



# Nazarene Theological Seminary

1700 E Meyer Blvd • Kansas City, MO 64131 • 816/268-5400

## THE680 – Life and Thought of John Wesley Module Fall 2010

### **Course Structure**

As a modular course, this class has three major divisions in calendar and structure

1. Pre-Module work—Monday, September 13 - Sunday, October 24, 2010
2. In-class sessions—1:00pm to 5:00pm, Monday, October 25; 8:00am-5pm, Tuesday-Thursday, October 26-28; 8:00am-12:20pm, Friday, October 29, 2010
3. Post-Module work—Monday, November 1-Friday, December 17, 2010

### **Essential Information**

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available at [http://support.nts.edu/index.php/Essential\\_Information](http://support.nts.edu/index.php/Essential_Information). Additional technical support information can be found at <http://support.nts.edu>.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose and Master of Divinity Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS bookstore procedures
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *A Handbook for Inclusive Language*

### **Instructor Information**

Professor: Timothy Crutcher, Ph.D.  
Office: (405) 491-6367  
Office Hours: MWF 2-4 or by appointment

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between 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

### **Catalog Description**

A study of John Wesley's theology as it was influenced by forces before and during the 18th century; as its foundation was laid in his own personal spiritual history, particularly from 1725 to 1738; as its development is revealed in his sermons and writings; and as it has been understood by his major interpreters. Special attention will be given to his doctrine of Christian perfection.

### **Course Narrative & Rationale**

This course is a historical-theology investigation of the Eighteenth Century Anglican theologian and father of Methodism, John Wesley. Wesley was a bridge person in many respects, a bridge between Reformation and Modern theology, between Protestantism and

Roman Catholicism, and between social activist and “evangelical” approaches to Christian life and theology. Understanding his life and work in context will allow us to appreciate and assess both Wesley’s historical contribution and his continuing relevance. While the course will touch on all the major facets of Wesley’s theology in the context of his biography, we will focus on three inter-related concerns that form the core around which most of Wesley’s distinctive contributions coalesce. They are his theological method, his concern to integrate good thinking and good Christian living, and his doctrine of Christian perfection or holiness. Taken together, these concerns form three views on Wesley’s “orienting concern,” which can be seen as guiding both his theology and his practice. Understanding how those concerns affected Wesley in his context allows us to reflect on how our appropriation of them today could affect us in ours.

### **Course Outcomes**

1. To become acquainted with the life and thought of John Wesley [Assignments 1, 2, 3]
2. To begin to understand and identify the "distinctives" of Wesleyan theology and tradition. [Assignments 1, 2, 3]
3. To be able to locate the "place" and "legacy" of Wesley within the catholic Church. [Assignments 1, 2, 3, 4]

### **Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies**

This course is mainly oriented toward COSAC Competency CN 22, though it will also touch on CN19, CN20, CN21, as well as sub-themes in CN 25 and CH 6.

### **Required Texts & Course Materials**

Collins, Kenneth J. *A Real Christian: The Life of John Wesley*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000.

Crutcher, Timothy J. *The Crucible of Life: The Role of Experience in John Wesley’s Theological Method*. Wilmore, KY: Emeth Press, 2010.

Maddox, Randy L. and Jason E. Vickers (eds). *The Cambridge Companion to John Wesley*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2010.

The works of John Wesley, as available online at

[http://wesley.nnu.edu/john\\_wesley/index.htm](http://wesley.nnu.edu/john_wesley/index.htm)

[http://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books/Wesley\\_Journal.pdf](http://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books/Wesley_Journal.pdf)

### **Recommended Texts & Course Materials**

These text would be very useful to have access to, but no reading from them is required.

Collins, Kenneth J. *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and The Shape of Grace*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007.

Heitzenrater, Richard P. *Wesley and the People Called Methodists*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995.

Heitzenrater, Richard P. *The Elusive Mr. Wesley*, 2nd Edition. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.

Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley’s Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994.

### **Course Outline**

1. The Historical Context for John Wesley
  - a. The Reformation context
  - b. The British-historical context
  - c. The Scientific and Philosophical context
2. Theological Biography

- a. Wesley's familial background
  - b. Wesley's ministerial and theological formation to 1738
  - c. The course of the Evangelical Revival in England and Wesley's role
  - d. Doctrinal and Ecclesial Controversies
  - e. Wesley's personal life and final days
3. Theological Method
    - a. The Importance of Scripture
    - b. The role of experience
    - c. The "tools" of Reason and Tradition
    - d. The synthesis of Wesley's theological method and its implications for both his theology and for contemporary appropriations of it.
  4. The Doctrine of Christian Perfection
    - a. A Plain Account of Christian Perfection
    - b. Its theological underpinnings in Wesley
    - c. Its practical implications in Wesley
  5. Other important doctrine emphases
    - a. Issues in the doctrines of God, Christ and Holy Spirit
    - b. Issues in the doctrine of human persons
    - c. Issues in the doctrines of sin and salvation
    - d. Issues in the doctrine of the church
  6. Other important practical considerations
    - a. Structure of the early Methodist movement and its consolidation as a "church"
    - b. Evangelism and "field preaching"
    - c. Compassionate ministry
    - d. Christian education

