

“what is the proper nature of religion, of the religion of Jesus Christ. It is $\theta\epsilon\rho\alpha\pi\epsilon\iota\alpha$ $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta\sigma$ (therapy of the soul), God’s method of healing a soul which is thus diseased. Hereby the great Physician of souls applies medicine to heal this sickness; to restore human nature, totally corrupted in all its faculties. God heals all our atheism by the knowledge of himself, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; by giving us faith, a divine evidence and conviction of God and of the things of God-in particular of this important truth: Christ loved me, and gave himself for me.”

(Galatians 2:20)

John Wesley, “Original Sin”
Sermon 44



Bart Weakley is an elder of the Virginia Annual Conference. He received a Master of Divinity (1982) and a Master of Theology (1991) from Duke University's Divinity School. The Master of Theology was a two-year program in Wesleyan Studies. He wrote his Master's Thesis on the Methodist Revival and health, entitled "Therapy of Souls: A Prescription for Healing". He has written for Sacramental Life and was contributor of several articles in For All the Saints.

From his studies, he trained as a Fire-fighter and Emergency Medical Technician serving in Central and Southwest Virginia. He is a Life Member of the Concord Rescue Squad, serving as President, Chaplain and Board Member. He was a member of the Concord Fire Department where he served as firefighter and several other offices including Safety Officer for the Department. He has served as Chaplain for Roanoke County and the Bedford County Fire and Rescue Departments. Currently, he is the President and Chaplain of the Onancock Volunteer Fire Department.



Learning the Tools of the Trade

A Study for Methodist Pastors
on the
Theology of Methodism

Fall 2018
Market Street United Methodist
Church, Onancock, VA

Tuesday Mornings at 10:00

Bart Weakley, Seminar Instructor

Learning the Tools of the Trade

What is the purpose of theological language? How should it be used in ministry? Is theological language meant only for the professional? Does it relate to exercising ministry in the local church setting? In the community? Really, how do terms such as original sin, justification, sanctification, new birth relate to the person in the pew?

At its core, theological terms are means to help the pastor comprehend the extent of the brokenness of the human condition and God's means of bringing healing to humanity. In fact, John Wesley, defined religion as "therapeia psyches, God's healing a soul which is thus diseased." ("Original Sin"). Mr. Wesley viewed God's dealing with sin and healing as a Physician.

The best way to comprehend the Methodist theology is to live within that paradigm of a physician. Taking that model allows the student to appreciate that the terms are looking at sin and salvation from a therapeutic position.

In a six-week course, students are invited to study and discuss the theological terminology that is addressed in Methodist theology. Whether as a local pastor or a provisional member seeking elder's orders, the course will be helpful in addressing the theological terms that the Board of Ordained Ministry seeks each student to articulate with a significant degree of mastery of the subject.

Course Outline

- Session 1: The Sources of United Methodist Doctrine
- Session 2: Putting the Puzzle Pieces Together: Comprehending Wesley's Order of Salvation
- Session 3: The Distinctions Between Justification and New Birth
- Session 4: Christian Perfection
- Session 5: The Means of Grace and The Sacraments
- Session 6: The Triune God

Each session will include reading assignments from the sermons of John Wesley. These texts serve as an easy blueprint to understanding Methodist theology. In addition, it is helpful in reading primary resources versus secondary resources. The sermons can be found on online in various websites.

Two of the most helpful websites are:

General Board of Global Ministries:
www.umcmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons

Northwest Nazarene University:
www.Welsey.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-John-Wesley-1872-edition

Our goal is to internalize these terms so that it will assist the student in responding comfortably to disciplinary questions in both written presentation as well as formal interviews.

Course Schedule Tuesday Mornings at 10:00 a.m.

September 11 Session 1
The Sources of United Methodist Doctrine

September 25 Session 2
Putting the Puzzle Pieces Together: Comprehending Wesley's Order of Salvation

October 9 Session 3
The Distinctions Between Justification and the New Birth

October 23 Session 4
Christian Perfection

November 13 Session 5
The Means of Grace and the Sacraments

November 27 Session 6
The Triune God

Each session will be accompanied by study questions as well as readings from primary sources from Mr. Wesley.