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Salvation for Both Worlds

Contours of a Wesleyan/Biblical Social Theology

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Introduction

From early in his Christian journey, John Wesley engaged in a range of activities directed toward the alleviation of the suffering of those who were, for various reasons, marginalized in 18th century English society. Visiting the sick and imprisoned, feeding the hungry, and serving the poor were core activities of Wesley and the Methodists, both before and after Aldersgate. Further, across the many years of his ministry Wesley repeatedly exhorted his Methodist followers to make engagement with the poor a fundamental part of their Christian living. In fact, Wesley would assert that without this regular service to the poor, his followers' Christian faith was in jeopardy. The temptation to settle into comfortable lives would be too great to resist unless it was tempered by frequent service to the marginalized.[1]

The succeeding generations of those who have claimed Wesley as their spiritual ancestor have produced a number of significant social reformers who have called the Church to serve and advocate for the poor. Examples of these perspectives and practices from the Wesleyan traditions represented here this evening would confirm that this emphasis on the transformation of individual lives, the alleviation of human suffering, and even the transformation of the world is an everflowing stream that courses from the headwaters of our Wesleyan tradition.

Nevertheless, Donald Dayton, commenting upon what he has termed "the Wesleyan preferential option for the poor," has observed that while Wesley's practice "...seems to make an option for the poor constitutive of the life of the church," he is "less clear how he would argue the theological grounding for this praxis. It seems to me that one reason for the neglect

[1] For a review of Wesley on this point see Rebekah Miles, "Works of Mercy as Spiritual Formation: Why Welsey Feared for the Souls of the Rich," in *The Wesleyan Tradition: A Paradigm for Renewal*, ed. Paul W. Chilcote (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 98-110.

of this theme in later generations is that Wesley did not ground his praxis sufficiently theologically to make the issue normative for those who would claim him as mentor in the following centuries."[2]

Yet even if we accept Dayton's claim that Wesley "did not ground his praxis sufficiently theologically" I suspect that the theological foundations have all been poured. One might, for example, argue that Wesley's well-established emphasis on the ministry of Methodists to the poor and the marginalized was the result of a general compassion for those who are, in various ways, suffering. One could even go farther and suggest that his compassion is a response to the love of God which he himself has received. This, as a foundation upon which to establish the Wesleyan preferential option for the poor, should not be dismissed lightly. Nevertheless, I am still driven to ask, "Is the foundation of a Wesleyan emphasis on the poor sufficiently established in this way?

My suggestion this evening is that there are other theological foundations for the Wesleyan concern for the marginalized which run deeply in the Scriptures, in Wesley's theology and in the Wesleyan psyche. It is not my intention tonight to put words into Wesley's mouth or to assert that he had a fully developed social theology. It is, after all, axiomatic among Wesley scholars that Wesley was not a systematic theologian. However, I do want to suggest that John Wesley had imbibed the Scriptures so thoroughly that it is possible to sketch out the contours of a biblical and theological grounding for our persistent Wesleyan orientation toward the love of our neighbour which expresses itself in service to the marginalized and a hope for the transformation of the world.

For example, the recognition that Wesley's theology is focused on transformation and re-creation is key to understanding the impulse to transform society that was expressed in his

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2. Donald W. Dayton, "'Good News to the Poor': The Methodist Experience after Wesley," in *The Portion of the Poor: Good News to the Poor in the Wesleyan Tradition*, ed. M. Douglas Meeks, Kingswood Books (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 67.

own ministry and that continues to percolate in the ministry of those who lay claim to his heritage. Whether we are discussing the transformation that was possible in individual lives, the restoration of the image of God, or the re-creation of all things, for Wesley God's work in the world is one of transformation that was anticipated in all of creation. The scope of this transformation and of this transformational impulse is expansive.

In this lecture, then, I want to sketch out several currents in Scripture—many of which are also found in Wesley—which ground our hope theologically. In the process, I hope to outline the contours of a biblical and Wesleyan social theology. We begin then, with the shape of the canon and its bookends, creation and new creation.