## **Course Assignments & Requirements**

1. Online Book Discussions (20% of final grade)—The assigned textbooks are to be read in the order indicated on the course calendar. Reading through the original source material from Wesley should be used to "follow up" on the issues raised by the textbook reading, and should come to about 50 pages each week. Suggested readings from Wesley are given in the course calendar. By the time the book reading is due, each student will have started at least one discussion thread over each book and begun to respond to the other threads posted by the other students. Each post will be graded out of 7 points for its insight and evidence of good reading, both of the assigned text and of relevant primary source materials. The cumulative total of all posts will be taken as a grade out of 200. (This means that one would need about 30 posts with an average grade of 6 to make an "A" on this portion of the course. Given about 25 minutes per post, that represents about 12 hours of on-line engagement, as shown in the Distribution of Student Learning Hours below.) [The various readings in the books cover all three outcomes of the course.]
2. Participation in Module Discussions (15% of final grade)—Engaged participation in the seminar is expected of all students. Each student will be given a daily grade for participation that reflects the range of knowledge and insight contributed to that day's discussion. [The various topics of the course cover all course outcomes.]
3. Research Papers (2 @ 25% of final grade each)—The bulk of the post-module work will be occupied with the writing of two research papers (approximately 10 pages each), one on a theological topic in Wesley's thought, the other on a "practics" topic in Wesley's life. Each paper should be governed by a clearly defined "research question," which must be approved by the professor by the close of the module (though changes after that point are allowed). [The theology paper focuses on outcome #2; the practics paper on outcomes #1 and #3.]
4. Final Reflection Essay (15% of final grade)—In lieu of a "final exam," each student will write a 2,000 word final reflection essay on the following topic: "What part of the Wesleyan heritage does the Church of the Nazarene need to recover most; why is that the case; and

what would it look like to accomplish such a recovery?” This essay should reflect a comprehensive knowledge of the textbooks and the module discussions and should be written as a possible article for submission to *Holiness Today*. [This essay focuses on outcome #3.]

## Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	pre-module hours	module hours	post-module hours
Face-to-face Class Sessions		32	
Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.	12		0
Reading	45	0	0
Writing	0	0	48
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	0	0	0
Exams & Quizzes	0	0	0
TOTAL	57	32	48

## Method for Submitting Assignments

All written assignments are to be submitted electronically. For most assignments, a place on Moodle will be opened through which the student can upload the assignment. Those assignments not delivered through Moodle must be emailed to the professor. No hardcopies are required, and submission of a hardcopy does NOT take the place of an electronic submission.

## Form and Style Expectations

All written material is expected to comply with one of the following three standards of style and citation: Turabian, MLA, or APA. The student is free to choose which style they prefer, but that style must be used consistently throughout all the students' work.

## Inclusive Language

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

## Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams

In a compressed delivery course such as a module, all work must be completed on time for the student to fully benefit from the class experience. Pre-module work is due on the first day of class and may not be made up for any reason whatsoever. Post-module work will be accepted up to a month after it is due, but with a full letter grade penalty assessed. After one month, no late work will be accepted for any reason whatsoever.

## Course Grading

Participation in pre-module on-line forums—	20%
Participation in module discussions (3%/day)—	15%
Theology Research Paper—	25%
Practics Research Paper—	25%
Final Exam Essay—	15%

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies which have been beneficial for the student in the past.

## Course Calendar

Date	Week	Assignment
9/13-19	1	Read Collins' book (Read primary sources out of Wesley's Journal)
9/20-26	2	Finish Collins book and post the assigned discussion thread by Monday, Sept. 20, participate in Online discussions the rest of the week
9/27-10/3	3	Read Crutcher's book (Read primary sources out of Sermons and Tracts)
10/4-10	4	Finish Crutcher's book and post the assigned discussion thread by Monday, Oct. 4, participate in Online discussions the rest of the week
10/11-17	5	Read Maddox/Vickers' book (Include "Plain Account of Christian Perfection" in your primary reading before the module)
10/18-24	6	Finish Maddox/Vickers book and post the assigned discussion thread by Monday, Oct 18, participate in Online discussions the rest of the week
10/25-29	7	Module week—Participate in seminar discussions
11/1-7	8	Reading and Research Week - no scheduled class activities
11/8-14	9	Continue work on Theology and Practics Papers
11/15-21	10	Finish Theology Paper, Due Wed. 11/17; Continue work on Practics paper
11/22-28	11	Work on Practics Paper; Thanksgiving Holiday
11/29-12/5	12	Work on Practics Paper
12/6-12	13	Finish Practics Paper, Due Fri. 12/10; Work on Final Essay
12/13-17	14	Finish Final Essay, Due Fri. 12/17