

This is the substance of my presentation at Oxford.

SYSTEM AND METHOD IN WESLEY'S THEOLOGY

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My intention in this working paper, which is offered not as a finished product but as a stimulus to discussion, is to raise some of the following issues:

1. Have the dimensions of Wesleyan theology conventionally been defined too narrowly in terms of justification and sanctification, and is there a larger soteriological scheme in Wesley which, if brought to the fore, could help to overcome the tendencies toward individualism in historical Methodism and provide a base for a more global and cosmic theology?
2. Can the encounter with liberation theologies, especially of the Latin American variety break open anew for us some of the riches of the Wesleyan heritage? Do we discover instructive parallels with Wesley's presuppositions and method? And do these parallels help us to understand why academic theology has found it difficult to take Wesley seriously, just as they find that liberation theologies do not fit into the traditional mode?

Is it presumptuous to speak of a "system" in Wesley? Perhaps so. We have it on the very best authority that Wesley is most adequately viewed as a "folk theologian" who has left us a large number of sermons and occasional writings, but certainly cannot be accused of generating a system -- at least not in the sense of a Calvin, or even John Fletcher and a host of other more consciously systematic Methodist theologians down to the present day.

Nevertheless, I am intrigued by the possibilities that are opened up for the reworking of Wesleyan thought if one approaches him in terms of his basic orientation. If we ask, in comparison with Luther and Calvin, what was determinative for Wesley's orientation, the uniqueness of his approach becomes more apparent. Whereas for Calvin the eternal counsels of God provide from the beginning the context within which our knowledge of ourselves and our destiny unfolds, and whereas for Luther the reconciliation of God and the sinner which takes place at the midpoint of history in the cross and is appropriated through justification by faith provides the center from which any system must be constructed, for Wesley it is renewal and re-creation in anticipation of, and participation in, the future that is determinative. That is, Wesley sees the present in terms of what it is called to be in the light of the transforming power of the telos of the renewal of all things. Heaven comes to earth in the power of the Spirit to introduce new life that is directed toward ever greater participation in divine reality. Once this orientation toward the promise of fulfillment is grasped, it readily can be seen how it functions to order the other elements in the system: the kingdom of God and creation, sanctification and the fall, prevenient grace and justification.

Caution is always advised lest we read modern interpretations of eschatology into Wesley's understanding of the Kingdom. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that as his theology matures the analogies to contemporary positions increase strikingly. Wesley's early eschatology was couched primarily in terms of heaven as the goal of human existence, and heaven was envisioned as a transcendent realm of the

blessed which was the reward of those who won the approval of God. This approval was the preoccupation of the young Wesley, and it could be gained only by a life of humility and self-sacrifice that was in conformity with the highest standards of the divine will. "My chief motive, to which all the rest are subordinate, is the hope of saving my own soul," he had written before setting sail for Georgia (Letters I, 188). And even in his Preface to the Sermons, as he muses about his past reflections and bares his "inmost thoughts," he writes, "I want to know one thing -- the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore" (Works V, 3).

In many of the sermons after 1738, however, there is an increased emphasis on the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God (the two are used interchangeably), and it is now a reality which is coming into this world in two ways: (a) as "God sets up his throne in our hearts" and we are filled with "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" and "(in a degree) heaven is opened in the soul" (Works, V, 81); and (b) as the promise of "greater things...than have been from the beginning of the world." The earth "shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," and nations shall "beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks." There will be "no oppression,...no extortion to 'grind the face of the poor'" (Works V, 45f.), as all the inhabitants of the earth do freely and willingly the will of the Father in an "active conformity" to the divine purpose (Works V, 337).

Here we see that, under the influence of his conviction that the new age has qualitatively broken in through the renewing activity of the Spirit, Wesley grasps the wider horizon of salvation. It is not simply the soul which is to be saved but the whole world and the soul with it. "The loving knowledge of God, producing... uninterrupted holiness and happiness, shall cover the earth" (Works VI, 279). In no nation does this condition now exist (Works, V, 47), but the kingdom already is present as a promise and power in the hearts of believers who participate in the first fruits of the age to come through the Spirit. Wesley does not simply anticipate that heaven will come to earth but that both heaven and earth will be renewed in "the final renovation of all things by God's...setting up the kingdom which endureth throughout all ages" (Works V, 336).