Creation and New Creation

Contrary to the way in which we often read the Scriptures, I am convinced that the Bible—taken in its entirety—is fundamentally optimistic. The Scriptures convey an optimism of grace, grounded in the firm conviction that the goodness of God will triumph. Overarching the canon is the framework of the creation of all that exists by the God who, in Genesis 1-3, calls the world into existence. The world, fresh from the Creator's hands is repeatedly described as "good" and at the end of the first creation narrative is deemed "exceedingly good" (Genesis 1:31). At the other end of the canon, the Bible closes with the stunning vision of a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21-22) which will restore—and more—the goodness of God's handiwork.

In between these canonical bookends there is, of course, the tragic story of a world in disarray, of a humanity run amok. It is the drama of humankind endowed with the image of God but nevertheless deeply flawed; the image of God distorted by disobedience and alienation from God and from each other. We cannot read far into the Scriptures without coming away with a deep sense of the profound loss that the world has suffered through human sin. It is

difficult to exaggerate the depth of the depravity into which humankind has fallen. Further, we quickly learn that the ramifications of this alienation have spread beyond humankind to the larger creation. The Bible is thoroughly realistic about the human propensity to perversity and about the ramifications of human sinfulness personally, socially, economically, and ecologically. This biblical realism leads some to despair of the world; to reject it as beyond hope; and to withdraw from engagement with the world. At its worst this may lead some to resignation about the state of the marginalized, sometimes citing Jesus' observation that "you always have the poor with you" (Matthew 26:11) as though it is an excuse—if not a mandate—for the marginalization of hundreds of millions.

But having said this, when we read the full canon of the Scriptures, we are driven to the conclusion that the one who created the world is determined to recreate it. God is not only the Creator, but also the Re-creator. From the end of the flood story where God determines not to turn away from humankind again; through the weeping agony of the prophet Jeremiah whose union with God is so intimate that it is almost impossible to distinguish between the anguish of the prophet and the aching heart of God; to the incarnation of the Word of God which signals God's embrace of humankind; to the revelation of self-emptying divine love in the crucifixion; and to the gift of the Holy Spirit as the continual guiding presence of God in the world—the Bible affirms God's persistent, stubborn and boundless love of the world. The visions of a new creation in Revelation are not merely wishful thinking; they are the culmination of the entire biblical narrative. Neither are the visions of a new heaven and a new earth the product of a pessimistic dismissal of the world as it is, in favour of the world as we might wish it to be. Rather, these visions are a deep affirmation of God's determination to fulfill the purposes of creation. Without the visions of Revelation, the biblical story is incomplete, inchoate and without purpose. Therefore, there is a fundamental congruency within the canon of Scripture between the creation in Genesis and the new creation in Revelation. In between these

bookends we find the story of God's call to faithful human partners to join with him in the work of bringing the new creation to reality.

This structure of the canon infuses it with an optimism of grace, with the firm conviction that God's faithfulness and love will triumph. More than simply patching over the world, God purposes to recreate it. The movement from creation through uncreation to new creation is foundational to the understanding of the Scriptures and it was fundamental to Wesley.

Theodore Runyon has recognized and written extensively about "the new creation" as a key motif in Wesley's thought, most notably in his book, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today*.[3] His argument is that Wesley's fundamental concern with the renewal of the image of God in humankind brings with it an emphasis upon the renewal of the harmony of the original creation. Runyon writes, "For Wesley religion is not humanity's means to escape to a more tolerable heavenly realm but participation in God's own redemptive enterprise, God's new creation, 'faith working by love,' bringing holiness and happiness to all the earth. But this inevitably means confronting the injustices of the present age."[4] It is this emphasis upon the work of God in the renewal of the divine image which, according to Runyon, spurs Wesley's unwillingness to excuse his followers from an easy acceptance of the suffering, alienation and oppression of the marginalized. His hope in God's work of new creation spurs Wesley to work for a world in which harmony and well-being might flourish for all humankind.

Randy Maddox has argued that this emphasis on the new creation became more prominent in Wesley's thought later in his life. Particularly in three sermons, "The General Spread of the Gospel" (1783), "The Signs of the Times" (1787), and "Of Former Times" (1787), according to Maddox, Wesley emphasized God's work of new creation in the realm of socioeconomic realities. He writes:

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

[4] Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 169-170.

