnally presume, that we have the Treasure of Grace, while indeed we are far from it.¹⁰⁵

He follows this with a comparison to the Church at Laodicea and other equally powerful biblical metaphors to call his student once again to a lifestyle of mourning and fear. He concludes lesson eight and Section V with a final call to balance:

‘Therefore, learn to serve the Lord in Fear, and to rejoice in him with Reverence.’¹⁰⁶

We began Section Five with a brief summary of its place in *Instructions*, and alluded to the fact that it did not fit with the traditional catechetical pattern as established in the Reformation period. Section Five, while laced with scripture and thematically in line with the rest of *Instructions*, does not contain any of the three standard catechetical resources, the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostle’s Creed or the Ten Commandments. And given its location, directly in the middle of the three sections which incorporate these three main resources, it does not seem as if a separate section for advice on the regulating of joy is merited. The themes of joy, fear, humility poverty of spirit and gratitude which Wesley shares with his students provide a rich collection of affections with which his students were to be formed. As to the location and inclusion of this section one is left to ponder what exactly Wesley had in mind.

Section VI – How to Regulate our Practice

The final Section of *Instructions* deals with the last of the major catechetical resources, the Ten Commandments. Lesson I follows a familiar and well-established pattern in *Instructions* – pointing out two distinctively different pathways and strongly indicating which path leads to happiness and holiness. Wesley begins this lesson by reminding his student that their life and body belong to God and that they ought to ‘dispose of them according to His will.’ They should do this to the exclusion of their

¹⁰⁵ *Instructions*, 29.

¹⁰⁶ *Instructions*, 30.

own will, which naturally inclines them to their own profit, honour and pleasure.

Following their own will, Wesley says, will lead the student into the deadly vices of covetousness, Pride and Sensuality. Wesley suggests several ways to combat this descent into sinfulness:

We should accustom ourselves, with God's Help, to deny ourselves in all things...to do all we do in a Spirit of Charity, and for the good of others: In a Spirit of Humility, without any design or Desire of being esteemed: And in a Spirit of Penitence, without any regard to our own Pleasure either of Body or Mind.¹⁰⁷

In the above vice and virtue list, notice that the virtues Wesley suggests that his student should 'put on' directly correspond to, and counteract, the vices listed above them. So, to follow the taxonomy more directly – Wesley suggests that if we follow our own will it naturally inclines to profit, which begets covetousness. So, we ought to follow God's will (because our Body and Life belong to Him), and if we follow God's will then in His power we begin by denying ourselves and then seek to accustom ourselves to do all we do in a Spirit of Charity and for the Good of others. Selfish profit is contrasted with a Spirit of Charity, and covetousness is pitted against doing good for others and self-denial. The taxonomy follows for the other two vices as they correspond to the opposite virtues (Pride to Humility and Sensuality to Penitence). Such starkly contrasted extremes demonstrate well the divergence of the two paths Wesley is pointing out. So, this repetition reminds us that it is the orientation and aspiration of the heart/will that determines the direction one will go, and then practice makes perfect thereafter. In a succinct summary of the directional call to follow the right path and choose the object upon which to focus the student's heart and will, Wesley says that 'In all things we should aim at being made

¹⁰⁷ *Instructions*, 30. Self-denial is one of the General Means of Grace for Wesley. He refers to the General Means in the Annual Conference *Minutes* of 1745: "Q. 11 – How shall we wait for (entire sanctification)? A. In universal obedience; in keeping all the commandments; in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily. These are the general means which God hath ordained for our receiving his sanctifying grace." (BE) 10.155.

conformable to our crucified Saviour.’¹⁰⁸ He suggests that this is ‘the true Spirit of the Christian Life and Practice. This is true Christianity.’¹⁰⁹

It would be helpful, as we turn to Lesson Two in Section VI, to remember that in Wesley’s most definitive statement on the purpose of worship, he calls for the honouring or glorification of God as our most essential task – ‘the end’ of divine worship and all other actions, for humanity. Having established two divergent paths in Lesson 1 (along with numerous other places throughout *Instructions*) Wesley moves to fix his student’s eye again upon the God who alone is worthy of our worship and praise:

It is the Will of God, that we should do nothing but to please him...His Glory should be our supreme, absolute, and universal End. The Glory of God is advanced in this Life, when we give ourselves up to Jesus Christ. Then His Power works through us many holy Actions; for which he alone is to be honoured and praised.¹¹⁰

Wesley suggests, in both the statement on worship from chapter 1 and again here in *Instructions*, that our “end” is the honouring and glorification of God. There is also an implication that God works in us through ‘holy actions’ or the ‘edification of the Church’ in such a way that He is glorified. Wesley completes lesson Two with a series of quotations from Scripture to certify the importance of a complete and total focus upon God as the object of our desire and service.

As Wesley ended Lesson II with Scripture, so he begins Lesson III begins with the same. In a paraphrase of I Corinthians 10:31 Wesley says that we ‘eat and drink to the Glory of God, and in the Name of Jesus Christ, when we are enabled by him to do it.’¹¹¹ Here once more Wesley uses familiar language to describe the importance of directing our Will and Heart in the Right Direction, for the Right purpose, from the

¹⁰⁸ *Instructions*, 30.

¹⁰⁹ *Instructions*, 30.

¹¹⁰ *Instructions*, 31.

¹¹¹ *Instructions*, 31.

Right motivational centre. He says that when we eat or drink to the Glory of God through God's divine enablement, that we do so in order to be able to say, 'On a right Principle, and in a right Manner...from the heart: Suffer me not, O Lord, to eat and drink, like a brute Beast, only by a brutal Appetite: Much less do thou suffer me to follow herein the Motions of my corrupt Nature. But grant me, through the Spirit of thy Son to eat and drink so much as is needful to support my life'¹¹² In a very literal way then, are we motivated to eat and drink to God's glory – and praying for God to empower us to do so. Wesley applies the same exactness to the analogy of speaking to the Glory of God: 'When you speak nothing but what is needful and proper to give Men good Thoughts, and turn them from such as are wicked and vain.'¹¹³ Wesley concludes this lesson with a good summary: 'And thus, in all Things, let this be your single Aim, that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.' We will move now to Lesson Five, in which Wesley begins to expound upon the Ten Commandments.

Wesley begins by teaching that the Law of God is a Spiritual law, and that this is the way that the Ten Commandments should be approached. Having established a need for a spiritual interpretation and application of this material he moves quickly to expound upon the first commandment. For Wesley, to have no other gods before our God means that we should not 'think, believe, or own any Thing to be God' except for God Most High. We should not put our trust in any Creature or love anything but God. These are the negative implications of this commandment for Wesley, but he seeks to accentuate the positive claims of this command and well: 'God likewise herein commands thee, to believe in him, and to acknowledge him in all thy Ways. He commands thee, to thank him for all thou hast...to desire him alone; to rejoice in

¹¹² *Instructions*, 31.

¹¹³ *Instructions*, 32.

him always, and to love him with all thy Heart and with all thy Soul.’¹¹⁴ Concerning the second commandment Wesley says that his student should not ‘fancy that God is like the Thoughts or Imaginations of our dark Reason.’ This infers that one of the reasons we should not make graven images of our God is that, because of our darkened minds and hearts, our artistic impressions of God would undoubtedly be marred and inadequate. Secondly, the student is instructed ‘not to worship or bow to any image or Picture, but to glorify God both with our Bodies and with our Spirits.’ Wesley boldly states that we are not to bow to an image or Picture of God because WE are to be Imagers of God in the world – we ought to be the way the world sees who God is and how He acts and loves. We are to ‘glorify God both with our Bodies and with our Spirits.’¹¹⁵ This is a clear reference, once again, to Wesley’s strong desire for the Image of God to be restored in humanity.

Lesson VI begins with Wesley giving some real depth to the third commandment for his students. Not only should they not swear falsely, they should also never use the Name of God at all unless it is with reverence and fear. The real value of Wesley’s comments on this third commandment come, however, in the next three statements:

We must not value ourselves upon his Name, his Covenant, or the Knowledge of him, in vain; That is, without profiting thereby, without bringing forth suitable Fruits. We must not cover over our own Will, or Passions, or Designs, with the holy Name of God, of his Truth or his Glory.

Put another way, Wesley is teaching his student that one must not attempt to improve their social status with claims of being a Christ-follower without producing the fruit of Christ-likeness. He further states that we must be careful not to claim God’s

¹¹⁴ *Instructions*, 33.

¹¹⁵ *Instructions*, 33.

involvement in our plans, our ways, our purposes, but rather seek to be conformed to His Will and Way.

Wesley's comments on the Fourth commandment are brief but call for discipline and a counter-cultural attitude of self-denial. Rather than doing 'worldly business' on the Lord's Day, one should spend the day 'wholly in Prayer, Praise, hearing or reading the Word of God, and other Works of Piety and Charity.'¹¹⁶ This is clear, concise and unambiguous. Wesley moves quickly to the Fifth commandment and stays true to his hermeneutical approach to the Ten Commandments as stated in Lesson V. Not only does he speak of reverencing Father and Mother, doing whatever they ask and relieving and helping whenever possible, he also expands this commandment to the limits of the spiritual realm. Wesley calls his student to 'Esteem the Ministers who are over you in the Lord...Honour the King. Obey Magistrates.'¹¹⁷ He even goes so far as to instruct those who have Masters or Mistresses to 'be obedient to them in Singleness of Heart, as unto Christ.'¹¹⁸

In Lesson VII Wesley quickly summarizes the remainder of the commandments. In fact, he dedicates almost as much space for the first commandment as he does the sixth through the tenth commandment combined. He expands the sixth commandment from a singular command against killing to the forbidding of anger, hatred, malice and revenge, as well as 'all provoking Words, all strife and Contention; all Gluttony and Drunkenness.'¹¹⁹ As with the sixth commandment, Wesley adopts a familiar pattern with the next several commands as he says concerning the seventh commandment, 'The Seventh Commandment forbids, not only all outward Uncleaness, but even the Looking on a Woman to lust after her.

¹¹⁶ *Instructions*, 34.

¹¹⁷ *Instructions*, 34.

¹¹⁸ *Instructions*, 34.

¹¹⁹ *Instructions*, 35.

It forbids also the using any Thing, merely to please ourselves. For this is a Kind of Spiritual Fornication.’¹²⁰ This ‘forbids not only...but even’ is used in succession for the sixth, seventh and eighth commandments, and the idea is conveyed concerning the ninth commandment using a slight variation of this phrase, ‘requires us...requires us also’. Wesley expands the eighth command, using this format, to include not only stealing from ‘another’ what is rightfully his, but also stealing from God ‘either our Affections, or our Time, or our Goods, or our Labour, but employing any of them any otherwise than for him.’¹²¹ In his comments on the ninth commandment Wesley says that we are to put away backbiting, lying, tale bearing and the practice of judging others, and to speak the truth from our Heart. His comments on the Tenth commandment are so brief as to make us wonder why this commandment seems so unimportant, but as we shall see later, his comments on this commandment are only preliminary. In this lesson he simply states, ‘The Tenth Commandment requires us to be content with what we have, and to desire nothing more.’¹²²

Having completed his preliminary ‘commentary’ on the Ten Commandments, Wesley begins Lesson VIII by re-establishing the scriptural superiority of these commandments and their blessing by Jesus Himself as ‘Life Everlasting’, naming John 12:50 in support for such a claim. He also reminds his student that the Holy Spirit has promised to write these commandments upon their heart if they will truly believe in Jesus. He follows Jesus’ lead by summing up the law in the following manner,

They may all be summ’d up in three. 1. To love God; 2. To love Jesus Christ himself, his Cross and his Tribulations, his Reproach, the Fellowship of his Sufferings, and the being made conformable to his Death. 3. To love our

¹²⁰ *Instructions*, 35.

¹²¹ *Instructions*, 35.

¹²² *Instructions*, 35.

Neighbour. Our Heart therefore should always be full of Reverence for these.
The Love of them should be fix'd in the very Marrow of our Bones.¹²³

Wesley continues by suggesting that we should 'labour after' these three by prayerfully and meditatively reading the 'deep words' of the 19th Psalm in which the merits and beauties of the Law are rehearsed.

It is at this juncture that we must recognize what appears to be a subtle recapitulation of Wesley's commentary in the Ten Commandments. This recapitulation comprises the latter half of Lesson VIII and all of Lessons IX and X and is not a straight-forward, verse by verse commentary as seen in Lessons V through VII, but rather a paraphrasing and ideational rehearsal of the basic components of the commandments. Remembering that this is a children's catechism, Wesley is repeating the same ideas from a slightly different perspective in order to increase comprehension and promote memorization. So, we see him suggest a positive embracing of the first commandment in Lesson VIII by beginning with an abbreviated version of the Greatest Commandment and then to assure that we place no other God's before Yahweh, we meditate on his Law and thus assure ourselves that He is worthy of our sole devotion and worship.

Lesson IX re-examines commandments two through five, beginning with a call to live and act always with an awareness that we are in the Presence of God. This call assures us that there is no need for any 'graven images,' after all if we are always with our loved one, a picture or painting is not necessary to remind us of their character or likeness. Wesley's return to the third commandment is a good example of the fact that this recapitulation is not Wesley looking again directly at the Ten commandments, but rather it is his revisiting and rehearsing them. Returning to

¹²³ *Instructions*, 35.

Lesson IX and Wesley's re-examination of the third commandment, he flips the perspective by pointing to God's judgment of our activities:

Remember, he is continually looking upon you: And he will bring into Judgment, all that you have done, said or thought, whether it be good or evil. For all which you will be either rewarded or punished everlastingly. Never fail to pray to God, Morning and Evening, as well as before and after you eat or drink. Often lift up your Heart to God at other Times, particularly before any work or Business.¹²⁴

So, there is a direct comparison to Wesley's earlier text, and an awareness is brought to bear that God is listening to our words and watching our actions and that the attitude of our hearts will be judged accordingly. Likewise, Wesley's preliminary comments on the fourth commandment centred mostly upon spending the Sabbath 'wholly in Prayer, Praise, hearing or reading the Word of God, and other works of Piety and Charity.' When he revisits this command in Lesson IX he focuses mostly on affirming the importance of hearing and understanding the Word and praying that the Spirit will 'enliven them by the Working of His Spirit. Pray him to give you an humble, submissive, simple and obedient Heart.'¹²⁵ His second look at the fifth commandment is less veiled, as he simply restates the need to reverence and love Mothers, Fathers and Superiors, to obey them without murmuring, 'even in those things which do not please you,'¹²⁶ and to do nothing without their knowledge or permission.

Wesley returns to a less obvious form of paraphrase in Lesson X in which it seems as if he is simply speaking in generalities on the whole 'second table', a phrase he often used to describe the second half of the Ten Commandments. He spends the first half of Lesson ten giving advice and suggestions for 'living in Peace' with neighbours and companions, suggesting the characteristic of humility as key for such

¹²⁴ *Instructions*, 36.

¹²⁵ *Instructions*, 36.

¹²⁶ *Instructions*, 37.

peace. In the middle of the second half of Lesson ten Wesley offers a brief commentary on how to avoid covetousness. It is especially interesting to view this treatment of coveting in light of Wesley's only comment on the tenth commandment at the end of Lesson VII was, 'The Tenth Commandment requires us to be content with what we have, and to desire nothing more.'¹²⁷ Wesley seeks to expand on this comment by elaborating in conjunction with such topics as eating, dress and accumulation of goods. Wesley concludes this lesson with a few short lessons on the use of time, striving for excellence and the willingness to be held accountable. In sum, the fact that Lesson X seems to be an exposition on the second part of the ten commandments reiterates the pattern we have been alluding to, that Wesley is reiterating (and in some cases expounding) in Lessons VIII through X, his own commentary from lessons five through seven.

Lesson XI contains a concise rehearsal of Wesley's particular view of sin. 'When you do wrong, without knowing it, perhaps it may be excused: Especially if you are glad to be taught better. But whatever Fault you commit wilfully, knowing it to be a Fault, that cannot be excused.'¹²⁸ Two interesting notes concerning the development and progression of Wesley's view of sin as it relates to *Instructions* should be mentioned at this juncture. First, Wesley, reacting to the seemingly irreconcilable difference between the Lutherans and Calvinists who were teaching doctrines that essentially conceded that sin was beyond dealing with in this lifetime and the Moravians and some of Wesley's own disciples who taught a complete sinless perfection, came up with what he believed to be a viable alternative. This alternative was the distinction between 'sin properly so called' (a deliberated violation of a known law of God) and 'involuntary transgressions', for which one was responsible

¹²⁷ *Instructions*, 35.

¹²⁸ *Instructions*, 38.

only when they had been made aware of the violation. But Wesley was not the first to propose such a distinction, and among the proponents of such a division was Claude Fleury, whose work, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, happened to have made a great impact upon Wesley, including and especially the first Section of *Instructions for Children*.¹²⁹

The second connection between Wesley's distinctive definition of sin and *Instructions* comes in the form of the most familiar description of Wesley's view of sin and its source. The phrase, 'wilful transgression of a known law of God' is found, among other places, in his sermon 'On Obedience to Parents'.¹³⁰ Another instance of this phrase, perhaps the first time Wesley heard it, may be found in a letter he received from his mother in July of 1732. He included a long excerpt of this letter in his journal on the day he conducted her funeral. The letter was a gathering of the "principal rules" which Susanna Wesley observed in raising and educating her family. This collection of ruling principles was sent to John, apparently, at his request. The phrase 'wilful transgression' is used in the context of bringing children into an 'obedient temper.' Susanna suggests the following advice:

When the will of the child is totally subdued, and it is brought to revere and stand in awe of the parents, then a great many childish follies and inadvertencies may be passed by. Some should be overlooked and taken no notice of, and others mildly reprov'd; but no wilful transgression ought ever to be forgiven children without chastisement, less or more, as the nature and circumstances of the offence require.¹³¹

It is not difficult to see how Wesley could have moved from this discussion of child-raising and obedience to a relational view of two different kinds of sin, picturing God as Father and a child being either wilfully disobedient or simply being childishly ignorant of all the external issues involved in relation to God and others.

¹²⁹ See Introductory comments for Wesley's sermon, 'On Sin in Believers' (BE) 1.314-315.

¹³⁰ 'On Obedience to Parents' (BE) 3.378.

¹³¹ Sunday, 1 August, 1742, (BE), 19.288.