This vision of the culmination and fulfillment of all things provides Wesley his clue to the original intention of God in creation. The doctrine of creation, which logically precedes consummation, must in Wesley's system follow it. Herein may lie one of the unconscious reasons for his vigorous opposition both to the Calvinists and the deists, for whom everything is given with creation and simply unfolds from that point. In Wesley creation goes on as, by the power of the Spirit, new possibilities are constantly opened up. Thus the Kingdom surpasses the original creation and discloses in unveiled fashion the gracious intention for creation present in the Creator from the beginning but realizable only synergistically. "He that made us without ourselves will not save us without ourselves" (Augustine)(Works VI, 281).

Sanctification has been identified as the Wesleyan doctrine by most commentators both inside and outside Methodism. This is undoubtedly true. But sanctification is subject to distortion if it is viewed independently of the Kingdom and the overall systematic context in which it is placed. When the interpretation of Wesleyan soteriology is limited to justification and sanctification, the intentionality present in both is not grasped and sanctification is seen as an end in itself, with the result that salvation is unnecessarily individualized, which has led to unfortunate consequences in historical Methodism.

The process of sanctification, which begins with the regeneration that accompanies justification, is teleological in nature. It gains its meaning and coherence from its goal, described negatively as the eradication of sin from the life of the creature, a "total death to sin," and positively as the perfect love of God and man, "an entire

renewal in the love and image of God." The goal is the same, therefore, as the cosmic goal of the kingdom of God, but applied now to the individual. In the process of sanctification we become co-workers with God in the renewal of the creation of which we are a part. And our participation in that renewal is intrinsic to the nature of the grace we receive. What we receive is the love of God which, by its very character, must be extended to others. "Love cannot be hid any more than light, and least of all when it shines forth in action.... Never, therefore, let it enter into the heart of him whom God hath renewed...to hide that light" (Works V, 302). Thus sanctification makes us agents of the Kingdom and mediators of the power that in the end will triumph.

The other side of the coin of the positive growth in love is the eradication of sin. And this is the side of Wesley's doctrine which has received the most attention because it seems the least plausible. Yet Wesley was unwilling to modify his doctrine at this point, not only because God requires holiness, but because he was convinced that God empowers what he commands. "No one born of God commits sin; for God's nature abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God" (I John 3:9). The empowering presence and activity of love counteracts those destructive relationships which are against the righteousness of God.

Wesley went further, however, to speculate on the arrival of what could be termed a "little eschaton" in the life of the individual, the eradication of the root of sin, resulting in "entire sanctification" (Works V, 165). In spite of attacks, he staunchly maintained this possibility for three reasons: First, the experience of being cleansed of all trace of sin, including the tendency to sin, was testified to by the Moravians with whom he came in contact and later by some of his own followers. If God is doing a new thing, Wesley reasoned, who are we to deny his power to renew his creature completely in his own image? Certainly one should expect signs and wonders when the kingdom draws near. Second, Wesley found that wherever hope for this transforming action of the Spirit grew, its practical effects were evident, i.e. there was an increase of love and good works, more seriousness of purpose, and more conscientious use of the means of grace.

Just the contrary effects are observed whenever this expectation ceases. They are 'saved by hope,' by this hope of a total change, with a gradually increasing salvation. Destroy this hope, and that salvation stands still, or, rather, decreases daily. Therefore whoever would advance the gradual change in believers should strongly insist on the instantaneous (VIII 328f.).

Here we see an excellent example of the power of the "eschatological imagination" at work in the origins of the Methodist movement. Third, entire sanctification, understood as the removal of the root of sin from the soul, was the clearest sign of the reversal of the old order and the dawning of the new by the overcoming of original sin and its effects. Wesley could espouse an almost felix culpa view of the fall, if hope for its reversal is possible. Humankind has "gained by the fall of Adam a capacity of attaining more holiness and happiness on earth than it would have been possible for them to attain if Adam had not fallen" (Works VI, 232). God's intervention in human history in the coming of Christ, and the blessings of justification and sanctification, would all be unnecessary had the fall never occurred.

