

*“Perfection, Holiness, and Sin: the Dance and Matrix of Wesleyan Thought,
Atonement, Prayer, and Song as Relates to the Character and Formation of God’s People”*

Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan

Whispering, harmonic Hope

Immediate incarnational Love

Warmed, caught hearts

Empowered, taught minds

Realized, eschatological spirituality

Wesleyan via devotio

Bespeaks the depths and breath

Of engaged character building and faith formation

From, within, in praise of the Glory of God!

Let this a thousand tongues sing

Daily, morning and evening and in between.

This Summer, I taught within a summer Roman Catholic traditional Black graduate M.Div. program, which was intensive of instruction betwixt daily Morning Praise and Noon Mass; I was also formally transferred from one CME Episcopal District to another District,¹ midst Annual Conference Bible studies, devotions, worship, and reporting Sessions; and I was researching John and Charles Wesley Sermons and Hymns, in my spare hours. These myriad activities made me consider belief systems, traditions, personal and corporate faith: all within the mystery of God.

Where does culture and childhood experience connect with adult learning and immediate spiritual encounters? Many sources supply a complex matrix that shape the belief systems held by denominational traditions, and their congregants concerning Scripture, God, and life. Congregants' faith and belief systems develop and become solidified from sermons and bible study.

Not surprisingly, many beliefs emerge from sermons embodied *in praxis*, and from the music idioms which people listen to and enjoy. When babies are ill and older parents are dying, people often retreat to the songs and prayers of their faith for comfort. Albert C. Outler in *John and Charles Wesley: Selected Writings and Hymns*, reminds us that the spirituality of John and Charles Wesley supports a vital, daily consciousness of God's presence, powerfully rooted in Anglican sacraments, liturgy, and doctrine. Wesleyan *spirituality* anchors John Wesley's prayers and Charles Wesley's *hymns*. Outler claims that central to understanding the Wesleys is their vision of God, their spirituality, and God's purpose for humanity. Exploring their spirituality through their understanding of perfection, atonement, and liturgy provides a way to think about their understanding of human character development and faith formation.

This essay considers selected prayers of John Wesley and selected hymns of Charles Wesley in dialogue with particular scriptures to discern, from a Womanist perspective, certain Wesleyan theological understandings of human character and formation of God's people. After giving an overview of my own Womanist spirituality, I analyze these selected Wesleyan prayers and hymns. Second, I exegete the Ten Commandments and 1 Corinthians 13, scriptures which are important to Wesleyan thought, in dialogue with analyzing Wesleyan concepts of atonement, perfection, holiness, and sin; and how these concepts might relate to the body and human sexuality. I conclude my study by assessing my findings as to how Wesleyan thought provides a

rubric for spiritual character development and a vision for the formation of God's people in the Twenty-first Century – including those Wesleyan thoughts which can address a climate wherein traditional patriarchy and its demonization of the body fosters sexual misconduct.

Righteousness Desired: An overview of Womanist spirituality

Womanist spirituality is a vital, profound, meaningful, incarnational, communal and personal resistance-based life experience and theoretical dialogue emerging from the powerful lived, yet tyrannical experiences of women from the African diaphora, who embrace their relationship with God and humanity, honor and celebrate life, love, and justice as they expose injustice, oppression, and evil: institutional, systemic, and personal. Injustice results from poor choices and oppression that unfolds as sexism, heterosexism, racism, classism, ageism, ableism, and the abuse of power. Womanist emancipatory spirituality, rooted in love, embraces hope and transformation towards care, empowerment, and flourishing for women, all people, towards holistic life, in mutuality and community. By honoring the *Imago Dei* in all persons, Womanist spirituality as thought and process posits the essential goodness of humanity and focuses on liberation amid personal and societal fragmentation in general, and theological discourse in particular. From questions of sacrality, identity, sacrality, and power to sacred texts, womanist spirituality presses concepts of rituals, authority, history, theology, ethics, visibility, integrity, location, aesthetics, ecology and community.²

Womanist spirituality, as dance, is vibrant, vital engagement, connecting with the divine, the divine within humanity, and all creation towards a holiness that enhances all of life. This holy, rejuvenating vitality shares love and sustains womanists through myriads of systemic, institutional oppression, when all appears hopeless. This spirituality helps them withstand intense difficulties, staying the course to resolution. Womanist spirituality involves a process of being in

the world, in the presence of Mystery and the Beautiful, where humanity can have exceptional intimacy with the divine, a power that is both within and greater than themselves. As co-creators in response to Graced realities, womanist spirituality engages the power of that divine, of holiness wherein people in community can grow and flourish amid hope and love, providing strength to experience and transcend grief, towards a socio-cultural, religious witness, communal attitude, and commitment for justice: loving God, loving life, loving love, and loving all people signifying unspeakable joy.³

Revelational aesthetics: Wesleyan prayers and hymns

Thousands of Charles Wesley's hymns convey: an evangelical focus on God's grace, notably reflected in the Christ event; a pedagogical tool for positing Christian belief and teaching Bible; and provide a huge repertoire of music for congregational and individual experiences of worship: praise, confession, thanksgiving, and petition to the Trinity.⁴ For Rattenbury, Wesleyan hymns envision the Church as the priesthood of all believers, and signal an evangelical, catholic ethos where the songs focus on the larger reality of Christ's holistic, salvific work, beyond a focus on blood atonement and wounds of Christ. The hymns have a revolutionary evangelical edge for the 18th century that embraces sacramental sharing and realized eschatology. While sacrificial imagery and themes are important, Rattenbury views the Wesleys' understanding of Eucharist as both sacrifice and sacrament from an Anglican stance, amid Christ's salvific self-giving and the Church's self-offering union with Christ. As sacrament, this meal is a mystical, triumphal event honoring Christ's redeeming love, midst the Communion of Saints: the Church militant (earth) and Church triumphant (heaven). Expanding on Daniel Brevint's sacramental polemics, the Wesleys create an evangelical, devotional Methodist song. As sacrifice, Wesley ruminates on Christ's shed blood on Calvary, a sacrifice that continues in heaven, sometimes pressing the metaphor that implies Mithraism, the sacrifice of the bull. Undergirding sacrifice is human frailty, sinfulness, and our inability to overcome or transform evil, the horror of sin. Slaughtered lamb imagery from Hebrews and

