

APPALACHIAN LOCAL PASTORS SCHOOL
September 30-October 1 and October 21-22, 2016
Fall Madisonville, Kentucky

COS 122 — THEOLOGICAL HERITAGE I: INTRODUCTION

Instructor: Dr. Charles W. Brockwell, Jr.

COURSE PURPOSE

Theological Heritage I (THI) addresses the primary concern of the first Methodist Conference (1744) — What to Teach — for those called to be pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11) in The United Methodist Church today. THI helps local pastors to joyfully and confidently internalize that they are teachers of the things of God — they are theologians. Our course does this by first identifying the constitutive themes of classical Christian teaching found in scripture and tradition, and prayerfully thought about and experienced in the church. Then THI relates these themes to the theological structure, daily practices, and faith journey (*ordo, via, iter salutis*) of the gospel of grace (Acts 20:24) in the Wesleyan/United Methodist (W/UM) heritage.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Local pastors joyfully and confidently embracing the privilege and responsibility of being theologians.
2. Gaining an overview of the scriptural and historic core issues in the churches' systematic thinking (*logia*) about God (*theos*).
3. Affirming how the United Methodist theological enterprise treats the interaction of Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and Reason to establish doctrine and D/discipline for our Church.
4. Grasping how the systemic structure (*gestalt*) of the Wesleyan/United Methodist gospel of grace (Acts 20:24) depicts the relationship between our Triune God and humankind, both as individuals and as persons in community (*ordo salutis*).
5. Presenting Methodism as a distinctive expression of Christian discipleship — a disciplined economy of the means of grace, a way of life (*via salutis*).
6. Making theology an immediate and treasured resource for pastoral ministry — Wesleyan/United Methodist "practical divinity" (*iter salutis*).

CORE READINGS
BRING THESE BOOKS TO CLASS

Gonzales, Justo L. & Zaida Moldonado Perez. *An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002).

Campbell, Ted A. *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, rev. ed. 2011).

Outler, Albert C. & Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds. *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991). Also two sermons not in this anthology and available from <http://gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons>. "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount – VII" [Fasting] and "On Visiting the Sick."

REFERENCE BOOKS

You will want to have these works wherever you keep books you use regularly as a pastor. We will refer to them often in class. Notice how they are coordinated with our class sessions. Bring to class the ones you will need for those periods. **THEY ARE CRUCIAL TO SUCCESS WITH YOUR COURSE PAPER.**

- *The Wesley Study Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009).
- *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2012* (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2012).
- Felton, Gayle Carlton. *By Water and the Spirit: Making Connections for Identity and Ministry* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1997) ISBN 0881772011
- *This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2005) ISBN 088177457X
- *The United Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1989) ISBN 0687431328 (blue; last numeral of the ISBN varies by color of binding). If your church doesn't use our hymnal, bring 2 copies of what you do use, one for yourself and one for me to have during the course. In any case, bring the UMH.
- Wesley, John. *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*. The paperback in the Classic Reprint Series is economical; order from Amazon.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTARY SOURCES

Collins, Ken. *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007).

Gunter, W. Stepher et al. *Wesley and the Quadrilateral: Renewing the Conversation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997).

Knight, Henry H. III. *The Presence of God in the Christian Life: John Wesley and the Means of Grace* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1992).

Maddox, Randy. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994).

Runyon, Theodore. *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998).

OUR SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND RELATED READING

I. ACCOUNTING FOR THE HOPE THAT IS IN US (I PETER 3:15).

Read the whole of Gonzalez/Perez, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*.

Peter is saying to everyone in the church, “Be ready with our theology, you’ll need it.”

As you read Gonzalez/Perez make notes on these themes: what theology is -- who the Lord our God is -- creation -- the human flaw -- Christology & soteriology, especially at-one-ment -- theodicy -- ecclesiology -- eschatology. How is personal theology different from the Church’s doctrine? Any word(s) you don’t understand? Google it/them. Ask in class.

II. OUR DOCTRINAL HERITAGE

Discipline, Part III, pp.43-78. *United Methodist Hymnal*, 880-889.

What we share ecumenically with the rest of the one holy catholic and apostolic church. Distinctive Wesleyan/United Methodist emphases within this heritage. Doctrinal standards in American United Methodism. Ecumenical creeds and particular confessional affirmations.