No wonder, therefore, that Wesley reacted sharply to John Taylor's attack on the doctrine of original sin. The obvious importance of this doctrine to Wesley's system lies in its correlation to sanctification, especially entire sanctification. Remove it, and entire sanctification has no metaphysical base. Taylor preferred a

neutral beginning for the race, without the corruption of human faculties, and with each generation responsible for its own foibles. Wesley responded in 1757, with his longest independently authored treatise, "The Doctrine of Original Sin, According to Scripture, Reason and Experience," and in 1759, added a letter to Dr. Taylor in which he speaks his sentiments in the polemical style of the time. "Either you or I mistake the whole of Christianity from the beginning to the end.... Are those things that have been believed for so many ages throughout the Christian world real, solid truths or...vain imaginations?" (Works IX, 465). Now, Wesley was no fundamentalist, and he himself objected to the predestinarian implications of original sin as espoused by some Calvinists. But what was at stake here was the grand scheme of redemption, in which the process of sanctification is the struggle to overcome the heritage from the fall, and entire sanctification is the removal of that root of sin which sprang up with Adam's disobedience. Eliminate this tendency toward sin and the eschatological gifts to overcome it become superfluous.

The doctrine of original sin is not only a truth agreeable to Scripture and reason, but a truth of the utmost importance....A denial of original sin contradicts the main design of the gospel.... If we do not derive a corrupt nature from Adam, we do not derive a new nature from Christ.... If we give up this doctrine, we cannot defend either justification by the merits of Christ, or the renewal of our natures by his Spirit (Works IX, 429).

This is the testimony of one who, far from being indifferent about the coherence of his thought, is well aware of the interrelatedness of his system and the way in which the telos requires the origin.

With entire sanctification the two sides of the re-creating process -- the elimination of sin and the increase of love -- come together as the person is restored to wholeness. When sin is removed completely, "in that instant he lives the full life of love" (Works XI, 402). This is not the end of sanctification, however, since for Wesley growth in grace and love is infinite. So that the little eschaton present in entire sanctification is not the end but a new beginning. And the person "still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity" (ibid.).

This growth in grace is not just individual but social and even cosmic, "for all the earth shall be a more beautiful Paradise than Adam ever saw" (Works VI, 294). All the inhabitants of earth shall in that day sing together, "'Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth'" (ibid., 288). And there will be "a deep, an intimate, an uninterrupted union with God; a constant communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, through the Spirit; a continual enjoyment of the Three-One God, and of all the creatures in him." (ibid., 296).

I have dealt elsewhere with the key role of justification in Wesley's system (Sanctification and Liberation [Abingdon Press, 1981], pp. 31ff.), but suffice it to say that the instrumental pattern which we have observed here in sanctification is operative in justification as well. As sanctification is instrumental to the grand design of the restoration of all things, so justification is instrumental to sanctification. This is what distinguishes Wesley from the Lutheran heritage which is otherwise so influential in his conversion and appropriation of justifying grace. For Luther the reconciling event of justification is salvation; for Wesley it is the means by which God begins the renewal process in his creatures. This is not to say that justification is transcended in sanctification. By no means. It remains the foundation, the continuing base, on which the proper relation between the Creator

and the creature and the world is maintained. The follower of Christ never grows beyond the need for God's continuing justifying grace which sustains. But the intention present in justification is the equipping of the saints to be agents of the same reconciliation they have received—and are receiving still—which is the sign of the age to come. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (cf. Eph. 2:8-10).

Now that the architectonics of Wesley's system have been sketched, it should be apparent that he operates out of a cohesive and comprehensive position, a system which admittedly suffers at some points from a too substantialist metaphysic bequeathed him by his time. (A charitable reading of Wesley sees him as struggling to overcome this substantialism in favor of a more relational approach [cf. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, A Theology of Love, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1972]). What distinguishes Wesley from Luther and Calvin, however, is the extent to which his system is oriented toward the future and finds its motivation in the anticipation of an ever greater fulfillment yet to come, a fulfillment already present in part through the activity of the Spirit mobilizing resources and energies toward that goal, and critiquing the present in terms of a normative vision provided by the telos.