Revelations and the focus on the cross symbolize this sacrifice. For Wesley, the Church, as the body of Christ, understands the salvific sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice and thus commits to union with Christ, corporately giving itself to God in Eucharist. Summed in one hymn, Wesley notes that the loving cup holds sorrow and salvation. Ultimately Rattenbury finds a Eucharistic theology of creation, realized eschatology, and redemption. Taking the cup now implies taking the cup with the Risen Christ as He drinks in the reign of Creator God. Wesleyan Eucharistic hymns celebrate a resurrected, risen, present Christ, which transcends a memorialist Christ: a vital, revealed Personality. Wesley's hymn, "*The mystery all! The Immortal dies*" situates atonement amid mystery and God's love revealed in Christ. Rattenbury notes that while Wesley's response may seem weak, Charles Wesley gives strong witness to God's mercy and God's love, through deep devotional contemplation. Eucharist as means and sign of Grace, transcends believers' experiences of remembrance or re-presentation in that Eucharist: (a) makes believers partakers of Christ in a different manner than when experiencing the Word; (b) profoundly ministers to believers' wants and desires; (c) reflects the transforming experience of blessing. Charles Wesley argues that we receive Eucharist, an outward sign for believers, beings with body, soul, and spirit. With this reception, our bodies, souls, and spirits join Jesus' humanity, soul, body, and spirit. The Wesleys believed in God's direct, immediate and mediate action upon a person's soul. The Eucharistic hymns echo apostolic era, bestow graces in the present, and anticipate the celestial feast.⁵

"*A Charge to Keep I Have*" reveals that God's call on one's life requires a response of consecrated obedience. Using the Levitical text where Aaron and his sons are consecrated, Wesley invokes the journey of Christian vocation and individual praxis of sanctification or holiness. One receives the charge to glorify God, to honor God's gift of life holistically in immediate, present reality. The experience of the charge includes a heightened awareness of divine presence and moves one to contemplate and pray.⁶ Written during times of great tumult, opposition, mob violence and threat, this hymn names the miracle that the Wesleys were still alive because of divine grace. Methodists across time, particularly at annual conferences sing this song about overcoming, going through, recording past

troubles, amid the ever present love of God. In response, the faith community gathers in worship amid mutuality, to praise, state its conflicts, acknowledge God's love, and commit to living the way of the cross. With Christ like self emptying and self-giving towards a redeemed life, believers become one with Christ.⁷

"And Can it Be that I should Gain" an interrogatory hymn, questions the connections between an individual, the Christ event, and the present, with incredulity. After much personal upheaval and studying Luther's Galatians Commentary, Wesley gleaned that his sin and humanity's sin were one and the same. Christ's sacrifice was for social and personal sin. Kimbrough notes that this hymn reminds us of the mystery we all face: the mysterious nature and capacity of God's love -- at once an invitation for us to empty ourselves of all but love, just as Christ did.⁸ Celebrating redeeming love, *"Christ the Lord is Risen Today,"* extols praise, victory over death amid the Christ event, the triumph of resurrection, and everlasting life. This hymn focuses on the jubilation of resurrection as opposed to the major focus on crucifixion in the Christian church even though the two events are essential to each other. This hymn celebrates the post-Resurrection experience of the Gospels, when the women hear the news that Jesus is raised from the dead, and they go to share this message with the disciples. The risen Jesus Christ reiterates the instruction for them to go tell the good news, to preach the gospel to the disciples. Unlike many contemporary patriarchal religious institutions, gender did not thwart the preaching of certain biblical women. Each line ends with Alleluia, the highest praise of God. For Wesley, framed by God's love, our redemption overcomes the power of death and sin through the victorious sacrifice of Jesus' death and resurrection. This victorious event defeats the sting, pain, and deep loss of death. The risen Christ is Lord of all, of heaven and earth. The power of resurrection changes life for us, in the present and after death, reflecting the phenomenal power of divine love, the sanctified holiness of Grace.⁹

"How Can We Sinners Know," extols a full awareness of self, including knowledge about strengths and weaknesses, capacities, and liabilities; consciousness of sin and the import of forgiveness. Though good can always happen, human beings continuously do inhumane things to each other. For

Wesley one knows the forgiveness of humanity and God through *knowing* and *feeling* forgiveness – through thought and emotions, as the power of God’s love engulfs us. Others will know of our change by outward and inward signs of faith: humility, a transformed mind and spirit of peace and love.¹⁰ “*Love Divine All Loves Excelling*,” a hymn of prayer, is a vibrant testament to Wesley’s desire for all relationships – his and others to be engulfed by divine, unlimited love. For Kimbrough, this love affords the capacity for one to receive God’s grace and to mature in God’s perfect love. This hymn includes themes of God as love divine, incarnated, salvific freedom, and a desire for grace, praise, perfection, and eternal glory: the unveiling of God’s nature and name. The intimate indwelling of God’s love is incarnated in Jesus: his healing and teaching ministry and sacrificial death. Wesley desired God’s transformative, loving breath to breathe into believers amid their life’s difficulties. Inspiration of the Holy Spirit moves us to care about the poor, prisoners; to aid the impoverished. This spirit provides us with gifts, dampens our urge to sin, and affords release from sin. We desire God’s active presence as divine love, always knowing God as blessing. Thus, we pray continuously, bless God with our praises, and embrace and know the wonder and beauty in God’s supreme love. At death, one experiences God’s complete restoration, as *Imago Dei*.¹¹

“*O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing*,” pronounces the gifts of praise, forgiveness, and a God-given transformed life amid Jesus’ redemptive self-gift on the cross, necessary because of human sin. Examining sin in himself and others, Wesley defines sin as: breaking God’s laws –doing the forbidden or omitting the required, or, also, sin as spiritual disease. Sin affects all we do and who we are. This hymn praises God’s salvific unmerited, undeserved, unearned love in God as Trinity, with particular focus on the crucified, sacrificial death of Jesus, which produces joy, forgiveness, new life, and peace. Yrigoyen finds Wesley’s sentiments reminiscent of the covenantal, scriptural God of creation and the Exodus, the God of extraordinary Grace. The Christ event -- Jesus’ life and ministry, his atoning, sacrificial death and resurrection -- is the epistemology of God’s freely-given, mysterious grace. Along with the reconciling grace and forgiveness in Christ Jesus, Wesley notes that we daily meet God in myriad apparent and more