The most distinctive feature of Lesson XII is the inference in the opening lines of ‘covered promises’: ‘Some may think the Rules before laid down to be either impossible or ridiculous. They would not appear impossible to us, but because we have not been accustomed to them. If we had, we should find, by the Grace of God, that nothing can be easier.’¹³² The phrase ‘covered promises’ describes a hermeneutical principle of Wesley’s which may be illustrated with a few lines from his fifth Discourse on the Sermon on the Mount:

We may yet farther observe, that every command in holy writ is only a covered promise. For by that solemn declaration, "This is the covenant I will make after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in your minds, and write them in your hearts," God hath engaged to give whatsoever he commands. Does he command us then to "pray without ceasing?" To "rejoice evermore?" "To be holy as He is holy?" It is enough. He will work in us this very thing. It shall be unto us according to his word.¹³³

Wesley moves from this assurance to a reminder that the Cross of Christ is foolishness to the world, and uses several scriptures to drive home once more the enmity between the follower of Christ and the world. His final set of adversarial metaphors is representative of another major tenet of Wesley’s theology. ‘How unhappy therefore are they, who bring up their Children according to the Rules of the World...But happy are those, who despising the Rules of the diabolical and antichristian World, Train up the precious Souls of their Children, wholly by the Rules of Jesus Christ.’¹³⁴ Wesley taught that the culmination of the Christian life was to find happiness and holiness in God. Along these same lines, it is fitting that Wesley should end *Instructions* using a technique that we have identified as being in line with the Two Ways’ tradition, a technique pitting two ‘pathways’ in dynamic

¹³² *Instructions*, 38.

¹³³ ‘Sermon on the Mount, V’ (BE) 1.554-555.

¹³⁴ *Instructions*, 39.

opposition to one another. One of the best examples of this technique is seen in Psalm 1, to which the end of this last lesson has striking similarities.

Catechism and Worship

In spite of the previously noted absence of interest in Wesley's catechism in general, it should be affirmed here that *Instructions* played an important role in the development of Methodists young and old in the context of worship. First, Wesley required *Instructions* to be learned 'by heart', and this included the Lord's Prayer, Apostle's Creed and the Ten Commandments. These three sources made up a large portion of the "grammar" of worship for both Anglicans and Methodists during Wesley's lifetime. Without knowing these sources and understanding their greater purpose within the life of the believer, the worshipper would have been bereft of resources in the worship of their God. For instance, as Don Saliers points out, 'Unless the confession of sin is part of a much larger pattern of self-judgment and relocation of desire, it simply is not adequate to what we mean by confessing one's sins before God.'¹³⁵ The Ten Commandments, for example, were used, both in the *BCP* and the Sunday Service, as part of preparation for Communion and function as a prompt for confession. Without Wesley's catechism, this process would have been much less likely to bring about a 'relocation of desire', a re-orientation away from self and toward God. Wesley's catechism, in its purposeful shaping of the whole person into Christ-likeness, was an indispensable tool in the worshipping community of the Methodists.

Conclusion

We began this chapter by providing a solution to the missing catechism in Wesley's *Sunday Service*. With the introduction of Wesley's *Instructions for*

¹³⁵ Don E. Saliers, *The Soul in Paraphrase*, 27.

Children we discovered a viable alternative to the Catechism in the *Book of Common Prayer*, one that was more capable of teaching the full gamut of Wesley's affectional theology. Through an analysis of the six Sections of Wesley's *Instructions* we saw key components of Wesley's religion of the heart and his call for the restoration of the Image of God in humanity on almost every page. We also demonstrated the relationship between the Catechism and worship for Wesley, and pointed to *Instructions* as a necessary Primer for the grammar of worship in a Wesleyan context. This chapter has established the importance of *Instructions for Children* for Wesley in creating and habituating Christian affections and tempers in the life of his followers.

Chapter 5 - The Watchnight, Lovefeast, Renewal of the Covenant and Preaching Service

Introduction

Most of the research and writing on the services reviewed in this chapter has been done by Methodist scholars who had, as their primary motive, to revive one or all of these service for the contemporary Methodist Church.¹ This chapter will operate under the assumption that, as a ‘prudential means of grace,’ Wesley never intended that these services be ‘perpetual’, but only that they provide opportunities for his Methodists to encounter and exercise holy tempers in their immediate historical context. Henry Knight’s definition of prudential means of grace sheds more light on this issue:

The prudential means of grace vary from age to age, culture to culture, and person to person; they reflect God’s ability to use any means in addition to those instituted in accordance with different times and circumstances. The prudential means of grace include a number of specific occasions and practices not mentioned in the first typology, such as classes, bands, and love feasts...²

The purpose of this chapter is to provide insight into the ways each of these services provided opportunities by which affections were nurtured and solidified into habituated holy tempers. Once this is substantiated, the burden then lies upon the Methodist tradition to determine whether re-establishing these same services will accomplish Wesley’s goal, or whether other means might be used more effectively. It will also be the purpose of this chapter to examine Wesley’s sources for each of these services and attempt to set the context for their birth and practice. As previously stated, the main purpose will be to assess the watchnight, lovefeast, covenant renewal

¹ See for example: Baker, Frank. *Methodism and the Love Feast*. London: Epworth Press, 1957; William Parkes. ‘Watchnight, Covenant Service, and the Love-feast in Early British Methodism.’ *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 32, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 35-58; and David Tripp. *The Renewal of the Covenant in the Methodist Tradition*. Epworth Press, London. 1969.

² Knight, *Presence of God*, 3.

and preaching services, focusing on their capacity for both expressing and compelling Christian affections in Wesley's Methodists.

A final note of introduction to these liturgical innovations of Wesley's should be offered. In chapter three we observed that Wesley indicated that, by themselves, these Methodist services were not 'worship', at least not in the same way as traditional *BCP* worship. This is a clear indicator that, by itself, these Methodist innovations were insufficient. However, it must be pointed out that Wesley, in the defence of his Methodist Societies, indicated an insufficiency he found in the Church of England of his day which was addressed by the Societies and by services such as the watchnight, lovefeast and covenant renewal. Facing accusations for schism because of his Societies Wesley suggested that the insufficiency found in the Church of England was the lack of *fellowship*, specifically Christian fellowship designed to provide accountability and encouragement on the spiritual journey. Wesley raises sharp questions of the Church in his response:

Which of those true Christians had any such fellowship with these? Who watched over them in love? Who marked their growth in grace? Who advised and exhorted them from time to time? Who prayed with them and for them as they had need? This, and this alone is Christian fellowship...we introduce Christian fellowship where it was utterly destroyed. And the fruits of it have been peace, joy, love, and zeal for every good word and work.³

As we examine Wesley's liturgical innovations which he created for the Societies it will be evident that, in addition to fostering the affections and tempers, each of these innovations served the purpose of providing Christian accountability, encouragement, edification and fellowship.

Watchnight

The Watchnight was one of the first liturgical innovations Wesley introduced to the Methodist movement. While it remains difficult to describe its contributions in

³ 'A Plain Account of the People called Methodists' (BE), 9.259.

exact terms due to the unwritten nature of its constitution it is, nonetheless, an important part of the development of the Methodist people and Wesley's own liturgical theology and practice. Wesley gives us his assessment of the origins of the service in 'A Plain Account of the People Called Methodist':

III. 1. About this time, I was informed that several persons in Kingswood frequently met together at the school; and, when they could spare the time, spent the greater part of the night in prayer, and praise, and thanksgiving. Some advised me to put an end to this; but, upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed it might be made of more general use. So I sent them word, I designed to watch with them on the Friday nearest the full moon, that we might have light thither and back again. I gave public notice of this the Sunday before, and, withal, that I intended to preach; desiring they, and they only, would meet me there, who could do it without prejudice to their business or families. On Friday abundance of people came. I began preaching between eight and nine; and we continued till a little beyond the noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God.

2. This we have continued to do once a month ever since, in Bristol, London, and Newcastle, as well as Kingswood; and exceeding great are the blessings we have found therein: It has generally been an extremely solemn season; when the word of God sunk deep into the heart, even of those who till then knew him not. If it be said, "This was only owing to the novelty of the thing, (the circumstance which still draws such multitudes together at those seasons,) or perhaps to the awful silence of the night:" I am not careful to answer in this matter. Be it so: However, the impression then made on many souls has never since been effaced. Now, allowing that God did make use either of the novelty or any other indifferent circumstance, in order to bring sinners to repentance, yet they are brought. And herein let us rejoice together.⁴

Development

The exact beginnings of the watchnight among the Methodists is difficult to determine. The first time Wesley mentions being in attendance at a watchnight was 12 March, 1742 at which point he offers the following description of the event: 'Our Lord was gloriously present with us at the watch-night; so that my voice was lost in the cries of the people. After mid-night, about an hundred of us walked home together, singing, and rejoicing, and praising God.'⁵ We have already referred to the

⁴ 'A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists' (BE) 9.264.

⁵ 12 March, (BE), 19.257.

description from ‘A Plain Account of the People called Methodists’ in which Wesley lays out the beginnings of the watch-night in Kingswood, so while it is not known when this event occurred, we do know the 12 March watch-night was not the first one. John Bishop mentions that Wesley was in attendance at watchnight services in 1739 and 1740, but he offers the critical distinction that these were *Moravian*, not *Methodist* watchnights.⁶ Bishop also submits that, in his opinion, when Wesley says ‘about this time’ in the reference above from ‘Plain Account’ he is describing the beginnings of the Methodist society meetings 15 February, 1742. The first Methodist watchnight was held in London on 9 April, 1742, so it seems logical to conclude that the 12 March date mentioned above is the safest date to suggest for the beginnings of this Methodist means of grace. As is generally point out, the service ended up being combined with the Renewal of the Covenant on New Year’s Eve. This move did not happen until 1774, at least according to Wesley’s journal.⁷ After 1774 there were watchnights held at times other than New Year’s eve, but it appears, from Wesley’s Journal, that 31 December was the most frequent date for watchnights for the rest of Wesley’s ministry.

Sources

As mentioned above, Wesley did not necessarily introduce the watch-night format to the Methodists in Kingswood. Rather, it seems as if he took something they had started and gave it a name and some definition, along with some theological and historical authority and weight. By taking this time of prayer which these Methodist miners had begun as a substitute for the revelling and carousing of their former lives and giving it the title of a watchnight service Wesley had invoked two strands of history and tradition which were very important to him – the Primitive Church and the

⁶ John Bishop, *Methodist Worship*, 93. See also Wesley’s Journal entries for 1 January, 1739 (BE), 19.29; and 31 December, 1740 (BE), 19.176.

⁷ 31 December, 1774, (BE) 22.395.

Pietistic tradition.

Wesley was always desirous of returning to the practice of the ancient Church. In his pursuit of this goal, he had many sources upon whom he depended. One of his most trusted sources of information on early church practices was Anthony Horneck. Horneck had high praise for the conduct of the early church, and his words were highly influential upon the young Wesley. The following excerpt from 'Letter to a Person of Quality Concerning the Lives of the Primitive Christians' surely had influenced Wesley's implementation of the watchnight service in Kingswood:

The days they appointed for publick Prayer, were the Lord's Day, the Anniversaries of their Martyrs, and Wednesday and Friday every week, on which two days they had their stations, fasted and humbled themselves before Almighty God; besides their Vigils at night, which they thought sinful to spend without prayer, and Celebrations of God's Goodness, and Holiness.⁸

It should also be noted that Wesley, while defending this service against a Mr. Bailey of Cork he appeals to his own tradition for precedent:

You charge me, fourthly, with holding "midnight assemblies". Sir, did you never see the word "vigil" in your Common Prayer Book? Do you know what it means? If not, permit me to tell you that it was customary with the ancient Christians to spend whole nights in prayer; and that these nights were termed *vigiliae* or vigils. Therefore for spending a part of some nights in this manner, in public and solemn prayer, we have not only the authority of our own national church but of the universal church in the earliest ages.⁹

However, as noted above, it was not the Primitive Church alone that influenced Wesley in the shaping of the watchnight service.

The Pietistic influence has been advocated by some and denied by others.

There are some who would contend that Wesley participated in watch-nights during his time with the Moravians, while others would suggest that, while this is possible,

⁸ Anthony Horneck. 'Letter to a Person of Quality Concerning the Lives of the Primitive Christians' in *The Happy Ascetick*. (London: For Samuel Chapman, 1724), 507.

⁹ *Letter to Mr. Bailey of Cork*, (BE) 9.305. For other criticism of the watchnight and Wesley's response see Leslie F. Church, *More About the Early Methodist People*. The Epworth Press, 1949. 244-245; and William Parks, "Watchnight, Covenant Service, and the Love-Feast in Early British Methodism." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 32, no. 2, Fall 1997. 51-52.

there is no way of knowing for certain.¹⁰ It is the contention of this thesis that Wesley did in fact participate in watchnights with the Moravians, and that these experiences had a deep impact on him. In his journal from August 1738 Wesley adds an extract from the Constitution of the Church of the Moravian Brethren, which includes the following description of typical Moravian practice: ‘Two men keep watch every night in the street, as do two women in the women’s apartment; that they may pour out their souls for those that sleep; and by their hymns raise the hearts of any who are awake to God.’¹¹ Since Wesley did not name the service he took over in Kingswood a *vigil*, but rather a *watchnight*, it might be suggested that this image of the watch being kept, men and women standing watch in prayer over those sleeping in their camp, was pivotal and powerful enough as an image to become the metaphor for this service of prayer and praise. Observing the watchnight services in the Moravian community of Herrnhutt, which literally means ‘the Watch of the Lord’, offered a fresh vision of what it might look like to form a people, a community, whose sole purpose was to be Watched by the Lord and to watch over the souls of one another. This vision was transformative enough for Wesley to become a model by which he began to shape the Kingswood community through the use of the watchnight service.

Analysis of the Watchnight

This image of the watch and the vision of a Watched and Watching community help us understand the purpose of the watchnight and also offers a small window into the actual content of the service and a glimpse of the desired outcome, the kind of people Wesley hoped the Methodists would become. The purpose was to

¹⁰ For instance, Geordan Hammond, in his thesis on Wesley’s ministry in Georgia, suggests that Wesley was highly influenced by the Moravians and that “Moravian practices such as love-feasts and watch-nights were later adapted by Wesley for his Methodist societies.” Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, 96. On the other hand, scholars such as Henry Rack have essentially dismissed the Moravian influence, although Rack does at least point out that Moravian influence was possible. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, London, Epworth Press, 1992, 411.

¹¹ 11-14 August 1738 (BE) 18.297.

spend, as Wesley said in the quote above, ‘the greater part of the night in prayer, and praise, and thanksgiving.’ Later in the same quote he expanded the description of the contents of the service: ‘I began preaching between eight and nine; and we continued till a little beyond the noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God.’¹² The main elements of the service are not dissimilar to other Methodist services – prayer, preaching, singing and some testimony. In a statement typical of reflections upon the watchnight service, William Parkes says

Nights of prayer, or prayer and praise, whilst clearly having a kinship, must not be identified with the Watchnight celebration... Whole nights spent in prayer by the people of God can be stimulated by a constellation of reasons. Watchnights were for a particular reason and planned at a particular season.¹³

The problem with this statement is that, while he is probably right, he does not go on to explain why a watchnight is different, what the reason was for the watchnight and how it was planned or carried out. The reason for the vagueness is because there is no written liturgy or service order for a typical watchnight, so aside from the brief descriptions in Wesley’s journal, and the lyrics of some of the hymns that were written and used specifically for watchnight services, we have very little idea what happened during one of these moonlit vigils. However, there are some distinctive elements of the watchnight service we can point to, given these descriptions and hymns, that seem to set it apart from other Methodist services.

Again quoting from the description from ‘Plain Account’, Wesley offers a fairly typical description, using a word he often associated with the watchnight service: ‘It has generally been an extremely solemn season; when the word of God sunk deep into the heart, even of those who till then knew him not.’¹⁴ Both parts of this sentence offer clues as to the contents of the watchnight service, beginning with

¹² ‘A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists’ (BE) 9.264.

¹³ Parkes, ‘Watchnight, Covenant Service, and the Love-feast’, 47.

¹⁴ ‘A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists’, (BE) 9.264.

the use of the word ‘solemn’. Seen in contrast with the wild, drunken revelry that surely characterized the pre-conversion lives of the Kingswood miners, the portrayal of the watchnight as “solemn”, Wesley’s most common and consistent description of the service, is indeed instructive. This contrast is seen most explicitly in the poetry of Charles Wesley, in what is perhaps the cardinal hymn of the watchnight service:

Oft have we pass’d the guilty night
 In revellings and frantick mirth:
 The creature was our sole delight,
 Our happiness the things of earth;
 But O! Suffice the season past,
 We choose the better part at last.

We will not close our wakeful eyes,
 We will not let our eyelids sleep,
 But humbly lift them to the skies,
 And all a solemn vigil keep:
 So many years on sin bestow’d,
 Can we not watch one night for God?

A further contrast may be seen between the watchnight as solemn and *comfortable*. Wesley mentions having ‘comfortable watchnight’ numerous times, and mentions the watchnight providing comfort to many on several other occasions.¹⁵ On 1 March, 1782 he said, “We had a very solemn and comfortable watch-night at West-Street.”¹⁶ Maddox offers helpful insight in this context:

As evidenced by the hymns that John selected for the service, its purpose was to provide a periodic time of reflection—both to awaken us to remaining sin and to convince us of God’s support in our renewed obedient response. The community setting of the service reflects Wesley’s pastoral wisdom, providing both an incentive for personal honesty and a context of mutual support (compare his frequent description of the service as having been solemn *and* comforting).¹⁷

This conjunctive approach, holding these two affections together, is one of the hallmarks of Wesley’s ministry, one to which we will return shortly.

¹⁵ See 9 February, 1750, (BE) 20.320; January 22, 1761, (BE) 21.301; September 24, 1779, (BE) 23.149-150 for examples.

¹⁶ 1 March, 1782, (BE) 23.229-230.

¹⁷ Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 210.

One other distinctive feature of the watchnight service is its eschatological tone. Themes such as the trumpet sounding, Jesus coming back and eternal life abound in the Watchnight and New Year's hymn collections. These references appear from the very beginning, as seen here in Wesley's description of the first watchnight at London in 1742:

There is generally a deep awe upon the congregation, perhaps in some measure owing to the silence of the night, particularly in singing the hymn, with which we commonly conclude,

Hearken to the solemn voice,
The awful midnight cry!
Waiting souls, rejoice, rejoice,
And feel the Bridegroom nigh.¹⁸

Here we see not only the theme of solemnness, but also an acknowledgement of waiting souls and a crying out for the return of the Bridegroom. Hymn 10 in the *Hymns for Watchnight* collection is perhaps the most suggestive of this eschatological emphasis:

Ye virgin souls arise,
With all the dead awake,
Unto salvation wise,
Oil in your vessels take;
Upstarting at the midnight cry,
Behold the heavenly Bridegroom nigh.

Go meet him in the sky,
Your everlasting friend,
Your head to glorify,
With all his saints ascend;
Ye pure in heart, obtain the grace
To see without a veil his face.

The everlasting doors
Shall soon the saints receive,
Above those angel-powers
In glorious joy to live,
Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.

¹⁸ 9 April, 1742 (BE), 19.258-259.

Then let us wait to hear
The trumpet's welcome sound;
To see our Lord appear,
Watching let us be found,
When Jesus doth the heavens bow,
Be found—as, Lord, thou find'st us now!¹⁹

With a clear call to be found *at* a watchnight service, praying for themselves and their fellow Methodists, as well as those who had not yet been redeemed, rather than in drunken revelry, the watchnight's distinctive place in Methodism is clear.

