

To Serve the Present Age, Our Calling to Fulfil

Liturgy and dogmatic

By Jørgen Thaarup

Abstract

In the 18th century England Methodism developed in a culture marked by the tension of Anglicanism and Puritanism. The Anglicans stressed strictness in Liturgy but tolerance in dogmatic. The Puritan perspective was the opposite: strictness in dogmatic but tolerance in Liturgy.

Methodism has inherited elements from both Anglicanism and Puritanism. In different periods Liturgy and discipline in the life of the church has been strongly underlined. In other periods right understanding and preaching of Wesleyan key themes was put in focus.

The identity of the church is linked to specific dogmatic understanding and to specific praxis of worship services and spiritual life. But identity is also depending on which marks and characteristics have main importance and weight. What is fundamental and unchangeable and what is no longer a central question?

One way to give an answer is to ask another question: What in a specific period is most current in the life of the church? What themes are binding together the development of the church, and what themes are on their way out of common interest?

In the post-literary time focus are moving from identity linked to understanding of dogmatic to identity linked to liturgy. In many local churches one branch of the congregation prefer the classic worship service and follow the rituals in the Methodist book of worship, and they sing hymnals in the old Wesleyan tradition. Another branch of the congregation prefer a constantly changing contemporary worship service with elements from the common ecumenical church fellowship. Today the traditional worship services attract many people. Tomorrow the contemporary worship services will attract much more people.

The liturgy understood as the way of worshipping has been a main element in the modern building up identity. Liturgy and worship experience is more important for people's identity than the dogmatic understanding of sacraments, conversion or salvation. Liturgy binds people together inside the church when you are formed by the same life of celebrating the Sunday service. Liturgy binds people together with other Christian in other churches where the music, the expressions of contemporary liturgy is the same.

The identity of a denomination is a very complex thing. The complexity is growing when not only content but also the heaviness of each single part is changing. What was fundamental yesterday is relative and not important for the identity today, and not important elements yesterday will tomorrow be in focus of the church.

Study paper by Jørgen Thaarup, UMC Theological Seminary, Överås, Gothenburg, Sweden

What role will dogmatic *and* liturgy play in Methodism in present age? What will Methodism look like (in Scandinavia) in the time after Charles Wesley's 300-year birthday?

Biblical perspective on the role of liturgy

Two reforms of the cultic life are very influential on the process of bringing the Old Testament into being.

Firstly the Josiah reform in 2 Kings 22 and 23. The text tells that under the work of restoring the Temple, the place of cultic life, an unknown book shows up. It is called the Book of the Law. The content of this book starts a wide process of building up the cultic and liturgical life. Restoring and new formation are going hand in hand. The text claims that when Josiah introduced the Passover it was not celebrated since the time of the judges. The main story of YHWH's powerful act of liberation from the slavery and death in Egypt and salvation through the sea is given its central place in the life of the Judah religion by the reform of Josiah.

The theology of the Josiah reform is e.g. the cult centralisation, the strong monotheism, YHWH is the only God, the holiness of the Sabbath, the warning against idolatry, the covenant with YHWH and the Passover. These are very important elements in the new liturgical life of the Temple in Jerusalem. The place where this theology is found and collected in a short and original formulation is in the Deuteronomy, more precisely Deut chapter 5 – 26. The Law Book found in the Temple at the time of Josiah, 622 BC, could very well have been a prior version of what we have in the Deut chapter 5 to 26. The link between the Josiah reform and the Deuteronomy has stimulated the understanding that the Josiah reform of the cultic life adopts the theology from the Deuteronomy and starts a process of collecting sources and material and puzzles it together to what could have been the first version of the Pentateuch. The process continues into what we call the historical book of the Deuteronomy's, including Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuels and 1 & 2 Kings.