III. HOW UNITED METHODISTS READ THE BIBLE

Campbell, pp.9-33 & 113-128; Gonzalez/Perez, pp.7-31; *Discipline*, Part III, pp.78-89.

Sermon “Catholic Spirit.”

United Methodist Hymnal 594; 595; 603.

Make ample notes on *Discipline* ¶105 – Section 4—Our Theological Task, pp.78-89.

The Bible, primary but not singular; not inerrant nor infallible, but absolutely indispensable. Taking the Bible seriously because we do not take it literally. Being theologically biblical rather than biblicist.

IV. THE LORD OUR GOD’S WILL TO SAVE

Campbell, pp. 35-51; Gonzalez/Perez, pp. 33-54 & 77-95

5 Sermons “Free Grace,” “The Lord Our Righteousness,”

“God’s Love to Fallen Man,” “The New Creation,” “The Wedding Garment.”

United Methodist Hymnal 240; 287; 302; 312; 355; 372; 384; 385

Now we are ready to learn how the doctrines we identified in section I are interpreted in the Wesleyan/United Methodist handling & handing on of them (the W/UM tradition).

Made for good by the Lord our Parent of Love. The human flaw. Evil in a good creation. Chosen for service with the Lord our God in the mission of at-one-ment and beloved community. Grace abounding for all through Christ our Lord. Life in the Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. Thus we are new creatures in Christ Jesus, called to ministry which God has prepared for us to do (Ephesians 2:8-10). We will see how Wesleyan/United Methodist doctrine differs radically from the TULIP theology of today’s so called neo-Calvinism.

V. CREATED IN AND BORN AGAIN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Campbell, pp.52-71; Gonzalez/Perez, pp.55-76 & pp.83-90

9 Sermons “The Image of God,” “Original Sin,” “The New Birth,” “Salvation by Faith,” “Justification by Faith,” “The One Thing Needful,” “The Way to the Kingdom,” “The Great Privilege of Those That Are Born of God,” “The End of Christ’s Coming.”

United Methodist Hymnal 57-59; 332; 342; 363

Here we learn John Wesley’s anthropology, his understanding of both original and current human nature, and how for him personal salvation is re-creation in, new birth in the image of God.

We will also lift up the various theologies of at-one-ment.

VI. HOLINESS OF HEART AND LIFE

Campbell, pp. 90-94; Gonzalez/Perez, pp. 139-158; *Discipline*, Part V, pp. 103-142.

14 Sermons “The Circumcision of the Heart” “Christian Perfection”

“The Witness of the Spirit — I,” “The Witness of the Spirit — II,”

“The Marks of the New Birth,” “Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount — IV” [Salt & Light], “Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount — VIII” [Treasures],

“The Use of Money,” “On Sin in Believers,” “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” “The Repentance of Believers,” “The Good Steward,” “The Danger of Riches,” “The More Excellent Way.”

United Methodist Hymnal 193; 388; 413; 417; 422; 438; 501; 513; 607

In units VI and VII we come to methodism proper. Prof. Joel Green intentionally uses the lower case spelling to distinguish this Christian way of life from institutions that bear the name but may or may not be what John Wesley meant by “the work of God called Methodism.” Holiness/happiness of heart and life, love of God and love of people could be Wesley’s one sentence summary of Christian being and acting. Everything to this point in THI has been foundational. Now we come what it is to follow Christ as a Methodist. We have learned about the Wesleyan/United Methodist systemic theology of the *ordo salutis*. Here we enter upon the way, the method, the *via salutis* and the personal experience, the *iter salutis*. We enter into the joy of the Lord – NOW (Matthew 25:21).

Altogether in units IV – VI we have learned the Wesleyan/United Methodist systemic gospel of the manifold/varied grace of God (I Peter 4:10) – creating; keepin’ on keepin’ on (prevenient); justifying/pardoning/accepting; sanctifying.

VII. WHERE THE LORD OUR GOD HAS PROMISED TO MEET US

Campbell, pp. 72-89 & 95-112; Gonzalez/Perez, pp. 97-137; *By Water and the Spirit; This Holy Mystery*.

6 Sermons “The Means of Grace,” “Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount — VI” [Prayer],

“On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” “The Duty of Constant Communion,” “Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount — VII” [Fasting], “On Visiting the Sick.”

