

THE FUTURE OF JOHN WESLEY'S THEOLOGY
Back to the Future with the Apostle Paul

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*Dedicated to
Will D. Campbell*

six

Conclusion

As I come to the conclusion of this essay, let me summarize each topic considered so far by stating as sharply as I can the key differences between Wesley and Paul. I will then develop these findings for each of the topics discussed above. Doubtlessly, this will come at the cost of some simplification to the accounts already given, which were too brief in themselves, but it will provide a launching place for us to move to an explicit statement of a preferred future for Wesleyan theology.

Justification as Rectification

Wesley sees justification as an act of God's pardoning and forgiving grace addressed first and centrally to individuals. In Wesley, until human guilt is dealt with, there can be no deliverance from the power of sin and death. In Paul, God's apocalyptic act in the death and resurrection of Christ is a cosmic and historical change in the creation itself. God has rectified the relationships between Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female, and has defeated the rulers, authorities, and powers of this world. The polarities of the old creation no longer exist, and creation itself is crucified and obliterated for those who are in Christ and who participate now in the new creation of the ecclesia. Even the powers of sin and death have been defeated. Rectification is not about forgiveness and pardon as it is in Wesley.

Basic to a preferred future for Wesley's thought is Paul's vision of the apocalypse of God in Christ, a disclosure and action that has changed the world. This needs to supplant Wesley's focus on sin, justification, and sanctification initially in the individual. It also needs to offer a different approach to discipleship than conversion as forgiveness understood in these more individual terms. I do not mean to dismiss the lives of those who have known Christlike, life-altering ways of being in the world. These transformations happen and are real, but these, too, require understanding in the wider framework of Paul.

My point is that the future of Wesleyan theology will take the new creation in Paul's terms as an event that has already occurred. It is not initially, as it is in Wesley, something that is reflected into the world by persons who take on the image of God. Moreover, of course, there is a not-yet dimension to this reality. While it is clear that Paul was wrong in his expectation of the imminent return of Christ, this does not diminish his vision of the new creation, but rather makes it more poignant.

Still, we must confront a skepticism about Paul that steadily asserts itself when this notion of new creation is taken with such seriousness. The question often takes the form, "What difference does this make in my life?" It is a good and pertinent question, although the danger of an individualistic view is inherent in the question thus posed, especially in US culture. But how may the question of the difference that the new creation makes be addressed in Paul's thought?¹ Let me suggest an answer by making six comments.

First, the problem with so much of modern thought is its loss of conviction that God can actually do anything. If one believes in a modern God, this deity somehow encompasses the world but cannot do much, apparently, except nudge our subjective states. I am struck, for example, by how many see the faith as some kind of abstract "truth" that actually has little gravity in terms of divine impact on human life and history. It seems to be merely some shoring up of our psyches.

Or I wonder about those who see nothing in the future beyond this cosmic order. Scientific studies suggest that the universe is between thirteen and fourteen billion years old, which may or may not be correct. How long will it last? How long before all the stars are burned out and/or all the

1. See Gaventa's work with this kind of question. *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 73f.

energy expended? Allow me a figural answer, one not literally correct, of course, that the universe will last a hundred billion years and that, by then, all that may remain is the triumph of an infinite void or the remnants of burned out energy. Is this finally all there is? I side with Paul, though not his time schedule, that God will bring the entire cosmos to its completion, that all of this majestic creation, despite its fallenness, is not a journey into futility, but rather is the creation of God, who loves and seeks finally to bring all of it into communion with Self.

Second, in Paul the basic cosmic and human predicament is captivity. As Gaventa points out, for Paul people are always enslaved to something.² This captivity, never reducible to sins in Paul, is structured in the polar oppositions of the world, resides in its authorities, powers, and rulers, and is manifested in sin and death. It is difficult to imagine a more encompassing assessment of the condition in which we live. Our world is one stalked by violence, hunger, disease, exploitation, oppression, alienation, meaninglessness, emptiness, and ecological devastation. The power of Paul's liberating vision speaks directly to our time and our situation. Wesley's notion that we must first be forgiven before we can be set free from the bondage of the world pales before the horizon Paul brings to our condition.

Third, the problem, of course, comes with the realism of Paul's cosmic view of such pervasive bondage: how can we then talk about a new creation? For example, what can we mean by "participation in Christ" as living in the new creation in the ecclesia? The witness of Paul is that this cosmos is already a new creation and awaits its full completion. God has already acted to save the creation and to complete it in God's own time. Meanwhile, the world groans in travail, waiting for its completion, and the ecclesia is the new assembly called out to live into this new creation.

How are we to understand this? What does it mean to perform this new reality? Is this some magical act, some "alchemy" wherein reality has shifted from an old order to a new one apart from any human decision as such? Or, are we to understand this in some subjective, perhaps psychological or existential sense, in which the proclamation of the gospel demands from us some overhauled self-understanding?

E. P. Sanders poses these options and maintains that Paul needs to be understood "as saying what he meant and meaning what he said," that is, that "Christians really are one body and Spirit with Christ." But Sanders asks "what does this mean?" and acknowledges that "we seem to lack a new category of 'reality,'" something that "lies between cosmic speculation and belief in magical transference on the one hand and a revised self-understanding on the other." He then confesses that he does not "have a new category of perception."³

Richard Hays offers as a suggestion for further reflection such a category of perception in the "widely recognized property of story." Story has the capacity to enable a community to identify with its protagonist, to create community, to provide a common identity, and to lay a foundation for communal self-understanding. Indeed, in narrative, the relationships of a community can be characterized as participation. As Hays says, "the story lays a claim upon us and draws us into its world; we recognize ourselves in the protagonist and feel that our own destinies are somehow figured in his story." In these ways story functions "not so much as a 'work of the imagination as a spontaneous response elicited by the story." Understood in this way story can operate with the encompassing character of a paradigm.