The origin of the Josiah reform is when the work with the Temple and the theology of the founded Law book are influencing one another. It is out of our horizon to decide what was the first beginning, did the restoring of the Temple cult shape the reading of the theology of the Law book, or did the theology of the Law book form the life of the Temple. But it is out of doubt that the two, work on the Temple and the theology of the founded book, fertilized one another in a very fruitful process from 622 BC and up to the Exile. Some scholars mark that the quite different consequences of on the one hand the Israel deportation to the Assyria and its loss of identity and on the other hand the Judaic developing of strong identity under the exile in Babel coursed the Josiah reform influence on the Judaic people up to the period of Exile.

Secondly the Ezra reform in Ezra chapter 7 to 10 and Nehemiah chapter 8 to 13. The Priest Ezra is the exponent in the reorganizing of the Temple cult after the Babylonian Exile. The character of this reform is carried of the theology developed under the Exile under the influence of the Exile prophets. The theology of Ezra is widening the focus from collective celebration in the Temple under the leadership of a priest to an individual spirituality and an ethical justice

lifestyle. Ezra is widening focus from cult of offering to cult of Word, spoken and sung. The theology is widening the perspective of YHWH's presence in the central Temple cult in Jerusalem to YHWH's presence among the Diaspora Israel people and heathens too. Covenant is no longer linked to a national understanding of salvation, but the Covenant of YHWH is now what the Jeremiah and Ezekiel had described as transforming the heart of stone into a heart of flesh and knowing God in the heart to do his will.

Ezra's theology is quite different from the theology of Josiah. It is developed and formed in the community of exile Judaic people in Babylon, who started worshipping God in fellowships, which later on became the synagogue congregation and service. What Ezra brought into the reform in Jerusalem was formed by the spirituality of Judaic people in the Diaspora of Babylon and Persia.

The theology of Ezra and the reform linked to his name is what we find in the Priestly source in the Pentateuch, especially in the first chapter of Genesis. Likewise we find this theology in the Chronicle historical books, which we think is a rewriting of the Deuteronomy historical books but rewritten in the perspective of Ezra's theology. Maybe we find the Priestly writer behind the editing of the Book of Psalm, organised after the model of the Pentateuch, Moses the great Law-promoter, and praising the perfectly law-inspired life of the individual in Ps 119.

The Ezra reform is a reform of the liturgical life of the Temple and the spirituality of the family leaders. But the reform is simultaneously the formation of the theological concept of Judaism as a religion. Cultic life and theological renewal is mirroring one another.

The Old Testament as a canonised collection of texts is linked very tight to the organized cultic life of Judah. You can say that Old Testament has been born out of the celebration of God. The theology has found its life and expression in the cult of the Temple and in the late Judaism also in the institution of the synagogue. The memory of the people is what has continued to live in the Temple and the synagogue.

Concerning the New Testament texts the connection between text and theology on the one hand and the Christian worship service on the other hand is well known.

Most of the epistles are written to congregations and we do imagine that letters has been read to the audience of a congregation. Some letters say directly that they should be circulated among several congregations from the very beginning.

The four gospels content the stories of Jesus from Nazareth. These stories are not arranged chronically after the life of the historical Jesus. Several studies indicate that especially the gospels of Mark and Mathew are structured after the homiletic and liturgical pattern of the first church worship services. The number of preaching texts, the structure of the single texts and the order of the texts fits into the liturgical Christian year. The Christian worship service was prior to the New Testament books, and has been a catalyst in the process of bringing the New Testament into existence.

Liturgy and confessional identity

The Christian worship grew out of the Judaic synagogue worship service and Temple liturgy. Every element in the Christian service has its roots in the Judaic tradition. Scripture reading, transmitting the oral tradition, explaining the texts and let them speak prophetic into the present time, hymn singing and blessings are all element from the synagogue service. From the perspective that Jesus from Nazareth is the Messiah new content came into the traditional elements. The Eucharist took the place of the Passover feast and the offerings in the Temple. The Baptism took the place of the circumcision and the proselyte baptism. The Christian religious life was a reformation of and a new direction of the Judaic religious life.

