

Heitzenrater, Wesley and the People Called MethOdists, Chapter 4b
Wesley Advocates **8 October 2017**

Consolidation of the Movement, 1744-1758 (pages 191-222)

Note that the 1748 Conference, involving the Wesleys, Whitefield, and Harris resulted in their agreeing not to “preach controversially,” to avoid the topics of absolute election, irresistible grace, final perseverance of the saints, and perfection. How specifically did the principals disagree on these topics?

Given these doctrinal disagreements, why did the Wesleys allow Whitefield a “full rein to roam through the Wesleyan societies”?

Who was Grace Murray? What happened between her, JW, CW, and John Bennet?

What did Wesley write about the “Catholic Spirit”? What prompted this concern?

The 1749 Conference identified London as “the mother church”---what is unusual about that? What four categories do the Methodists identify for their congregants? What does each of these represent?

What is the importance of publishing the *Minutes*? How do those *Minutes* become part of the ritual for training and accepting preachers?

How did Wesley enlarge and schedule the circuits for preaching? On p. 196, Heitzenrater says, “Discipline was becoming the hallmark of the Methodist movement, with accountability at every level. . . .” Whence comes such “discipline”? And where do we see its continuing influence today?

How does Wesley’s 1746 *Sermons on Several Occasions* arise from Cranmer’s *Book of Homilies*? What does Wesley mean by “plain truth for plain people”? Heitzenrater says these sermons were not those Wesley preached in the fields—why not? What is the irony is Wesley’s using Oxford on his title page?

How does the 1748 *Sermons* differ in emphasis and content from the previous volume? What are “regeneration and sanctification”? How does JW define *grace*?

How does the 1750 *Sermons* differ from the previous two volumes? According to RPH, what was JW’s favorite text and sermon title associated with it?

What is the purpose of *A Christian Library*? How many volumes? Organized how? What does this project reveal about JW's education, reading, concerns?

Examine the map of page 201—identify the nine principal circuits of 1749-1750.

On page 200, RPH tells us of 2000 Methodists in London alone, a near-end to persecution of Methodists, and the Methodists' success in dealing with both spiritual and physical needs. (Even Whitefield "begrudgingly" recognized Methodism as mainly Wesleyan.) How important was the network of classes, societies, and circuits?

Why did JW leave the examination of preachers mainly to Charles? With what results? Who was Vincent Perronet?

What help to the Methodists was William Grimshaw at Haworth? How did the Wesleys view Grimshaw? (Picture Haworth at the time—about the same as when Patrick Bronte was the vicar? About the same as when we last saw it?)

By contrast, how did the Wesleys regard Charles Darney? Why?

What was the January 1752 covenant? Involving whom? How has the issue about leaving or staying within the C of E become increasingly important? How do JW and CW disagree? How does CW succeed in promoting his point of view? In 1754, what did the preachers resolve?

Who were the "book stewards"? Why were they important? How did publication support the network? How much did it cost JW, in his reckonings?

When JW became ill and wrote his epitaph, how did he use the metaphor of the "brand"?

When JW published his commentary on the Bible in 1754, how did he modify his portrait—and thereby his representation of himself?

Reviewing the page (RPH p. 212) of Wesley's commentary on Luke, what do we observe about JW's learning, education, theology, attention to detail? What do we learn from the page (RPH, p. 213) in which JW schedules preachers for the London circuit?

Briefly review the Act of Toleration (1689): beyond their history growing up in the C of E, beyond their ordinations as C of E priests, why would the Wesleys find it to their advantage to keep Methodists within the C of E? Clearly the Wesleys saw huge needs for Methodists to receive the two Protestant sacraments—which, in the C of E, only ordained priests could provide. How do JW and CW regard the importance of ordained priests alone providing sacraments? Why does the issue of ordaining Methodist preachers especially raise the issue of staying in or leaving the C of E?

How has the “examination” of candidates for preaching continued?

What is the covenant renewal service? And what is its importance?