Wesley's Presuppositions and Method

Turning from the implicit system in Wesley's thought to his theological method, one cannot help but be struck by the similarities between Wesley's approach and the issues of methodology being raised by Latin American liberation theologians today. I would suggest, in fact, that the Latin Americans can be of very real assistance in helping us to smoke out the presuppositions and theological method which Wesley employed but seldom elucidated.

Truth

Colin Williams' John Wesley's Theology Today (Abingdon, 1960) is written with an eye toward ecumenical dialogue. It is a conscious effort to defend Wesley against the accusation of indifference to theological issues and to demonstrate the seriousness with which he took the theological task. Williams repeats the popular but troublesome quotation, "Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?... If it be, give me thine hand," which he comments is often used to infer that Wesley was "more interested in sincerity than in doctrine" (p.13).

We initially encounter this quote (taken from II Kings 10:15) in a letter Wesley wrote to one of his preachers, Howell Harris, who was of Calvinist persuasion (Letters II, 8f.; August 6, 1742). No doubt Wesley had been engaged in strenuous debate with Harris, for the issue of predestination was a matter of no small import with him, as the sermon on "Free Grace" (1740, Works VII, 373) amply demonstrates. Nevertheless Wesley concludes, "Brother, is thy heart with mine, as my heart is with thy heart? If it be, give me thy hand.... Let us rise up together against the evildoers. Let us not weaken but... strengthen one another's hands in God" (Letters II, 9). Was this simply a tactic of compromise on Wesley's part to avoid a split in the movement? No, in spite of his strong convictions, predestination belonged to that category of beliefs which Wesley termed, "opinions," about which Christians could honestly differ. How could he allow such differences regarding the truth? Because he clearly recognized the limitations of language and of the human mind to encompass truth and describe it exhaustively. In his own Compendium of Natural Philosophy, Wesley reprints Peter Brown's view that

Divine metaphor is the substituting our ideas of sensation, which are direct and immediate with words belonging to them, for the things of heaven, of which we have no direct idea, or immediate conception.... The words, figuratively transferred from one thing to another, do not agree with the things to which they are transferred, in any part of their literal sense" (vol. II, pp. 436f.).

To be sure, this stricture does not apply to "essential doctrines" central to Scriptures or defined by early councils. But even these doctrines are subject to the limits of language, and the category of "opinions" appears for Wesley to have been expandable depending upon the circumstances.

Commenting from the position of Latin American liberation theology, Jose Miguez Bonino attacks the classical concept of truth which he says is taken for granted by most academic theology. According to that view truth belongs to an abstract "universe complete in itself, which is copied or reproduced in 'correct' propositions, in a theory...which corresponds to this truth.... Truth is therefore preexistent to and independent of its historical effectiveness" (Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation, p.88). The liberationists want to claim, by contrast, that truth is to be created in history in faithfulness to -- "being true to" -- God's will in concrete situations. Truth is not a correct abstract idea but an "obedient participation -- whether in action or suffering -- in God's active righteousness and mercy" (ibid.,89).

Without questioning the classical correspondence theory of truth, which he simply assumed, Wesley nevertheless arrived at an understanding similar to that of the Latin Americans by making concrete truth more ultimate than theories that do not affect life. For him the essence of truth is God's love. In his tract, "A letter to a Roman Catholic," he writes, "Are you not fully convinced that malice, hatred, revenge, bitterness, whether in us or in you, in our hearts or in yours, is an abomination to the Lord? Be opinions right or be they wrong, these tempers are undeniably wrong." They undermine the credibility of the gospel and prevent us from fulfilling the mission to which we are called of spreading the truth. "O when shall it spread over all the earth!" While we may continue to disagree about the correspondence of our theories to the truth, "let the points wherein we differ stand aside; here are enough wherein we agree...to provoke one another to love and good works;...enough to be the ground of every Christian temper and every Christian action ." The mission of the renewal of the world demands unity. "Let us endeavor to help each other in whatever we are agreed leads to the kingdom" (Works X, 80-85).

By defining the innermost nature of truth as love, Wesley insures that truth will become concrete. For love is never abstract. Wherever it is received from God it must be passed on in deeds. This understanding is inherent in his view that sanctification, as the renewal of the creation and the restoral of the creation, is the goal toward which everything else tends and which all else serves. For sanctification is nothing else than growth in love the increase of God's own love through the creature Love cannot remain an abstract idea. Its inner character drives toward expression, to have effect, to make a difference, to become incarnate.