The leadership of the church was identical with the leaders of the worship service. Deacons, Presbyters and Bishops were leaders by virtue of their authority to preside the public worship service and to preach.

The name “the Orthodox Church” comes out of the Greek wording *ορθος* and *δοξα*, way of honouring, the right way of celebration, the right order of worship. The name underlined the understanding that the church has its identity in the worship service.

The Orthodox Churches have more than other churches kept a strong focus on the worship service as the main authority in the church and the main identity maker. Every new theological subject has to be tested on the texts of the liturgical life. The ongoing teaching process of the Holy Spirit is first of all seeing in the developing of the liturgical life. Answers of new questions in any new time have to be found out of the inspiration of the liturgical life of the church.

Methodism in the tension between Anglicanism and Puritanism

In the 18th century England Methodism developed in a culture marked by Anglicanism and Puritanism. Methodism has inherited elements from both of them.

The ancestors of the Wesley family was strongly connected to the struggling groups that marked the English church history from the late 17th century to the very beginning of the 18th century. John Wesley in fact was a child of reconciliation between his mother and father, who had different loyalties, but they were united in a new support to the Anglican Church.

The Anglican Church is based on two standard to define the confessional identity. The one standard is the 39 Articles of Religion, which is a set of theological documents where you find the old common tradition back to the first ecumenical synods, but also influences from the 16th century Lutheran and Reformed statements. The Articles of Religion immediately never got the place in Anglicanism as similar doctrinal documents have in other protestant churches.

The other standard to define what is Anglicanism is the Book of Common Prayer. From the early beginning of the Anglican reformation several editions of the Book of Common Prayer was authorized before the Book of Common Prayer got its highly and common respected place in the church. The Book of Common Prayer is a lectionary for daily bible readings and a liturgy book

for services in the church during the whole year. The Book of Common Prayer became a major instrument to form the Anglican Church in the new direction after the separation from the Roman Catholic Church.

Maybe one more standard need to be mentioned, the Homilies. The idea behind the Homilies was to give a direction of the Anglican understanding of the gospel, and give this direction in the framework of proclamation and preaching in the English language. The Homilies is dogmatic guidelines expressed in the form of the worship service, but not dogmatic laws or judicial articles. They are set to show the mainstream understanding of Christianity from the Anglican perspective, and not to defend and mark the borders of the church.

The Anglican way to focus on the liturgy and the worship service to express the character of the church is unique compared to the protestant churches, but very similar to what we have learned from the Orthodox Church tradition. In both traditions we find a developed consciousness about the connection between liturgy of the worship services and the dogmatic thinking of the church, members as well as leaders.

After the chequered church history of England in the 16th and 17th century the Anglican position had come to the position that religious movements, theological ideas and political power structures comes and goes, and none of these shall hold together the church or set its future, but the loyalty to the liturgy, especially collected in the Common Prayer Book and in the Homilies, are the instrument for the church to form the nation.

The Puritans in England was a parallel movement to the continental Lutheran pietistic movement, but not quite the same. Cromwell's social-religious revolution in the midst of the 17th century marks a culmination of puritan fight against the state-church symbiosis and gave Puritanism in England a place no pietistic movement on the European continent ever had. Cromwell introduced a lot of ideas from Calvin's Geneva, e.g. Presbyterian church structure, the church is first of all a *communio*, where the people of faith themselves are the church.

After the end of the period of the puritan republic and the victory of Anglicanism many puritans became dissenters. But also within the Church of England the Puritan movement continued.

The Article of Religion XII reflect the Confessio Augustana Article VII saying that the visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered to Christ's ordinance. The Puritans focused the first part of this article, the congregation of faithful, and the Anglicans focused the second part, the place for administration of Word and Sacrament. Drawn up to its sharpness the Anglicans claimed strictness in Liturgy but tolerance in dogmatic, and the Puritans the opposite, strictness in dogmatic but tolerance in Liturgy.