hidden ways. According to this hymn, grace can powerfully overcome sin; help one repent and not fear divine judgment; is universal, available to all; and ushers in new life. Grace offers an assurance that overcomes the impurity and stain of sin. Grace, as God's freely given love, witnesses the power of the Holy Spirit, is essential for living, and prepares one to experience heaven. Originally including eighteen verses, the seven verses of "*O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*," written in honor of Charles Wesley's personal Pentecost conversion experience, praises the Triune Godhead, celebrates transformation, salvation, and redemption as it calls for the believer's response.¹² Theologically, this hymn focuses on praising God, Divine Grace, and Thanksgiving. Both Wesleys embrace God's love and praise of God throughout their lives and work. Kimbrough posits that for Wesley, praise of God expresses love and love expresses praise of God manifesting God's glory, joining earth and heaven. Ancient and present voices engage an eternal, universal, community. Such conversion (original stanzas 2-8 of "*O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*,") monumentally changes one's life: bringing an inner radiance to darkness; exacting an immediacy to one's views of life; awakening faith via the Holy Spirit; involving human feelings; provoking awareness towards personal choice. The inclusive, unilateral Christological verses (9-11) extol Jesus who heals and calms personal, psychological issues of fear and sorrow; who overcomes sin and champions those whose living is like death: the troubled, poor, destitute, and burdened. A response of outreach and mission, verses (12-18) is the action of Jesus' followers. These verses call for ministry to the needs of all: the mentally and physically challenged, addicts, criminals – everyone who struggles with life or sin. For Wesley, an experience of forgiveness and salvation presses one to participate in holistic mission outreach. That is, this hymn embodies a commitment to global, inclusive praise of God by diverse voices in the world, and mission to all.¹³

For John Wesley, being watchful and praying without ceasing, a divine command, and forever rejoicing in love, and deep gratitude, is part of Christian perfection. One is to be vigilant and prayerful regarding pride, even after God has driven it out. An appropriate experience of knowledge, reason, and wisdom comes through prayer. Wesley developed prayers for each day of the week, including prayers of

petition, deprecation, intercession, and thanksgiving. His prayers emerge from a rubric where one is to follow Jesus and renounce self; devote total self to God; deny self; advances mortification via self denial; know that Christ lives in us to fulfill the law. The final step of Christian Holiness involves Grace in action as Christ takes one into glory. Prayer, one of the major means of grace, must occur daily, deliberately and fervently, in public and private; for virtues like humility, love, faith, and hope.¹⁴

John Wesley wrote prayers with five intentions: (1) daily prayers involving deprecation, petition, thanksgiving, and intercession; (2) prayers of love and thanksgiving for sanctioned holidays; (3) prayers for mourning, contrition, and humility; (4) daily intercessory prayers; and (5) daily prayers of petitions regarding Christian duty. Frank Whaling posits that Wesley sees the Lord's Prayer as the consummate prayer, containing all anyone could ever desire; that which is to God's glory. Whatever one desires ought to be worthy of prayer. Nothing is off limits in "the Lord's Prayer": it contains most basic, reasonable human desire, and makes clear our duties to God and humanity. Prayer is a perpetual connectivity with God, with heart language, in intimate relation. One focuses on and walks with God, ever conscious of the divine. As one prays, one rejoices, with deep gratitude and thanksgiving. One prays without ceasing as the command of God, because we need God's grace. Thus, we need the connectivity afforded by prayer. The commitment to God through prayer signals that everything one does is an act of prayer, including basics like eating and sleeping. Centered in graced love, one's desire to please God itself is a constant prayer.¹⁵

In "*A Collection of Prayers for Families*," Wesley includes daily prayers for morning and evening: Sunday morning's prayer begins with praising God for sound mind and body, the gift of the day, followed by a blessing of God on behalf of creation and the Christ event. After acknowledging God's tremendous love for us reflected in the giving of Christ and the Holy Spirit, Wesley presses for a corporate focus on experiencing God's unspeakable joy which occurs through continuous prayer. The prayer shifts to confession of sin and disobedience, towards being holy and pure in God's sight. Prayer involves asking God to help us focus on God, to honor our bodies in sanctification, to love our neighbors, and to glorify God in all things. A plea goes forth for acceptance of the praise and prayer, for the

righteousness of all, that those in distress trust God, with gratitude and by blessing God's name. Sunday evening's prayer begins with adoration and thanksgiving, and acknowledgement of the Christological offering and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The blessing of God connects with the affirmation of public worship. So committed, believers then offer their bodies and souls to divine will with a desire for purification of heart, humility, and steadfast faith, in hope that all Christians will reflect the light of God, experience blessing, and protection for all.¹⁶

Monday morning's prayer begins by acknowledging God's attributes and Christ's redemptive activity. Following a request for mercy and a confession of sin and desire to be devoted totally to God, one desires to be like Christ, professing self-giving to divine service. The gratitude for God's constant protection and care follows with a blessing for God's goodness, blessedness for a poverty of spirit, and the desire for all humanity to be blessed. Monday evening's prayer begins with the context of a most merciful God who creates us, provides compassion, and protection; this God is one to be blessed for being God and for all good gifts. Asking for divine inspiration, a testimony of faith follows remembering the offering of Christ for human sin. The prayer continues with a request for guidance, divine protection during evening sleep, entrusting all to God, in hopes of waking in the morning.¹⁷

Thursday morning's prayer begins with a commendation for God's gift of salvation, a testimony of assurance, and a request for continuing protection. A petition for grace, mercy, and pardon for previous sin frames a desire regarding the Lord's joy for strength. Asking for sanctification for all movement in the world from crosses to comfort, one recognizes that all occurs through the grace of Christ and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. A desire for God's protection and favor follows with the recognition that all is lost if one is removed from God. Thursday evening's prayer testifies to God's glory and the gift of eternal life through the gift of Jesus Christ. With prayer for mercy and consolation, there is recognition of divine omnipotence: that God knows all amid desire for divine armor and protection. With prayer for all people everywhere, a request arises for empowerment of teachers and counselors, and a desire not to be judgmental. Desire for grace and reward to friends and benefactors continues with requesting blessings

for family, bringing everyone into relationship with God. The prayer closes with a request to God to receive these sacrificial prayers with praise and thanksgiving, in gratitude for divine patience, care, and concern in relation, eternally.¹⁸

These selected prayers of John Wesley make plain his total commitment to continuous prayer and devotion. God's overwhelming, freely-given love of grace and mercy for humanity frames and undergirds every prayer. Private and public issues, all desires, and all concerns are fodder for prayer. This Triune-God is ever present, always desiring relationality; in response, people praise and offer prayers in gratitude, confess their sin, and ask for guidance and protection, in deep appreciation for life itself.