I cannot help thinking here of Michèle de Certeau's observation that in everyday life we walk through a forest of stories, meaning that the world is populated with stories and that we live them out pervasively, sometimes in conflicts between stories, sometimes in the contradictions internal to a particular story, and so on.⁴ Stories can be, moreover, fictional, idolatrous, fantastical, paranoid, schizophrenic, imperialistic, and more! Yet, stories underlie our science, even our math, and Alasdair MacIntyre argues compellingly that reason itself is tradition dependent.⁵

Yet, while I certainly want to appreciate the functions that story performs in an anthropological sense, my focus here is on Paul's thought particularly and what he offers expressly in approaching the revelation of God in Christ. My point in using story here is not to reduce God's revelation to story, not even to Paul's story. Neither is it an attempt to equate

3. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 522–23. Sanders, of course, is posing in the two alternatives here the positions of Albert Schweitzer and Rudolf Bultmann.

4. Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 77–90.

5. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, 367, 369, 390f.

"history" with Paul's story, nor to hold that any story equals the mystery of what God has done in Christ. The revelation of God must be understood theologically. That is, it is always more than history, and no story can ever be equated with the ineffable mystery of God's revelation. So where does this leave us?

I find helpful here Barth's understanding of analogy. Barth separates his use of analogy (similarity in the midst of dissimilarity) from that of metaphor; the latter is seen as some expression of a more general "truth" about human experience. By analogy Barth speaks of God's self-analogization, that is, the way in which God can reveal Self in the images, language and stories of Scripture.

In our context here this means that God can make Self known through the text even as the text hides God. This avoids the literalist interpretation of Scripture that equates the text with the revelation and thus fails to address the profound, mysterious hiddenness of God. At the same time, the use of analogy avoids the expressivist/metaphorical view, which makes the relation of the text and God's revelation equivocal or ambiguous with possibly any number of meanings and therefore not an adequate witness to the particularity of God's revelation in Christ. Closely related to the expressivist view is the problem that God is ruled out as the actor in the revelatory event, that is, the expressivist approach uses metaphors to mine out generalized characteristics of human experience, and thereby God as the actor is shelved.⁶

Barth understands God as able to use Scripture as an analogy of divine activity. In this the Scriptures' mode of address to humanity is not primarily cognitive or emotive but kerygmatic, meaning that God comes to us in a divine personal encounter in Scripture. It is a self-involving encounter for both God and human recipients. The cognitive and emotive are aspects of and subordinate to this encounter.

We live into this story by the performance of its plot. It is the story of a world created good but fallen in captivity to the powers. In this story God does not leave us enslaved but invades the world in order to deliver

us. We are saved by the suffering obedience of Christ on the cross and called out as the assembly of those who live in a new creation in anticipation of the consummation of the world in God's time. We perform the plot of this story by opening ourselves to the God who has not left the world but has joined it in Christ and in the ongoing work of the Spirit. We are able to live because we are ready to die knowing that our death, too, is placed within God's victory over death.

Fourth, it is crucial, then, that we understand this story in terms of its ultimacy. It means that the polarities of the world so active among the powers in Paul do not have final standing with God. It is not merely we who stand against the powers; this is *God's struggle*, one that God has already won in the divine economy. In Christ, the walls of hostility we face are ultimately ended. That the walls are still there is clear, but that they will not prevail is the promise of God in the action of Christ. Although we face—at times in wrenching agony—a not yet, we live in a world with an already present and alive with promise and hope. This means that there is a possibility—an already—for us to live into that reality of God's new creation, albeit in broken and fragmented ways. We can be an embodied, obedient witness to that world by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Again, Wesley shares this vision, at least in part. That Christ has won this victory is clear in Wesley. Henry Knight states that for Wesley "the actual concrete manifestations of that victory come through the church being really the church, and Christians really being Christian, through the power of the Holy Spirit." Knight observes that Wesley may be "more focused on personal salvation, but . . . it is within an already/not yet context."⁷

Fifth, by that reality we can be an already community, an ecclesial people, not merely individuals plucked from the world and "saved," but a Body of Christ living in obedience to the Christ of the cross and resurrection. We can live on the walls of the divisions of the world knowing that God wants them brought down and that this is their destiny. This means crossing the borders and divisions of the powers and standing with those that the idolatries of nation, economic order, class, race, ethnicity, gender,

6. I am indebted in this discussion of Barth's understanding of Scripture to George Hunsinger and his extraordinary book *Disruptive Grace* 210–25, esp. 222–25. I cannot, however, possibly do justice to Hunsinger's account in this space.

7. Personal correspondence with Henry H. Knight III, March 16, 2010.

orientation, disability, and the unfaithfulness of the church, among others, have excluded.

Even as I write these words, however, they sound too heroic. I have in mind something far more ordinary. It means things like simply refusing the divisions of the world. It means everyday life with those who are other. It means congregations not content with being homogeneous. It means crossing lines simply as a matter of course, as a way of being in the world, of developing sensibilities, dispositions, and habits that exclude the exclusions of the powers.

Sixth, we do need formation and skills: formation to live lives as the Body of Christ and skills to teach us how to live as though the walls do not finally matter. To cross the lines that the powers place in the structures of the world, to refuse the idolatries sustaining these walls, and to resist the framing of our lives, the captivity of our practices, and the blinding of our imaginations by these powers, requires formation and a community, an ecclesia, that participates in the new creation.