John and Charles Wesley were Church of England men their whole life, and this position was integrated in their understanding of Methodism. But on essential fields they implemented Puritan values into the Methodist movement.

The General Rules were the rules for membership of the Methodist societies and have been standard rules for how Methodists understood themselves as members of a local congregation. The third paragraph of the General Rules is about the means of Grace. The Methodists promised to use the means of Grace frequently. When the General Rules were formulated the only way to use the mean of Grace was to attend the local Anglican Church. Membership of the Methodist societies were well integrated fellowship of faithful people, they gathered not in church time and the gatherings were informal, but to hold the membership you had to attend the worship services, listening to the preaching and receiving the sacrament in the local Parish church.

The Methodist societies was organised with classes and bands. The classes were for every Methodist. The bands for those who were working on holiness, and later it was the place for the leaders.

The Episcopal Methodist Church

When Methodism after the instruction by John Wesley became the Methodist Episcopal Church in America in 1784, one of the instruments to form Methodism into a church was the Sunday Service, printed in London 1784.

The Sunday Service was Wesley's shortened edition of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Wesley had reduced the Book of Common Prayer to include only the most needed parts for a young church.

In addition to the Sunday Service John and Charles Wesley published 'A collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day' same year as the Sunday Service was published. In the US we find that some Sunday Service and Hymnals from 1784 are bound in one volume, one book.

The General Conference of the Episcopal Methodist Church was dealing with all kind of questions concerning the church.

- Doctrines were one field. Wesley's questions "What to teach? How to teach? What to do?" is an example on this.
- Discipline or church order was another field. Wesley's discussions with the travelling preachers concerning strategy for the mission are an example on this.
- Liturgy and how to lead the Methodists in worship was the third field of ongoing work of the conference.

The point is that reflections on dogmatic and developing of guidelines for worshipping and strategy for the mission are going hand in hand.

A symbol for this is that the Book of Discipline from 1798 to 1960 every fourth year included:

- Doctrinal standard of the Methodist Church
- Rituals and orders for worships and administration of the sacraments
- General Rules for the Methodist Societies
- Discipline, church orders and strategies for the mission.

In addition to the Book of Discipline, the Methodists have

- Wesley's Standard Sermons, which in Methodism have the place, the Homilies have in the Anglican Church,
- The Hymnals, which were the liturgical and doctrinal book for ordinary members of the church.

Methodism in Scandinavia

Methodism came to Scandinavia in the middle of the 19th century. From the very beginning the activities of the Methodists were:

- Evangelical meetings with preaching, singing and testimonies, all in an informal pattern. The meetings were similar to the meetings of the original Methodist society meetings.
- Class meetings with interview about the members fight against sin and how they lived as Christians in their daily life. The talk inspired the free praying of the group.
- Public worship services in a more formal way following a stricter liturgy and offering the sacraments to people.

The different kind of meetings and the variations of content and ways to lead the meetings corresponded to the dogmatic themes Methodism was about.

The public worship were the liturgical frame for communicating Gods everlasting love. The Grace of God was the focus in preaching, offering the Sacraments and sharing the Christian fellowship in worship. All the means of grace were brought in function in the public worship. The Methodists understood them selves as a congregation who celebrated a public worship service that the whole population of the country was invited to attend. The Methodist church was a free church in the Scandinavian countries, but it saw itself as a church of the people because of the public worship service it offers.

The evangelical meetings did also communicate the Grace of God, but in addition the members experiences with God were very important to bring forth. The preaching often included personal experiences, and testimonies were a regular element. The evangelical meetings were the public place where new Christians could tell about their conversion and faith, and it was the place where the seeker could come and listen to those who had experienced what they were longing for. It was the place where faith and longings where shaped and put in words of ordinary people.

