



TYNDALE

• SEMINARY •

Course Syllabus

Fall 2012

JOHN WESLEY AND THE MISSION OF GOD
MISS/THEO 0629

WEEKENDS: OCT 11, 12, 13; NOV 15, 16, 17

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To access your course materials at the start of the course, please go to
<https://www.mytyndale.ca>

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of the mission of the church today in terms of the Trinitarian mission of God (*missio dei*) drawing upon insights from the life and experience of John Wesley and of early Methodism as a movement of evangelism, renewal, and mission within the larger Christian Church. Students will explore the witness of John and Charles Wesley, the dynamics of early Methodism, and the relevance of these precedents for comprehensive (holistic) mission today, especially in the current Canadian context.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to relate the central themes of Christian doctrine to a theology of the mission of God and the mission of the people of God.
- Demonstrate a critical appreciation and understanding of John Wesley's theology as it relates to a theology of the mission of God and the mission of the people of God.
- Demonstrate the ability to relate non-confessional, critical historiography of Christian movements to a confessional and frankly theological understanding of God, of Christian teaching, worship and prayer, life in the church, and mission in the world.
- Identify and understand significant civilizational and intellectual challenges to Christian social and intellectual life that are prevalent in contemporary culture, and in particular in contemporary Canadian and Western societies. Demonstrate a critical perspective on at least one such challenge, and demonstrate the ability to use this critical perspective as the basis for evaluating proposals for Christian social and intellectual renewal in contemporary culture.
- Demonstrate skills in critical thinking in research, writing and spoken communication, through critical analysis of sources of information appropriate to the level of the course.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED TEXTS

Hempton, David. *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005. ISBN 0300-10614-9.

Mealey, Mark T. *God is Love: Christian Doctrine as the Story of God's Love*. Manuscript available in PDF form (see course resource page).

Newbigin, Lesslie. *Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. ISBN 978-0802808295.

Outler, Albert, ed. *John Wesley*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. ISBN 978-0195028102.

B. SIGNIFICANT SOURCES

Wesley, John. *Sermons*. Ed. Albert Outler. 4 vols. (Vols. 1-4 of the *Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley*). Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984-87.

Wesley, John. *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*. Ed. Franz Hildebrandt and Oliver Beckerlegge. (Vol. 7 of the *Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley*). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

In general, wherever something written or published by John Wesley is available in the *Bicentennial Edition*, published by Abingdon and Oxford, this is to be preferred to other sources. Nevertheless, since there may be significant demand on the library's resources, other sources may be used. Wesley's writings are widely available in other print versions and online.

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Read the whole of Mealey's *God is Love* prior to the first lecture session (Oct 11). The purpose of this reading is to create a common ground for relating the central themes of Christian doctrine to a theology of the church's mission in the world. In particular, this is intended to create a common ground for understanding the doctrine of the Trinity and of the *missio dei* to a doctrine of the church's mission in the world. Because *God is Love* was written by the instructor there will be no assignment related to this reading.

Due Oct 11.

2. Write an analytical theological review that relates a central theme in John Wesley's theology to a theology of the mission of God and of the mission of God's people in the world.

Central themes in Wesley's theology include the fall of humanity; election, predestination and atonement; the witness of the Spirit; faith; new birth; sanctification; Christian perfection; the church; the sacraments; Christian ethics. You may check with the instructor on appropriate texts, but in general such a review should be based on at least 4 or 5 major Wesley sermons.

You may also write an analytical review of Wesley's explanations and defenses of his practices, including early Methodist ecclesiology, early Methodist sacramental life, class and band meetings, or other important practices where you may find significant sources written by Wesley in defense or explanation of the practice. The purpose of this review is to demonstrate the ability to relate Wesley's theology to his practice of mission. There are a variety of possible sources here, including sermons, hymns, letters and occasional pieces.

You may also choose to write an analytical theological review of one of Wesley's major engagements with Enlightenment critiques of Christian faith. The most

significant of these are his *Earnest Appeals* and his *Letter to the Reverend Doctor Conyers Middleton*.

The analytical review should be 10-12 pages in length and should be almost entirely an analysis of the primary sources, with only incidental reference to secondary sources where necessary. The instructor will orient the class to Wesley's bibliography and will describe analytical reviews during class sessions.

Due Nov 15. 40% of Final Grade.

3. Write an analytical review of Hempton's *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*.

This review must identify and assess the main historical and intellectual categories in the light of which Hempton understands the history of the Methodist movement.

Your review should also focus on how Wesley's theology does or does not relate to Methodist history in the story that Hempton tells.