Ruminations on Texts: Scripture, Theology, and the Body

John Wesley believed that the Ten Commandments or Decalogue or moral law parallels the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount; the latter a development on the former.¹⁹ His commentary on the Decalogue works through what God said, the people's related impressions, and God's liturgical teachings to Moses. These legal instructions occur because God has the authority to command and make covenant with humanity. Wesley follows the Protestant order of the Decalogue, wherein the first four pertain to God, and the remaining six pertain to humanity: thus Commandment Ten concerns coveting of neighbor's wife *and* goods. In the Jewish and Catholic readings, the first three pertain to God, and the remaining seven pertain to humanity: thus Nine focuses on coveting of neighbor's wife, and Ten on the coveting of goods. The First Commandment refers to worship of God, the need to avoid idolatry, and how people make something else a god through exacting love, delight, or fear of someone or something other than YHWH. Wesley's deconstruction of the Second Commandment, to avoid worship of graven images, includes a historical overview of such practices, warning against honoring any other and advising our allegiance to faith as opposed to the capacities of human imagination. The Third Commandment, to avoid taking God's name in vain, means that one should avoid hypocrisy, breaking covenant, rash or false swearing, and careless use of God's name. While Wesleyan piety posits daily worship, the Fourth Commandment focuses on the time of Sabbath, for God blesses and consecrates the seventh day since the

initial creation story in Genesis; the eternal Sabbath completes redemption and providence. The last six commandments or those of second table concern faithful duties to self and neighbors amid the edict to love. The Fifth Commandment, to honor one's parents involves obedience, respect, and a desire to comfort one's parents. The Sixth Commandment condemns killing; thus one should not hate, hurt, or do harm to self or to another. Wesley speaks of the Seventh Commandment, avoidance of adultery, with the language forbidding any unclean acts against the soul. The Eighth Commandment pertains to stewardship, not robbing the self through being a spendthrift or taking from others through debt, stealing, or improper use. He speaks about the Ninth Commandment as unjust communication, as not bearing false witness, speaking unjustly or falsely, or lying that causes others ruin. The Tenth Commandment, also about stewardship, bans or deters any coveting or desire of another's holdings.²⁰

John Wesley's commentary on *1 Corinthians 13* explores the case made for love, the properties and nature of love, and the duration of love. This love involves the love of God and love of humanity. Love trumps knowledge of the greatest mysteries, God's providence and word. Charitable giving or bodily sacrifice pales in comparison to love. Divine love has many attributes including: patience, inspiration, hospitality, triumphant, empathetic grieving, and all encompassing. Love's duration is eternal, ever present. While human knowledge is imperfect, love is perfect. Even when humans see, the view is distorted, obscure, making much of life a riddle. When humanity sees God face to face, through love, all will become clear. Wesley adds together faith, hope, and love as the total of perfection on earth; love is the total of perfection in heaven.²¹

Wesley's commentary on the Decalogue and *1 Corinthians 13* frames worship, relationships with God, self, and neighbors through a framework of love. Love is the beginning and ending for his understanding of God, life, its complexities, and how believers are to respond. The propensity of love, realized eschatology, and love-based praxis running throughout Wesleyan thought presses the question of how one understands what happens in the latter part of the Christ event.

Some scholars question whether the passion of Christ, His suffering and dying “for us” sanctions deeds and attitudes that accept, glorify, and require that human beings must suffer, creating a climate that engenders abuse against others. Rebecca Parker and Joanne Brown argue that Christianity roots its redemption in the glorification of Christ’s suffering. Scripture and three notions of classical atonement attest to this fact. While interpretations abound as to “the how” of human salvation by Jesus’ death, all classical atonement theories demand Jesus’ suffering: that is, human salvation requires the suffering and vicious death of Jesus. The classical atonement traditions of *Christus Victor*, Satisfaction Theory, and the moral influence tradition respectively find that Jesus confronts evil, and His resurrection shows God’s power; that Jesus paid for human sin; and that Jesus’ suffering and death reflect divine mercy. Three twentieth century critiques of atonement theory find for the following: 1) the Suffering God co-suffers with humanity; 2) human liberation requires suffering as inevitable and essential; and 3) they harshly criticize redemptive suffering, yet require the cross for liberation. Some argue the fallacy of original sin and thus no need for redemption. Others note that to require suffering is an abusive theology. For God to demand that Jesus die for human sin is pedocide, wrongful death of the child. Brown and Parker argue that positing suffering as redemptive is wrong, and that the awful death of Jesus cannot be redeemed by the resurrection. While this might appear heretical to some believers, if one took the scenario of Jesus’ life, changed his name, and assumed his life to be that of a human being, not fully divine, one would be scandalized and calling for justice.²²

John Wesley’s notion of saving faith evolved from that of assent to propositional truth revealed in scripture as opposed to reason, through faith as feelings of trust and assurance, which he later rejects, to a mature notion of faith. One receives faith as divine gift of spiritual experience through distinctive means of grace: Eucharist, prayer, and reading scripture.²³ For the Wesleys, the Eucharist, the model for all the means of God’s Grace, embodies God’s love in action in the life experience of the faithful; with a call for constant partaking of this meal. All Christians have a duty to partake the Eucharist as often as possible because: 1) Christ commanded this; 2) the Eucharist benefits by the forgiveness of sins, and strengthening

of one's soul; and 3) experiential grace confirms pardon of and release from sins, as one receives the strength to believe. Wesley argues that feeling unworthy is no excuse to avoid the Eucharist, for if one is unworthy, God knows it. This is not the point. What is important is that God offers mercy as pardon and one ought not to refuse this life-giving expression. One needs to take the Eucharist because Christ asks us to do so, in remembrance of him. Interestingly taking the meal "*in remembrance*" does not appear in the four Gospel accounts of the Passover Meal which becomes the Last Supper, and then the Lord's Supper. This edict appears in *1 Corinthians 11*, where Paul says Jesus said to remember me.²⁴ Why all of the conversation around atonement or salvation regarding human character and faith formation?: the challenge of human sin.