Thus, far from being the result of sloppy thinking or indifference to serious theological issues, Wesley's unwillingness to give opinions and ideas ultimate status rests in his profound understanding of the nature of Christian truth.

Knowledge

Miguez points out that the epistemological correlary of the Christian under-

standing of truth is that knowledge is "not a gnosis, but a way.... a 'walking,' ...a participation in new life which has been made available in the midst of the old 'world.' It is 'a new birth'" (Doing Theology, pp. 89f.). Genuine knowledge of the revelation in Christ is not so much cognitive knowledge of a metaphysical realm but discipleship in the way to the kingdom announced by Jesus, which "now can and should be travelled by humanity" (Jon Sobrino, Christology at the Crossroads, 351). Only "he who does the word will know the doctrine," says Miguez interpreting John 8 (Doing Theology, 90), because "knowing" is being involved in a reality in which one is being transformed and is becoming an agent of transformation. In this sense the Bible is closer to Marx than to Kant (cf. Sobrino, p 348). It is not a matter of "interpreting the world" but "changing it" (Juan Luis Segundo, The Liberation of Theology, 13).

Again, Wesley's doctrine of sanctification places him in proximity to the liberationists. The devils are orthodox and know all the right doctrines -- but are nevertheless devils (Works V, 8, 213). Knowledge which is not transforming does not participate in the creative power of the Holy Spirit, who is the agent of sanctification. But where "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us," both change in life and works of love must needs be the result.

Wesley takes "experience" seriously as an epistemological component, a development which had begun in his own time in philosophy but was not yet general in theological circles, where the reliance on the authority of Scripture, tradition and reason was deemed not only more safe but more appropriate to an eternal science. To be sure, the place accorded experience by Wesley was not to be without its difficulties. And he sought to clarify that experience functioned not so much as a source of theology, but rather as a confirmation of the knowledge of God derived from Scriptures and the witness of the church (cf. Williams, 32ff.). Nevertheless his conviction that experience is a component of genuine knowledge served to guarantee that the empirical element could not be ignored by succeeding generations of Methodist theologians. And this leads me to my final comparison.

Praxis

Latin American theologians outline a new agenda for theology. The primary task of the theologian, they say, should not be "establishing through deduction the consequences of conceptual truths," but rather "analyzing a historical praxis which claims to be Christian" (Miguez, 93). A "historical praxis" means in this case a total system, with its ideological underpinnings and its practical outworkings that together constitute, communicate, and reinforce a world view and mode of operation so pervasive in the culture as to be taken for granted. This praxis is always grounded, according to Marxist analysis, in the prevailing economic system and its mode of the creation and distribution of wealth. Under this definition, theology becomes a critical enterprise which compares the present state of things with the will of God for humankind as disclosed by Jesus in his proclamation of the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The present order is held up against the promised future, and the question of how justice, liberation, and love can become operative in this situation is asked. Only in this way does theology avoid being an exercise in mystification and participate in the renewing power of the Spirit at work in the world.

Although the critical analysis of the structures of society was never Wesley's long suite--and could scarcely be so in an age when democracy and the exercise of responsibility by the citizenry were in their rudimentary stages--some of his writings do point in this direction in what can be significant and paradigmatic ways. I shall list just three examples.

In his major treatise on "Original Sin," Wesley goes beyond the usual method of theological argumentation, with its deductions based on Scripture and tradition, and begins instead with an "empirical" survey of the human condition, first historically and then geographically, inquiring around the globe as to the actual state of human relations in every clime and under every people. Not surprisingly he discovers a universal malaise. Just one example of this is the phenomenon of war.