> These late sermons also evidence Wesley's characteristic emphases about how we can best cooperate in God's nurturing of new socioeconomic realities. His broadest emphasis is on the church's mission of evangelism. Central to this emphasis is his conviction that transformed action in the world is grounded in transformed lives. As those already experiencing God's inner renewing work, Christians should seek to meet the social and economic needs of others. But we should not limit ourselves to concern for external welfare; like God, we should long that others experience as well the new creation of the spiritual dimension of their lives."[5]

This linkage between the ministry of Christians to meet socioeconomic needs and to bring socioeconomic transformation with the spiritual transformation of human lives leads us next to consider briefly John Wesley's *ordo salutis*, or order of salvation.

Wesley's *Ordo Salutis*

John Wesley's theology was, fundamentally, soteriological. Salvation, in its fullness, was the constant theme of his preaching and his writing. There are many excellent treatments of Wesley's theology of salvation,[6] so for our purposes a simple sketch of the way of salvation is adequate.

Foundational to Wesley's theology was his belief that humanity has been deeply marred by the stain of sin. The original creation of humanity in the image of God has been tainted, if not destroyed, by sin. Not only has humankind been alienated from God, but there is a corresponding corruption of the image of God in which humanity was first created. If left to its own devices, humanity would be lost. But the gulf between human depravity and God is bridged by God's prevenient grace which is present universally and operative when it prompts a

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[5] Randy Maddox, "Nurturing the New Creation: Reflections on a Wesleyan Trajectory," in *Wesleyan Perspectives on the New Creation* (edited by M. Douglas Meeks; Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 42.

6. For example, Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998); Kenneth Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdom, 2007)

positive response from human beings. This prevenient grace, as it were, mitigates the paralyzing effect of sin and prompts a willing human partner to respond to God's grace.

Justification and new birth are joined together for Wesley as the next benchmark in his order of salvation. For Wesley, justification signals what God does for us through his forgiveness of our sin; new birth or regeneration is what God does within us, the first movements of God's transforming work toward the restoration of the image of God. Justification *restores the relationship* between God and human beings while new birth and sanctification *restore the image of God*. While Wesley emphasizes justification as constituting a *relative* change in the relationship between God and humanity, unless coupled with a corresponding *real* change within the person, justification would be an ineffective and incomplete salvation. Wesley constantly insists that along with the relative change there has to come a subjective or real change within the person. This subjective change or transformation (or regeneration) begins with the new birth. However, as important as the new birth is, it is also, in and of itself, only a beginning. Christian perfection or perfect love or sanctification is the further work of transformation. That is, the transformation that begins with new birth continues on toward Christian perfection.[7] Throughout the entire order of salvation, the grace of God meets with an obedient response from God's human partner. The initiative rests with God and thus is founded upon grace; however, it must meet with a positive human response. Thus Wesley's soteriology is deeply cooperant, bringing together divine grace and human response into a dynamic and powerful transforming work. Make no mistake: Wesley is thoroughly convinced that the foundation of this transforming work is to be found in God's grace. But he maintains that unless the human partner responds to this grace, it will be thwarted. Furthermore, Wesley's soteriology is fundamentally optimistic (even if realistic)

[7] Wesley is, of course, careful to qualify the ways in which this *Christian* perfection is to be understood.

about the possibility of true transformation. The sinner can be transformed; sin can be overcome. The grace of God can triumph over sin in the life of a faithful, regenerate human being.

It is imperative to understand that for Wesley this was not a mechanical process, a formulaic recipe for salvation. Wesley was too steeped in the Bible to permit such a perfunctory understanding of salvation. He learned both from the Scriptures and from his own experience that the way of salvation is often rather circuitous. He envisions what could be described as a more aesthetic, almost poetic, process in which movement back and forth, with the dividing lines blurred was common. I think we fall prey to severe misunderstandings of Wesley when we attempt to enforce a rigid consistency on his thought. Further, the high value that Wesley places upon the obedient response of the human creature to the divine initiatives of grace invests human actions with immense importance and value. Quietism is not Wesley's way.