The call, as heard in the watchnight, to a profound change of lifestyle must be seen in conjunction with a call to a radical change of character and orientation. As suggested in chapter 1 of this thesis, the affections and tempers are transitive, meaning they take an object, and that object then becomes the source of the character and behaviour of the worshiper. So, when Wesley's Methodists sang Hymn #1 from the *Hymns for Watchnight* Collection, they were acknowledging God as the object of their affections:

Dear object of our faith and love,
We listen for thy welcome voice:
Our persons, and our works approve,
And bid us in thy strength rejoice,
Now let us hear the midnight cry,
And shout to find the Bridegroom nigh.²⁰

With God firmly fixed as the object of our affections, we are invited to choose Godly virtues over human vices. Allowing God to change our heart, enabling us to form holy tempers through the practice of the means of grace, we begin to hear about, sing about and experience joy rather than sorrow, solemnity and reverence rather than mirth and revelry, freedom from rather than bondage to sin and comfort in Christ

¹⁹ *Hymns for the Watchnight*, London: Strahan, 1750. Text available at <https://divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/cswt/wesley-texts/poetry-hymn>

²⁰ *Hymns for the Watchnight*, London: Strahan, 1750. Text available at <https://divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/cswt/wesley-texts/poetry-hymn>

instead of anxiety and fear. Many of these ‘exchanges’ are evident in Hymn 3 from *Hymns for The Watchnight*:

Our brethren we see
By mercy set free,
They have found the abundant redemption in thee;
Thy tenders of grace
They gladly embrace,
And tell of thy goodness, and live to thy praise.

But still we remain
In bondage and pain,
Unable to bear, or to shake off our chain;
In the furnace we cry,
Come, Lord, from the sky,
Make hast to our help, or in Egypt we die.

O Jesus, appear,
Thy mourners to cheer,
Our grief to assuage, and to banish our fear:
Thy prisoners release,
Vouchsafe us thy peace,
And our troubles and sins in a moment shall cease.

That moment be now:
The petition allow,
Our present Redeemer, and Comforter thou!
The freedom from sin,
The atonement bring in,
And sprinkle our conscience, and bid us be clean.

This call to follow God’s path, adopt new affections and practice these affections of joy, peace and self-control until they are hardened into holy tempers is at the very core of the watchnight service.

Along with the call to holy tempers is a beckoning for the restoration of the Image of God in the heart of every participating believer. The lyrics from Hymn IV in the *New Year’s Hymns* collection leave little doubt that the restoration of the Image of God in humanity is a central goal for Wesley through the watchnight service:

Ye spirits enslav’d,
Your liberty claim,
Believe, and be sav’d

Thro' Jesus's name;
That infinite lover
Of sinners embrace,
And gladly recover
His forfeited grace.

With joyfullest news
Your prisons resound,
Your fetters are loose,
Your souls are unbound:
Resume the possession
For which ye were born,
From Satan's oppression
To heaven return.²¹

Claiming the liberty that is a part of the restored natural image, being loved by Jesus and reclaiming His forfeited grace, the call is to “resume the possession For which ye were born” – these are strong proclamations of God’s desired restoration of His image in the lives of Wesley’s Methodists, heard clearly through in the watchnight service.²²

Lovefeast

Wesley first encountered the love-feast on August 8, 1737 in Savannah, Georgia. He describes it in his journal:

After Evening Prayers we joined with the Germans in one of their Love-feasts. It was begun and ended with thanksgiving and prayer, and celebrated in so decent and solemn a manner as a Christian of the apostolical age would have allowed to be worthy of Christ.²³

Wesley practiced lovefeasts at the Fetter-Lane society for several years after his return to England from Georgia. They became such a part of his devotional practice that

²¹ *Hymns for New Year's Day, 1750*. Text available at <https://divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/cswt/wesley-texts/poetry-hymn>

²² Sarah Crosby offers a testimony of a powerful experience of God’s grace which seems to have occurred at a watchnight service in which she received assurance that God had “taken full possession of my heart.” In this testimony she quotes a hymn from the watchnight collection and says that she was “refreshed with these words.” See Amy Caswell Bratton, *Witnesses of Perfect Love: Narratives of Christian Perfection in Early Methodism*. 2014. 53-54.

²³ 8 August 1737 (BE), 18.537.

even after he parted ways with the Fetter-Lane society the love feast continued to be a major part of the worship and devotional practice of his Methodist societies.²⁴

Even before he broke fellowship with the London Moravians, Wesley held his first Methodist lovefeast. On 29 April, 1739, near Bristol, Wesley reports 'our first love-feast in Baldwin Street.'²⁵ Wesley's own recollection of his plan for the lovefeast is as follows:

In order to increase in them a *grateful sense of all his mercies*, I desired that, one evening in a quarter, all the men in band, on a second, all the women, would meet; and on a third, both men and women together; that we might together "eat bread," as the ancient Christians did, "with gladness and singleness of heart." At these lovefeasts (so we termed them, retaining the name, as well as the thing, which was in use from the beginning) our food is only a little plain cake and water. But we seldom return from them without being fed, not only with the "meat which perisheth," but with "that which endureth to everlasting life."²⁶

Much like the watchnight, the frequency of the lovefeast changed over the years. The audience changed as well, as Richard Johnson explains:

For many years Wesley regarded the love feast as a highly private experience, primarily intended for members of the bands, the smallest and closest fellowship groups in the developing Methodist system. As his movement matured, however, Wesley began to make gradual changes. The Methodist Conference in 1758 agreed that once a year members of the Methodist societies who were not members of a band might be admitted to a love feast. The following year the first society-wide love feast was held at the Foundery.²⁷

Wesley himself, on 9 December, 1759, reports that 'I had, for the first time, a love feast for the whole society.'²⁸ But the large majority of the lovefeasts were celebrated among the bands, as suggested by Johnson. These bands were one of the

²⁴ In a notably sad irony, Wesley's split from the Moravians at Fetter Lane happened *at* a lovefeast. On 20 July, 1740, at the conclusion of a love-feast at Fetter-lane, Wesley stood and read a paper detailing his concerns with the Moravian society and stating clearly his intention to leave them for good. He invites those that are 'of the same judgment' to follow him and promptly exits, followed by '18 or 19 of the society'. See 20 July, 1740 (BE), 19.162.

²⁵ 29 April 1739 (BE), 19.52

²⁶ 'A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists', (BE) 9.267.

²⁷ Richard O. Johnson, 'The Development of the Love Feast in Early American Methodism' *Methodist History*, 19, no. 2, (January 1981) 68.

²⁸ 9 December, 1759, (BE) 21.236

most important components of Wesley's plan to lead his Methodists to spiritual maturity. In the section appearing before the quote above in which he describes his plan for the lovefeast, Wesley details his plan for the bands:

In compliance with their desire I divided them into smaller companies...The chief rules of these *Bands* run thus: In order to 'confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another that we may be healed', we intend: 1) To meet once a week, at the least. 2) To come punctually at the hour appointed. 3) To begin with singing or prayer. 4) To speak, each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our soul, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting. 5) To desire some person among us (thence called a *Leader*) to speak *his* own state first, and then to ask the rest in order as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins and temptations.²⁹

This context of the bands is important because of a need that these bands met which was not, according to Wesley, being met otherwise. Wesley, in answer to a suggestion that his Methodist movement was promoting a schism and destroying the Christian fellowship of the Church, replied with a scathing review of the Church as he saw it:

That which never existed cannot be destroyed. But the fellowship you speak of never existed. Therefore it cannot be destroyed. Which of those true Christians had any such fellowship with these? Who watched over them in love? Who marked their growth in grace? Who advised and exhorted them from time to time? Who prayed with them and for them as they had need? This and this alone is Christian fellowship. But alas! Where is it to be found? Look east or west, north or south; name what parish you please. Is this Christian fellowship there? Rather, are not the bulk of the parishioners a mere rope of sand? What Christian connexion is there between them? What intercourse in spiritual things? What watching over each other's souls? What bearing of one another's burdens? What a mere jest is it, then, to talk so gravely of destroying what never was! The real truth is just the reverse of this: we introduce Christian fellowship where it was utterly destroyed. And the fruits of it have been peace, joy, love, and zeal for every good word and work.³⁰

Not only was this need for fellowship met within the bands in general, but more specifically in services like the lovefeast. John Bishop upholds this assertion:

²⁹ 'A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists', (BE) 9.267.

³⁰ 'A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists', (BE) 9.259.

‘Various characteristic Methodist services came into being, sometimes almost by accident. In each case the purpose was to provide a richer fellowship than was supplied in the sometimes gabbled Liturgy of the parish Church, and to impress upon members the personal nature of religion.’³¹ Leslie Church posits that,

In effect these gatherings were little more than a united class-meeting, with the simple symbolic act of eating and drinking together, but, like the ancient Agape, they became a real fellowship of people struggling against unreasonable persecution in a hostile world. The members were bound together, however, by stronger and more positive ties, for they not only shared a common burden but a common joy—the conscious presence of their Lord.³²

The effectiveness of the bands as well as services like the lovefeast may be seen

Wesley in comments like these:

Great and many are the advantages which have ever since flowed from this closer union of the believers with each other. They prayed for one another, that they might be healed of the faults they had confessed—and so it was so...They were built up in our most holy faith. They rejoiced in the Lord more abundantly. They were strengthened in love, and more effectually provoked to abound in every good work.³³

Frank Baker gives us this very helpful outline of a typical lovefeast during

Wesley’s time:

Hymn
Prayer
Grace (sung)
Bread distributed by the stewards
Collection for the poor
Circulation of the loving cup (tea or water)
Address by the presiding minister
Testimonies and stanzas of hymns
Spontaneous prayers and stanzas of hymns
Closing exhortation by the minister
Hymn
Benediction³⁴

³¹ Bishop, *Methodist Worship*, 87.

³² Leslie Church, *More about the Early Methodist People*, 237.

³³ ‘A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists’ (BE) 9.268.

³⁴ Frank Baker, *Methodism and the Love Feast*. (London: Epworth Press, 1957), 15.

The inclusion (and prominent role) of testimonies in Wesley's love feast was a rather distinct departure from the Moravian style. As Richard Johnson points out 'In the Moravian love feast, 'testimonies' by believers were not an integral part of the ceremony. The emphasis was rather on praise, and on the fellowship symbolized by the common meal of bread and water or tea.³⁵ Interestingly, Johnson is almost emphatic about the Moravians being Wesley's only source for the Love Feast, but he seems to undervalue the importance of Primitive Christianity for Wesley. Here follows a description of the early Church's practice of the Love Feast from William Cave, one of Wesley's most important sources for understanding the practice of the early Church:

Out of these oblations also they sent to furnish the common feast, which in those days they constantly had at the celebration of the Sacrament, where the rich and the poor feasted together at the same table. These were called Agape, or Love Feasts, (mentioned by ST. JUDE, and plainly enough intimated by ST. PAUL,) because here at they testified and confirmed their mutual love and kindness...³⁶

With Cave as one of his major sources of knowledge of early church practices, Wesley would feel justified in including testimonies into his lovefeast. Much more could be said of the historical formation, implementation and critique of, as well as the role of the hymns, in the lovefeast, but these have all been adequately treated elsewhere.³⁷ Most important for our thesis is the formation of Christian tempers in the lovefeast, to which we now turn our attention.

³⁵ Johnson, Richard O. 'The Development of the Love Feast,' 69. Emory S. Bucke agrees with Johnson's criticism and suggests Wesley's departure with the Moravian's order as one of the main reasons for the later dissolution of the Love Feast in American Methodism. See Bucke, 'American Methodism and the Love Feast,' *Methodist History*, 11.

³⁶ William Cave, *Religion of the Ancient Christians*, 6th Edition (London: Printed for R. Chiswel at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1702), 218-219.

³⁷ See especially Baker, *Love Feast*; Bishop, *Methodist Worship*; Johnson, 'Development'; Bucke, 'American Methodism'; and Adrian Burdon, 'The Lovefeast in Methodism.' *Epworth Review* 15/2 (1988), 36-43.

Theological Analysis

Just as he did for the watchnight service, Wesley often described the lovefeast as ‘solemn and comfortable’. For example, on Sunday, March 15th, 1789, Wesley reports: ‘Having Mr. Baddiley to assist me in the morning, I preached at Kingswood in the afternoon; and in the evening, at the Room. We concluded the day with a solemn and comfortable love-feast.’³⁸ This implies that, in spite of their differences, the watchnight and lovefeast created a similar atmosphere in which solemnity and comfort were plentiful. These two traits, common as they appear to be in these important liturgical innovations, point to characteristics such as seriousness, self-control, holy fear and peace as essential to the Methodist. The lovefeast and watchnight were designed to intentionally cultivate these and other characteristics. Two other characteristics or “holy tempers” are prominently featured in Wesley’s portrayal of the lovefeast.

Gratefulness and Thanksgiving³⁹

As noted above, in Wesley’s description of the purpose of the lovefeast, he envisioned the service as a way to ‘increase...a grateful sense of all his mercies’. Gratefulness was a core characteristic for Wesley, one that he very intentionally nurtured in the lovefeast. Wesley’s vision of gratefulness is not difficult to discern, as he wrote about it frequently. Wesley summarized his view of gratitude and its importance in the following quote: ‘I thank—In the very Entrance of this one Epistle are the traces of all Spiritual Affections; but of Thankfulness above all, with the

³⁸ 15 March, 1789 (BE) 24.124.

³⁹ Gratefulness and thanksgiving, while expressing essentially the same idea, are emblematic of one of the main ideas discussed in this thesis. Gratefulness is an affection or temper, an emotion indicative of a way of being, especially in relation to God. Thankfulness is what we do as a result of our being grateful. While Wesley does not explicitly make this distinction himself, it underlies the way he uses the terms, and this pattern is consistent with the way he understands affections in general. The terms will be used synonymously throughout this section.

Expression of which almost all St. Paul's Epistles begin.'⁴⁰

Thanksgiving was a common theme in the watchnight of the Moravians of which Wesley was a part. On 2 August, 1738 Wesley described the watchnight at Hernhutt: 'At four in the afternoon was a love-feast of the married men, taking their food with gladness and singleness of heart, and with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.'⁴¹ That this was a regular part of the Moravian watchnight may be corroborated by their own constitution: 'For the farther stirring up the gift which is in us, sometimes we have public, sometimes private, love-feasts: At which we take moderate refreshment, with gladness and singleness of heart, and the voice of praise and thanksgiving.'⁴²

A pattern that regularly appears in Wesley's comments concerning the lovefeast is the willingness to give thanks in all circumstances. In *The Character of a Methodist* Wesley says, 'Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of his heart to Him who orders it for good; knowing that 'every good gift cometh from above.'⁴³ On 10 May, 1741 Wesley, having been sick the previous day, spent the day in bed but felt compelled to preach and attend the love-feast that evening. His report of those events is as follows:

But at our love-feast which followed, beside the pain in my back and head, and the fever which still continued upon me, just as I began to pray, I was seized with such a cough, that I could hardly speak. At the same time came strongly into my mind, "These signs shall follow them that believe." I called on Jesus aloud, to "increase my faith;" and to "confirm the word of his grace." While I was speaking, my pain vanished away; the fever left me; my bodily strength returned; and for many weeks I felt neither weakness nor pain. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I give thanks."⁴⁴

⁴⁰ *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament*, Romans 1:8, 382.

⁴¹ 2 August, 1738 (BE) 18.267.

⁴² (BE) 18.297.

⁴³ 'The Character of a Methodist', (BE) 9.37.

⁴⁴ 10 May, 1741 (BE) 19.195.

Practicing gratefulness to God for deliverance from all circumstances, as well as thanking Him for His Presence with us even *while* in the midst of suffering creates opportunity in the love-feast for an important balance for Wesley. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, Wesley advocated both works of mercy and works of piety as practices for his Methodists. Works of mercy tended to be targeted on people, while works of piety focused the attention on God. As suggested above, a collection for the poor was taken at each lovefeast. Spending the evening singing and testifying about the goodness, mercy and grace of God each Methodist had received was followed by an opportunity to *pass on* the blessings in a very tangible way. As Wesley said in a quote used earlier, ‘True religion is...gratitude to our Creator and supreme Benefactor, and benevolence to our fellow creatures.’⁴⁵ The lovefeast was a place for the grace and generosity of God to be both received and extended.

It is also clear that Wesley understood the lovefeast to be a place where affections changed targets as people’s hearts were changed. At a lovefeast on Sunday, 29 November, 1761 Wesley reports:

Many have, and many do daily experience an unspeakable change. After being deeply convinced of inbred sin, particularly of pride, anger, self-will, and unbelief, in a moment they feel all faith and love; no pride, no self-will, or anger: And from that moment they have continual fellowship with God, always rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks. Whoever ascribes such a change to the devil, I ascribe it to the Spirit of God: And I say, let whoever feels it wrought, cry to God that it may continue; which it will, if he walks closely with God; otherwise it will not.⁴⁶

Less than a year later, on 4 July, 1762, Wesley again reports on a lovefeast, this time in Dublin. The similarities with the November lovefeast are noteworthy:

Sunday, 4, was a day of solemn joy, equal to any I had seen in Dublin. At the love-feast in the evening, it appeared that God had now visited Limerick also. Five persons desired to return thanks to God, for a clear sense of his pardoning love: Several others, for an increase of faith, and for deliverance from doubts

⁴⁵ ‘The Unity of Divine Being’ (BE), 4.66-67.

⁴⁶ 29 November 1761 (BE), 21.344.

and fears. And two gave a plain, simple account, of the manner wherein God had cleansed their hearts, so that they now felt no anger, pride, or self-will; but continual love, and prayer, and praise.⁴⁷

Finally, Wesley notes with a heavy heart that it seems Christian gratitude diminishes with experience:

How does the frequency and greatness of the works of God make us less (instead of more) sensible of them? A few years ago, if we heard of one notorious sinner truly converted to God, it was matter of solemn joy to all that loved or feared him. And now that multitudes of every kind and degree are daily turned from the power of darkness to God, we pass it over as a common thing! O God give us thankful hearts!⁴⁸

It should be noted here that forgetting God was a major source of concern for Wesley.

His usual term for this was *dissipation*, which he defined as ‘the art of forgetting God...a total, studied inattention to the whole invisible and eternal world; more especially to death, the gate of eternity, and to the important consequence of death, heaven and hell.’⁴⁹ Wesley further warns that being distracted by other things is the same as being dissipated, and that the consequence is devastating: ‘But whenever the mind is unhinged from God it is so far dissipated...Dissipation then, in general, may be defined, the uncentring the soul from God.’⁵⁰ In short, for Wesley, dissipation is the greatest enemy of faith and of one of his most common metaphors for a focused faith in Christ – the ‘single eye.’ This is significant for our focus on the lovefeast because of a connection between the ‘single eye’ and another important word for Wesley – *simplicity*.

Simplicity

Simplicity was a foundational characteristic of Christianity in Wesley’s mind even while he was at Oxford. As he recalls his time there with the ‘young gentlemen’ that comprised the Holy Club the importance of simplicity is highlighted:

⁴⁷ 4 July 1762 (BE), 21.371-372.

⁴⁸ 16 May 1749, (BE) 20.273.

⁴⁹ ‘Walking by Sight and Walking by Faith’, (BE) 4.58.