Let us calmly and impartially consider the thing itself. Here are forty thousand men gathered together on this plain. What are they going to do? See there are thirty or forty thousand more at a little distance. And these are going to shoot them through the head or body, to stab them, or split their skulls, and send most of their souls into everlasting fire, as fast as they possibly can. Why so? What harm have they done to them? O none at all! They do not so much as know them. But a man, who is King of France, has a quarrel with another man, who is King of England. So these Frenchmen are to kill as many of these Englishmen as they can, to prove the King of France is in the right. Now, what an argument is this! What a method of proof! What an amazing way of deciding controversies! What must mankind be, before such a thing as war could ever be known or thought of upon earth? If, then, all nations, Pagan, Mahometan, and Christian, do, in fact, make this their last resort, what farther proof do we need of the utter degeneracy of all nations ...of the absolute want, both of common sense and common humanity, which runs through the whole race of mankind? (Works IX, 222).

In another essay, "On the Present Scarcity of Provisions" (Works XI, 53-59), Wesley not only graphically describes the plight of the poor, he proposes concrete remedies the government should apply, including taxes to curb unnecessary luxury, price controls on basic necessities on which the poor are dependent for survival, and a reduction in military spending to reduce the deficits that fuel the inflation that crushes the poor. Wesley's knowledge of economic principles was of course unsophisticated in an age when "the dismal science" was just getting underway. But he knew when government policies and social practices militated against the law of love and made scandalous the British claim of being "a Christian people."

Perhaps the best example of this kind of social analysis is Wesley's "Thoughts upon Slavery" (Works XI, 59-79), in which he dismantles one by one the carefully constructed ideologies by which Christians were able to justify the slave trade to themselves and to others. To the claim, "the traffic in slaves is authorized by law," he responds, "Notwithstanding ten thousand laws... there must still remain an essential difference between justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy" (Works XI, 70). The methods used to procure slaves, it is argued, are "necessary to furnishing our colonies yearly with a hundred thousand slaves...inasmuch as white men are not able to labor in hot climates." Wesley retorts, "Better that all those islands should remain uncultivated forever; yea, it were more desirable that they were altogether sunk in the depth of the sea, than that they should be cultivated at so high a price as the violation of justice, mercy and truth" (ibid., 71). Wesley addresses his appeals to the captains of slave ships, who claimed they bought slaves only to save them from death as prisoners of war. He punctures this claim with the question, "Can they say, before God, that they ever took a single voyage, or bought a single Negro, from this motive? They cannot; they well know, to get money, not to save lives, was the whole and sole spring of their motions" (ibid., 72). He appeals to the merchants who profit from the business and whose money it is that corrupts African rulers to sell their own people and to make war to procure others, and to the plantation owners, who supply the economic motivation for the whole enterprise. "It is your money that pays the merchant, and through him the captain and the African butchers. You therefore are guilty, yea, principally guilty, of all these frauds, robberies and murders. You are

the spring that puts all the rest in motion" (ibid., 78).

Wesley here consistently identifies the economic motive as the main factor that perpetuates the evil. And he attempts to appeal to those in the system who he thinks can do something about it. More politically effective, of course, were the efforts of William Wilberforce, who took the battle to Parliament and persisted until the trade was finally abolished. But long before Wilberforce was successful, during one of the early parliamentary skirmishes, Wesley from his deathbed wrote his encouragement.

Unless God has raised you up for this very thing you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But if God be for you, who can be against you? ... Go on, in the name of God and in the power of his might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it (Letters VIII, 265).

Here Wesley sees the Spirit of God at work in the concrete circumstances of parliamentary debate to bring about change that will eventuate in a social order more in conformity with divine righteousness. He lacked the panoply of critical tools available to today's theologian for such analyses, tools which make it possible to be more astute about the systemic and global dimension involved in contemporary forms of oppression. But he made do with what he had, giving of his own substance and enlisting others to found clinics, orphanages and schools, and set up literacy projects, credit unions and cottage industries. To project Wesley's concerns into the twentieth century is inevitably to become involved in the issues raised to consciousness by the theologians of liberation.

No, Wesley does not fit traditional models of the systematic theologian. But it is the argument of this paper that, although he did not write a system, he did presuppose a comprehensive theological orientation which is surprisingly contemporary in its eschatological intentionality, and bears arresting resemblances to the hermeneutic of Latin American theologies today. Not surprisingly, he suffers from some of the same misunderstandings which they encounter in their efforts to do theology in a new mode. And an appreciation of their enterprise may help us to look at Wesley afresh and discover insights we did not know were there.