In broad strokes, Wesley's account of salvation with Christian perfection as the real transformation of the human person, leads to an optimistic, hopeful stance. The future can be embraced as filled with hope and positive potential. But Wesley's understanding of salvation on the individual level, according to Theodore Runyon, leads quite naturally to a broader interest:

> Wesleyans are united, in insisting that salvation includes the transformation of the creature. Many would extend this transformation not only to the individual but to society. They find a peculiar affinity between Wesley's doctrine of sanctification and movements for social change. When Christian perfection becomes the goal on the individual level, a fundamental hope is engendered that the future can surpass the present. A holy dissatisfaction is aroused with regard to any present state of affairs—a dissatisfaction that supplies the critical edge necessary to keep the process of individual transformation moving. Moreover, this holy dissatisfaction is *readily transferable* from the realm of the individual to that of society, where it provides a persistent motivation for reform in the light

> of 'a more perfect way' that transcends the *status quo*. So Wesleyans are united on both the possibility and the necessity for real transformation.[8]

As Runyon argues, there is a fundamental and direct link between Wesley's emphasis on the transformation of the individual that is embedded in his teaching of new birth and Christian perfection on the one hand and the transformation of society on the other. The extension from the transformation of the individual to the transformation of society is logical. The optimism about personal transformation is parallel to the optimism about the transformation of the world. This linkage became more prominent in Wesley in the later years of his ministry. A similar linkage—sometimes unstated, but nonetheless present—can be found in others.

Within my own tradition, William Booth, the co-founder of The Salvation Army and a committed Wesleyan holiness proponent, later in his life wrote a short article entitled, "Salvation for Both Worlds."[9] Known widely as a revivalist whose passion was to save souls and to lead them into the experience of "sanctification" before delivering them to their eternal reward, Booth reframed his mission and his theology in 1889 and 1890. In "Salvation for Both Worlds" and then in his book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out,* Booth set out his vision for this significant recasting of his ministry. In his reflection upon his forty-four years of service to God, Booth wrote these words:

> ...as I came to look more closely into things, and gathered more experience of the ways of God to man, I discovered that the miseries from which I sought to save man in the next world were substantially the same as those from which I everywhere found him suffering in this [world], and that they proceeded from the same cause--that is, from his alienation from, and his rebellion against God, and then from his own disordered dispositions and appetites...But with this discovery there also came another, which has been growing and growing in clearness and intensity from that hour to this; which was that I had two gospels

8. Theodore Runyon, "The New Creation: The Wesleyan Distinctive," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 31, no. 2 (1996): 111–12.

9. William Booth, "Salvation for Both Worlds," in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. and comp. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green, reprint, 1889 (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 51–59.

> of deliverance to preach--one for each world, or rather, one gospel which applied alike to both. I saw that when the Bible said, 'He that believeth shall be saved,' it meant not only saved from the miseries of the future world, but from the miseries of this [world] also. That it came from the promise of salvation here and now; from hell and sin and vice and crime and idleness and extravagance, and consequently very largely from poverty and disease, and the majority of kindred woes.[10]

Booth's words reflect what one biographer has described as "a second conversion experience;"[11] that is, a conversion from a single-minded focus on saving individual souls for eternity, to a broadened concept of salvation as embracing both the next world *and this world*. Booth was by no means the only Wesleyan to forge a bridge between the personal and the social dimensions of salvation.

With its strong emphasis on transformation and with its extension beyond the transformation of discrete individuals to the transformation of society, there is a stream in Wesleyan theology which draws us to the conclusion that the goal of involvement with the marginalized is not simply the amelioration of suffering, but more positively the transformation of society and the world. It is no accident that in 1890 Booth could write an article entitled, "The Millennium; or the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles" in which he envisioned the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth with its centre in London, England.[12] If we are able to filter out the clear triumphalist overtones of 19th century imperial Britain, we can see the trajectory of Booth's theology. The Wesleyan teaching of Christian perfection created a

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10. William Booth, "Salvation for Both Worlds," in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. and comp. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green, reprint, 1889 (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 53–54.

