**Wesley Academy 4**

**Social and Economic Holiness**

I. Social Holiness (social sanctification movement):

A. Theological Backgrounds of Social Sanctification: Personal and Social Sanctification:

1.holiness of heart and life: For Wesley sanctification has two dimensions: holiness of heart and life. For holiness of heart we need to practice works of piety and for holiness of life we need to practice works of mercy.

2. Personal and social holiness: For Wesley sanctification has two dimensions: personal and social. For Wesley, personal sanctification is defined as two concepts: holiness (*kadosh* in Hebrew and *hagios* in Greek) and love. This concept of holiness is expressed as holiness of heart and life. Wesley highlights the fact that individuals wait for entire holiness, for a full salvation from all our sins - pride, self-will, anger, desire, and unbelief.

This concept of entire sanctification before death implies doing good works and loving perfectly as well as achieving entire holiness from inner sin. For Wesley, the positive meaning of sanctification is love, whereas the negative meaning of sanctification is holiness or sinlessness. What is sanctification? What is perfection? Wesley answers, "It is loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength." It is love excluding sin, love filling the heart.

While holiness is separation from the world, love is incarnation to the world. Love is realized among people in the society and the world. At this point love is social as well as personal. Wesley emphasized that the essence of faith is inward and the evidence of faith is social. Outward witness in daily living is the necessary confirmation of any inward experience of inward faith.

3. Healthy evangelism: Through the Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification, Albert Outler argues against unhealthy evangelism; it emphasizes self-righteousness and only the relationship with God: "Do you want to be saved? Do you want to go to heaven?" But healthy evangelism involves questioning the relationship with people as well as the relationship with God.

Outler believed that Wesley gathered his converts in order to reform the nation. Wesley asked what is the reasonable purpose of God which calls Methodist preachers and answered that it is not to make a new sect but to reform the nation, particularly to reform the church and to spread scriptural holiness widely on the earth. To reform the nation as well as the church is the main point of social holiness or social sanctification.

4. Social religion and social holiness:

Wesley insisted that Christianity is not the solitary religion. He did understand religion as social religion and holiness as social holiness. Wesley expressed the vital balance between personal piety and social reform, personal holiness and social holiness in his preface to a special collection of *Hymns and Sacred Poems(published in 1739)*:

Solitary religion is not found [in the Gospel].

"Holy solitaries is a phrase no more consistent

with the gospel than "holy adulters." The

gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social;

no holiness but social holiness. "Faith working

by love" is the length and breadth and depth

and height of Christian perfection....And

in truth, whomsoever loveth his brethren, not

in word only but as Christ has loved him,

cannot but be "zealous of good works." He feels

in his soul a burning, restless desire of spending

and being spent for them... And at all opportunities

he is, like his Master, "going about doing good."

For Wesley, faith working by love is the length, depth and height of Christian perfection. Wesley understood that Christianity is essentially a social religion and to change Christianity into a solitary religion is to destroy Christianity.

In order fully to explain and enforce these important words

I shall endeavor to show, first, that Christianity is

essentially a social religion, and that to turn it into a solitary

one is to destroy it, secondly, that to conceal this religion

is impossible, as well as utterly contrary to the design

of its author....When I say this is essentially a social religion,

I mean not only that it cannot subsist so well, but that it

cannot subsist at all without society, without living and

conversing with other men.

Wesley preached a concept of a realized kingdom of God in this history in his "Sermon on the Mount VI": "We pray for the coming of his everlasting kingdom, the kingdom of glory in heaven, which is the continuation and perfection of the kingdom of grace on the earth." Wesley also believed that all the inhabitants of the earth are willingly and perfectly to do the will of their Father who is in heaven continuously.

B. Social Sanctification Movement:

1. Labor Movement: The major contrast between the pre- and post- Industrial Revolution in England was that of the transition from small, family-type social units to the larger society of undifferentiated equals. Methodist enthusiasm was a transforming influence. It was with this new self-awareness emanating in large part from the classes and class leadership that Methodism contributed to the radical political movements of the nineteenth century. The early labor unions consisted of twelve members and one leader. Each member paid one penny weekly to his class leader at the time of the meeting, for the goal to obtain political liberty and universal freedom. The National Union of Working Classes was organized along similar lines as a special committee in 1831. They met once every week. Watson notes in his book, The Early Methodist Class Meeting, "since the magistrates had suppressed their legal peaceable meeting, they had resolved to hold small class meetings similar to the Methodist class meetings, to concentrate their strength." Methodism was indirectly responsible for a growth in self-confidence and the capacity for organization of working people. The new Methodist revival provided a new dream of a jubilee of ideal cooperation between the ruling class and the employed class during a period of profound alienation between classes in Britain. Methodism provided a tremendously successful service as the religion of the industrial bourgeoisie and a broad representation of the proletariat: miners, weavers, factory workers, seamen, potters and rural farmers. Oscar Sherwin says, "Methodism was a child of the Industrial Revolution."

2. The Liberation Movement from the Slavery System: Wesley attacked the slavery system in his article “Thoughts Upon Slavery" in 1774. He used Quaker Anthony Benezet's "Some Historical Account of Guinea" as the primary source. Three fourth of his article consisted of quotations from Anthony Benezet's article and one fourth dealt with his understanding of logical, legal and natural human rights. He rejected the biblical expression which accepted slavery. Some who supported the slavery system during the period of the Civil War were not happy about Wesley's article. Wesley insisted upon teleological ethics which fight against human, social and political obstacles in order to achieve the ethical goal. For him the cosmic and human teleological ethical goal is the restoration of natural right in terms of *imago Dei*. Bernard Semmel called this anti-slavery movement the 'Methodist Revolution' and entitled his book Methodist Revolution.