⁵⁰ ‘On Dissipation’, (BE) 3.120.

In order to assist each other in working out their salvation (they) placed that question first in their scheme of daily self-examination: 'Have I been *simple* and *recollected* in all I said or did? Have I been *simple*? That is, setting the Lord always before me, and doing everything with a single view of pleasing him? *Recollected*; that is, quickly gathering in my scattered thoughts, recovering my simplicity, if I had been in any wise drawn from it by men or devils or my own evil heart.' By this means they were preserved from dissipation...⁵¹

Wesley's definition of simplicity begins with a quote from À Kempis: "Simplicity and purity", says a devout man, "are the two wings that lift the soul up to heaven; simplicity, which is in the intention, and purity, which is in the affections."''⁵²

What is most interesting about Wesley's view of simplicity is the fact that he consistently links it to some of his most important metaphors and images for sanctification and holiness. For instance, in *The Witness of our Own Spirit* Wesley makes a direct link between simplicity and the 'single eye', a key image for Wesley. In describing simplicity and the 'single eye' he takes us closer to the root of his view of holiness:

We are then simple of heart when the eye of our mind is singly fixed on God; when in all things we aim at God alone, as our God, our portion, our strength, our happiness, our exceeding great reward, our all in time and eternity. This is simplicity: when a steady view, a single intention of promoting his glory, of doing and suffering his blessed will, runs through our whole soul, fills all our heart, and is the constant spring of all our thoughts, desires, and purposes.⁵³

If any doubt remained concerning the connection between simplicity and Wesley's emphasis on holiness, he dispels it in a single paragraph:

I rejoice because the sense of God's love to me hath by the same Spirit wrought in me to love him, and to love for his sake every child of man, every soul that he hath made. I rejoice because he gives me to feel in myself 'the mind that was in Christ'; simplicity, a single eye to him in every motion of my heart; power always to fix the loving eye of my soul on him who 'loved me, and gave himself for me'; to aim at him alone, at his glorious will, in all I think or speak or do; purity, desiring nothing more but God, 'crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts', 'setting my affections on things above, not

⁵¹ 'On Dissipation', (BE) 3.124.

⁵² 'On Dissipation', (BE) 3.124; and 'On a Single Eye,' (BE) 4.120.

⁵³ 'The Witness of our Own Spirit,' (BE) 1.307.

on things of the earth'; holiness, a recovery of the Image of God, a renewal of soul after his likeness; and godly sincerity, directing all my words and works so as to conduce to his glory.⁵⁴

Here we see simplicity alongside essentially every major synonym Wesley uses for the holy life. So, while having demonstrated that simplicity was an important disposition for Wesley, we have yet to establish how this relates to the lovefeast.

Simplicity is the characteristic Wesley most commonly associates with the lovefeast. He directly mentions simplicity in conjunction with the lovefeast almost twenty times. Given the survey of Wesley's views concerning simplicity, this takes on added significance. The use of a seemingly innocent word like simplicity, when directed toward the testimonies of his Methodists, now takes on a completely different aspect. Notice, for instance, this example from a lovefeast held on 18 February, 1750:

Today, likewise, wherever we assembled together, God caused his power to be known; but particularly at the lovefeast. The honest simplicity with which several spoke, in declaring the manner of God's dealings with them, set the hearts of others on fire. And the flame spread more and more, till, having stayed near an hour longer than usual, we were constrained to part.⁵⁵

The use of simplicity in this description, against the backdrop of Wesley's overall usage of the word, does not only imply that the speakers had a simplistic, elementary grasp of the English language and communicated with bare, unadorned speech. It implies also that those who declared 'the manner of God's dealings with them' with 'honest simplicity' were communicating a 'single eye' focus on God's gracious activity in their lives. It must be remembered that these lovefeasts were, at least during Wesley's lifetime, almost always gatherings of the Methodist bands. This would mean that those who were testifying were living in close communion with at least a few others in attendance, and that their experiences of God's grace and victory in their lives could easily be corroborated or proven false. Thus, the simplicity to

⁵⁴ 'The Witness of our Own Spirit,' (BE) 1.310.

⁵⁵ (BE) 20.321

which Wesley attests would have been understood, in word *and* deed, by many of those in attendance.

Wesley uses the word simplicity in several different circumstances. On 6 February 1763, he suggests that those involved displayed their ‘single eyed’ devotion to God with a simplicity that had powerful effect: ‘In the evening we had a love-feast, at which many spoke with all simplicity; and their words were like fire. I hardly know when we have had so refreshing a season.’⁵⁶ Wesley also marvelled at the ability of ‘unpolished people’ and ‘country people’ to communicate powerfully in the lovefeast: ‘I have seldom heard people speak with more honesty and simplicity than many did at the lovefeast which followed. I have not seen a more unpolished people than these; but love supplies all defects. It supplies all the essentials of good breeding, without the help of a dancing-master.’⁵⁷ Finally, Wesley’s most common description of simplicity in the lovefeast was brief and to the point: ‘We had a love-feast for all the society, at which many spoke their experience with much simplicity.’⁵⁸

Wesley’s display of admiration on behalf of these unpolished country folk coincides with his remarks concerning wealth. In his sermon *On a Single Eye*, Wesley addresses his Methodists concerning practical issues such as choosing a spouse for their child. He questions them in this regard, saying ‘Which will you prefer? A rich heathen or a pious Christian? A child of the devil with an estate? Or the child of God without it?’⁵⁹ He concludes this sermon by declaring that those who would choose wealth over a ‘single eye’ for God should, ‘Renounce the title Christian, or prefer, both in your own case and the case of your children, grace to

⁵⁶ 6 February, 1763 (BE) 21.406

⁵⁷ 4 September, 1776, (BE) 23.31. Also see Monday, 21 September, 1767, (BE) 22.103; and Wednesday, 17 June, 1778, (BE) 23.95.

⁵⁸ Sunday, 24 January, 1790, (BE) 24.165; See also Tuesday, 1 July, 1766, (BE) 22.47; Tuesday, 22 September, 1767, (BE) 22.103 and Monday, 17 June, 1776, (BE) 23.20.

⁵⁹ ‘On a Single Eye’, BE 4.130.

money, and heaven to earth.’⁶⁰ One final word from Wesley will reemphasize for us the vast difference between simplicity and dissipation: ‘The having our thoughts and affections centred in God, this is Christian simplicity; the having them in any degree uncentred from God, this is dissipation.’⁶¹ Wesley’s use of the lovefeast in developing gratitude and simplicity in his Methodists allowed him to help them continue to battle against dissipation.

As noted above in the suggested service order by Baker, an offering for the poor was taken at each lovefeast. This gave Wesley’s Methodists a chance to act out their sense of gratitude and single-eyed devotion to God by giving to others in need. Thus, we see both works of mercy and works of piety in the lovefeast. Wesley believed that for his Methodists, the lovefeast was both creating within them in certain Christian dispositions such as simplicity and gratitude and giving them an outlet to act out those dispositions. And since the creation of these was one of Wesley’s foundational pastoral concerns, the lovefeast appears to have had a necessary and vital place in the formation of Wesley’s Methodists, at least during his lifetime.

Renewal of the Covenant Service

John Wesley’s Covenant service is often described as the most notable and important contribution Methodism ever made to Christian liturgy. Frank Baker says the Covenant service is, ‘The one major contribution of Methodism to religious liturgy...’,⁶² while John Bishop says that ‘it may rightly be claimed that Methodism has contributed nothing more notable to the worship of the Church than the Covenant Service.’⁶³ Much of the work that has been done in the study of Wesley’s Covenant Renewal service has been an effort to trace the disappearance of the service and to

⁶⁰ ‘On a Single Eye’, BE 4.130.

⁶¹ ‘Thoughts on Dissipation,’ (Jackson) 11.525.

⁶² Baker, ‘Beginnings of the Methodist Covenant Service.’ *London Quarterly & Holborn Review* 180, 215.

⁶³ Bishop, *Methodist Worship*, 98.

recover its usage in the church today. Little has been done in the area of the connection between Wesley's pastoral theology and the development and use of the Covenant Service. Few connections have been made between Wesley preaching of holiness of heart and life and the purpose or outcome of this service.

This section seeks to suggest a different way of looking at the Covenant Renewal Service which will incorporate Wesley's affectional theology in an effort to point to Wesley's overall purpose for this service.

History

Frederick Hunter marks the first covenant service as January 1, 1748. He points to a journal entry from Wesley on Christmas Day, 1747 as pointing toward the actual event on New Years day. Wesley records the events of 25 December, 1747: 'We met at four and solemnly rejoiced in God our Saviour...Both this and the following days, I strongly urged the wholly giving up ourselves to God, and renewing in every point our covenant, that the Lord should be our God.'⁶⁴ And just a few days later, he describes the events of New Year's Day 1748 – 'We began the year at four in the morning, with joy and thanksgiving. The same spirit was in the midst of us, both at noon and in the evening. Surely, we shall, at length, present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.'⁶⁵ Hunter also points out that Wesley published *Vindiciae Pietatis* in 1753. While there are covenantal themes present in these journal entries, it seems a stretch to suggest that these were indicative of a Wesleyan Covenant Renewal service. As Parkes suggests, 'a strong covenant theme does not a Covenant service make.'⁶⁶ Wesley's journal from August, 1755 describes what is commonly accepted as the first Covenant Renewal service:

⁶⁴ 25 December 1747 (BE) 20.203

⁶⁵ 1 January 1748 (BE) 20.203

⁶⁶ Parkes, 'Watchnight, Covenant Service and Love-feast in Early British Methodism', 53, see footnote 49 for this comment and Parkes' excellent list of other proposed theories on early covenant services prior to 1755.

Wednesday, August 6, I mentioned to the congregation another means of increasing serious religion, which had been frequently practiced by our forefathers, namely, the joining in a covenant to serve God with all our heart and with all our soul. I explained this for several mornings and on Friday many of us kept a fast to the Lord, beseeching him to give us wisdom and strength, to make a promise unto the Lord our God and keep it.

Monday, August 11. I explained once more the nature of such an engagement, and the manner of doing it acceptably to God. At six in the evening we met for that purpose, at the French Church in Spitalfields. After I had recited the tenor of the covenant proposed, in the words of that blessed man, Richard Alleine, all the people stood up, in testimony of assent, to the number of about eighteen hundred persons. Such a night I scarce ever saw before. Surely the fruit of it shall remain forever.⁶⁷

A few years later, we see in Wesley's journal on 13 April, 1757 – 'On Good-Friday...at the meeting of the Society, God was eminently present with us. I read over and enlarged upon Joseph Alleine's directions for a thorough conversion to God, and desired all, who were able, would meet me on Monday, that we might perform our vows unto the Lord.'⁶⁸ This entry is important for a number of reasons. First, we see a pattern emerge between this event and the one in August of 1755, where Wesley is calling the people to prepare, for a number of days, for participation in the Covenant Renewal. Frank Baker talks about the importance of preparation for entering into the Covenant for Wesley, and cites occurrences of the Covenant in London, Bristol and Dublin as examples where Wesley spent 3 to four days in exhortation and explanation of the Covenant. He also points out that gradually this period of preparation was confined to the covenant day itself and quotes Wesley from his journal on Friday, 29th February 1760: 'A great number of us waited upon God, at five, at nine, and at one, with fasting and prayer; and at six in the evening we met at the church in Spitalfields to renew our covenant with God.'⁶⁹ Because of the immensity of the crowds wishing to participate in the Covenant Renewal, the services were typically held in large venues, such as Spitalfields and later in the City Road

⁶⁷ August 1755, (BE) 21.23.

⁶⁸ August 1755, (BE) 21.91.

⁶⁹ Baker, 'Beginnings' 217.

Chapel. By 1762 the service was routinely being held on New Year's day, and in 1782 it was shifted again to the first Sunday in January, where it remained until after Wesley's death.

In Wesley's journal references above he refers to both Richard and Joseph Alleine. Wesley published *Directions for Renewing our Covenant with God* in 1780, and its contents reveal the Alleines to be his source for this service. Joseph Alleine, a nephew of Richard Baxter's, published *An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners*, which his father-in-law Richard Alleine later published as part of another work entitled *Vindiciae Pietatis*, an extract of which Wesley placed in his *Christian Library*. More will be said about the content of the service below. Baker has made an interesting connection between Wesley's covenantal allusions in his journal entry on Christmas 1747 and his preaching schedule around that time. Baker points out that Wesley preached on this theme of covenant for several days, covering Moses' covenant, Josiah's Covenant and the covenant Judah entered into under Asa's leadership. Baker says this cycle of sermons on covenantal themes was repeated several more times within the year.⁷⁰ It seems clear that during this time Wesley was beginning to think biblically and pastorally about how the Covenant might be used as 'another means of increasing serious religion' to deepen the spiritual journey of his Methodists.

Purpose of the Service

Frederick Hunter's article, 'The Origins of Wesley's Covenant Service', appeared in 1939.⁷¹ Hunter's main task in his article was to make the connection between Wesley and the Puritans, particularly stressing Wesley's family's Puritan Heritage. Hunter goes out of his way to submit that it was this family connection, specifically naming the relationship between both of Wesley's grandfathers and the

⁷⁰ Baker, 'Beginnings' 215.

⁷¹ Frederick Hunter. 'The Origins of Wesley's Covenant Service.' *London Quarterly & Holborn Review* 164, (January, 1939), 78-87.

Alleines and he summarizes the last section of the article by reiterating this connection: ‘We conclude therefore that when Wesley spoke of the Covenant service as having been used by “our forefathers” he probably meant his grandfather John Westley...and almost certainly the Annesleys.’⁷² While exhibiting some remarkable historical scholarship, Hunter makes no attempt at understanding Wesley’s pastoral, moral, theological or liturgical agendas, and his article set the standard for the types of questions that were to be asked and answered concerning the Covenant Service by those who followed in his footsteps.

Frank Baker’s article, entitled ‘Beginnings of the Methodist Covenant Service’, appeared a few years later.⁷³ Baker makes an important point in his opening paragraph when he says:

The genius of Wesley’s service was that it preserved a method of personal covenanting for individuals and generations whose spiritual temperature was far lower than that of the Puritans, and at the same time fused this personal dedication into a congregational rite. The Methodist Covenant Service became a corporate renewal of individual discipleship.⁷⁴

This is an important observation about Wesley’s ability to adapt liturgical material to his pastoral needs. Other innovations of the Covenant Service by Wesley are pointed out as well. For instance, Baker suggests that, while Charles did not put together a special collection for Covenant services, one hymn in particular became a very important part of the Covenant service. The Hymn entitled ‘Come, let us use the Grace Divine’, based on Jeremiah 1:5, was also popularly known as ‘*the* Covenant Hymn. Baker notes that this hymn was included in the *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* collection, which was published in 1762. Also, quoting from the *Arminian Magazine* in 1784, Baker uses the first person description of ‘Young Robert Roe’ to point to a very important pattern: ‘There was an amazing

⁷² Hunter, ‘Origins’ 86.

⁷³ Baker, ‘Beginnings’ 215-220.

⁷⁴ Baker, ‘Beginnings’ 215.

number of serious people, to whom he mentioned the propriety of the meeting, and gave an exhortation; after which, we sealed our engagements by prayer and the Lord's Supper.'⁷⁵ This use of the Lord's Supper in conjunction with the Covenant Renewal is an important liturgical practice which is referenced time and time again by those who follow Baker. Baker's article is much less laden with the textual criticism found in Hunter and much more of a study on the historical and liturgical development of the Covenant Renewal service, both during and after Wesley's time.

Six years after Baker's article was published Rupert Davies entered the discussion with his article, 'The History and Theology of the Methodist Covenant Service.'⁷⁶ As his title indicates, Davies' article is more focused on the theology exhibited in the service than most. Davies also makes more of a connection from the covenant renewal to Wesley's pastoral theology than Hunter and Baker. As he discusses Wesley's sources, he says:

The notion of a covenant with God, both personal and corporate, was an integral part of the English Puritan tradition, and Wesley, himself of Puritan forebears, was here appropriating, for his purpose of spreading Scriptural holiness throughout the land, something which was highly congenial to one side of his nature. His genius was shown, as so often, not conceiving new ideas, but in adapting old ideas to his purposes and giving them practical expression. The only original element in Wesley's Covenant Service is that he turned into a congregational rite what had previously been a single act of personal or public dedication.⁷⁷

Of equal important is Davies' observation about the corporate and God-focused nature of the service,

There is nothing even remotely subjective about the Covenant Service: the experience of the worshipper, his opinions and his programs, do not come into the picture; God's work, God's word, God's grace, God's covenant, are in the centre—it is our part only to respond and to yield ourselves.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Baker, 'Beginnings' 217.

⁷⁶ Rupert Eric Davies. 'The History and Theology of the Methodist Covenant Service.' *Theology* 64 (1961): 62-68.

⁷⁷ Davies, 'History and Theology,' 63.

⁷⁸ Davies, 'History and Theology,' 67. It should be stated that Davies' suggestion that 'there is nothing even remotely subjective about the Covenant service' is clearly excessive. He is attempting

Both of these observations, while important in their contribution of the theology and liturgical formulation of the Covenant, still do not discuss in any depth why Wesley chose these resources, or how he intended this service to shape and form his Methodists. His work, much like that of Baker and Hunter, is largely a historical and theological reconstruction of where the Covenant Service went after Wesley died and how it has been liturgically restored to the Methodist tradition in recent years. Most of his theological work in this article is his attempt at making the Covenant service more palatable to a wider Ecumenical audience.

In 1969 David Tripp wrote his Master's Thesis for the University of Leeds on the topic of *The Renewal of the Covenant in the Methodist Tradition*.⁷⁹ While this work is thoroughly comprehensive and by far the most detailed account of the history, sources, textual criticism and liturgical development of the Covenant Renewal, there is no mention of Wesley's pastoral intentions for the service, or of his moral, theological or pastoral agenda in the construction or use of this liturgy. True to his title, much of Tripp's work is done regarding the service's history after Wesley, and on the liturgical development of the service in modern Methodist liturgical resources.

Roger Hahn, Doug Hardy and Jason Lewis add an article that is completely unlike anything else that has been written on Wesley's Covenant service.⁸⁰ Their approach is fresh and provides a helpful and much needed contribution to the discussion. They offer a critique, from a biblical and practical theological perspective, on the Covenant Renewal as constructed by Wesley. They also extend

to point to the corporate nature of the Covenant service, and should have suggested that the Covenant service was not *only* a subjective, individualistic experience. However, as stated, Davies statement must be seen as a blatant exaggeration.

⁷⁹ David Tripp. *The Renewal of the Covenant in the Methodist Tradition*. (Epworth Press, London. 1969).

⁸⁰ Roger L. Hahn, Douglas S. Hardy, and Jason D. Lewis, "Wesley's Covenant Service: A Relational Practice Connecting Biblical Doctrine with Communal Formation," *Didache: Faithful Teaching* 10:2 (Spring 2011).

this same perspective to some of the more contemporary adaptations of the Covenant Renewal. While bringing a completely different perspective to the table, Hahn, Hardy and Lewis still do not broach the subject of why Wesley used the material he did, or what he hoped to accomplish in doing so.