11. Roger J. Green, "An Historical Salvation Army Perspective," in *Creed and Deed: Towards a Christian Theology of Social Services in The Salvation Army*, ed. John D. Waldron (Oakville, ON: Triumph Press, 1986), 63.

[12] William Booth, "The Millennium; or the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles," in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. and comp. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green, reprint, 1890 (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 60-71.

trajectory that leads from the transformation of the individual, to the transformation of society and finally to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. This trajectory leads us, quite naturally, to consider the biblical motif of the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God

Near the beginning of his Gospel, Mark characterizes the ministry of Jesus in this way: "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news'" (Mark 1:14-15). In the programmatic declaration of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth as recounted in Luke 4, Jesus cites the words of the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:18-19). This is then followed by the astonishing declaration by Jesus, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). These references to the coming of the kingdom of God—which could be multiplied many times over—are characteristic of the accounts of Jesus' ministry as we find it described, especially, in the Synoptic Gospels. There can be little doubt that the kingdom of God was a key theme in the ministry of Jesus. Not only did he proclaim the coming of the kingdom in words, but through his ministries of healing, forgiveness and inclusion he also enacted the kingdom. But having said this, what are some of the features of the kingdom of God? What does it actually mean in practice? In this portion of the lecture, we shall consider briefly first the character of the Kingdom and then, secondly, its timing.

If we go back to the very beginning of the idea of the kingdom of God, we shall find it in the Old Testament concept of the LORD, the God of Israel, as the divine King. Within the experience of the Israelites, the LORD was the king of Israel (e.g. Exodus 15:18; Numbers 23:21;

Judges 8:23; Isaiah 6). As king, the LORD exercises sovereignty over Israel and all of creation. For its part, Israel, as the people of the LORD, understood itself to be the people over whom the LORD rules. The LORD is their sovereign and they are God's domain or kingdom. The claim this made upon Israel was twofold: first, they were to give undivided and uncompromising loyalty to the LORD; and second, Israel was to be an alternative community, one in which politics, economics and social relationships reflected the justice, holiness and compassion of God.

The backdrop against which this vision of Israel as the domain of the LORD is developed is their oppression in Egypt. Having been exposed to the tyranny of an oppressive social, political and economic system, Israel as the people of the LORD was called out of Egypt to establish an alternative community—to be a people set apart, religiously, politically, economically and socially. The best place to see the nature of this alternative community is the book of Deuteronomy. It demands of Israel an uncompromising loyalty to the LORD. But it couples this with a social vision in which the rapacious practices of Egypt are set aside in favour of a community in which concern for the neighbour trumps the self-interest of the individual. Israel, as the kingdom of the LORD, is to be a community in which there is a wide distribution of power, resources and, most fundamentally, land. But the real barometer of how high a standard of behaviour is expected can be seen in the way in which Israelites were expected to treat those who had no rights or means of support within the community: widows, orphans and aliens. These three groups were likely to be the poorest and the most easily oppressed of Israelite society. If Israel provided for these marginalized groups, then it was an indicator that the life of the community was congruent with its vocation.

Unfortunately, in the history of Israel the high ideals of Deuteronomy were seldom, if ever, achieved. In some streams of Old Testament tradition, the institution of the monarchy in Israel is identified as a turning point when Israel began to compromise on its vocation as an alternative community and became like the nations. By the end of Solomon's reign and

through the following centuries, the two Israelite kingdoms each in its own way became indistinguishable from its neighbours in the way in which it organized and distributed power and resources. Thus the prophets of the eighth century BCE—prophets such as Amos, Micah and Isaiah—would rant against the crushing oppression of the weakest members of society. Their calls for justice and righteousness were uttered against the backdrop of a people who had returned to Egypt in every way except geography. The calls to protect the widow, the orphan and the alien are a potent protest against the voracious economic, social and political practices that were rampant. The weakest were the most oppressed; the economy was built on the assumption that those on the margins were dispensable; and justice was identified with legality rather than with the wellness of the community.