Here Wesley is so very important in his witness. It was his living on walls, his engagement with the poor, his opposition to slavery, his openness to women, his living out their inclusion in the work of the Methodist movement, and his enduring commitment to holiness of heart and life: all these and more carry this sense of living on the walls, knowing that they are already not important and then living as though they were finally defeated. As Paul stood against the divisions and factions of the Corinthian assembly in the Lord's Supper, he called them to a unity in Christ that would admit no walls, but rather a witness to a world where they were down, a world embodied in the Lord's Supper. Indeed, those who eat and drink in "an unworthy manner," that is, by sustaining the walls of the world, will be answerable to the Lord.

At this point the future of John Wesley's theology is one that can be released from a focus on individual forgiveness and pardon and placed in the encompassing horizon of Paul's apocalyptic vision of rectification. It is a far more compelling vision of what God has done. There is room in this vision for forgiveness and pardon, but this vision addresses the captivities of the world and requires no move from the individual to the social but encompasses all in a new creation.

Sanctification Reconsidered

For Wesley sanctification is that ongoing fulfillment or restoration of the image of God in persons. Basic to this fulfillment is the role of the Christian in witness and mission as one of reflecting God's image to the wider world, so that his initial focus on the individual does carry social responsibility.

For Paul, however, sanctification is not some final condition we achieve, even by the grace of God. Rather, sanctification is to be set apart for God's work in the sense that one is called by God. In Paul, being called is the very meaning of sanctification, and sanctification is being in service to God, to fulfill that call.

There is much of value in Wesley's understanding of persons bearing the image of God and of the call of God to fulfill that image personally and in the wider world. But Paul triumphs Wesley with his understanding of sanctification. The call into the ecclesia with its mandate of service is the more encompassing claim and avoids the individual focus, at least initially, in Wesley. As John Howard Yoder claims about justification, "the primary, direct and immediate consequence of justification is not the 'saved' individual, but [the assembly]."⁸ Wesley's own life of service represents an example of Paul's understanding of sanctification.

This in no way requires a loss of dealing theologically with the image of God in persons and its important place in Christian thought. Here Wesley can be quite valuable even in correcting Paul. I think especially of Paul's use of the image of God in relation to men and women in 1 Corinthians 11:7: "For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the reflection of man" and requires that her head be veiled. I have already discussed the patriarchal implications of Paul's view here, but this is a place where Wesley's correction would be valuable, along with a carefully nuanced approach to the authority of Scripture.⁹

8. Quoted in Harink, *Paul among the Postliberals*, 62.

9. See Wesley's *Notes on the Bible*, 1 Cor 11:7–16. Cf. Rom 8:29. See Hay's call for a more nuanced view of the authority and diversity of Scripture, *First Corinthians*, 248.

The Faith of Christ and Faith in Christ

In the "battle of the genitives," Wesley seems to be aware of the subjective genitive (faith of Christ) and objective genitive (faith in Christ) and uses the former in his translation of Galatians, but he interprets it primarily in terms of the latter. His basic focus is on faith in Christ. Further, while faith is an unearned gift of God, received through the Witness of the Spirit, it is necessary to justification and to sanctification. In Paul, recent scholarship maintains that *pistis Christou* is rightly translated faith of Christ or the faithfulness of Christ. The subjective genitive is used to convey the obedient, suffering love of Christ on the cross. God's rectification comes through Christ's loyalty to God in facing the powers and God's victory over them in the deliverance of humankind from the powers. The basic difference between Wesley and Paul, then, is the role of justifying faith in Christ in forgiveness and pardon in the former, and the apocalyptic rectifying/liberating action of God through the faith of Christ in the latter.

Again, there are appropriate places to use the translation "faith in Christ," and Wesley can be helpful to us in these instances, but the role of the faith of Christ is central in the apocalyptic gospel of Paul. Not only does the suffering obedience unto death of Christ become the vehicle of God's action in victory and in liberation of humanity from the powers, it is, as Hays says, "the central *defining* act for his identity; it marks him as the singular, irreplaceable individual in whom God's will for the salvation of a faithless world is made effectual."¹⁰

The obedience of Christ becomes the pattern for what faithfulness and love mean. It is the clearest place where we are called to imitate Christ. In our own time the problem with a Christian ethic based on love is that it is so often mushy and undefined. It can be little more than a sentimental feeling. And popular faith is often reduced to an individualistic, subjectivist focus on one's experience without engaging the rich coherence of any faith tradition. It is too often a "spirituality" set in the flows of a perceived "self-fulfillment" and shared only in its denial of religion, meaning not related to a church. While such corruptions were not true of Wesley, Paul's use of the faith of Christ provides a paradigm for Christian loyalty and

love, one that can be enriched by crucial ingredients of formation from Wesley.

I do need to recognize in no uncertain terms that many fear this suffering obedient death of Christ as a paradigm because it is so often used to continue the oppression of people of the third world, of ethnic minorities in our own country, of the poor and other working classes, and of women across all of these categories and others. Sarah Coakley is quite helpful here in a discussion of vulnerability in a feminist reconceptualization "of the power of the cross and resurrection." In a discussion of "the paradox of power and vulnerability," she makes distinctions between a rightful vulnerability versus an invitation to abuse, between a contemplative "self-effacement" versus "self-destruction or self-repression," and between "the productive suffering of self-disclosure" and "the decentering torture of pain for pain's sake." A faithful self-emptying, she argues, "is not a negation of self."¹¹

She maintains that these "crucial distinctions" are gradually being learned in white feminist theology that has tended to repress "a productive 'theology of the cross' in the face of continuing disclosures of women's abuse in the *name* of the 'cross'" (italics in original). She remarks that Black womanist theology has been far "less coy" in distancing "abusive suffering" from "a productive or empowering form of 'pain.'"¹² Such considerations are, of course, important to make for one very important reason: misuses of the cross are an expression of the violations of the powers in one of their most vicious forms, that is, when evil takes on the disguise of "redemption" or the wicked perversion of kenosis.