The importance of the class meetings was the guided talk about faith and how to live as a Christian. It was the place many new Christians prayed their first prayer and first time formulated what they believed in. Troubles and sins were discussed and victories of faith were shared. The fellowship of the class gave support to the individual member so that nobody was isolated or alone in practising the Christian lifestyle. This sharing, supporting and collective responsibility for one another was understood as the method, those following the road, similar to what the first Christians were called in Acta. The classes were reserved for members, people who had decided that they wanted to become a Christian or to live in holiness and sanctification as a Christian.

In addition the different kind of meetings corresponded to the understanding of Methodism as an ecclesia and an ecclesiola.

The ecclesia; the church as an instrument of Gods grace in the world, according to the second part of Rel. Art. XII and CA Art VII, an agent for spreading out the Word and the Sacrament. The ecclesia, the church is Gods institution where the doorstep in is as low as possible to make it easy for people not familiar with church culture to come and feel home.

The ecclesiola; the church as a fellowship of faithful people, according to the first part of Rel. Art. XII and CA Art VII. It is the fellowship of believers on the same road. It is the function where one hungry are telling another where you can find bread, or how you are going the way. The ecclesiola, the church is the human fellowship where the doorstep in is on the level where those going into the fellowship are united in their common goals, to love God and your neighbour.

Change in the pattern of worship services

In the midst of the 20th century the pattern with three different kinds of gatherings changed.

First the evangelical meeting was moved from a weekday to Sunday evening or to some few periods of the year with revival campaign over one single week. The evangelical meetings still had the character of place for seekers, conversion and people's testimonies on what God can do.

Second the class meetings ended. When only a few new people came, the classes lost their functions as place for developing and growth in the Christian life. The introvert perspective of the classes turned the atmosphere into a hostile attitude to culture, developed isolation from the world and moralized life.

Up to the 1950s and '60s many local Methodist churches had the public worship service on Sunday morning and evangelical meeting on Sunday evening. But the evangelical meetings disappeared during the 1960s. Two things caused this development.

- One thing was the raise of young generations with higher education than earlier. The entry of intellectualism and one-sided scientific thinking meant that educated people didn't like the emotional and often naive preaching, testimonies and revival songs. Christianity should be understandable and social acceptable in a secular world, and the evangelical meetings often was seen as an anachronism, something best left back in the time before the two World Wars.
- Another thing holding back the attendants to the evangelical Sunday evening meetings was the introduction of Television to the private homes, which took place in the 1960'es. People were staying at home watching the fantastic world of the new media.

The disappearing of the evangelical meetings and the class meetings built up a spiritual vacuum. Conversion and sanctification more or less disappeared from the preaching. It was no longer a theme among the Methodists. Testimonies about what God are doing in individual peoples life

was something only elderly members of the church could tell. Essential Methodist doctrines were on their way out of the Methodist identity and understanding well stimulated by the changes in the local Methodist pattern of meetings.

Even at the Nordic Methodist Theological Seminary, Överås, the changes of curriculum in the 1960'es and 1970'es is obvious. The theology on how to receive the salvation of God is turned down. The Ordo Salutis thinking as an understanding of what God is doing in the life of the individual has no longer priority. The theological focus is on the objective description on salvation, Gods grace towards all people, and very little attention was given to peoples respond to Gods actions.

In this spiritual vacuum in the 1970'es an ecumenical charismatic movement ran over the churches. Some people saw it as a returning of Methodist spirituality from a past time. Other saw it as a new Pentecostal revival.

On the liturgical field the charismatic movement brought some element from the old evangelical meetings and the revival meetings into the classic Sunday service. The revival songs and the new praise songs were introduced to Sunday services, accompanied by the instruments earlier only used in evangelical meetings, the piano and the string instruments.

Many local Methodist churches had now one and only one kind of worship service, which over time became a patchwork worship service. It had elements from all the three quite different meeting forms, the classic worship service, the evangelical meeting or the revival meeting, and finally the class meeting. The understanding of worship included a mix of meeting forms that had had very specific goals. Now everything should pass into one form of service.