Chongnahm (John) Cho claims Wesley posits that humanity, originally created in true holiness and righteousness, engaged in disobedience and rebellion through Adam, by misusing freedom. This was Adam's fault not God's. All humanity share Adam's sinfulness and guilt for original sin. Viewing both individual and collective approaches to sin, tension exists between acts of sin and promptings of *sola gratia*. Wesley builds his anthropology from his soteriology, thus God acts in gift; and then humanity can work. Despite the weight of sin, Wesley remains optimistic for one's Christian life because of God's activity. Salvation, then, occurs as God begins the grace, maintains grace, and completes it. Human beings are to be responsible participants and the church is to engage in mission.²⁵

Seeking for a nonviolent atonement theory, J. Denny Weaver posits a *Christus Victor* narrative theory of atonement, building and extending the thought of Gustaf Aulen, which declined after the sixth century, given problems regarding cosmic battles with or ransom payment to Satan, military imagery, and the absence of victory in the world. Satisfaction, ransom, and moral influence theories are all problematic, given their respective tenets toward seeing Jesus' death as: satisfying divine justice (Anselm); divine ransom payment to Satan for sinful humanity (Irenaeus, Origen, Tertullian, Augustine); showing God's love (Abelard).²⁶

A good God orders fratricide, divine child abuse, which invites domestic child abuse. Weaver argues conversely, that Jesus chose to die. The salvific message is that Jesus comes to reveal God's reign, which exposes and confronts evil powers in the world. Weaver's theory is not atonement based, where Jesus' death is payment, ransom, substitution through some divine requirement or honor in place of humanity. *Christus Victor* narrative is atonement theory if it concerns reconciling humanity to God through the Christ event. The violence is human violence, not an act of God. Weaver asserts that St. Paul uses sacrificial language to frame Jesus' death as a reversal, an apocalyptic fulfillment of the law. Christus Victor narrative theory reflects the church's reality pre-Constantinian adaptation of the Greco-Roman empire's ethos. Black theology highlights the systemic violence of hate, sword, slavery, and race. Feminist theology critiques the violence and hegemony of patriarchy, male supremacy, and child abuse. Womanist theology indicates the connections between atonement, theodicy, and Christology, calls for an ethic of responsibility, and views Jesus' death as evil powers opposing God. Weaver's narrative Christus Victor acknowledges the powers and principalities amid economic, state, education, corporate, and ecclesial institutions, etc., following the thought of Walter Wink. Though the powers exist within systems, when fallen, they can be redeemed, and used toward God when under the rule of Christ. In this model, the impetus is that God does not orchestrate Jesus' death; Jesus fulfills Creator God's will by revealing God's rule, God's reign in the world. Violence is not the arbiter of justice. Jesus engages the saving, just work of God, confronting and transforming oppression towards reconciliation, where God continues to love and extend mercy despite human sin.²⁷

William Greathouse agrees with John Deschner, that the *Christus Victor* theory has relevance for Wesley's understanding of sanctification. Through Christ's work on Good Friday, Easter, today, and in the future, Christ bears human guilt and punishment at Calvary, as the Spirit sanctifies with the Christ who is victorious and who suffers. The victorious and suffering Christ ultimately moves as prophet – in each moment, the light; as priest – as atonement acceptable to God; and as king to attain holiness. While many scholars argue that John Wesley's sanctification doctrine is thin, without in-depth articulation,

Greathouse argues that by understanding that the beauty of holiness as worship of God is Christian perfection, one can have a better understanding of his everyday, practical theology – an indication of where he could have gone.²⁸

Charles Wesley's musical theological subject matter engages oxymoronic, paradoxical language, which is subtly held in poised tension. James M. Gordon posits that Wesley's theology of divine love frames his view of atonement. His phrases juxtapose power and powerlessness to reveal contradiction, incongruity, and conflicts in human experienced reality to evoke the tragedy and glory of God's passion.²⁹ Wesley creates a crucicentric atonement theory, a worldview based upon a believer's experience of the cross, where "Bloody sacrifice has become cosmic blessing."³⁰ Christ intercedes and advocates through personal, present suffering, apparent in his blood, denoting sacrifice and God-convincing argument. Wesley's metaphor of atonement is Victim Divine: the crucified pleads a perpetual argument in heaven. His Eucharistic theology posits that Christ's sacrifice made for all times, in sensual language of spiritual empiricism. Wesley argues for an absolute, limitless atonement, framed by universal gospel and universal salvation, where love trumps power and grace trumps judgment: Jesus' blood removes *all* sin for Jesus Christ died for *all*. God's phenomenal, merciful, everlasting love engenders patience amid judgment, which makes Grace irresistible and free: a universal gospel which does not prohibit one being lost. Gordon posits that Wesley views God's relentless, generous determination for Grace as more preponderant than the Calvinistic notion of divine sovereignty. The Wesleys support divine foreknowledge, over a conditional election; God recognizes, but does not cause sin.³¹

God's grace, the foci of Wesleyan theology, is divine love as redeeming activity. Grace dominates all of life as it "creates, redeems, sustains, sanctifies, and glorifies."³² John Wesley posits the reality of God's gift of grace in Christ's work and the Holy Spirit's power. Rosemary Keller states that Wesley wants people to react to this gift in Christ by choosing God over the world, committed to holiness and freedom. Being born again allows one a transformed relationship amid justification and sanctification, where one experiences forgiveness of sins and a life, restored to a moral image of holiness

and righteousness -- to *Imago Dei*. One experiences a total change from the sinful natural, the informed legal, toward the receptive, decisive evangelical human, embracing real holiness, humility, and disinterested love for everyone. This free, unmerited grace is totally God-given to which human beings must respond amid the salvific process to love God, everyone, and self as social practice. In sum, theology, which spiritually empowers one to love God, self, and others creates a new inner spiritual relationship with God which includes a commitment to responsibility in the name of Christ Jesus.³³

Using themes from Western and Eastern Christianity, John Wesley views justification as a combined legal pardon and a healing participation, where salvation is *via salutis*: way of salvation or faith journey – an ongoing process. In justification, remorseful sinners engaging trusting faith in the merits of Christ’s death experience a pardon that covers past and those remaining sins in believers. Believers always need pardon and the righteousness given through justification. Some scholars claim Wesley views atonement where Christ’s death provides satisfaction to God’s justice, that God can pardon and forgive sinners. Other scholars argue that Wesley views Christ’s death as an act of substitution for humanity’s sin. Woodrow Whidden sees both models as Wesleyan, while leaning towards the model of satisfaction pardon in sync with Wesley’s passionate, argumentative contexts. For Wesley, with imputation or reckoned righteousness, sinners are counted sinless in Christ, despite their histories; that is, on a faith journey, pardon is constantly available, only for those who avoid sin, and true saving grace always requires participation.³⁴ For Wesley, justification brings sinners back into favor with God; regeneration changes people internally, bringing them closer to God’s holy image. Justification occurs prior to sanctification or holiness – both gifts of divine favor and grace.³⁵

John A. Newton argues that John Wesley understands sanctification synonymously with Christian perfection or scriptural holiness, where God’s love sets one’s heart on fire. An inflamed heart echoes Wesley’s Aldersgate experiences. Charles Wesley uses these themes in a hymn connecting “a flame of sacred love, a heart’s altar, preparation for God’s perfect will, with sacrifice complete (*Hymns and Psalms*, 745, vv. 1 and 4). John Wesley engages and critiques selected Church Fathers, the Spanish and