The purpose of this thesis is to argue that Wesley's primary theological and pastoral concern was to call his Methodists to 'enjoy and manifest all holy and heavenly tempers.'⁸¹ As will be demonstrated below, Wesley's service of Covenant Renewal was an excellent format within which his Methodists might 'enjoy and manifest' certain holy tempers which Wesley believed to be indispensable to the Christian life.

Poverty of Spirit

If heart religion really is the centre of Wesley's theology of holiness, then it would seem as if it would have occupied most of his thoughts when trying to figure out ways to form and shape his Methodists into a holy people. He would have wanted to find ways to shape specific affections and tempers in them. One look at Wesley's first sermon in his series on the Sermon on the Mount confirms this priority, and names a central affection that Wesley believed to be the beginning point for any believer:

Poverty of spirit, and every other temper which is here mentioned, are at all times found, in a greater or less degree, in every real Christian. And it is equally true, that real Christianity always begins in poverty of spirit, and goes on in the order here set down, till the "man of God is made perfect." We begin at the lowest of these gifts of God, yet so as not to relinquish this, when we are called of God to come up higher: But "whereunto we have already attained, we hold fast," while we press on to what is yet before, to the highest blessings of God in Christ Jesus.

The foundation of all is poverty of spirit: Here, therefore, our Lord begins: "Blessed," saith he, "are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."⁸²

⁸¹ 'Salvation by Faith', (BE) 1.125.

⁸² 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (BE) 1.475.

So, Wesley places the affection or temper of poverty of spirit, or humility, at the very *beginning* of the Christian faith, foundational to its construction and continuation.

Next, in the same sermon, he asks a very important question:

Who then are "the poor in spirit" Without question, the humble; they who know themselves; who are convinced of sin; those to whom God hath given that first repentance, which is previous to faith in Christ. One of these can no longer say, "I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing;" as now knowing, that he is "wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked." He is convinced that he is spiritually poor indeed; having no spiritual good abiding in him. "In me," saith he, "dwelleth no good thing," but whatsoever is evil and abominable. He sees more and more of the evil tempers which spring from that evil root; the pride and haughtiness of spirit, the constant bias to think of himself more highly than he ought to think...the love of the world, the self-will, the foolish and hurtful desires, which cleave to his inmost soul.⁸³

The phrase 'wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind and naked' not only arrests our attention because it is a quote from Revelation 3, it also is almost exactly replicated in the Covenant Renewal service, in perhaps the most poignant passage in the entire liturgy:

O blessed Jesus, I come to thee hungry, wretched, miserable, blind, and naked; a most loathsome, polluted wretch, a guilty, condemned malefactor, unworthy to wash the feet of the Servants of my Lord, much more to be solemnly married to the King of Glory; but since such is thine unparalleled love, I do here with all my power accept thee, and take thee for my Head and Husband, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, for all times and conditions, to love, honour and obey thee before all others, and this to the death. I embrace thee in all thine offices: I renounce mine own worthiness, and do here avow thee for the Lord my Righteousness: I renounce mine own wisdom, and do here take thee for my own guide: I renounce mine own will, and take thy will for my law.⁸⁴

Among other places, the appeal to humility or poverty of spirit is displayed when Wesley suggests that there are two things which 'must necessarily be supposed' if a person wished to come to Christ: '1. A deep sense of his Sin and Misery. 2. An

⁸³ 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (BE) 1.477-478.

⁸⁴ Tripp, *The Renewal of the Covenant in the Methodist Tradition*, 187.

utter Despair of himself, and all Things else besides Christ.’⁸⁵ This sense of a complete distrust of one’s own righteousness, or of anything aside from Christ himself, to save us appears again a few pages later. Wesley suggests the necessity of recognizing that righteousness, “duties” and Ordinances will not save and calls the sinner to look no farther, to realize that: ‘His Righteousness cannot help him, this is but rags his Duties cannot help him, these may be reckoned among his sins: Ordinances cannot help, these are but empty cisterns; and all them him, You know at a wrong door, Salvation is not in us.’⁸⁶ This call to divorce ourselves from false forms of salvation or feelings of righteousness conforms well to Wesley’s description of humility: ‘Humility, a right judgment of ourselves, cleanses our minds from those high conceits of our own perfections, from that undue opinion of our own abilities and attainments, which are the genuine fruit of a corrupted nature.’⁸⁷

One final word from Wesley on humility or poverty of spirit will highlight its importance for Wesley in general and more particularly in the Renewal of the Covenant service:

Our Lord has hitherto been more immediately employed in removing the hindrances of true religion: such is pride, the first, grand hindrance of all religion, which is taken away by ‘poverty of spirit’; levity and thoughtlessness, which prevent any religion from taking root in the soul till they are removed by holy mourning, such are anger, impatience, discontent, which are all healed by Christian meekness. And when once these hindrances are removed—these evil diseases of the soul which were continually raising false cravings therein, and filling it with sickly appetites—the native appetite of a heaven-born spirit returns; it hungers and thirst after righteousness.⁸⁸

In summarizing the character of the Covenant Renewal it might be suggested that moving from a place of pride in one’s own righteousness and submitting to God as our sole source of salvation and healing is this service’s central message. This quote

⁸⁵ *Directions for Renewing our Covenant with God*, 2nd Ed. London. Printed by J. Paramore, at the Foundry, Moorfields: 1781), 5.

⁸⁶ *Directions*, 7.

⁸⁷ ‘The Circumcision of the Heart’, (BE), 403.

⁸⁸ ‘Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, II’, (BE) 1.495.

from Wesley's second sermon on the Sermon on the Mount also describes several other tempers, and it is to one of these, meekness, that we now direct our attention.

Meekness

Wesley tells us that 'no disposition...is more essential to Christianity than meekness.'⁸⁹ This is a strong affirmation of the importance of meekness to Wesley's scheme of religion. Wesley sees meekness as the means by which we balance our affections, the tool we use to bring and keep them 'under due regulation.'⁹⁰ He explains further that meekness 'holds an even scale with regard to anger and sorrow, and fear; preserving the mean in every circumstance of life...'⁹¹ Horst clarifies the difference between meekness and humility: 'If humility vanquishes pride, meekness conquers inordinate sorrow, fear, and anger.'⁹² Wesley understands meekness to function in three distinct ways, as he explains in his second discourse on the Sermon on the Mount:

Meekness, therefore, seems properly to relate to ourselves. But it may be referred either to God or our neighbour. When this due composure of mind has reference to God, it is usually termed resignation; a calm acquiescence in whatsoever is his will concerning us, even though it may not be pleasing to nature; saying continually, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." When we consider it more strictly with regard to ourselves, we style it patience or contentedness.⁹³

The pages of Wesley's Covenant Renewal are strewn with references to being resigned to God's will. After the call to choose Christ over our own righteousness, and to choose Him alone, the Covenant Renewal liturgy directs the participant to 'Resign, and deliver up yourselves to God in Christ. Yield yourselves to the Lord, that is, as his servants, give up the dominion and government of yourselves to

⁸⁹ 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, IV', (BE) 1.534.

⁹⁰ 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, II', (BE) 1.488.

⁹¹ 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, II', (BE) 1.488.

⁹² Horst, *Christian Understanding*, 154.

⁹³ 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, II', (BE) 1.489.

Christ.’⁹⁴ This yielding of ourselves to Christ takes on two very specific manifestations: ‘And this giving yourselves to him, must be such as supposes that you be heartily contented; 1) That he appoint you your work. 2) That he appoint you your Station.’⁹⁵ The Covenant continues with a call for the participant to be *resigned* to God’s will even if God assigns them difficult, unflattering, painful work. It may be the case, says Wesley, that this may be work ‘wherein we cannot please Christ, but by denying ourselves...parting with our ease, our liberties, and accommodations for the Name of our Lord Jesus.’⁹⁶ The participant is then called upon to count the cost of discipleship, and to be willing to say ‘Lord Jesus...impose on me what condition thou pleases, write down thine own articles, command me what thou wilt, put me to any thing thou seest good...I will be no longer mine own, but give up myself to thy will in all things.’⁹⁷ In moving to a point of finalizing their covenant with Christ, of ‘closing’ with Him, Wesley says, ‘when you have understandingly and heartily resigned, and given up yourselves to him, resolving for ever to be at his command, and at his disposal; then you are Christians indeed...’⁹⁸ Then, the participant vows ‘I do here resign my Heart to thee...that it is the resolution of my heart, and that I do unfeignedly desire grace from thee, that when thou shalt call me hereunto, I may practice this my Resolution...’⁹⁹ All of this corresponds to Wesley’s suggestion that ‘when this due composure of mind has reference to God’ it manifests itself in ‘resignation’, the mind-set that whatever God plans for us, we willingly ‘acquiescence’ to His desires. We now turn our focus toward how meekness displays itself in humanity.

⁹⁴ *Directions*, 10-11.

⁹⁵ *Directions*, 11.

⁹⁶ *Directions*, 12.

⁹⁷ *Directions*, 13.

⁹⁸ *Directions*, 14-15.

⁹⁹ *Directions*, 19-20.

As stated in the excerpt above from Wesley's second sermon on the Sermon on the Mount, 'When we consider it (meekness) more strictly with regard to ourselves, we style it patience or contentedness'.¹⁰⁰ This call to meekness and contentment is a consistent theme in Wesley, especially in his sermons on the Sermon on the Mount. In his final sermon from this extended text, Wesley speaks of the importance of meekness in contending with ungodly passions: 'Now add to your seriousness, meekness of wisdom. Hold an even scale as to all your passions, but in particular as to anger, sorrow, and fear. Calmly acquiesce in whatsoever is the will of God. Learn in every state wherein you are, therewith to be content.'¹⁰¹ Wesley demonstrates what this kind of contentedness might look like in a letter to Hannah Ball:

Little things contrary to our will may be great blessings. We have need to apply the general word, 'Take up thy cross, and follow Me,' to a thousand little particulars: a smoky room, a cold morning, a rainy day, the dullness or perverseness of those we are with, these and innumerable little crosses will help us onward to the kingdom.¹⁰²

This type of contentment or meekness is exercised in the Renewal of the Covenant Service, particularly in the following prayer:

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt; put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for thee, or laid aside for thee; exalted for thee, or trodden under foot for these; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing, I freely, and heartily resign all to thy pleasure and disposal.¹⁰³

Humility and Meekness are just a few of the affections/tempers that were being shaped and habituated in Wesley's Methodists as they participated in the Renewal of their Covenant with God. It is important to remember, however, that at an even more elementary and foundational basis, the Covenant Renewal was helping solidify holy

¹⁰⁰ 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, II', (BE) 1.489.

¹⁰¹ 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, XIII,' (BE) 1.696-697.

¹⁰² 'To Hannah Ball' 2 December, 1778 (Letters), 6.330.

¹⁰³ *Directions*, 14.

tempers.

Orientation and Developing Holy Tempers

In a letter to his father in 1734 Wesley he points out what, for him, is the essence of holiness:

By holiness I mean, not fasting, or bodily austerity, or any other external means of improvement, but that inward temper to which all these are subservient, a renewal of soul in the Image of God. I mean a complex habit of lowliness, meekness, purity, faith, hope, and love of God and man.¹⁰⁴

Wesley was not simply looking to shape and form individual tempers. Even before these individual tempers can be formed, it must be remembered that affections and tempers are *transitive*, they take an object. So, the object of our affections determine the shape and form of the character of the person, the tempers they manifest. As noted above, the whole opening sequence in the Covenant Renewal, and a dominant theme all the way through the service, is a call to turn toward Christ and away from the devil. This is not only reminiscent of the “two paths/ways” material in the Catechism, it is also a reminder of the orientational aspect of affections and tempers. As pointed out in chapter 1 of this thesis, affections and tempers are both relational (they take an object) and dispositional. The purpose of this thesis is to suggest that Wesley’s worship services, the communally implemented means of grace, both empowered his Methodists to ‘chuse Christ’ and hardened their affections into abiding tempers. We see this mind-set in one of Wesley’s earliest and most important sermons:

In general we may observe it (circumcision of the heart) is that habitual disposition of soul which in the Sacred Writings is termed “holiness,” and which directly implies the being cleansed from sin, “from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit,” and by consequence the being endued with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus, the being so “renewed in the image of our

¹⁰⁴ *Letters*, (BE) 25.399.

mind” as to be “perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect.” To be more particular, circumcision of heart implies humility, faith, hope and charity.¹⁰⁵

As pointed out earlier, the participant in the Covenant renewal service is called upon to choose a path:

Get these three Principles fixed in your heats: that Things eternal are much more considerable than Things temporal; that things not seen are as certain as the Things that are seen; that upon your present choice depends your eternal lot. Chuse Christ and his ways, and you are blessed forever; refuse, and you are undone forever...If you be unresolved, you are resolved: if you remain undetermined for Christ, you are determined for the Devil.¹⁰⁶

Making even more clear the effects of these two divergent paths, Wesley suggests the consequences of following either Christ or the Devil:

Yield yourselves so to the Lord, that you may henceforth be the Lord's; I am thine, saith the Psalmist. Those that yield themselves to Sin, and the World, their hearts say, Sin, I am thine; World, I am thine; Riches, I am yours; Pleasures, I am yours: I am thine, saith the Psalmist; devoted to thy fear, dedicated to thy service; I am thine, save me; give yourselves to Christ, Sinners, be devoted to his fear.¹⁰⁷

Wesley concludes the Covenant Renewal service with this prayer, sealing the Covenant between God and the participant with one last reminder that God's grace is and Covenant Friendship are the essential components in this service: ‘O dreadful Jehovah, the Lord God Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Thou are now become my Covenant-Friend, and I through thine infinite grace, am become thy Covenant-Servant. Amen.’¹⁰⁸ Holy tempers are formed only when the moral image is restored and maintained by a living, thriving relationship with God, who is and must remain the supreme object of our affections.

We conclude this section on the Renewal of the Covenant service by reiterating the idea Wesley expressed above in the letter to his father concerning holiness being about inward tempers rather than ‘fasting, or bodily austerity, or any

¹⁰⁵ ‘The Circumcision of the Heart’, (BE) 1.402-403.

¹⁰⁶ *Directions*, 3-4.

¹⁰⁷ *Directions*, 11.

¹⁰⁸ *Directions*, 23.

other external means of improvement.’ In his letter, Wesley points to the development of a ‘complex habit of lowliness, meekness, purity, faith, hope, and love of God and man.’ In ‘A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion’, Wesley suggests that his Methodists have moved beyond external religion to pursue this same ‘complex habit’:

Over and above this outward change they began to experience *inward* religion. ‘The love of God was shed abroad in their hearts’, which they continue to enjoy to this day. They ‘love him, because he first loved us’...And this love constrains them to love all mankind, all the children of the Father of heaven and earth, and inspires them with every holy and heavenly temper, to the whole mind that was in Christ. Hence it is that they are now uniform in their behaviour, unblameable in all manner of conversation. And in whatsoever state they are, they have learned therewith to be content. Insomuch that now they can ‘in everything give thanks.’ They more than patiently acquiesce: they rejoice and are exceeding glad in all God’s dispensations toward them. For as long as they love God...they are always happy in God.¹⁰⁹

This call to move from outward religion to inward religion, to receive God’s love and become lovers of God and humanity, to be ‘inspired with every holy and heavenly temper’, and to become content in all things, these are manifestations of holiness which come as a result of the practice of communal means of grace such as the Renewal of the Covenant service.

The Preaching Service

Field preaching was a vital but difficult part of Wesley’s ministry. In April of 1739 he reports his first experience of preaching outdoors: ‘At four in the afternoon, I submitted to be more vile and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation.’¹¹⁰ Apparently, Wesley never lost his distaste for field preaching, as he still speaks of it with disdain twenty years later:

I preached ... to twice the people we should have had at the house. What marvel the devil does not love field-preaching! Neither do I: I love a

¹⁰⁹ ‘A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part III’, (BE) 11.275.

¹¹⁰ April 2, 1739, (BE) 19.46.

commodious room, a soft cushion, an handsome pulpit. But where is my zeal, if I do not trample all these under foot in order to save one more soul?¹¹¹

Even as late as 1772 he still felt much the same way: ‘To this day field-preaching is a cross to me. But I know my commission and see no other way of “preaching the gospel to every creature.”’¹¹² It is interesting here to note that Wesley seems to be living out a vital part of his own Renewal of the Covenant service. Even as he ‘submitted to be more vile’, he was living out the covenant prayer:

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt; put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for thee, or laid aside for thee; exalted for thee, or trodden under foot for these; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing, I freely, and heartily resign all to thy pleasure and disposal.¹¹³

In an article using Wesley’s well-known dictum, ‘I do indeed live by preaching’,¹¹⁴ as his title, Michael Pasquarello emphasizes the importance of character in the preacher:

...the most important “practical” matters related to preaching are spiritual and moral, rather than methodological and technical, and have primarily to do with knowing, loving, and speaking what is true and good. For this reason, the vocation of “preacher” consists in becoming a particular kind of person, one whose life and speech are sanctified by the Spirit through living faith in the crucified and risen Lord whose gospel we have been called to believe and are sent to proclaim.¹¹⁵

Likewise, in *John Wesley, Preacher*, William Doughty suggests that whatever Wesley recommends as advice or imperative for his preachers must be suggestive of his own character. Richard Heitzenrater, in response to Doughty’s assertion, says that such a statement ‘screams for analysis by the historian.’¹¹⁶ While our current thesis

¹¹¹ June 26, 1759, (BE) 21.203.

¹¹² September 6, 1772, (BE) 22.348.

¹¹³ *Directions*, 14.

¹¹⁴ July 28, 1757. (BE) 21.118.

¹¹⁵ Michael Pasquarello, “‘I do indeed live by preaching’: John Wesley and the Preaching Life”. Unpublished Paper, Presented to the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies, 2007 Institute. <http://oxford-institute.org/2007-twelfth-institute/working-groups/>

¹¹⁶ Richard Heitzenrater, ‘John Wesley’s Principles and Practice of Preaching.’ *Methodist History*, 37.2 (January 1999). 89.

will not allow for in-depth consideration of Wesley's theory and practice of preaching, it is at least instructive to consider the input of Pasquarello, Doughty and Heitzenrater, especially in light of Wesley's own seeming adherence to the Covenant by demonstrating his willingness to participate in field preaching. Wesley's character was important to his preaching, and it was actively being formed and shaped by his own regimen of prudential means of grace.