United Methodist Hymnal 606; 613; 616&339; 627; 635; 699; 715

Methodism as a way, a *via salutis*, is a disciplined economy of those means of grace which, when lived in faithfully, lead to the experience of wholeness (salvation) in the Lord our God, the *iter salutis*. In Wesleyan/United Methodist living we identify seven fundamental means of grace: Prayer (private and communal); Scripture (private and communal); Holy Baptism (performed once, renewed periodically, remembered daily); Holy Eucharist; Fasting; Christian Conference; Ministry of Justice and Loving Kindness.

PAPER – THE PRACTICAL DIVINITY OF A UNITED METHODIST PASTOR AND TEACHER

Your Theological Heritage I course grade will be based on your understanding of Wesleyan/United Methodist theology as expressed in a theological statement of a maximum of 40 pages outlined as follows:

BEING A UNITED METHODIST PASTOR AND TEACHER

Use the readings from unit I.

When as a pastor are you also teaching? When as a teacher are you also being a pastor?

HOW UNITED METHODISTS READ THE BIBLE

Use the readings from unit III.

This is primarily about the Wesleyan/United Methodist theological quadrilateral.

FROM CREATION TO FULL SALVATION: THE GOSPEL OF GRACE

Use the readings from units IV – VI.

This is about creating, prevenient, justifying and sanctifying grace.

A DISCIPLINED ECONOMY OF THE MEANS OF GRACE

Use the readings from units VI and VII.

Include Prayer – Scripture – Baptism – Holy Eucharist – Fasting – Christian Conference – Ministry of Justice – Ministry of Loving Kindness.

In addition, you may wish to use resources from the Recommended Supplementary Readings and from your own research.

Course grades will be letter grades on the plus/minus scale. Each section of your paper will be evaluated independently and the final grade will be the composite average. Thus there are four grading units, not just one make or break opportunity. Within the 40 page maximum you will chose how much to write on each topic.

There are no other exams in our course.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE THEOLOGICAL PAPER

You are expected to demonstrate your grasp of the Wesleyan/United Methodist theological heritage. **DO NOT JUST WRITE WHAT YOU THINK AND BELIEVE!!** READ the assignments. **MAKE ORGANIZED NOTES** using the explanatory paragraphs to help you outline each section of the paper. There will be time in class to question, probe, disagree. **THE PURPOSE OF HTI IS FOR YOU TO SHOW THAT YOU GET IT ABOUT WESLEYAN/UNITED METHODIST THEOLOGY AND DOCTRINE.**

Attach a **RESOURCES PAGE** at the end. This will be the list of all the sources of information you found helpful in your writing. These assigned readings, other books, articles, internet sources, personal interviews – all the sources that provided your information. This does not count as part of the 40 pages of content.

Give credit for direct quotations and for major points you owe to your sources. Do this with footnotes or endnotes or parenthetical references to your resources. Be complete; ask yourself, “From this note could I go directly to this source and the proper page?”

WARMING TO WESLEY'S SERMONS

That's right, "They won't preach." Probably, they never were preached in their printed form. What did and will preach is what they teach. Wesley published his sermons as teaching papers for Methodist preachers and people. METHODIST preachers learn John Wesley's sermons — period!

The one page introductions to each sermon in the *Anthology* are great. Read the introduction first to get the gist of the piece and learn what to look for in that sermon.

On first reading don't PLOW or PLOD through, SURF through. Notice how Wesley gives the outline up front; skim the sermon; mark what grabs you; make notes. This produces mental magnets to attract and hold fast the argument when you return to it later. You'll see that you've softened it and it comes easier.

The sermons overlap a lot. You'll see Wesley's themes recurring throughout them. You will grow more and more comfortable in reading them. In time you'll ask yourself, "Why did I think these sermons were going to be a problem?"

PREPARE! PREPARE! PREPARE!

Mastery on the day we gather isn't required. Because you will have given your best to your core reading and your paper I will be able to help you clarify questions and get on top of these essentials for a pastor and teacher in our tradition.

DUE DATES

For May classes – papers due to the ALPS office (NOT to the professor) by April 1. After April 1 til April 30 there will be a one letter grade reduction. After April 30 a two letter grade reduction.

For weekend classes – papers due to the ALPS office (NOT to the professor) four weeks prior to beginning date of the course. After that a one letter grade reduction. Two letter grade reduction for work received on site of the class.

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