By Wesley's inclusion of women in the Methodist movement, once again his witness has much to offer us. His sense of the image of God in each one can play an important role, especially when placed within Paul's wider vision of God's defeat of the powers by the faith of Christ. But Paul also makes an important difference here in that liberation from the powers is the more encompassing action of God. The focus on justification as forgiveness and pardon for those already beaten down by false guilt

11. Coakley, *Powers and Submissions*, 34-37.

12. Here Coakley references the work of Emilie Townes, who uses this distinction from the work of Audre Lorde. Ibid.: Townes, "Living in the New Jerusalem," 83-86; Lorde, "Eye to Eye," 171-72.

and the self-abasement of oppression is no redemption. Moreover, the perverse use of the suffering obedience of Christ in order to continue the work of the powers is a contradiction of the first order.

The Powers and the Future

In Wesley the captivity of the powers is not a significant concept except for his understanding of the powers of sin and death. More important and first in order for Wesley is the problem of human guilt, which must first be healed by the atoning priestly work of Christ. Only then can the defeat of sin, death, and Satan occur by means of Christ's kingly work in the hearts of those so justified and forgiven of their trespasses. In Paul the powers are a key reality. Not only heavenly, the powers include earthly authorities, powers, and rulers. More, they are elemental polar opposites that structure the cosmos and sustain its order. Further, sin and its consequence, death, are powers that hold humanity in their grip. All of these together enslave not only humanity but also the entire cosmos. In Paul the defeat of the powers is basic to the fundamental good news of God's apocalyptic action in Christ.

A recovery of the understanding of the powers is crucial in our time and an important move for Wesleyan theology. I understand that many find the language of the powers esoteric or just plain strange. As able a New Testament scholar as Rudolf Bultmann argued for demythologizing the powers. In his discussion of Paul on the powers, Bultmann states: "To be sure, for the Christian they are already 'dethroned' (1 Cor 2). In reality they can no longer harm him. To be sure, the Christian, too, still lives 'in the world,' 'in the flesh,' and the ultimately unmythological meaning of the 'powers' is also manifested in the fact that their 'dethronement' is conceived unmythologically."¹³ Bultmann goes on to say that there is no magical change in "a Christian's existence" even after becoming a Christian. One's existence is still under the threat of danger as long as one lives an "historical existence" and is thus "in the flesh." A person is still under threat from the powers that menace one's very existence. "The 'powers' come upon the Christian in the vicissitudes of his particular lot—i.e. in his 'tribulations' and 'distresses,' etc. (Rom. 8:35; cf. 1 Thess. 2:18; Satan

hindered us)³—which, however, can no longer basically harm him (Rom. 8:31–39)."¹⁴

Also in this volume, Bultmann says of the *kosmos* in Paul that it is an "eerie fact" that "the world of men, constituted by that which the individual does and upon which he bestows his care, itself gains the upper hand over the individual."¹⁵ In this dynamic the powers come to represent "an independent super-self over all individual selves." He says, "In modern terms, 'the spirit of the world' is the atmosphere to whose compelling influence every man contributes but to which he is also always subject."¹⁶

In such "unmythological" language as that of the "vicissitudes of his particular lot," his "tribulations" and "distresses" and "the atmosphere" individually constructed which in turn dominates the individual, Bultmann attempts to demythologize the powers. But I am struck by how individualistic Bultmann's language is in these passages, a reflection of the existentialism he brings to the New Testament, but also, it seems, of his own attachment to the individual/society conceptuality discussed above, an issue with Bultmann I regretably cannot address for reasons of space.

It is worth noting that Bultmann makes the case that Paul, too, demythologizes the powers as understood in his own time. For example, Paul does not use the dualistic thought of Gnosticism but sees the powers as part of God's creation,¹⁷ and yet Bultmann claims that Paul uses "naïve mythology" in his discussion "of the battle of the spirit powers against Christ or of his [Christ's] battle against them (1 Cor. 2:6–8; 15:24–26)." But Bultmann says that "in reality" (no small claim), Paul's language is but the expression of a particular view of human existence: "The spirit powers represent the reality into which man is placed as one full of conflicts and struggle, a reality which threatens and tempts."¹⁸

It strikes me, however, that this move up the ladder of abstraction in Bultmann's characterization obscures the richness of Paul's account, moving it to a generalized "reality" of "conflicts" and "struggle" that "threatens and tempts." These abstractions cannot carry the gripping insight of Paul

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., 256.

16. Ibid., 1:257.

17. Ibid., 258.

18. Ibid., 259.

13. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 1:258.

about the powers as captivities based in the very structures of the world, of the powers of an evil age, of powers, authorities and rulers, and of sin and death.

A Wesleyan theology for the future will require a view of the powers in Paul closer to that of Karl Barth. In his critique of those who attempt to demythologize the powers, Barth calls rather for the demythologizing of the myths of the modern powers, such as the state and mammon. Barth understands the powers as "spirits with a life and activity of their own, lordless indwelling forces." They are "entities with their own right and dignity." While their reality and capacities are obscure, mixed in value, and not intelligible, they seem transitory and take on various shapes in historical periods, in the diversities of and within culture(s), and in personal lives. But they are formidable, they have impact and cannot be avoided.¹⁹

Refusing the claim that the worldview of the New Testament writers is "magical," Barth contends that these authors are less limited by the dominant perspectives of their times than we are in our time. He declares that they "have seen more, seen more clearly, and come much closer to the reality in their thought and speech, than those of us who are happy possessors of a rational and scientific view of things."²⁰