Heitzenrater tells a story about the observation of a stranger as to Wesley being 'the personification of piety' he sets about the task of clarifying the central nature of Wesley's message.¹¹⁷ He arrives at a summary Wesley himself uses to sum up the teachings of the Methodists: 'The essence of it is holiness of heart and life.'¹¹⁸ Regarding Wesley's central message of holiness of heart and life Heitzenrater says 'in this sense, the topics for preaching were an extension of the Christian life that the preacher was expected to model.'¹¹⁹ Pasquarello describes well Wesley's desire to hold together mission and message:

For Wesley, the moral life of Christians and the life of the preacher cannot be separated, since the fullness of our human nature has been assimilated by God's gracious activity in Christ, and is best understood in terms of infused gifts, beatitudes, and virtues rather than rules, principles, or external obligations. Thus when Wesley's sermons are read in light of this moral teaching, they provide fresh insight to the "preaching life" that unites the person *and* work of the preacher, the study of doctrine *and* Scripture, and the practice of spiritual *and* moral wisdom, within the life and mission of the church.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Heitzenrater borrows a story from Albert Outler's introduction to Wesley's sermons. Outler uses a report from Johan Henrik Liden, a visiting professor from Sweden, to illustrate how Wesley's character aligned with his message, to great effect. Liden, on the 15th of October, 1769, tells of hearing Wesley preach at the Methodist Chapel in Spitalfields, and describes his impressions and experience of Wesley's appearance and message: 'He is a small, thin old man, with his own long straight hair, and looks as the worst country curate in Sweden, but has learning as a bishop and a zeal for the glory of God which is quite extraordinary. His talk is very agreeable...He is the personification of piety, and he seems to me as a living representative of the loving Apostle John.' See JW, Sermons, *A Career in Retrospect*, WBE 1.9.

¹¹⁸ *The Methodist Societies*, 'Thoughts upon Methodism' (BE) 9.529. Interesting, as noted elsewhere in this thesis, on the very next page of "Thoughts upon Methodism", Wesley seems to directly equate Methodism with 'the religion of the heart.' See 'Thoughts upon Methodism' (BE) 9.530.

¹¹⁹ Heitzenrater, 'Principles,' 100.

¹²⁰ Pasquarello, 'Preaching Life,' 18.

Character development, the manifestation and maturation of holy tempers in the life of the believer (and the preacher) was essential in the Methodist movement under Wesley's development, and nothing was more crucial to that development than the preaching ministry. However, the ministry of the Word underwent some very important changes during Wesley's lifetime.

Field preaching was, in Wesley's mind, a vital cog in the Methodist machine.

He described its importance in his *Short History of the People Called Methodists*:

Being thus excluded from the churches and not daring to be silent, it remained only to preach in the open-air; which I did at first, not out of choice, but necessity; but I have since seen abundant reason to adore the wise providence of God herein, making a way for myriads of people who never troubled any church, nor were likely to do so, to hear that word which they soon found to be the power of God unto salvation.¹²¹

In agreement with a question concerning whether field preaching had been too limited, Wesley answered 'We have found a greater blessing in field preaching than in any other preaching whatever.'¹²² This comment came in the midst of a two year trial in Wales and Cornwall where the preachers had attempted to preach 'without forming any societies', for the sake of being able to preach more.¹²³ However, by 1748 this experiment was abruptly abandoned. It seems Wesley and the Methodists learned a valuable lesson that would serve them well in the coming years:

Q. 2. We are again pressed "only to preach in as many places as we can, but not to form any societies". Shall we follow this advice?

A. By no means. We have made the trial already. We have preached for more than a year without forming societies...and almost all the seed has fallen as by the way-side. There is scarce any fruit of it remaining.¹²⁴

¹²¹ 'A Short History of the People Called Methodists' (BE) 9.431.

¹²² Monday, June 19, 1747. (BE) 10.203.

¹²³ Saturday, August 3, 1745. (BE) 10.159.

¹²⁴ Thursday, June 2, 1748. (BE) 10.210. Years later, having seen the fruits of their labor, Wesley admitted that it was more difficult to maintain a day-to-day accountability and teaching ministry than it was simply to show up and preach: "It is far easier to preach a good sermon than to instruct the ignorant in the principles of religion." See 'Minutes' (BE) 10.881. Interestingly, this quote comes in the midst of a section encouraging the preachers to be diligent about distributing and instructing every Methodist home in the truths found in the *Instructions for Children*.

The answer to the very next question proves to be extremely important in the progression of the Methodists:

Q. 3. But what particular inconvenience do you observe when people are not formed into societies?

A. These among many others:

(1)The preacher cannot give proper exhortations and instructions to those who are convinced of sin unless he has opportunities of meeting them apart from the mixed, unawakened multitude.

(2)They cannot watch over one another in love unless they are thus united together.

Nor, (3) can the believers build up one another and bear one another's burdens.

These observations do not signal the beginning of the formation of societies among the Methodists, but it certainly proved their worth for those who doubted their necessity. This reminder of the importance of the formation of the Societies solidified the role of the preaching service.

Wesley insisted, through the majority of his ministry, on his Methodists meeting at 5AM to attend a simple preaching service. No service order or formal liturgy exists for the preaching service, but Kenneth Wilson suggests that a typical order would 'begin with hymn-singing, followed by extempore prayer, and either an exhortation or a more ordered sermon.'¹²⁵ The preaching service was for the benefit of the societies and allowed Wesley and his preachers to take advantage of the strengths of this system, namely the accountability and fellowship these communities of faith provided. While field preaching may be seen as dominating Wesley's time, Heitzenrater quotes a source as suggesting this may not have been the case:

Most of Wesley's own preaching was within four walls, to the societies or the classes. Wanda Smith, who has established an accurate record of Wesley's preaching, estimates that the overwhelming proportion of his preaching

¹²⁵ Wilson, 'Devotional Relationship,' 443.

throughout his lifetime, perhaps more than ninety percent, was to the Methodist societies.¹²⁶

What may be gained from Smith's insight is that, for Wesley, while field preaching was important, as the Methodist Revival gained momentum his focus began to change. He began to spend a greater portion of his time and energy leading people into the pursuit and experience of holy tempers.

The preaching service was so vital to Wesley's mission of the spread of heart religion that when it began to disappear in some pockets of Methodism he immediately pointed to this single factor as the reason for the demise of spiritual fervor. In answer to a question concerning what might be done to prevent God's work from becoming stale, Wesley's response is enlightening:

Q. 23. In many places the work of God seems to stand still. What can be done to revive and enlarge it?

(2) Let there be more field preaching. Without this the work of God will hardly increase in any place.

3) Let the preaching at five in the morning be constantly kept up, wherever you can have twenty hearers. This is the glory of the Methodists. Whenever this is dropped they will dwindle away into nothing.¹²⁷

Later, in 1784, Wesley again points to the absence of the preaching service as devastating. His comments in this context are particularly important for this thesis:

Leaving Bristol after preaching at five, in the evening I preached at Stroud, where to my surprise, I found in the morning preaching was given up, as also in the neighbouring places. If this be the case while I am alive, what must it be when I am gone? Give up this, and Methodism too will degenerate into a mere sect, only distinguished by some opinions and modes of worship.¹²⁸

The final line of this journal entry hints at the fact that, for Wesley, the Methodist movement was much more than just theological "opinions" and "modes of worship". This is not a unique thought in Wesley, as he expresses similar sentiments in other

¹²⁶ Heitzenrater, 'Principles,' 93.

¹²⁷ August 16, 1768 (BE) 10.361.

¹²⁸ Monday, March 15, 1784 (BE) 23.298.

places, but it is important to remember that he had higher aspirations than merely sectarian theological distinctions and unique liturgies or worship practices. His goal of holiness of heart and life was always the ultimate goal, and ‘opinions’ and ‘modes of worship’ served as tools to reach that goal.

Resonating with themes of simplicity and inclusion of the poor that we have seen throughout this chapter, Wesley established, at the very early stages of his public preaching ministry, a very distinctive and intentional communication style: ‘I design plain truth for plain people. Therefore of set purpose I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations, from all perplexed and intricate reasonings, and as far as possible from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scriptures.’¹²⁹

Further in the same document we come to the purpose of the preaching service which, in Wesley’s own words, most closely answers many of the questions of this thesis:

I have endeavoured to describe the true, the scriptural, experimental religion, so as to omit nothing which is a real part thereof, and to add nothing thereto which is not. And herein it is more especially my desire, first, to guard those who are just setting their faces toward heaven (and who, having little acquaintance with the things of God, are the more liable to be turned out of the way) from formality, from mere outside religion, which has almost driven heart-religion out of the world; and secondly, to warn those who know the religion of the heart, the faith which worketh by love, lest at any time they make void the law through faith, and so fall back into the snare of the devil.¹³⁰

It is here we see Wesley’s own desires and aspirations for the preaching service meeting with the contention of this thesis; namely, that the purpose and goal of all

¹²⁹ Sermons, Preface to Sermons on Several Occasions, 1746. (BE) 1.104. Adrian Burdon, in *The Preaching Service—The Glory of the Methodists*, tells a story about Wesley securing the assistant of ‘intelligent maid-servant’ who would listen to him read his sermons aloud. He instructed her to stop him every time he used a word or idea she did not understand. As Burdon tells the tale, ‘She shouted “Stop sir!!” so often that Wesley became impatient.’ Apparently this tactic worked though, because he soon thereafter began to hear the approval of the crowds as they began to understand his messages more clearly. See Adrian Burdon, *The Preaching Service—The Glory of the Methodists*, Alcuin/GROW Liturgical Study 17 (Grove Liturgical Study 64), 1991. 8.

¹³⁰ Sermons, *Preface to Sermons on Several Occasions*. (BE) 1.106.

worship for Wesley was to seek the religion of the heart and ‘the faith which worketh by love.’

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide insight into the ways each of these services provided opportunities by which the affections and tempers were nurtured and habituated in the lives of Wesley’s Methodists. All of these services fall into the category of prudential means of grace which means that, as Henry Knight has points out, they ‘vary from age to age, culture to culture, and person to person.’ As has been suggested, all of these services allowed Wesley’s Methodists to encounter God’s gracious Presence and become aware, on an ever-deepening level of His Identity. These encounters, through these prudential means of grace, combined to empower and enable the Methodists to see affections like humility, meekness, love, simplicity and gratitude to grow and bloom in their lives.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to examine John Wesley's liturgical theology through the lens of the affections and tempers. This study was necessary because Wesley has been claimed by Revivalists, Anglo-Catholics and many in between, all attempting to make Wesley speak on behalf of their form of worship. However, as we pointed out in the introduction to this thesis, Wesley chose a deliberate pastoral pathway which engaged both the liturgical traditions of the Church of England *and* the liturgical innovations inspired by the Moravians, Puritans and the Primitive Church. This pathway was chosen because it maximized Wesley's desire to edify the Church in a very particular way which, in his mind, led to the honouring of God.

This particular way of edification was elucidated for us at the beginning of this thesis by way of Wesley's description of worship:

In divine worship (as in all other actions) the first thing to be considered is the end, and the next thing is the means conducing to that end. The end is the honour of God, and the edification of the Church; and then God is honoured when the Church is edified. The means conducing to that end, are to have the service so administered as may inform the mind, engage the affections, and increase devotion: But that cannot be done, where the tongue it is celebrated in is not understood.¹

This thesis has sought to examine Wesley's liturgical theology by focusing on how the Church under Wesley's care was edified, particularly centring on the 'means' that Wesley prescribed – the informing of the mind, the engaging of the affections and the increasing of devotion. As we have surveyed Wesley's liturgical documents and gauged his intentions for his people as they worshipped God, we have offered evidence we believe suggests that Wesley's primary purpose in the diversity of his liturgies was to cultivate a balanced, diverse pattern of Christian affections.

¹ 'A Roman Catechism' (Jackson), 10.102.

Several questions were raised in the introduction that we have sought to answer through this thesis. It was suggested that, while Wesley sought to maintain a balance between the liturgical traditions of the Church of England and his own liturgical innovations created for the Methodist societies, no one had offered a valid reason why he had attempted this balance. The solution offered by this thesis is that Wesley's pastoral practice of 'heart religion,' and his desire to develop holy tempers in his Methodists was the reason he held these opposite poles (liturgical traditions and liturgical innovations) in tension with one another. The scriptural substance of the *BCP* offered a firm foundation from which the Methodists would have heard of the love God had for each of them. The weekly practice of the Lord's Supper, the prayers of the Church, the hymns written and sung in support of these stabilizing conveyers of grace, all played a valuable role in both embodying and enacting such affections as love, peace and gratefulness. The liturgy of the *Book of Common Prayer* as well as the *Sunday Service* were the prime mode of exercising the works of piety and informing the minds of Wesley's Methodists. Wesley also encouraged participation in liturgical innovations such as the watchnight, lovefeast, covenant and preaching services. Each of these services was designed to both manifest and engender affections such as simplicity, meekness and mercy. These services were the principle means by which devotion was increased and works of mercy were exercised among the Methodists.

We also raised the question of whether Wesley *synthesized* these two divergent strands of worship, and as we examined the material found that rather than synthesizing Wesley seemed instead to be routinely holding them in conjunctive tension. The finding of this thesis is that Wesley did not seek intentionally to weave

liturgical tradition together with liturgical innovation to create one new way of worship. Rather, he attempted to introduce new and innovative ways of experiencing God's grace while maintaining the traditional forms of worship, all while preaching 'heart religion' as the essential ingredient to both. Wesley's pastoral desire and practice was to guide his people in conjunctively living in the tension between the liturgical traditions of the Church of England and the liturgical innovations he designed for his Methodist societies.

It has been the intent of this thesis and its author that this study would provide a way of understanding worship in the Wesleyan tradition that might re-orient the Church upon the vital task of the development of Christian character. We conclude, therefore, with a prayer greatly loved by Wesley himself, the collect for purity:

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

CHILDREN.



NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE:

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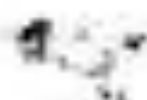
Parents and Schoolmasters.

I Have laid before you in the following Treatise, the true Principles of the Christian Education of Children. These should in all Reason be instilled into them, as soon as ever they can distinguish Good from Evil. If the Fear of our Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom, then it is certainly the very first Thing they should learn. And why may they not be taught the Knowledge of God, and the Knowledge of Letters, at the same Time?

2. A great Part of what follows is translated from the French: Only it is here cast into another Form, and divided into Sentences, that it may be the more easily understood, either by the Teacher or the Learner. And altho' the great Truths herein contained, are more immediately address'd to Children, yet are they worthy the deepest Consideration, both of the eldest and wisest of Men.

3. Let them be deeply engraven in your own Hearts, and you will spare no Pains in teaching them to others. Above all, let them not read or say one Line, without understanding and mind-

ing what they say. Try them over and over & keep them fast, almost in every Sentence. And ask them, "What was it you said last? Read" it again. What do you mean by that? So that, if it be possible, they may pass by nothing, till it has taken some Hold upon them. By this Means they will learn to think as they learn to read: They will grow wiser and better every Day. And you will have the Comfort of observing, that by the same Steps they advance in the Knowledge of these poor Filarets, they will also grow in Grace, in the Knowledge of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ.



INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

CHILDREN.

SECTION. I.

LESSON I. and II.

Of G O D.

1. **H**OW many Gods are there?
One: Who is God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Holy Ghost. These three are One.
2. What is God?
A Spirit.
3. What do you mean by a Spirit?
One that cannot be seen or felt.
4. What Sort of a Spirit is God?
One that always was and always will be.
5. Where is God?
Every where.
6. What does God know?
Every Thing.
7. What can God do?
Wherever he will.
8. Does God love you?
Yes: He loves every Thing which he has made.
9. What has God made?
Every Thing, and in particular, Man.

A 3

L 28

LESSON III. and IV.

Of the Creation and Fall of Man.

1. How did God make Man?
His Body out of Earth, his soul out of nothing.
2. Why did God make Man?
To know, love, and be happy in God for ever.
3. Where did God put the first Man and Woman?
In the Garden of Paradise.
4. What Command did he give them there?
Not to eat of the Tree in the Middle of the Garden.
5. Did they keep that Command?
No, they did eat of it.
6. What Hurt did they bring on themselves hereby?
Sin and Guilt, and Pain and Death.
7. Did their Sin hurt any beside themselves?
Yes, all Men that came from them.
8. How did it hurt them?
They are all born in Sin and Guilt, and subject to Pain and Death.
9. How are Men born in Sin?
We are all born proud, self-will'd, Lovers of the World, and not Lovers of God.

LESSON V. VI. and VII.

Of the Redemption of Men.

1. By whom are we to be saved from Sin?
By Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God.
2. What did he do to save us?
He was made Man, and lived and died and rose again.
3. What may we gain by his living and dying for us?
Forgiveness of Sin, and Holiness and Heaven.
4. When does God forgive our Sin?
When we repent and believe in Christ.
5. What do you mean by Repenting?
Being thoroughly convinced of our Sinfulness, Guilt, and Helplessness.
6. What

6. What is Believing, or Faith ?

A Conviction of those unseen Things which God has told us in the Bible.

7. What is Faith in Christ ?

A Conviction that Christ has loved us, and given himself for us ?

8. By whom is this wrought in us ?

By the Holy Ghost.

9. What is Holiness ?

The Love of God, and of all Mankind for God's sake.

10. Is he that believes and loves God saved from Sin ?

Yes, from all sinful Tempers and Words and Works.

11. How is he saved from Pride ?

He is little and mean and base and vile in his own Eyes.

12. How is he saved from Self will ?

His Heart continually says, " Lord, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

13. How is he saved from the Love of the World ?

He desires nothing but God.

14. How is he saved from sinful Words ?

His Words always spring from the Grace of God, and are fit to minister Grace to the Hearers.

15. How is he saved from sinful Works ?

By the Spirit of God which dwelleth in him; whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does, it is all to the Glory of God.

LESSON VIII. and IX.

Of the Means of Grace.

1. What is Grace ?

The Power of the Holy Ghost, enabling us to believe and love and serve God.

2. How are we to seek this ?

It is a constant and careful Use of the Means of Grace.

3. Which are the chief Means of Grace ?

The Lord's Supper, Prayer, Searching the Scriptures, and Fasting.

4. How

4. How often did the first Christians receive the Lord's Supper ?
Every Day. It was their daily Bread.
5. How often did they join in publick Prayer ?
Twice a Day, as many of them as could.
6. How often did they use private Prayer ?
Every Morning and Night, at least.
7. How did they search the Scriptures ?
They heard or read them every Day, and meditated therein Day and Night.
8. How often did the old Christians fast ?
Every *Wednesday* and *Friday* till Three in the Afternoon.
9. How long is every Christian to use all these Means of Grace ?
To his Life's End.

LESSON X. and XI.

Of Hell.

1. Where do Unbelievers go after Death ?
To Hell.
2. What sort of a Place is Hell ?
It is a dark bottomless Pit, full of Fire and Brimstone.
3. How will they spend their Time there ?
In wringing and wailing and gnashing of Teeth.
4. Will both their Souls and Bodies be tormented ?
Yes, every Part of them at once.
5. How will their Bodies be tormented ?
By lying in burning and flaming Fire.
6. How will their Souls be tormented ?
By a Sense of the Wrath of God ; by Pride, Self-love, Malice and Envy ; by Grief, Desire, Fear, Rage, and Despair.
7. Who will be their Tormentors ?
Their own Conscience, the Devils, and one another.
8. Set will they have no Rest from Torment ?
No, not for one Moment, Day or Night.
9. How long will their Torment last ?
For ever and ever,

L. E. S.

LESSON XII.

Of Heaven.