In this context, when we turn to the New Testament, the words of Jesus at Nazareth take on added meaning. His proclamation of the coming of the kingdom of God is not a vacuous proclamation of pious platitudes. It is a call to action; a declaration of God's mission to the disenfranchised and the marginalized. It is a proclamation that it is amongst the poor, the sick, the imprisoned and the oppressed that the kingdom of God comes closest.

Yet the kingdom of God is not simply a tool of protest. It is also a vision—a vision of a world in which those on the margins are brought near the centre; in which the people of God are known by their orientation toward the poor, just as God is said to take special interest in the well-being of those who are weakest and most in distress. Alongside their strong denunciations of the abuses that were characteristic of Israel and Judah in the eighth century BCE, we find the prophets envisioning a better day when God's rule will be established and the world will be characterized not by oppression and injustice, but by *shalom* and righteousness. Swords will be beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3); the wolf shall live with the lamb…for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD (Isaiah 11:6, 9). From their lips these words describe the quality of the life of the community as it

should be and as it will be. The extension of this hope is found in the coming of the kingdom of God with the ministry of Jesus. There is a vision of the kingdom of God as the realm in which peace, justice and mercy embrace; in which there is no Jew or Gentile, free or slave, male or female.

We turn then, from this broad description of the character of the kingdom of God to a consideration of its timing. Without doubt, there is in the ministry of Jesus the clear assertion that the kingdom of God has come near. That is, that in some sense the kingdom has come; it is now present. And yet there is, within the teaching of Jesus, and within the New Testament as whole the expectation that the fullness of that kingdom awaits a final consummation. The kingdom is not only realized, but there is an eschatological dimension to it. We wait in hope for the kingdom.

This eschatological vision of the coming kingdom has inspired reform movements through the millennia. As a student of the Bible, Wesley could not help but be influenced by this dynamic vision of the kingdom of God which formed a central theme in the ministry of Jesus. For Wesley, it functioned alongside his teaching of Christian perfection and grew in importance as he matured.

Randy Maddox, among others, has argued that later in life Wesley was drawn toward postmilliennialism, that is, the belief that God's work of establishing the kingdom was already underway and that it required no dramatic return of Christ to usher in its fullness.[13] The kingdom of God would come in its fullness and be established in the millennium even before the return of Jesus. This postmillennialism inspired efforts to the transform socio-economic systems to bring them into conformity with the economics of the kingdom; and it motivated efforts to rectify the injustices and inequities which permeated western societies. Once again, as with his affirmation of the new creation and his belief in the necessity of the transformation

[13] Randy Maddox, "Nurturing the New Creation," 40-41.

of individuals through Christian perfection, we find that Wesley's optimism shines through in his belief in the establishment of the kingdom of God.

Conclusion

In this lecture we have outlined several aspects of a Wesleyan/biblical grounding for a social theology, one which is grounded in Scripture and which is consistent with the thought of John Wesley. Other themes, such as the imitation of Christ, the love of God and the love of neighbour, and the dangers of wealth could be drawn into our discussion to provide a more well-rounded account of Scripture and of Wesley's own mature teaching. However, in light of the limitations of the present endeavour, I want to conclude by drawing upon an observation of Kenneth Collins regarding Wesley's concern for the poor. According to Collins, a truly Wesleyan social theology requires that our efforts be devoted not only to the material needs of our neighbour, that is, to the reform of society; they must also be devoted to the transformation of the individual. As Collins notes, the truly radical nature of John Wesley's ministry was that "…he recognized that the evils of economic injustice, though significant, were informed by more basic evils that had their roots in the human heart. Accordingly, the greed of the rich, their taste for luxury and waste, could not be overcome simply by state fiat, nor by moralizing, but by a transformation of the inward person as well."[14] Moreover, with respect to the poor, Wesley was critical enough to realize that meeting their material needs was an incomplete salvation. The whole gospel, according to Wesley, was one which brings the eternal and the temporal together. It is, indeed, a salvation for both worlds.

[14] Kenneth J. Collins, "The Soteriological Orientation of John Wesley's Ministry to the Poor," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 36, 2 (2001): 34f.