How may we then see the powers in a future Wesleyan theology and ethics? Just to be clear, I will suggest some examples of ways to think about the powers. I do not, however, put a final status on my views here. Like most things of this kind, my claims about the powers require an eschatological reticence, that is, I "see through a mirror darkly." Nevertheless, I think of so many ways in which social, biological, and ecological relationships and patterns are more than the sum of their individual parts; or of the cumulative buildup of personal, social, cultural events and relationships in history; or of the unintended consequences of human acts, policies, and practices as well as the intended ones; or of the ambiguous results of political, economic, social, and cultural agency; or of a concept like that of Anthony Giddens of the duality of social structure wherein people enact a social pattern they are formed by and act out of but by

which they then participate in the construction of new social structures: this is a short list.²¹ Such things are not in themselves necessarily evil, but these kinds of historical, pervasive, hugely encompassing characteristics of our world/cosmos bear captivities of biblical proportions.

I confess I don't know what to do with Paul's understanding of the powers as heavenly entities. But I write at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century in the United States. Viewing the politics of our country at the local, state, and federal level, I must say that over and over again the most helpful descriptive term for what I experience in US politics is "crazy," and I mean this in the deranged sense. Moreover, when I look at our economic order, I am dismayed by the greed, the blindness, the corporate arrogance, and the violations of the commonweal. I wonder how these can be accounted for by human wickedness alone. So while I plead agnosticism with regard to fallen heavenly agents, I do wonder what God is telling us through Paul's language of the powers in this regard.

James Luther Adams perceives that the operations of the powers in history are expressly named in Scripture in the domination and imperial power of states, in the transmissions of Gentile culture, in Pharisaic legalism, in the popular opinion of the masses, and in the fashions and currencies of idolatry. These operations brought with them captivity, corruption, enmity, and wrongdoing. Adams calls for a church ready to struggle against these powers, one that is open to God's strength, which can conquer these powers or at least limit them.²² Adams's "listing of specific powers in biblical times," says Marva Dawn, is reminiscent of "Mahatma Gandhi's litany of seven Social Sins":

- politics without principle
- wealth without work
- commerce without morality
- pleasure without conscience

21. See Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, 77-81.

22. I am indebted to Marva Dawn for calling my attention to Adams's paper. See his "We Wrestle against Principalities and Powers," 168-69. Dawn does a helpful job of reviewing a number of biblical and theological approaches to the principalities and powers. See her *Powers, Weakness, and the Tabernacled of God*, 1-34; her reference to Adams is on page 33.

19. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4:214, 215-17, 220-33. I am indebted to Marva Dawn for calling my attention to this passage in Barth. See her *Powers, Weakness, and the Tabernacled of God*, 21f.

20. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4:216-17.

- education without character
- science without humanity
- and worship without sacrifice.²³

So, then, what can be the response of a Wesleyan theology to the powers? It involves remembering that the powers are not an unmitigated evil in the world. To see them as utterly wicked would constitute a dualistic view of a good God and evil powers. Instead they are rightly understood as part of God's good creation but fallen. Further, Wesley's view that the state has a role in guaranteeing rights and in protecting citizens has a place. And, while his commitment to the king and his Toryism need to be relativized and corrected, for example, and while his views require a more systemic grasp of social, political, and economic relationships, nevertheless his sense of the role of larger forces in slavery, in the violations of the poor, etc., opens the door to a faithful use of Paul's understanding of the powers. Finally, in what is a suggestive and not a complete list, Wesley's understanding of the Holy Spirit and the gift of its power in the church and in the world can be developed in new and valuable directions as ways of countering the captivities of our time.

In a new working of Wesley's understanding of justification, sanctification, faith of and faith in Christ, and of the powers, a Wesleyan theology will address the modernist conceptualty of the individual and society. This move has special gravity in Western culture.

Individual and Society

I contend in chapter 5 that a dual conceptualty of individual and society operates continually in Wesley's theology. I believe that even his corporate understanding of the church is an example of this duality at work, expressing the social pole of this ideational structure. In Paul, however, we find a radically different duality, that of old creation and new creation. Again, this is a place for Wesley to be rethought in terms of Paul.

Furthermore, I am struck by how much of Christian ethics in the last century was governed by this duality. This can be seen especially in so

Conclusion

many theologians who make the move from love to justice, for example: "justice is love distributed" (Joseph Fletcher), "justice is the order love requires" (Daniel Day Williams), and "justice is what Christian love does when confronted by more than one neighbor" (Paul Ramsey). Each of these definitions works with a dual conceptualty of the individual and the social, and sees love in personal terms and moving toward justice as a social expression.²⁴

In terms of our study of Paul, this distorts the place of justice in God's revelation in Christ. In Paul God's justice as rectification is at the heart of the apocalypse. Love understood as that of the obedient suffering Christ on the cross, which becomes the pattern for our lives, is the very exercise of God's justice understood in its liberative, merciful, and reconciling action. It is the way that God rectifies the relationships of Jew and Gentile, slave and free, and male and female. There is no need to move from love to justice; they are one in God's apocalyptic act. There is no need to move from the individual to the social; the powers of the entire cosmos have been defeated in Christ. This act does not only save persons but rather represents the coming of a new creation and its embodiment in the ecclesia.