In particular, your review should identify issues in "practical ecclesiology." That is, it should identify perennial challenges and particularly modern issues that the Christian church faces in its historical movements. You should seek to assess the gravity of these challenges and to reflect on positive and negative lessons that can be learned from Methodist history in dealing with these challenges.

The analytical review should be very concise, and should be 3-5 pages in length.

Due Nov 15. 20% of Final Grade.

4. Write an analytical reflection on a theme related to the *missio dei*, the mission of the church in the world, and the mission of the church to the world. This reflection should integrate discussions of central themes in Wesley's theology and themes in Methodist historiography with an analytical review of Lesslie Newbigin's *Open Secret*.

The core of this analytical reflection will be an analytical review of the whole of Newbigin's book, approximately 6 pages in length. This review will contain an outline of Newbigin's argument, and an analysis of the stated and unstated principles of that argument, and of the consequences of that argument.

After this review of the whole of the book, select a particular theme related to Newbigin's argument that you believe is significant. You may evaluate Newbigin's approach positively or negatively. But beginning from your analysis, reflect more broadly on the theme you have chosen to highlight, integrating your insights from Wesley's theology and Methodist historiography.

In total, the analytical reflection should be 12-14 pages in length.

Due Final Day of Classes, Dec 7. 40% of Final Grade.

5. There will be no final examination.

D. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Citations Style

For proper citation style, consult the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.46 to 10.51](#) and [14.253 to 14.254](#).

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

General Guidelines

Students should consult the current Academic Calendar for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System. The Academic Calendar is posted at <http://tyndale.ca/registrar>.

E. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments.

Wesley Analytical Review, Nov 15	40 %
Hempton Analytical Review, Nov 15	20 %
Newbiggin Analytical Reflection, Dec 7	40 %
Total Grade	100 %

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Oct 11 6.30-9.30	Introduction to John Wesley and the Early Methodist Movement Readings: Hempton: Introduction; Chapters 1-2; Chronology (pp 217-25) Outler, Introduction (pp 3-33) Outler, 37-86 Wesley, <i>On God's Vineyard</i> (Outler 104-116)
Oct 12 6.30-9.30	Wesley's Doctrine of God, of Humanity in the Image of God, and of the Fall Readings:

	<p>Wesley, <i>Original Sin</i> (s44 in <i>Bicentennial Edition—BE</i>) Wesley, <i>The New Birth</i> (s45 in <i>BE</i>)</p> <p>Wesley’s Doctrine of Atonement and Salvation Readings: Wesley, <i>The Scripture Way of Salvation</i> (s43 in <i>BE</i>; Outler, 271-82)</p>
<p>Oct 13 8.30-11.30</p>	<p>Wesley’s Doctrine of Salvation and Sanctification Readings: Wesley, <i>Justification by Faith</i> (s5 in <i>BE</i>; Outler, 198-208) Wesley, <i>The Witness of the Spirit II</i> (s11 in <i>BE</i>; Outler, 209-220) Wesley, <i>Christian Perfection</i> (s40 in <i>BE</i>; Outler, 252-270) Wesley, <i>A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity</i> (Outler, 181-196)</p> <p>Wesley’s Doctrine of the Church and of Sacraments Readings: Wesley, <i>Catholic Spirit</i> (s39 in <i>BE</i>; Outler, 91-103) Wesley, <i>Of the Church</i> (s74 in <i>BE</i>; Outler, 308-316) Wesley, <i>On Baptism</i> (Outler, 317-331) Wesley, <i>The Duty of Constant Communion</i> (s101 in <i>BE</i>; Outler, 332-344)</p>
<p>Oct 13 1.00-4.30</p>	<p>Wesley’s Doctrine and Practice in Christian Mission Readings: Outler, 134-180 Outler, 353-376</p> <p>Wesley’s Engagement with Enlightenment Critiques of Christian Social and Intellectual Traditions Readings: Outler, 384-424</p>
<p>Nov 15 6.30-9.30</p>	<p>Early Methodist Mission Readings: Hempton, Chapters 3-5</p>
<p>Nov 16 6.30-9.30</p>	<p>Early Methodist Mission Readings: Hempton, Chapters 6-9</p>
<p>Nov 17 8.30-11.30</p>	<p>Themes in Newbigin’s <i>Open Secret</i> Readings: Newbigin, Chapters 1-6</p>
<p>Nov 17 1.30-4.30</p>	<p>Themes in Newbigin’s <i>Open Secret</i> Readings: Newbigin, Chapters 7-10</p>

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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