French Counter Reformation mystics, and Luther where they are; respectively, where the former are weak on justification by faith and the dark night, and the latter on the import of sanctification and good works. Wesley finds faith and works necessary for sanctification, forging an intrinsic perfection of ethics in obedience and love. Newton argues that Wesley understands that Christian perfection or sanctification equals Christ-like love: given by the Spirit; the love prominent in *1 Corinthians 13*: divine agape given to us through Christ, charity embodied in practice living and character, notably ministry with the disadvantaged and disenfranchised. Wesleyan thought finds a strong connection between religion and reason, views the sacraments and social holiness as paramount. Central to sanctification is grace, disciplined obedience, and deep devotion.³⁶

John Wesley posits that because humanity breaks God's laws and does sin, no one can be righteous or justified before God. Through Christ's merits, God's mercy, and faith, people receive righteousness or justification afforded by God, argues Ole Borgen. God grants the gift of this faith. The experience of faith and justification moves one to do good works as service to God following biblical warrant throughout life. For Wesley, there is nothing we can ever do to warrant or deserve justification. This experience of salvation only comes through God's mercy and Christ's sacrifice on the cross.³⁷ John Wesley's three-fold notion of sin includes: original, involuntary, and willful sin opposed to a recognized law. Original sin concerns guilt and loss of *Imago Dei*. Involuntary sin involves sins of illness, inaccuracy, and ignorance. Willful sin concerns revolt against God. Minus repentance and God's forgiveness, people are only responsible for the third category of sin. All three require atonement, for Christ authors and causes salvation – justification and sanctification. Without Christ's atonement, no one can stand before God. His passion and atonement, like a pendulum, goes backward and forward, covering past and future sins. Wesley's *ordo salutis*, or order of salvation, assumes atonement as foundation and impetus of God's grace, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Atonement guarantees prevenient grace for everyone, is a catalyst for a believer's growth in holiness, until actualized in love. The atonement covers all sins through Christ's atoning work until God receives one in glory the Holy Spirit brings divine Grace

to humanity. Wesley sees Eucharist, the most significant means of grace, as a memorial sacrament, a realized eschatological event for it demonstrates Christ's death, revives Christ's sufferings, and believers have a sensory, worship experience where the Holy Spirit allows worshippers to transcend time and space, an eternal now, where Christ's crucifixion occurred then on Calvary, and here and now.³⁸

In his essay, "*Thoughts on a Single Life*," the connectivity between faith, thought, and praxis, of everyone leading a holy life is apparent. John Wesley suggests that one avoid any needless self-indulgence, sloth, apathy, inactivity; though one ought not to avoid all pleasure, because to avoid all pleasure destroys the body. God does not want us to avoid all pleasure. Avoid those things which harm our enjoyment of God. In his sermon, "*The Good Steward*," Wesley speaks of the body as fearfully and wonderfully made, given to us with power, sense organs, with many talents, and in trust, to use them for God's will, for righteousness sake. The body is thought to be comprised of the four Aristelian elements: fire, earth (dust), air, and water. Humanity is mortal, corruptible dust since the advent of sin, the results of humanity choosing evil. With grace, the body, mind, and soul are infused with the light of God, when one engages via devotion. Believers, then give their bodies and souls as holy, living sacrifice, to God; doing everything to God's glory.³⁹ Given the connectivity, the Wesleys envision between mind, body, and spirit of humanity and that of Christ, and they have a deep appreciation of Christian perfection and holiness, thus the body for them would be good, as it is made in God's image, and thus capable of healthy intimacy. John Wesley's exegesis of the Decalogue and of *1 Corinthians 13* reiterates a type of love that simultaneously embraces and transcends all. For one to live a life of Christian perfection, of holiness, mutual respect would always be accorded to another person and boundaries would not be broached, thus human sexuality would be appreciated as gift, and not perverted by doing harm.

Rejuvenation: Spiritual character development and formation of God's people

Wesleyan spirituality, framed by a passion for order, piety, method, and detail, produces a total, determined, consuming-focus on devotion to God, incarnated in human life of holiness or Christian perfection toward human everlasting destiny; that is, union with God, notes Robin Maas. Wesleyan

spirituality, grounded in Pneumatology, is a process where a believer experiences salvation as justification, where Christ does something for and in us. With justification, one experiences change, a new birth through sanctifying grace, which puts one on a pilgrimage toward perfection. The transformed believer must then engage study and grace-filled initiatives, creating a life style to help forge a freedom from sin as gift in concert with divine freedom and will. Formed by parental expectations and in-depth reading of the Eastern Church fathers and Roman Catholic mystics, John Wesley had idealism, a vision of a second blessing, of entire sanctification where one comes to know God's generosity through faith, which moves one toward holiness, a necessary state for union with God: consummate Love. The Spirit desires total change of individuals and society to social holiness, where through God's gifts to humanity, one has pure intentions toward God, and thus has the freedom to cease committing conscious or known sins. The Spirit working in humanity along with intentional, complete cooperation by humanity is the work of perfection. Wesley had a genius for organization and spirituality, and outlined a way to support his theology with an applied spirituality. He incorporated the model of religious society structure of the Church of England, and divided his members into bands and classes.⁴⁰

Based on marital status, age, and sex, bands were settings where people could engage in soul searching and confession. Meeting weekly, engaging in prayer the bands allowed individuals to speak truth, and about their faults and temptations, as an experience of accountability to support the membership in adherence to their new life that occurred with their experience of justification. Membership to these bands assumed this new birth, and thus new life. One also needed to participate in the ordinary means of grace: regularity in church and band meetings, Bible study, frequent Eucharist, family and private prayer, Friday fasting – all responses to God's grace.⁴¹

Maas notes that with a financial crisis, Wesley created the class meeting system in 1742, with twelve members per group, and a lay leader for each class. Class leaders were to inquire at class meetings as to the individual's spiritual life, to offer advice, reprove, comfort, or exhortation, and to collect funds; a place for mutual support and confession. The class leader would then report to the stewards of the larger

society regarding any illness, disorderly conduct, or those who refused to be reproved. Class meetings helped to assure that one's experience of worship and new birth would not die amid the harsh, often stymieing realities of daily life. Class membership required an assent to avoiding known sin, doing all possible good, and participating in God's ordinances, evidence of an individual's desire to escape from judgment in the eschaton.⁴²

Much of Wesley's applied spirituality does not exist today, particularly as he assumed a consensus on certain matters of doctrine and theological tenets amid the Bible and the church's historical creeds. Both my parents were class leaders while I was growing up in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church: they counted the monies and reported to the weekly Board meetings on the status of their members. As time has gone on, many churches no longer have weekly board meetings.⁴³