Yet, further, my problem with this dual conceptualty is not only the way it has been used by the nation-state to move "religion" into the private sphere but also because of its implicit view that sees individuals as ontologically prior to social relationships, hence "entering" society and forming social contracts. Rubbish! We are conceived socially, impregnated and formed in our mother's womb. Our genes go back for thousands of years. We are birthed into a profoundly social world. If we are not touched or held, suckled and socialized, we die! We are then shaped and developed by language and signs and socially conditioned by class, race, ethnicity, and gender. Geographic location, the historic times in which we live, and the cultures by which the world is mediated to us: all these serve to make us who we are. We do not enter society; we are subjects constructed of a specific geographical, biological, social, cultural, and historical world. Such an understanding is crucial for us, living as we do in a culture filled with the fictions of individualism. Our theologies need to flush away the dual

23. Dawn, *Powers, Weakness, and the Tabernacled of God*, 33.

24. See Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 99; Williams, *Spirit and the Forms of Love*, 250; Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics*, 243.

conceptuality that continues to operate in them implicitly and explicitly. As helpful as Wesley can be in his understanding of the church, and as indebted to him as we are for his social witness, he needs correction by Paul's cosmic vision and his understanding of God's liberating salvation. The importance of this shift will become clearer as we discuss conclusions for and implications of justice in Wesley and Paul.

Wesley and Paul on Justice

As we see above, Wesley's approaches to justice are many and varied. He certainly privileges the poor—to use a contemporary phrase—and defends them and spends much of his ministry in their service. He opposes slavery and opens doors previously closed to women. Clearly, he has a central conception of the good and of the common good. In his defense of human rights he appealed to the natural law tradition of the Enlightenment, but he filled this concept with his view that human beings were made in the image of God, and he rejected those dimensions of the Enlightenment that were humanistic only or atheistic. Basic to Wesley's approach to justice and the good is his commitment to holiness of heart and life. This is the basic goal of his life, thought, and work. It is his ongoing commitment. As a person of his time, he did not see systemic social issues and structures in the way that we do now, but much of the faithfulness of his witness speaks to us today.

In Paul the apocalyptic action of God in Christ has changed the cosmos, and God's liberation of the cosmos and humanity from the powers is a reconciling act that makes all one in Christ. The new creation is God's justice, an already/not yet reality disclosed and enacted in Christ. Paul was a man way ahead of his time in his inclusion of women in the work of the ecclesia. Even as we discover patriarchal implications in his work that require critique, Gaventa instructs us to work with "the theological dynamics" of Paul's writings, which are more important than what he says or thinks about women on specific occasions in his writing. His view of the righteousness of God made manifest in Christ will govern any account of human justice faithful to his understanding. Moreover, his concern for the good of all because of God's love redemptively enacted in Jesus Christ

fuels a concern for the common good and opens the way for Christian participation in public life about it.

How, then, may we offer an account of justice that engages both Wesley and Paul that offers instruction for us here and now? I suggest that the recent scholarship on Paul with its emphasis on rectification as the more adequate way both to understand and to work with Paul's *dikaiosis* is the way to begin. It provides a way in which Wesley can be reconceived and reworked for the future. Such an approach will not ignore the very real positive contributions Wesley has to offer, as we shall see.

Basic to all I attempt to do here is the development of an approach to the understanding and practice of justice focused on the centrality of righteousness in Paul and its manifestation in Christ. At the very least, then, a justice formed from Paul's writing will have at least three characteristics.²⁵ The first is that it will be characterized by redemption. The word *redemption* in Paul carries the meaning of liberation from the powers, and any understanding of justice derived from Paul's understanding of righteousness will include this kind of freedom, this kind of release from the captivities of the world.

At the same time, as crucial as this is, redemption from a Pauline understanding of righteousness involves as well the transformation of life. It is, indeed, a call not to be conformed to the cosmos/world but a transformation that constitutes a renewal of the minds and bodies of the ecclesia as a living sacrifice, one that gains its informative and formative character from the suffering obedience of Christ on the cross. Christ's witness of obedience unto death provides us the character of love and the pattern of our lives. It is not enough to have a view of justice; rather the church is called to be *formed* in a redemptive justice. In our time, it is far too easy to have a "position" on justice and not to be shaped by it. When this happens, views of justice too easily become status games in which we get "up" on others by having "a higher standing" as a result of our views. Such "satisfactions" hardly meet the vision of Paul, but become instead a form of the powers.

25. I am indebted in what follows to Stanley Hauerwas, "Jesus, the Justice of God," in *War and the American Difference*, 99–116. I have drawn the three characteristics of redemption, mercy, and reconciliation from this chapter. One should not assume, however, that I have used his work in a way that he would necessarily agree with.

A second characteristic of a justice informed by Paul's view of righteousness is mercy. There is no escaping the merciful God of Paul's writings. The kenosis of God in Christ, the self-emptying that results in taking the place of a slave, the God who breaks the power of sin and death and sets us right, the God who takes the initiative on our behalf and who comes to us while we are still God's enemies—these are acts of an everlasting mercy. No understanding of justice oriented only to giving one one's due, and certainly not one's exactions of retributive judgment, can adequately represent the merciful vision of Paul.

A third characteristic of justice understood from Paul's notion of righteousness is reconciliation. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." This ministry of reconciliation is intrinsic to the life of the ecclesia and therefore takes on the character of a conviction that forms both its approach and its substance. Intrinsic to justice, it is not a utilitarian seeking after effectiveness—that is, because it "works" better that way—but rather because it participates in the righteousness of Christ. This stands in sharp contrast to a justice that results from a balance of power as in Reinhold Niebuhr. A "justice"—really a stand-off—that results from a balance of power is not justice for Paul. It may be, by Niebuhr's account, a rough approximation of justice in the terms of the nation-state, but it is not adequate to a Pauline view.²⁶

So where does this leave us with Wesley? It suggests that we need a renewed reading of rectification in Paul in terms of its implications for Wesley's work with justice, human rights, and the common good. We shall turn to these in this order.