3. The Reformation Movement of The Prison System: Wesley visited the castle prison once a week before his Aldersgate experience from the age of the Holy Club at Oxford. Thus, his concern for prisoners had continued for a long time. However, his concern about the reformation of the prison system came out after the Aldersgate experience.

At that time the punishment system was very severe; the crime of shooting a rabbit with a rifle, the crime of breaking down a bridge, crime of cutting down young tree, the crime of stealing more than five shillings, each carried a sentence of death. Many criminals waited for trials for many months or many years.

From the spring of 1739 Wesley preached the gospel to prisoners and counseled prisoners. His counseling and praying were very powerful and influential. Particularly he gave confidence in eternal life and peace of mind to prisoners sentenced to death. The Judge prohibited daily worship service at New Gate of Bristol and limited it once a week. Other Methodists followed Wesley's example and made it a principle of Methodist society for social action to visit prisoners from 1743 on. In the annual conference of 1778 the ministry to prisoners was made a duty of all Methodist preachers.

4. Other Social Services:

1) Visiting the sick: Wesley began visiting the sick from 1741. Wesley divided

46 members into 23 groups; each group had two members. Wesley wrote

"Primitive Physic" in 1747 which consisted of 289 titles and 829 paragraphs

and published in 23 editions until 1848 in England and published in 7 editions

even in America from 1764 to 1839. This book contributed to the decrease in

the death rate of children under five years old from 74.5% to 31.8% from   
 1740 to 1820.

2) The Strangers' Friend Society: Wesley and Methodists organized the Strangers' Friend Society in 1785 in London. For strangers without friends, the sick and the poor, this institution was organized and spreaded to every place where Methodist society was established.

3) Kingswood School: Wesley established Kingswood School in 1748. This school was started for the lower class who could not educate their children in high school. Without having to pay tuition and living cost they were taught to become biblical Christians by the method of Christianity.

II. Economic Holiness (Jubilee Economic Ethics):

A. optimism of grace and perfect social sanctification:

1). the optimism of grace to realize jubilee as the perfection of social sanctification:

2). jubilee in New Castle, Cornwall and Kingswood where Methodist developed very well: the sign of the society of jubilee on earth.

3).the text of jubilee: Luke 4:18-19, "the year of the grace" as "jubilee" in Wesley Explanatory Notes Upon The New Testament).

4). Charles Wesley's jubilee hymn "Blow Ye the Trumpet, Blow.”: realization of jubilee through justifying grace

B. Jubilee as the Present Kingdom of God: The kingdom of God starting from here and now and growing to completion in the future just as a seed of mustard, the realization of the jubilee as the present kingdom of God.

C. Jubilee as the Sharing and Distribution of Riches through Stewardship: For Wesley Levicus 25 and Isaiah 61 are very important in order to realize the dream of jubilee.

D. The Jubilee Economy as the Third Alternative beyond Capitalism and Socialism: Wesley preached about the danger of loving riches in his sermons on the jubilee economy: "On Riches," "The Danger of Riches," "The Danger of Increasing of Riches."

1)."The love of money is the root of all evil."

2). The early church‘s Christians' enthusiastic sharing and distribution of their

possessions with strong stewardship.

3). Economic freedom- gain all you can and save all you can and equality- give all you can. Gaining all you can and saving all you can are directed to giving all you can.

The first of these is Gain all you can. Here we speak like

children of the world. We meet them their own ground. And it

our bounded duty to do this. We ought to gain all we can

without buying gold too dear, without paying more for it than

it is worth.

We have to gain all we can with wisdom, sincerity and faithfulness, without hurting our health and our employees’ health. The Second principle of using money is Saving all you can.

Having gained all you can*,* by honest wisdom and unwearied

diligence, the second rule of Christian prudence is, save all

you can. Do not throw precious talent into sea: leave that

folly heathen philosophers. Do not throw it away in idle

expenses which is just the same as throwing it into sea.

Expend no part of it merely to gratify the desire of the

flesh, the desire of eye, or the pride of life.

E. Sharing and Distribution with Stewardship as Sanctification: Sanctification as a gift to return our riches and possessions to God. Increasing rich is hindrance of sanctification.

First, such are the hindrances to holiness which surround him

on every side. ....The root of all religion is faith, without

which it is impossible to please God....And if you take it

in another sense, for a confidence in God, what a tendency

have riches to destroy this! Or if you take faith in the proper

Christian sense, as a divine confidence in a pardoning God, what

a deadly, what an almost insuperable, hindrance to this faith

are riches

Wesley also pointed increasing riches as hindrance of holiness: love of God, love of our neighbor, humility, meekness, patience and good tempers. It causes atheism, idolatry, the desire of the eyes, the pride of life, the physical desire and self-will.

F. Laying Our Treasures to Heaven: 'Giving all we can' to the poor and the alienated as laying our treasure to heaven as well as church offering. The third rule of giving all you can is more important than gaining and saving.

But let not any man imagine that he has done anything barely

by going thus far, by gaining and saving all he can, if he

were to stop here. All this is nothing if a man go not forward,

if he does not point all this at farther end. ....And you may

as well bury it in the earth as in your chest, or in the Bank

of England. Not to use, is effectually to throw it away.

If therefore you would indeed make yourselves friends of

the mammon of unrighteousness, add the third rule to the

two preceding. Having first gained all you can, and secondly

saved all you can, then give all you can.

Laying to heaven is more precious than laying to bank or real estate. If we lay our rich to the poor, we would become a creditor and God would become a debtor. God will give us returning awards in heaven.

G. Reformation of System of Job Opportunity: "Thoughts on the Present Scarcity

of Provisions" The cause of poverty is not laziness but the layoff system.

H. Reformation of Tax System : "Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisinons"

Less tax is better for the poor and more tax is better for the rich.