Wesleyan spirituality has three diverse, harmonized components that affect character formation: (1) training and experience, (2) massive rallies and small group movements, and (3) behavior and heart. One's spiritual life forms when training and experience work together. Paul Hin Kyung Chin states that Wesley experiences faith, as God's instantaneous gift bolstered by training, a vehicle for receiving God's grace.⁴⁴ For Wesley, spirituality emerges from "a balance of experiencing the Holy Spirit and a continuous training as a proper response to the ministry of the Holy Spirit"⁴⁵ Wesley balanced two modes of meeting: (1) mass rallies to evangelize nonbelievers, and (2) small groups to nurture them. Wesley deals with the reality of so-called original or inherited Adamic sin and actual sin, acts of a corrupt, depraved heart. Holiness, for Wesley involves circumcising or restoring the heart. Obeying divine law, love of God and neighbor, invokes holiness, particularly through the Ten Commandments. Holiness as spirituality and praxis helps transform societies, addressing voluntary, external sins – the fruit of internal original sins, which received less attention. While holiness is progressive in nature, one receives it as God's instantaneous gift of grace. Justification and holiness occur through our reception of faith through God's grace.⁴⁶

Roberta Bondi posits that for Wesley, Christian perfection paraphrases Jesus' response to the most important of the laws, to love God with one's heart, strength, mind, and love one's neighbor as one's self (*Matthew 22:36-38*), as the greatest commandment, as opposed to the mythic, instantaneous, simplistic sense of Aldersgate that has heightened false expectations of believers around spirituality and Christian life. Aldersgate's concept of perfection in love, a complex process, indicates that attitudes like love grow over time through God's grace amid prayer, practice, and training. Second, as opposed to being afraid of one's shortcomings and complexities, Aldersgate's concept of spirituality encourages one to see and comprehend personal history, incentives, options, and patterns of connecting with self, others, all activities, and God. This type of spirituality opts for a daily prayer life, where one shares her or his actual life, warts and all, for relationship, growth, and healing over time – including verbal prayer, centering prayer, praying scripture.⁴⁷

The Wesleys modeled the praxis indicative of embodied loving human character and faith formation. For example, John Wesley's *via devotio*, as a scholar/pastor involved a week, where the following studies framed his existence, and where warmed heart met academic rigor: Mondays and Tuesdays: classics; Wednesdays: ethics and logic; Thursdays: biblical languages; Saturdays: poetry and speaking; and Sundays: theology. Evidently, Fridays were considered a day of rest. The Wesleys engaged faith seeking understanding through heart and head experiential knowledge: living piety with comprehensive learning. Piety and learning connected as one lives a Christian life as *via devotio*, a way of devotion, a totally committed life consecrated to loving God and neighbor. Wesleyan spirituality is life in motion as opposed to a time of devotion. This attitude of *via devotio* links piety and knowledge, holiness and learning, love and truth: a remarkable union of heart and head. Paul Wesley Chilcote argues that Wesleyan devotion, as disciplined, daily praxis engaged classic Eastern and Western Christian spiritualities, which balanced personal and public, social venues. Wesleyan hymns, as language of the

heart, reiterate the heart message of divine redemptive love which desires a response of love, forged by the God-given gift of faith in Christ. In sum, Christian faith is a balanced, loving, active piety of warmed, *caught* heart, intimately tied to pursuit of wisdom with a reasoned, philosophical, *taught* head. In the 18th century, this faith availed itself to those oppressed, marginalized groups, including women, to develop thorough learning and deep-seated piety.⁴⁸

Chilcote maps out Wesleyan salvation as forensic and therapeutic, or legal and healing/restorative – a both/and, synthetic perspective in a four dimensional paradigm of knowing, living faith which understands scriptural, divine revelation amid tradition, reason, and experience. This paradigm engages how one experiences restored divine relationship (justification) through trust (faith) because as broken beings we need healing. Spiritual healing begins when we trust God. When we trust God totally which happens once we accept Christ, God's freely given unconditional love, we can then start to love God, other people, and ourselves. The inherent result of this love experience is our works, our own efforts of love, empowered by God:

Everything begins with the message (kerygma) of God's good news in Jesus Christ, the story of his death and resurrection [free grace and inclusive love: the conjunctions of faith and works and Word and Spirit; via proclamation and preaching]. The experience of the gospel immediately draws us into a community (koinonia) where we can learn how to love [shared experience and enthused disciples: conjunctions of personal and social, form and power; via fellowship and partnership]. In the context of this new family, those who learn of Christ receive the discipline (paideia) that is necessary for them to be nourished and grow in their faith [holistic formation and spiritual nourishment: conjunctions of heart and head and pulpit and table]. All Christians, however, find their ultimate purpose in servanthood (diakonia) [transformational vocation and incarnational ministry: conjunctions of Christ and culture and piety and mercy]. Just as in Jesus' image of the

vine and the branches (Jn 15), we are gathered together to learn how to love and are then sent out into the world to share and love with others.⁴⁹

Relational, Realized, Revelational, Rhythmic, Responsorial, Ritualized Rubric: A Conclusion

When asking the question of human character and faith formation, the Wesleys' life and thought provide a wealth of thought and heart for creating a matrix of lived study that is powerful and engaging. For the Wesley's everything in life is related to the divine and a life framed by Christian perfection, thus it would be important for individuals to engage in deep discernment about who they are, whose they are, and the nature of their ministerial lives on the planet. The process of character development and faith formation emerge from a Wesleyan sense of realized eschatology, the already and not yet, where believers connect with those in ancient Israel, with Christ, and with people today, as we envision and plan for tomorrow. Such a praxis would be revelational as God is forever loving us, and as we look to the Christ event, and I would suggest including Jesus' ministry on earth (in Delores S. Williams terms, the ministerial vision of Jesus). One then has a model/minister who reveals the Creator, and who loves people. This paradigm would be rhythmic as it happens daily. Wesleyan spirituality, through prayers and song, create a sense of immediacy for worship and living a liturgically-enhanced life. Such a program for individuals' development would be responsorial: everything comes from God, thus we are to respond to God's love for us. Worship and prayers are parts of incarnational ritual to engage in daily, not as static repetitive words; rather words and music and movement that can electrify one into worship and praise. A dynamic rubric involving the heart and life experiences being caught and warmed, and the mind and heart being taught and made holy has tremendous potential for enlivening a Wesleyan-holiness-sanctified vital congregation to love, minister, and care deeply enough to make a difference.