The service was no longer the Public service with the low doorstep communicating Gods love and grace to the people. The service was neither an evangelical meeting because the attention to the receiving of Gods transforming life strictly was very limited and misplaced in the liturgical form.

New focus on worship service

From the 1980'es and still ongoing there has been a new focus on the worship. Now the focus is raised from very different perspectives:

- The influence of Television, movies and electronic communication.

Communication has been something quite different after the appearance of electronic media. Television is effective in spreading news and information on a level not comparable to any other media in history. The stream of audio-visible impulses and fast shifts from scene to scene, from one piece of information to another, has been the common way of bringing information from sender to receiver.

For the church it has given a new standard for how to reach people with the gospel. The claim on effectiveness and speed in communication has reached a level nobody imagined fifty years ago.

- The influence of entertainment and adventure.

Earlier ages one-sided idea that Christianity is about right thinking forced the worship services to place clearness in understanding and logical argumentation as the highest qualities of the service. Now people expect an experience which include all senses and their own participation in the program e.g. doing something. The worship shall not necessarily lead to a new understanding. A good experience is more important. For the church you can do worship services in many more ways, illustrating and enlightening the theme. The aesthetic quality is important. The only thing you can't do is to do something boring and no engaging. The church is competing with other churches and with the whole entertainment industries.

- The influence of modern, classic spirituality.

Several places around the world have been centre for a modern form of classic Christian spirituality. One place is the ecumenical monastery in France named Taizé. Another place is the Isle of Iona between Ireland and Scotland. But also many retreat houses with a group of dedicated people who revive the liturgical prayers, pilgrimages and spiritual readings e.g. of the Church Fathers. Many local protestant churches have Orthodox icons and candlesticks where you can light a candle as a prayer, and there is an increasing use of symbols in all churches. Many individuals are looking for a deeper spiritual life.

- The influence of management, sociology and business ideology.

In Europe churches are looked upon as social institutions like public health or education institutions or public libraries. Churches often see themselves as a service institution in spirituality and religious matters. The leadership of the church perform the worship service, and especially baptism, confirmation, marriage and funerals as acts of service for the actual persons. Kindness and not too evangelistic and provocative is important.

In America churches are looked upon as companies, selling a product. The language of common business education and business strategies has adopted many religious inspired words like mission, faith, expectations, message, spirit, vision, prophetic and conversion. The business and management thinking fits well into modern church leadership, including how to perform the worship service and sell the gospel. Even the discipleship thinking of the church has a parallel in the coaching and mentorship thinking of the modern age.

- The influence of contemporary music.

Music style changes over time. Different churches have their own tradition of music in the worship. The major part of an Orthodox Church worship service is the singing of the liturgy. The Roman Catholic Church music in the Worship is singing without instrument and hymnals accompanied by instrument. In the classic protestant churches the organ music has got the most powerful space, sometimes with reducing of the congregational singing. In Methodism the Wesleyans indeed promoted the singing, but for John the music only was a catalyst for the words of the hymns. The organs became later the favour instrument in the British Methodist chapels, but when the Primitive Methodist left the Methodist because they wanted to turn Primitive Methodism back to how it was in the beginning, we find that many organs were thrown out of the Methodist Chapels and burned in the street, and the congregation returned to singing accompanied by string music only.

In the 1970'es and 1980'es many churches started to take in new music. The development has continued since. The new music could be characterised in two ways:

The praise singing is one category. The texts could be Bible quotations or very simple formulations of praising, celebrating and worshipping God. The texts could also have the character of professing the faith, saying what I am doing as a believer. The praise singing engages the congregation in the prayer, worshipping and celebration, and singing the same texts over and over again often stimulates the engagement.