1. Where will Believers go after Death ?
To Heaven.
2. What sort of Place is Heaven ?
A Place of Light and Glory.
3. How will good Men live there ?
In Joy and Happiness, greater than they can now de-
sire or think.
4. Will they suffer anything there ?
No : They will have no War, or Pain, or Sin.
5. What sort of Bodies will they have then ?
Spiritual Bodies, swifter than Lightning, and brighter
than the Sun.
6. But wherein will their chief Happiness lie ?
In the Enjoyment of God.
7. How will they enjoy God ?
They will know, and love, and see God Face to
Face.
8. How will they spend their Time ?
In singing Praise to God.
9. How long will this Happiness last ?
As long as God lives, this is, for ever and ever.
Lord ! bring me thither. Amen.



S E C.

S E C T I O N II.

L E S S O N I.

Of GOD, and of the Soul of Man.

TAKE Care you do not dare nigh to God with
your Lips, while your Heart is far from him.
Never say any Thing to God which you do not
mean.

Do not dare to tell a Lie to God: for he sees all that
is in your Heart.

Do you know what God is ?

If you do not know God, how can you hope to please
God ?

Think on this. Mind it well. For God is here.
He needs you, if you do not mind him.

L E S S O N II.

God is an Eternal Spirit, without Beginning and
without End.

He cannot be seen, nor fully known by Man.

He is Good, and all Good comes from him.

He has Power to do whatever he will.

He is Wise, knowing all Things, and doing all Things
well.

He is Angry, and cannot want any Thing.

He sees all Things which he has made, and Man
above all.

It is his Will, that all Men should be saved, and come
to the Knowledge of his Truth.

He is Just, to give to every Man according to his
Works.

He is True, in his Promises, and in his Threatnings.

He is Merciful, forgiving the Sins of those who truly
repent and believe.

L E S S

LESSON III.

No Man hath seen God at any Time. The Son of God, who is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him unto us.

No one knoweth the Son of God, but the Father; and no one knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

All our Reading, and the Things we hear either at Church, or any where else, cannot reveal God unto us.

All the Men in the World cannot give us the least Spark of the true Knowledge of God, or of the Things of God.

Only God himself can do this, by giving us his good Spirit.

He gives his Grace and his Light to those who pray earnestly for it.

He declares himself to those who do his Will, so far as they know it already.

LESSON IV.

There is none Good, but One, that is, God.

Every Thing that is Good, comes from God alone, whether it be in Heaven or in Earth.

If there is any Thing good in any Man, it all comes from God.

Therefore He alone ought to be praised for it all.

All that we do without Him, without his Grace and his Help, is Evil.

Without God we can do nothing that is Good.

He that has not God, has nothing that is Good; and is more unhappy than any Words can tell.

L E S

LESSON V.

I know that God has Power, to keep what I commit
to him, safe unto that Day.

Our souls are now spoiled and destroyed by Sin.

No one can save us from our Sin, but God who has
all Power.

Let us commit our souls wholly to him, to do with
them what he will, and as he will.

Then he will keep us by his Power, and defend us
against every Thing that would hurt us.

He is able to deliver us from all Danger, and to keep
our souls unto that great Day.

And at that Day he will reward in Glory both our
Bodies and Souls, and all that we had committed to his
Charge.

LESSON VI.

Do you know what your soul is?

You have in you (tho' you cannot feel it) a soul that
will never die.

God made this, that he might come and dwell in it.

If God lives and dwells in your soul, then he makes
it like himself.

He makes the soul in which he dwells, Good, Wise,
Just, true, full of Love, and of Power to do well.

He makes it happy. For it is his Will, that your
soul should rejoice in him for ever. He made it for this
very Thing.

When a soul loves God, and knows and enjoys him,
then it is truly happy.

But when a soul does not love God, nor know and
enjoy him, then it is truly miserable.

S E C

(15)

SECTION III.

LESSON I.

How to regulate our Desires.

The Gate by which God with his holy Grace comes into us is the *Desire* of the Soul.

This is often called, the *Mind*, or the *Will*.

Unless our Desire be toward God, we cannot please Him.

All our Knowledge, without this, does but make us the wiser like the Devil.

The Desire is to the Soul, what the Mouth and the Stomach are to the Body.

It is by the Mouth and the Stomach that the Body receives its Nourishment, whether good or bad.

That our Body may live, we must take care to put nothing but what is good into our Mouth or Stomach.

And, that our Soul may live, we must take care to desire nothing but what is good.

LESSON II.

Desire was made for that which is Good, that is, for God, who is the only Good, and for his Will, from which every good Thing flows.

We ought to desire nothing but God, and that which is according to his holy Will.

And we ought to turn our Desire from every Thing beside :

For every Thing beside God and his Will, is evil.

Therefore no Man ought to follow his own Will.

As the Will of God is the Spring of all Good, so our own Will is the Spring of all Evil.

Take care, not to use yourself to do your own Will.

No Soul can ever be saved, unless it renounce its own Will and its own Desire.

Further, let not my Will be done, but Thine Ω .

We came into the World, not to do our own Will, but the Will of him that sent us.

If we are already accustomed to do our own Will, we must begin that Culture without Delay.

O Lord, save us from our own Will, or we perish.

LESSON III.

No one can do any Thing good of himself, without the Help of God.

All our own Desires are only evil continually.

Therefore no Man should desire to be esteemed, honoured or praised by any Man.

And no one ought to praise or esteem himself.

Rather we ought to despise ourselves :

And we ought to desire to be thought by others, what we really are, that is, poor, weak, foolish, sinful Creatures.

Thus should we find Help from God. For he rebuketh the Proud, but giveth Grace to the Humble.

They who teach Children to love Praise, train them up for the Devil.

Praise is deeply poison for the soul ; therefore never praise any one to his Face.

Do not place value in him or yourself that holds of Honour which is an Abomination to the Lord.

LESSON IV.

You are of yourself nothing but sin, and deserve nothing but Hell.

Therefore you ought to be content, tho' you should have little or nothing in the World.

And you ought not to desire any thing more than you have ; for you have now more than you deserve.

Chase therefore the world and unworldly Things ; for even these are too good for such a sinner.

To raise any other Desire in your Heart, is to prepare you for Hell-fire.

They that give you fine Cloaths, are giving your Soul to the Devil.

They that honour you, do not love you.

If your Father or Mother giving you every Thing that you like, they are the worst Enemies you have in the World.

By

By doing this, they make you Slaves to the Flesh, to Vanity and Corruption :

And to keep you as far from the Spirit of Christ, as the Devil himself can wish.

LESSON V.

God is Power, Wisdom, Goodness itself.

Therefore we should strive, to praise and honour him as he deserves, and to please him in every thing.

The End for which we are born, is to praise and honour God,

And this we may do without ceasing, by continually lifting up our Hearts to him.

This is the continual Employment of the Angels of God in Heaven.

They sing Day and Night, no Hiss that saith upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever,

Holy, Holy, Holy ! Lord God of Hosts ! Let all the Earth be full of thy Glory.

LESSON VI.

God is continually helping us, and pouring his Blessings upon us.

All Things come from him, our Soul, our Body, our Life, our Parents, our Friends, and the good Angels that guard us :

The Earth on which we stand, the Air we breathe, the Sun which shines upon us, the Food that keeps us alive, the Clouds that cover us, the Fire that warms us, are all from him.

Therefore we should thank God, for all these Things, and for every one of them.

We ought to be thankful, even to a Man, when he does us any good.

How much more ought we to be thankful to God, who made that Man, and who does us good by him ?

Thou art worthy, O Lord, our God, to receive Glory and Honour and Power :

Because thou hast created all Things, and for thy Praises they are, and were created.

It is

And

And God not only has done us all this Good, but he does us more and more Good continually.

For without his Goodness we and all the World should fall into nothing in a Moment.

We are just like a brittle Vessel, which if it were not always upheld, would fall at once and break in Pieces.

Therefore it should be our Desire to be always thanking God, because he is always blessing us.

O God, our Father, teach us to give thee Thanks, at all Times, and for all Things, through Jesus Christ!

LESSON VII.

Thus God has been helping us to this Day. And we have no less Need of his Help for the Time to come.

Above all, if we would be happy, we have Need of his Blessing upon our Souls.

These he gives to them who truly desire them, and to none else.

Therefore, let us desire of God, to give us his Grace, his good Spirit, and the Knowledge of himself.

Let us ask of him, a meek and quiet Spirit, a contrite, humble, thankful Heart.

If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all Men liberally, and it shall be given him.

Let us then take care, not to offend him, from whom we hope to receive so great Benefits.

And let us always be ready to do his Will; for if any Man honour God and do his Will, him he loveth.

LESSON VIII.

But we have often offended God already, and so are unworthy of his Grace and Blessings.

Therefore we ought with earnest Desire to ask of God to forgive our past sins, for the Sake of his Son who died for us, and to keep us from them for the Time to come.

These Desires,

1. To praise God, and his Power, Wisdom and Goodness;

2. To thank him for all his Benefits;

3. To

3. To ask his Grace, that so we may please him :
and,

4. To beg his Mercy, for the Pardon of our Sins :
are what we commonly call *Prayer*.

We never pray, but when we have really these Desires in our Heart.

If we say ever so many Words, without having these Desires, we are but like Parrots before God.

BeWARE of this : of drawing nigh unto God with your Lips, while your Heart, (that is, your Desire) is far from him.

LESSON IX.

What do you mean, when you pray to God, in the Name of Jesus Christ?

The bare saying those Words signifies nothing. It is only meeting God, if you do not know what you say.

We were all under the Wrath and under the Curse of God, when Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for us.

And for his Sake, if we truly believe in him, God is now reconciled to us.

Therefore all our Trust should be in Jesus Christ, whenever we pray to God for any Thing.

For God would not hear us at all, but for the Sake of the Blood of Christ shed for us.

Therefore we ought to pray always, with an Eye to him, looking unto Jesus.

And our Desires should all spring from his Grace, and be agreeable to his Desire.

Then he offers our Desire, as his own, to God his Father, before whose Throne he stands :

And God can refuse nothing to the Desire and the Merit of his well-beloved Son.

When therefore you pray in the Name of Jesus Christ, it is as if you should say,

" Lord, I offer thee the Desires which are wrought in me by the Grace of Jesus Christ.

I pray, that thou wilt unite them to the Desire of thy Son, and regard them as his, who is pleading for me :

And grant me what I thus desire, for his Sake, for thy own Glory and my Salvation."

LESSON X.

Pray to God in such Words as come from your Heart:
It may be, such as these:

"My God, Thou art Good. Thou art Wise. Thou
art Powerful. Be thou praised for ever!

Give me Grace, to love and obey thee.

My God, I thank thee, for making and for redeem-
ing me.

My God, I thank thee for giving me Meat and
Clothes, and for permitting to give me thy Love for ever.

My God, forgive me all my sins, and give me thy
good Spirit.

Let me believe in thee with all my Heart, and love
thee with all my Strength.

Let me be always looking unto Jesus Christ, who is
pleading for me at thy Right hand.

Give me Grace not to do my own Will but thine.

Make me content with every Thing. The best of
all the Good Things thou givest me, is far more than I
deserve.

Give me, O my Lord, a holy Heart.

Let me not think myself better than any one.

Let me despise myself, and look upon myself as the
very worst of all.

Let me hate all Pride. Thou alone, O my God, art
worthy to be praised!

LESSON XI.

The best Prayer in the World is the Prayer which our
Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us.

Our Father which art in Heaven, 1. Hallowed be thy
Name. 2. Thy Kingdom come. 3. Thy Will be done
in Earth as it is in Heaven. 4. Give us this Day our
daily Bread; and 5. Forgive us our Trespases, as we
forgive them that trespass against us. And do, Lord, not
lead us into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil. For
thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory, for
ever and ever. Amen!

Do you understand what you have said now?

How dare you fly to God, you know not what?

Do not you know, that this is no Prayer, unless you speak it from your Heart ?

God is not pleased with you saying these Words, unless there is in your Heart at the same Time a real Desire, that God should be 1. Known and esteemed, 2. Honoured and praised, 3. Obeyed by all Men :

4. That he should send your Souls with his Grace and his Love ; 5. That he should forgive you your past Sin ; and 6. That he should keep you for the Time to come, from all Sin and from all Snares of the Devil.

SECTION IV. LESSON I.

How to regulate our Understanding.

Our Understanding was made for Truth, that is, for God himself, for his Word and his Works.

Therefore we should not desire to know any Thing but God, and what he has spoken and done for his own Glory.

Accordingly, Lying is the most abominable of all Things. The Devil is a Liar and the Father of it.

We should not desire to know, what Men say and do. It is Folly and Vanity.

Curiosity is good for nothing.

It fills our Mind with Darkness ; and makes us forgetful and void for the Light of God.

What a Loss is this, to fill those Vessels with Filth and Dirt, which were made to receive the pure Light of God !

LESSON II.

That Eye of the Understanding, which should see God, is quite shut in all Men since the Fall.

We are born quite blind to God and the Things of God.

And it is God alone who can open the Eyes of our Soul, to see and know spiritual Things.

We could not see or know the Sun, the Earth, or any other of the Things of this World, if God had not given us bodily Eyes.

And

And we can never know the Things of God, if God do not reveal the spiritual Eyes of our Soul.

This he does for those and those only, who flee from Evil, and learn to do Good.

Give me Understanding, O Lord, and I will keep thy Law: Yea I will keep it with my whole Heart.

Open thou mine Eyes, that I may see the wondrous Things of thy Law.

Till God opens our Eyes, to see the Things above, we shall believe what God has told us, tho' we see it not.

But we must not believe what the World tells us about the Things of God; for all Men who have not his Spirit, are blind and lame.

We must trust in God, as to those Things which as yet we cannot comprehend:

And wait and desire, that he would open the Eyes of our Understanding, and give us his Light, that we may see all Things clearly.

LESSON III.

A blind Man, tho' he could reason ever so well, yet could not by this Means, either know or see the Things of the World.

And with all his Reason he could have only very dark, gross, and false Conceptions of them.

In like Manner, tho' all the Men in the World should reason with all their Might concerning them; yet could they not by this Means know either God or the Things of God.

Nay, with all their Reason, they could only have dark, foolish, false Conceptions of them.

Before God can be known, he must give other Eyes to the Soul, and other Light than a Man can give.

We may paint the Sun or Moon in a Picture; but this painted Sun cannot warm, or give us Light:

And those painted Moons cannot nourish us, nor give us any Strength.

Just so we may draw Pictures, as it were, in our Minds, of God and of the Things of God.

But these Pictures can give us no true Light: Nor, tho' we draw them, can they nourish our Souls, or give us any Strength to serve God.

They

They are only dead shadows, cold and empty, barren and unfruitful.

We can build nothing upon them but the Wind, which serves only to puff Men up, and to drive each against the other in cruel Disputes, till they burst of themselves, or dash in Pieces one against another.

LESSON IV.

Our Understanding or Reason, without the Grace and Experimental Light of God, is like a blind Man, who draws wild, random Pictures of Things he never saw, nor can see.

The Natural Man discerneth not the Things of the Spirit of God.

They are Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned.

No man knoweth the Things of God but the Spirit of God: and he is whom God revealeth them by his Spirit.

Offer therefore your Understanding to God with a sincere Desire to do his Will only.

And pray him earnestly, to give you his light, and to open the Eyes of your Soul.

LESSON V.

Endeavour to see God in all Things, and to give a Reason for every Thing, from the Perfections of God.

For Example. Why was the World made? To show the Goodness, and Wisdom, and Power of God.

Why do Men die? Through the Justice of God.

Men having abused the Life he gave, it was just to take it away.

Why is it our Duty to obey our Parents? Because it is the Will of God.

Why ought we not to return Evil for Evil? Because God would have us do like him: who is continually doing good to us, even when we ourselves do evil.

Why may we not despise or judge of our Neighbour? Because God is the Judge of all.

Thus we should continually ourselves to have God always before our Eyes, and to walk continually in his Presence.

Thus

Thus every Thing may shew us the Power, Wisdom
or Goodness, the Truth, Justice or Will of God.

And in every Thing may shew us, the Weakness, Ignorance, Folly and Wickedness of Man.

LESSON VI.

What do you believe of God ?

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of
Heaven and Earth :

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord :

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the
Virgin Mary :

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead
and buried : he descended into Hell :

The third Day he rose again from the Dead.

He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the Right-
hand of God the Father Almighty :

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the
Dead :

I believe in the Holy Ghost,

The Holy Catholic Church,

The Communion of Saints,

The Forgiveness of Sins,

The Resurrection of the Body, and the Life ever-
lasting.

You may learn from these Words, 1. To believe in
God, the Father, who is Powerful, and Wise and
Good : who made you and all Things, Visible and In-
visible, Temporal and Eternal.

You may learn, 2. To believe in God the Son, who
Died and died to redeem you and all Mankind :

And 3. To believe in God the Holy Ghost, who re-
stores fallen Man to the Image of God in which he was
made.

LESSON VII.

All which comes to this. Almighty God, the Maker
of all Things, made Man to this Intent, that desiring
God alone, God might fill him with his Knowledge,
with his Love and Joy and Glory for ever.

But Man cannot sin Deeds from God and his Will,
and so became both guilty, wicked and miserable.

The

The Son of God was made Man, lived and died and rose again, to buy Forgiveness for us, and to show us how we ought to renounce our own Will and Desire, and to give ourselves up to the holy Will of God.

Thus the Holy Ghost works in us, enlightening our Understanding, and filling our souls with a divine Peace and Joy.

Hereby we are joined again with all that is holy, either in Earth or Heaven.

We rejoice together with them in the common Salvation, in the Blessings and Graces of Jesus Christ.

And after the Body is dead and risen again, we shall live together in eternal Glory.

LESSON VIII.

We cannot now comprehend, how these three are one, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

But tho' we do not comprehend it, yet we believe it, because God has said it.

The true Knowledge of all the Things of God is wrought in our Souls by his Holy Spirit.

This is a Saving Knowledge, when it works by Love, and desires us to imitate God.

So we are taught by St. Paul, Be ye Followers of God, as dear Children, and walk in Love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us.

For every one that loveth (saith St. John) is born of God, and knoweth God.

But he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is Love.

So likewise, if any Man say, he knows Jesus Christ, and keepeth not his Commandments, he is a Liar, and the Truth is not in him.

We then truly know God the Father, the Maker of all Things, when we love him with absolute Reverence:

When we confidently give ourselves up into his Hands, and rely on his Providence:

And when we imitate his Goodness in all Things, and toward all Men.

We then truly know God the Redeemer, when we see as those whom he has bought with his Blood:

And

And when all our Tempers, and Words and Actions show, that he has redeemed us from the power and World.

We truly know God the Father, when we are holy as he is holy.

When he hath purified both our Hearts and Lives by Faith, so that we continually see and love God.

S E C T I O N V.

L E S S O N I.

How to regulate our Joy.

Men are poor, ignorant, foolish Sinners, that will surely rot in the Earth.

And all that is in the World is perishable and vain, and will soon be destroyed by Fire.

Therefore we ought by no means to place our Joy and Delight on any of these Things.

Neither ought we to rejoice or delight in pleasing Men, who will quickly turn to Dust :

Nor in being handsome, or well clothed, or well provided with all Things : For all this will perish forever.