Sanctification and justification rooted in love would not tolerate a climate of patriarchy and the demonization of the body which fosters sexual misconduct. The Wesleys would have us love God, ourselves, and our neighbors in such ways that reform would be the order of the day. Simply put, one cannot be holy and experience God's holiness midst hate, abuse, and the desecration of the living of the Decalogue. One cannot know Christian perfection and do harm to another human being. While I continue to find Atonement Theory problematic and the blaming of daily, destructive human behavior on Augustine's concept of original sin (notably Wesley here does not talk about the Fall, since no one fell out of a garden: God expelled them), I find hope in Wesleyan notions of engaged holiness, sanctification, and love. The Wesleyan theology and ethic of love holds much promise if people are willing to commit to the practices, adapted for twenty-first century living. The Wesleys showed us how to engage Christian perfection as holiness. The question remains: do we care enough to try?

END NOTES

¹ I am an ordained Elder in full connection in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, which means I can marry, bury, and consecrate the elements with the best of them!

² Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan, "Womanist Spirituality" *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 644-45.

³ *Ibid.*, 645-646.

⁴ Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., *Praising the God of Grace: The Theology of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), xi

⁵ J. Earnest Rattenbury, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley* (Akron, OH: OSL Publications, 2006), xi-xiii, 10-12, 25-26, 44, 49, 55, 65, 75, 106-134.

⁶ S. T. Kimbrough, Jr. *A Heart to Praise my God: Wesley Hymns for Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 30-32.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 36-38.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 39-41.

⁹ Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., *Praising the God of Grace: The Theology of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 75-84.

¹⁰ S. T. Kimbrough, Jr. *A Heart to Praise my God: Wesley Hymns for Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 103-105.

¹¹ Kimbrough, 131-132; Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., *Praising the God of Grace: The Theology of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 45-54.

¹² Yrigoyen, 1-12;

¹³ Kimbrough, 15-27, 142-144.

¹⁴ Frank Whaling, ed. *John and Charles Wesley: Selected Prayers, Hymns, Journal Notes, Sermons, Letters and Treatises. The Classics of Western Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 77-78, 85, 86, 111, 351, 360, 361, 370; Kenneth Collins, *John Wesley: A Theological Journey* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 111.

¹⁵ Whaling, 77, 111, 304, 351, 370.

¹⁶ *The Works of John Wesley: Thoughts, Addresses, Prayers, and Letters*, Third ed, Complete and unabridged, Vol. 11 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books), 237-241.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 241-244.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 250-253.

¹⁹ Kenneth Collins, *John Wesley: A Theological Journey* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 159.

²⁰ Wesley's commentary on the Ten Commandments. Exodus 20;
http://wesley.nnu.edu/john_wesley/notes/exodus.htm; viewed June 15, 2007.

²¹ Wesley Center Online. <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/notes/1Corinthians.htm#Chapter+XIII>; viewed June 15, 2007.

²² Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker, "For God So Loved the World," in *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse: A Feminist Critique*, eds. Joanne Carlson Brown and Carole R. Bohm (Cleveland, Oh: Pilgrim Press, 1989), 59, 62.

²³ Lane A. Scott, "Experience and Scripture in John Wesley's Concept of Saving Faith" in *Holiness as a Root of Morality: Essays on Wesleyan Ethics*; Essays in Honor of Lane A. Scott (Lewiston, NJ: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), (245-258), 246.

²⁴ Albert C. Outler, ed. *John Wesley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 333-337.

²⁵ Chongnahm (John) Cho, "Adam's Fall and God's Grace: Wesley's Theological Anthropology" in *Holiness as a Root of Morality: Essays on Wesleyan Ethics*; Essays in Honor of Lane A. Scott (Lewiston, NJ: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 5, 12-15.

²⁶ J. Denny Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2001), 7, 14-17; Inna Jane Ray, *The Atonement Muddle: An Historical Analysis and Clarification of a Salvation Theory*. *Journal of Women and Religion*, Vol. 15 (Berkeley, CA: Graduate Theological Union, 1997), 20-25.

²⁷ Weaver, 42-50, 71-72, 120-121, 156, 176-178, 195-215, 225-228;

²⁸ William M. Greathouse, "Sanctification and the Christus Victor Motif in Wesleyan Theology" *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 38 no 2 Fall 2003, 225-229. (217-229)

²⁹ James G. Gordon, "Impassive He Suffers: Immortal He Dies": Rhetoric and Polemic in Charles Wesley's Portrayal of the Atonement" *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 18 no 1 Spr 2000, p 56.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 58.

³¹ *Ibid*, p 58-70.

³² Thomas Langford, *Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1983), 24.

³³ Keller, Rosemary Skinner. "Grace and freedom: spiritual empowerment in the Wesleyan tradition". In *People called Methodist*, p 31-49. Nashville, Tenn: Discipleship Resources, 1984), 31-37.

³⁴ Woodrow W. Whidden, "Wesley on Imputation: A Truly Reckoned Reality or Antinomian Polemical Wreckage?" *Asbury Theological Journal* 52 Fall 1997, 64-68.

³⁵ Collins, 91.

³⁶ John A. Newton, "Spirituality and Sanctification" *One in Christ* 24 no 3 1988, 218-221.

³⁷ Albert C. Outler, ed. *John Wesley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 124-127.

³⁸ Ole E. Borgen, "No end without the means: John Wesley and the sacraments" *Asbury Theological Journal* 46 Spr 1991, 63-65, 67, 72. (p 63-85.)

³⁹ *The Works of John Wesley*, vol 6, 138-139; 215, 219; John Wesley, "The Character of a Methodist," Viewed July 29, 2007, <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/character/>

⁴⁰ Robin Maas, “Wesleyan Spirituality” in *Spiritual Traditions for the Contemporary Church*, ed., Robin Maas and Gabriel O’Donnell, O. P. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 305-313.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 313-314.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 314-315.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 315-316.

⁴⁴ Paul Hin Kyung Chung, “The Balanced Spirituality: An Interpretation of the Wesleyan Tradition in *Holiness as a Root of Morality: Essays on Wesleyan Ethics*”; *Essays in Honor of Lane A. Scott* (Lewiston, NJ: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 80-83.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 84-92.

⁴⁷ Roberta C. Bondi, “Aldersgate and Patterns of Methodist Spirituality” in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, ed. Randy Maddox (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 1990), 24-32. (21-32)

⁴⁸ Paul Wesley Chilcote, *Recapturing the Wesleys’ Vision: An Introduction to the Faith of John and Charles Wesley* (Downer’s Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2004), 69-77.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 21