The second category is music in the style of modern pop music and commercial music. It is simple music, easy to learn, tuneful and rhythmic. It is music of the present time; it comes easy and fast, is very popular in a period, and disappears soon. Some people like this music style in the church, because it is also the kind of music they are listening to on the radio and they have the understanding, that people not familiar to the church like this music better than standard hymns and old instruments. Other people do not like this music because it is similar to the commercial pop music, which they see as low quality music, and they fear that the church will attract a specific kind of people because of this music culture.

The music used in many churches is often identical with both categories.

- The influence of tourism and migration.

The exchange of ideas and mixing of cultures because we are travelling more today than any generation before us, and because so many people are moving around in the world. On all level of life cultures are mixed. On the religious field we have seen people from other churches and religions, and we bring ideas back home to our own church. We sing songs from all parts of the world, and pray prayers formulated by people on the other side of the world. And church-arts from one church tradition finds its way to quite different church traditions and are well accepted.

What is the theology of these tendencies?

What is the theology behind these tendencies? Is there a deliberate theological reflection that effects the changes in the worship services?

One major motive in the work with the liturgy is to reach out to people. The churches in the Western World are losing attendants. The memberships of most churches are declining. The stress on every pastor and staff of the congregation are so heavy. The primary claim is to get your church growing. The mission perspective is one major theological motive behind the changes of the worship services in the last thirty years.

In the effort to be more effective there is an attention to the congregations where the mission is functioning well. Exchange of ideas, methods and materials has grown dramatically. If something is successful in one local church, other churches want to learn how to do practically to reach similar results. The focus has been on mega churches in Korean, in Willow creek, in Brompton, in Brownsville, in Toronto, in Ginghamburg and in Gothenburg. During the church history Christian leaders have travelled to places for getting inspiration. It is not anything new. There was a time where Cluny was the centre of inspiration; another time inspirations came from Geneva and Strasbourg. It is well known that John Wesley travelled to Herrnhut and found it a Paradise on earth. In modern time the speed of communication and the easy way of travelling has extended the propagation of ideas and methods and claims fast and concrete results.

Is it possible to see other theological motives? Are there some theological key items the liturgical changes should communicate and support? Are the liturgical changes in the last thirty years theological rooted?

Thesis for the future:

1.

Churches, which in worship services have similar liturgy, will over time develop similar theology.

Dogmatic controversies and differences play a minor role today among the churches. Many Christians don't understand the historical theological statements of the church confessions. Even the theology of your own church is difficult to express for many members.

Liturgy in worship connect people, and fellowship with other Christians is an immediately experience even though it is Christians from other churches. Many Christians feel stronger fellowship with Christians who sing the same songs and have the same form of worshipping than they feel with Christians from their own church, who don't like the same kind of worships services.

Strictness in liturgy and freedom in dogmatic will again be dominant, but in a new interpretation where the strictness in liturgy is understood very broad and the freedom in dogmatic is understood as confessions within the ecumenical Christian fellowship.

The loyalty to the specific worship service is stronger than the loyalty to your own church confession.

2.

The specific Wesleyan theological subjects such as sanctification and Christian perfection will come into renewed focus because of the influence of new classic spirituality, Christian meditation and retreats, which will be the liturgical instrument to inspire the personal growth and holiness, which in early Methodism was stimulated in the classes and the societies.

All over the world and in many different churches people are seeking the roots of Christian spirituality. The seeking and the longing are for a deep and committed Christian life. Many don't find the vital Christianity in the life of the churches.

In the seeking after a spiritual vital life some of the same sources that inspired the Wesleyans has been important sources today. For instance the anthropology of the Eastern Church, the Antioch Theology, the Irenaeus thinking on salvation as growth and receiving the Divine pleroma, the understanding of recapitulatio and the presence of the eschatological Kingdom in the life of the Christian.

The specific Wesleyan doctrines will be focused in a new and strong way because the spiritual seeking leads people to the same sources, Wesley was depending on.

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Jørgen Thaarup, Strandvej 30, DK-9970 Strandby. Denmark