God alone is Great, Good, and the Governor of all good Things.

Therefore we ought to rejoice and delight in him alone, and in the fulfilling of his good and holy Will.

And we should now strengthen ourselves to this : to rejoice and delight in God and his holy Will.

L E S S O N II.

For Example. We should rejoice, that we have for our true Father, an Eternal and Almighty God :

We should rejoice, that this God has made us, so fill us with divine and eternal Joy :

That is, if we will believe in Jesus, and do his holy Will :

If we will love and obey him, and not love either the Honours, Riches or Pleasures that pass away like a Dream.

And this we may do, by the Power of his Grace, by the Holy Ghost which he is ready to give unto us.

WE

We should rejoice, that God is happy and glorious in himself, that he is greater than we can think :

That he knows every thing, and can do every thing :

That he is just and good ; that he is true in all his Promises ; and wise to teach and govern us well.

We should rejoice, that God alone deserves to be desired, known, loved, praised and glorified for ever.

We should rejoice that the Son of God took our Nature upon him, in order to take us with him to Heaven for ever :

And that even now, he will come and dwell in our Heart, if we desire it, and believe in him and do his Will.

LESSON III.

When any thing is done according to the Will of God, we ought to rejoice in it.

But when any thing is done according to our own Will, we ought not to rejoice, but to be sorry for it.

Therefore we ought to be greatly troubled and deeply sorry, for the Sin committed against God, whether by ourselves or others :

For in doing we follow our own Will, and despise the holy Will of God.

Likewise, when any one grieves us, if we were wise, we should be ashamed and sorry ; and should say,

O Lord, thou art good, and thou alone. These alone are worthy to be praised.

O Lord, it is a shameful Thing for a poor Creature to take to itself, the Honour and Praise which belong to thee only.

On the contrary, when we are despised or ill used, or when we have not Things as we would have, we should rejoice :

We should take all as from the Hand of God, and be well content, saying unto him :

O Lord, I deserve nothing but Pain and Contempt : I rejoice that thy Justice gives me what I deserve.

I desire to thank thee for it with all my Heart, and to rejoice that thy holy Will is done upon me.

It is thy Will, that we should be like Christ; and he was despised and hated of Men.

He lived in Contempt, and Want, and Pain. O let me rejoice to tread in his Steps.

Let me be crucified, let me rejoice to suffer with him, that I may reign with him.

LESSON IV.

One that is sick, if he is wise, will rejoice to take a good Medicine, be it ever so bitter.

Especially if he knows it is given him by a wise Physician, and that it will restore his bodily Health.

In like manner, if we are wise, we shall rejoice to take what God sends us, be it ever so bitter.

For we are sure, it is given us by the wise Physician of our Souls, in order to restore them to Health and Life everlasting. On the contrary,

It would be Folly and Madness in a sick Man, to rejoice in taking the Things that pleased his Taste, tho' they would kill him.

And the same Folly and Madness it is in us, to rejoice in taking the Things that please our corrupt Will.

Because the End of these Things is Death, even the destroying both Body and Soul in Hell.

LESSON V.

When you are glad of any Thing that is given you, be sure to remember, that all this comes from God.

Therefore thank him for it, and thank in yourself, God has a thousand and a thousand Times more than this, to give us them that love and obey him.

And he needs to leave all these little Things, whenever it is his Will.

If any one says to you, See what a pretty Thing here is, or, Look, here is a fine Thing for you, they are Fools, and know not what they do.

This

This is the Way, to make you free of such foolish Things. But if you love these, you cannot love God.

If any one ever said to you, "Did it hurt you? Give me a Blow for it." They were then teaching you to love the Devil.

For one who teaches you to revenge yourself, and to revenge ourselves is forcing the Devil.

If any one said to you, when you did any thing, "It was not my Child, was it? Say it was me."

Then they were leading you the Way to Hell: For all Leads go to Hell.

And whoever they see that teach their Children Lying, Pride, or Revenge, they offer their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils.

LESSON VI.

Above all, beware of the Love of Money: For it is the Root of all Evil.

Money is now the God of this World. The Aim of Man is to get and keep this. And herein they place their Welfare and Joy.

This is an Idolatry no less damnable, than that of the Heathen World.

There would be love or rather no Use for Money, if Love governed the World.

And even now, Money is good for nothing, but as it is a Means of procuring among Men of the World, the things needed to sustain Life.

Neither ought we to desire it any further, than as it is needed for this End.

God to whom it belongs (as do all Things) will require us to give a strict Account of it.

His Will is, that when we have used what is needful of it for ourselves, we should give all the rest to the Poor, and for his Glory.

Do not use yourself therefore to lay it up, but give what you can spare to the Poor.

Or else buy a little Meat or Cloaths for them, or some good Book for their Instruction.

C 4

And

And rejoice when you use your Money thus : because this is for the Glory of God.

I. E S S O N V I L

Joy was made for God. Therefore we are taught to be joyful, to rejoice in the Lord always.

We should look upon God and his Grace as a great Treasure ; and thence we may learn, how to rejoice in him.

When we possess a vast Treasure, so that we cannot possibly lose it, then our Joy is perfect.

Such will be the Joy of the Saints in Heaven, because then they cannot possibly lose this Treasure any more.

But when we possess a vast Treasure in such a manner that we may lose it every Moment, it is plain that our Joy therein should be tempered with a very serious Fear.

And so it is with us. We may lose the Grace of God, yet every Moment, by divers Ways.

We may lose it by our own wilful Sin, by our Negligence, or by our Presumption.

To this we are tempted continually, by an infinite Number of malicious and subtle Enemies.

These surround us at all Times and in all Places, and they never rest Day or Night.

Day and Night the Devil goeth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Therefore blessed is the Man that fears always.

And accordingly the same Apostle who teaches us to rejoice in the Lord always ;

Teaches us at the same time, to work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.

And so St. Peter, speaking to those who rejoice in Christ, with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory ;

Advises them to remember him, who would judge them according to their Works, and to pass the Time of their Sojourning in Fear.

LESSON VIII.

If we have lost this great Treasure by our own Fault,
we have nothing in its Place but Torment and Misery.

But God has promised, to give it to us again, if we
are thoroughly sensible of our Loss :

If we repent, bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance,
and truly believe in Jesus Christ.

So there is room for us still to rejoice in Hope : yet
with a lively Sense of our past Sin, and present Mi-
sery.

For to such store is the Promise made : Thus saith
the Lord, To this Man will I look : even to him that
is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and that trembleth
at my Word.

And our Lord says, Blessed are they that mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

A broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt
not despise.

LESSON IX.

Even Religious Joy, if it be not thus mix'd with Fear,
will soon be a mere Nest of Self-love.

It will cover the greatness of our Corruption, and so
hinders us from seeking to be cured of it.

It will make us carnally profane, that we have the
Treasure of Grace, while indeed we are far from it.

So the Church of Laodicea said, I am rich and in-
creased in Goods, and have Need of nothing.

But Christ answered, Thou knowest not that thou
art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and
naked.

And it is so such that he says, We unto you that
are rich, for ye have received your Comforters.

We weep you that are full : for ye shall hunger.

We unto you that laugh now : for ye shall mourn
and weep.

These are they to whom he. Jesus says, Be afflicted,
and mourn and weep.

Let your Laughter be turned to Mourning, and your Joy to Humiliation.

Blessed is the Man that feareth the Lord: for the Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom.

Therefore, learn to fear the Lord in Fear, and to rejoice in him with Rejoicing.

SECTION IV.

LESSON I.

How to regulate our Practice.

Our Body and our Life belong to God. Therefore we ought to dispose of them according to his Will, not according to our own.

Our own Will naturally inclines to our own Profit, our own Honour, and our own Pleasure. And thus it brings in us the deadly Vices of Covetousness, Pride and Sensuality.

These hinder the Workings of God in us, and the Salvation of our Souls.

Therefore we ought to crucify ourselves, with God's Help, to deny ourselves in all things :

We should crucify ourselves to do all we do in a Spirit of Charity, and for the Good of others :

In a Spirit of Humility, without any Design or Desire of being esteemed :

And in a Spirit of Penitence, without any Regard to our own Pleasure either of Body or Mind.

In all Things we should aim at being made conformable to our crucified Saviour.

This is the true Spirit of the Christian Life and Practice. This is true Christianity.

But it is wholly opposite to the Spirit of the World, and of corrupt Nature :

By which, sinners see themselves as he is fully drawn into Hell, and drop sliding into everlasting Perdition.

LESSON II.

It is the Will of God, that we should do nothing but to please him.

It is his Pleasure, to be glorified by our Salvation.

His Glory should be our supreme, absolute, and universal End.

The Glory of God is advanced in this Life, when we give ourselves up to Jesus Christ.

Then his Power works through us many holy Actions; for which he alone is to be honoured and praised.

Without me, saith our Lord, ye can do nothing. But he that abideth in me bringeth forth much Fruit.

Hence is my Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit.

This is to be understood of all Sorts of Actions and Things; for every Thing we do, is to be done to the Glory of God.

And nothing can be done well but in the Name, that is, in the Strength and through the Mediation of Jesus Christ.

Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.

Whosoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

LESSON III.

So, for Example, you eat and drink to the Glory of God, and in the Name of Jesus Christ, when we are enabled by him to do it, on a right Principle and in a right Manner, so as to say to him from the Heart.

Suffer me eat, O Lord, to eat and drink, like a brute Beast, only by a brutal Appetite:

Much less do thou suffer me to follow herein the Motions of my corrupt Nature.

But grant me, through the Spirit of thy Son, to eat and drink so much as is needful to support my Life.

And let me spend that Life wholly in blessing thee, and in loving and obeying thee.

So

So likewise you speak to the Glory of God, and in the Name of Jesus Christ, when by his strength you say nothing but what is guided by him, and directed according to his Will :

When you speak nothing but what is needful and proper to give Men good Thoughts, and turn them from such as are wicked and vain.

And thus, in all Things, let this be your single Aim, That God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

LESSON IV.

What are the Ten Commandments of God ?

1. Thou shalt have none other Gods but me.

2. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image, nor the Likeness of any Thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Water under the Earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them : for I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the Sin of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me ; and show Mercy unto Thousands of them that love me and keep my Commandments.

3. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain : for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.

4. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day. Six Days shalt thou labour and do all that thou hast to do ; but the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God : In it thou shalt do no manner of Work, thou and thy Son and thy Daughter, thy Man-servant and thy Maid-servant, thy Cattle and the Stranger which is within thy Gates. For in six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea and all that is therein, and rested the Seventh Day : therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day and hallowed it.

5. Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy Days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou

6. Thou shalt do no Murder.

7. Thou shalt not commit Adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's House, thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's Wife, nor his Servant, nor his Maid, nor his Ox, nor his Ass, nor any thing that is his.

LESSON V.

Consider. The Law of God is a spiritual Law. Therefore all these Commandments are to be spiritually understood.

The first Commandment means, Thou shalt not think, believe, or own any Thing to be God but me.

Thou shalt not fear any Thing but me.

Thou shalt not seek after Witches or Wizards, or practise any such Abomination.

Thou shalt not put thy Trust in any Creature.

Thou shalt not love any thing but me, or for my sake.

God likewise teaches commands thee, to believe in him, and to acknowledge him in all thy Ways.

He commands thee, to thank him for all thou hast, and to make him thy only Fear and thy only Loved One.

To be in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long, and to trust in him with all thy Heart:

To desire him alone, to rejoice in him always, and to love him with all thy Heart and with all thy Soul.

The second Commandment teaches us, not to fancy that God is like the Thoughts or Imaginations of our dark Reason:

It teaches us also, not to worship or bow to any Image or Picture, but to glorify God both with our Bodies and with our Spirits.

LESSON VI.

If we will keep the third Commandment,
We must never swear falsely ; and if we have sworn
to do any thing, we must surely do it.

We must never use the Name of God at all, but
with Reverence and godly Fear.

We must not value ourselves upon his Name, his
Covenant, or the Knowledge of him, in vain :

That is, without producing thereby, without bring-
ing forth suitable Fruits.

We must not cover over our own Will, or Passions,
or Designs, with the holy Name of God, or his Truth,
or his Glory.

By the fourth Commandment you are taught, to
do no worldly Business on the Lord's Day :

But to spend it wholly in Prayer, Praise, hearing or
reading the Word of God, and other Works of Piety
and Charity.

The fifth Commandment teaches you these Things.

Show all Loyalty and Reverence to your Father
and Mother, and do whatever either of them bids
you.

If need be, relieve them, and never let them want
any thing you can help them to.

Honour the Ministers who are over you in the Lord
very highly in love for their Work-like.

Obeys them, and submit yourselves to them ; for
they watch over your Souls.

Honour the King. Obeys Magistrates. Pray for
Kings, and all that are in Authority.

If you have a Master or Mistress, be obedient to
them in Singleness of Heart, as unto Christ.

LESSON VII.

The Sixth Commandment forbids not only the Kill-
ing or Hurting any one, but all Anger, Hatred, Ma-
lition or Revenge :

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It forbids all provoking Words, all Bitter and Contentious ; all Gluttony and Drunkenness.

The Seventh Commandment forbids, not only all outward Uncleaness, but even the Looking on a Woman to lust after her.

It forbids also the using any Thing, merely to please ourselves. For this is a Kind of spiritual Fornication.

The Eighth Command forbids not only the taking from another what is his, either openly or secretly :

But likewise the stealing from God (so when they all belong) either our Affections, or our Time, or our Goods, or our Labour, by employing any of them any otherwise than for him.

The Ninth Commandment requires us, to put away all lying, and to speak the Truth from our Heart.

It requires us, to speak Evil of no Man, but to put away all back-biting and Tale bearing.

It requires us also, to judge no Man, that we be not judged, but to leave every one to God, the Judge of all.

The Tenth Commandment requires us to be content with what we have, and to desire nothing more.

LESSON VIII.

These are those Laws of God, so wonderful and holy, of which David speaks so often with such Love and Admiration.

These all the Scriptures recommend as the Spring of Life, the Light of the Heart, the Treasure of Souls : Yea, our Lord calls them Life everlasting, John xii. 50.

These the Holy Spirit has promised to write in the Hearts of those that truly believe in Jesus.

They may all be sum'm'd up in these.

1. To love God ; 2. To love Jesus Christ himself, his Cause and his Trinitarians, his Reproach, the Fellowship of his Sufferings, and the being made conformable to his Death.

3. To love our Neighbour.

Our Heart therefore should always be full of Reverence for them. The Love of them should be fix'd in the very Marrow of our Souls.

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We should labour after this, by earnest Prayer, by reading, and by meditating on these deep Words :

The Law of the Lord is an unrolled Law (the Law of Love) converting the Soul : The Testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth Wisdom unto the Simple.

The Statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the Heart ; the Commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth Light unto the Eyes.

The Fear of the Lord is clean and endureth for ever ; the Judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than Gold : yea, than much for Gold : sweeter also than Honey and the Honey-comb.

Moreover, by them is thy servant taught, and in keeping of them there is great Reward.

LESSON IX.

In a Word : With regard to God, always live and act, as being in the Presence of God.

Remember, he is continually looking upon you :

And he will bring into Judgement, all that you have done, said, or thought, whether it be good or evil.

For all which you will be either rewarded or punished everlastingly.

Never fail to pray to God, Morning and Evening, as well as before and after you eat or drink.

Often lift up your Heart to God at other Times, particularly before any Work or Business.

Desire his Blessing and Help ; and afterwards give him Thanks, and ascribe it up to God and his Glory.

Hear the Truths of God with Attention and Reverence, whether at home or at Church.

But do not think you have served God, barely because you have heard them, or have got them by Heart.

Pray to God to give you a true Understanding of them, and to revive them by the Working of his Spirit.

Pray him to give you an humble, submissive, simple and obedient Heart.

As to your Father and Mother, and Superiors,

Pray

Pray to God for them, love and reverence them, obey them without murmuring, even in those Things which do not please you, unless they are plainly Sin.

Do nothing without their Knowledge, or without their Leave.

LESSON X.

With regard to your Neighbours, and your Companions,

Pray to God for them also; wish them well as you do to yourself; and do to them as you would have them do to you.

Think every one better than yourself.

Live in Peace with them, help them; if they have done you Wrong, forgive them, and pray heartily to God for them.

With regard to yourself,

Pray to God that you may always think aright of yourself.

Eat nothing between Meals.

At your Meals eat moderately, of whatever is given you, whether you like it or not.

Desire nothing fine. Do not desire Abundance of any Thing. Be content with a little.

Employ your Time as you are directed. Never be doing nothing. Idleness invites the Devil to tempt you.

Whatever you do, do it as well as you can.

Do not dispute, do not contradict any one, do not talk unless there be a Necessity.

Do not seek to excuse yourself when you have done wrong, but be always ready to confess your Fault, both to God and Man.

For God will not forgive your Sin, so long as you strive to excuse it.

LESSON XI.

If you do any Thing well, thank God for it, and say, I praise thee, O Lord, for giving me Grace to do this. Without thee I can do nothing but Evil.

And take Care not to vaunt yourself upon it. If you do, it destroys your Soul.

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When you do wrong, without knowing it, perhaps it may be excused: Especially if you are glad to be taught better.

But whatever Fault you commit wilfully, knowing it to be a Fault, that cannot be excused.

So you must always be punished for lying, for calling Names, for Disobedience, or for striking any one.

For you know, this is a Sin against God: And you must be punished for it, out of Love to you, and for your Good.

You deserve Punishment, both in the Sight of God and Man.

If this Fault was not punished now, it would grow upon you, and carry you to Hell.

To prevent this, it is good to let you suffer a Punishment now, a hundred thousand Million of Times less than that.

If you do this again, you must be punished again; but pray to God that you may do it no more.

That foolish Love which would spare you now, would be indeed the most cruel Hatred.

LESSON XII.

Some may think the Rules before laid down to be either impossible or ridiculous.

They would not appear impossible to us, but because we have not been accustomed to them.

If we had, we should find, by the Grace of God, that nothing can be easier.

Neither can any think them ridiculous, unless it be those to whom the Cross of Christ is Foolishness.

They are indeed ridiculous to the World, because the World is an Enemy to God.

But the Wisdom of the World is Foolishness with God, as the Wisdom of God is Foolishness to the World.

Therefore the Apostle saith, Know ye not, that the Friendship of the World is Enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a Friend of the World, is the Enemy of God.

Be not conformable then to this perfect World.
And love not the World, nor the Things of the World.
If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father
is not in him.

How unhappy therefore are they, who bring up their
Children according to the Rules of the World?

They who train them up, as it is called, to make
their Fortunes in the World, to be great, rich, and
honoured in the World!

That is indeed, to perish with the World, to be turn'd
into Hell, with all that forget God.

They will be reproached and cursed to all Eternity,
by those whom they thus trained up for the Devil, toge-
ther with whom they will have their Lot in everlasting
Burnings.

But happy are those, who despising the Rules of the
diabolical and antichristian World,

Train up the precious Souls of their Children, wholly
by the Rules of Jesus Christ.

They shall be blessed by them for ever in Heaven,
and shall together praise God to all Eternity.

F I N I S.