Rights and Justice

First, as important as God's initiating action is for Wesley in justifying the sinner as forgiven before God, his more individual understanding of justification and his focus on forgiveness and pardon leave his views at this point inadequately informed by the wider vision of Paul and his understanding of justice. The result is that when Wesley faces some of the most important challenges of his time—poverty and slavery, for ex-

ample—he addresses these issues in terms of rights and, at least initially, in individual terms of the image of God in each person. As grateful as I am for what Wesley did here, it is not an adequate approach to a Christian understanding of justice.

It is at this point that I want to raise a question with Wesley's focus on rights, but I don't want to be misunderstood. I am certainly glad that Wesley stood up for the rights of slaves, the poor, women, and others. More than that, I think it important to support human rights because they are a declining range of moral claims that can resist the increasing encroachments of both the nation-state and capitalism. It is crucial that the state be held responsible for living up to its own standards of rights by which it attempts to legitimate itself on too many other grounds. Moreover, given Wesley's time and the resources available to him in terms of the thought of his time and the importance of human rights in the emergence of the modern nation-state, I do appreciate the importance of his use of rights as based in creation and the image of God in his context.

At the same time, a conception of justice that is primarily centered in rights is inadequate from a Christian view. Richard Hays in a discussion of homelessness declares that

the ubiquitous appeal to a rationally grounded notion of human rights is without warrant in Scripture. Nowhere in the New Testament is there any hint that housing—or anything else—is a "right." Those who fail to respond to the homeless are not castigated for violating a human right; rather, it is suggested that they have disregarded "Moses and the prophets" (Luke 16:27-31) or that they culpably failed to recognize Jesus himself (Matt 25:45). This last image cannot be adequately translated into the Enlightenment idiom of human rights and dignity . . . Insofar as the church's discourse replaces these powerful images with pallid rationalistic notions of rights and equity, we as a community have lost our bearings and our identity.²⁷

Not only this, when justice is reduced to rights it can become a procedural justice where each person is merely a cog of self-interest pursuing his or her own aims with only a thin commitment to respect the "rights" of others to do the same thing. I think here of the 1960s claims by the

26. See Niebuhr's statement in *Nature and Destiny of Man*, 2:244-69, and in *Christianity and Power Politics*, 1-33.

27. Hays, "Scripture-Shaped Community," 54f. Quoted in Rasmussen, *Church as Polis*, 294 n. 186.

boomer generation such as, "You do your thing and I'll do mine. Let's just don't get in each other's way." Justice as rights becomes then the shallow ordering of units of desire that share little else in common. Pierre Manent makes the crucial observation that such views of rights lose their ontological moorings, and rights become arbitrary, little more than the description of wants.²⁸

Of course, Wesley never made these kinds of moves in his view of rights. As influenced as he was by the Enlightenment, he was also critical of the secularism of its humanistic accounts. His understanding of human rights as anchored in God's creation and of human beings as bearing the image of God represents a different basis for rights, as we have seen.²⁹ This is an important contribution from Wesley. I contend, however, that it is not enough. In his concluding assessments of Wesley, Jennings notes the limitations of Wesley's politics and suggests the need for a different political ethic, "one based on, perhaps, a broader biblical foundation than the one Wesley was able to embrace in eighteenth-century England." Jennings asks here for "a thoroughly radical political ethic: a theology of liberation." I suggest that this ethic come from a new reading of the Apostle Paul. Basic to this work will be the development of a justice of the common good.

Justice and the Common Good

As we see above, neither Wesley nor Paul had a fully developed view of a justice of the common good. Furnish concludes that Paul nevertheless

28. *City of Man*, 124-55. I am indebted to Stanley Hauerwas for calling this to my attention in his *A Better Hope*, 257 n. 6. See also Beverly Harrison's critique of procedural justice in behalf of a substantive justice "of what is good for human persons." *Making the Connections*, 177f., 252f.

29. Nicholas Wolterstorff in his recent work on justice maintains that a possessive individualism can distort the ways we deal with rights, though not the rights themselves (388); nevertheless he holds that justice is "constituted of rights," that a "society is just insofar as its members enjoy the goods to which they have a right." He understands rights "as ultimately grounded in what respect for the worth of persons and human beings require" (xlii). See his *Justice*; see also his "Way to Justice," esp. 29. This is a line of thought that is not inconsistent with Wesley's view and represents a way for rights to be defended on the basis of the worth of persons. My comment here, however, should not be seen as agreement with Wolterstorff's argument in this book.

lays the groundwork for such participation in public life. Meanwhile, Wesley's views of the good and the common good need expansion into a more fully orbited Christian understanding of justice. To focus on justice as rights misses not only the importance of righteousness in Paul and the development of Wesley's view of the good and the common good in terms of justice, but also the important Christian tradition of a justice based in the common good.

I think here particularly of Thomas Aquinas, who sees the kingdom of God as an order of charity. That order of charity gives rise to the common good of all. He then bases his understanding of a general justice on the common good. For Aquinas general justice is an undergirding virtue, one that orders the good or aim of persons with the larger aims of the human community, with the common good.

Indeed, for Aquinas every person has a longing for completion that is God given, one that realizes its aim in the beatific vision, the common good. This common good is not foreign to the good of the individual, but rather the individual's good is so intimately grounded in the good of all that when one does the common good, one realizes one's own personal good. It is interesting to see here the reversal of the move from the individual to society in Wesley and Thomas's priority of the good of all in which personal good is grounded in this more encompassing good of all, a view I suspect Wesley would agree with stated this way.

Furthermore, general justice provides an ordering for the other virtues as well. All virtues find their proper aim and fulfillment in general justice understood as the common good. So in Aquinas, justice was a principle of unity and an ordering of life, covenantal in shape, and arising out of the order of charity as the common good.³⁰

Wesley's work on justice for the future requires a rethinking informed by the tradition of the common good. While Wesley has an understanding of the good and the common good, it would be wrong to conclude that this never informs his ministry and work, but he does not explicitly develop this understanding in its relationship to justice.

30. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II.58.1. For a brief and helpful discussion of Aquinas's views on justice and subsequent Catholic social thought, see Bell, *Liberation Theology*, 107-23. Let me say, too, that Thomas's view of justice would take on even more substantive power should it be engaged with the recent research on Paul we examine here.

How, then, might we move in this setting to a justice of the common good, especially in light of our description of justice in Paul as one characterized by redemption, mercy, and reconciliation? It seems clear that most people outside the church and, indeed, many inside the church do not describe justice in such terms. How, then, in a future for Wesley's theology do we proceed here?

First, in the church, a new reading and understanding of Paul is necessary if we are to develop a justice of redemption, mercy, and reconciliation. This centrally involves a Christ-centered and Spirit-powered faithful searching by the church for this new direction in its life. Such direction will help the church resist accommodation to the forms of justice instituted by the powers and thereby expressions of their captivities. This calls for an enactment of Paul's thought in the reading of Scripture, in preaching, in worship, in baptism, and, centrally, in the practice and language of the Eucharist. It summons the Body of Christ to new interpretive profiles of ministries of service and witness in our communities and in the larger world.

Further, it is clear here that we will have to go beyond Paul and Wesley, since neither of them developed a justice of the common good. For our purposes I will sketch out briefly what that might look like. I do not, of course, regard this as a final view, but rather as an illustrative attempt to provide some description of a justice of the common good. It is a beginning and an invitation to others in the church to move beyond it.

The first thing to be said is that the common good is not an abstraction, some verbal definition that we take like a principle and attempt to apply to a context. The common good is something much more like a process, really in one important dimension like a conversation between peoples and groups. It is an activity. It cannot be characterized by propositions finally, though some guidelines may help keep the process going.

The common good occurs not only as a process but is achieved in a place and time. It has an "inescapable contextual dimension," as Stanley Hauerwas says.³¹ It cannot be generalized to all times and places. Moreover, the search for the common good, because it is dealing with concrete, living people in a given social and historical time and place, emerges from the needs and necessities of flesh-and-blood people, from their visions,

31. Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue*, 237.

and from their interests. It is not an imposed scheme, but an emergent "find" among people dedicated to the good of the whole, not merely to the satisfaction of a narrow set of personal or social interests. While it will inevitably involve these, it cannot be reduced to such interests because it must move beyond them to what is genuinely good and common. It is not the greatest good of the greatest number but rather the greatest good of all.

This does not deny pluralism as such, but, as Hauerwas argues, what is "at stake here" is "a certain conceptual picture of that pluralism that has held our will captive."³² That is, Hauerwas takes on the specific interest-group liberalism quite active in the seventies when he wrote his book. In that liberalism, "the fundamental assumption of the pluralist ideal—namely that the balance of interest achieved by the free bargaining of groups in society will achieve the greatest possible justice and common good."³³ This assumption simply equates "the old capitalist-utilitarian idea" with "the greatest sum of individual satisfactions." In turn, this reductive conception of the common good becomes the basic model for group life. The result is that justice becomes simply procedural with no commitment to a wider vision of a justice of the common good, more holistically conceived.

This gives interest-group pluralism a quality not unlike the "free market" of laissez-faire capitalism. Only here the medium of exchange is not money but power. It provides no larger vision of the common good. The "common good" is but the result of the conflicts and exchanges in the dog-eat-dog "market" of interest group elites struggling in the imbalances and reciprocities of power and influence. It is not clear here, for example, what place there is for the poor and others excluded from such a political order.

When Hauerwas wrote these thoughts about the common good, it was before the ascendancy of a resurgent neoliberalism with its renewed arrogance about the "invisible hand" of the laissez-faire market providing the greatest good for the greatest number. Since that time, the interest-group liberalism of the political order and the reemergent laissez-faire capitalism of a global economy have compounded the dynamics that dis-

32. *Ibid.*, 238.

33. *Ibid.*, 234.

turbed Hauerwas back then. While not exhaustive, these two massive influences, combined with the decline of civil society in the "bowling alone" phenomenon described by Robert Putnam, contributed to turn the citizen into a consumer and to make the dynamics of interest-group liberalism even more prominent. Meanwhile, growing concentrations of power and wealth have set serious limits to the realizations of the balances of power necessary on the interest-group model for even a procedural justice.³⁴

A different kind of pluralism can seek a common good without occluding our differences. This must not be a dittoization that leeches away the otherness so crucial to a vital communal life nor a uniformity that damns us to mediocrity and the cookie-cutter contours of the consumer self. The search for the common good is not existence in a vanilla world, but an invitation to new expressions of creativity and excellence on behalf of life together. Hauerwas says that in this sense we must attempt to develop "a more profound unity that will undergird our differences."³⁵

An Apocalyptic Justice and a Justice of the Common Good

A crucial issue here is the relationship between the apocalyptic justice in Paul characterized by redemption, mercy, and reconciliation and a justice of the common good that engages a wide variety of people, many of whom come from outside the church. The first thing to be said is that the church brings to the activity of seeking the common good its own distinctive understanding of justice, as do others. There is no more important witness than that of a justice of redemption, mercy, and reconciliation in our time and, I daresay, for the future. It is time for the church to offer a radically different form of justice and to embody this justice in its worship, its life, and its witness. To bring a faithful performance of God's righteousness to the conversations and actions for the common good may be the single most important mission we have in our time.

Second, the church is to remember that the Reign of God is always wider than the church. This means that God's work in the world occurs outside the church as well as within it. So we remain open to what God may be doing in others: those of other faith traditions and those of no

34. See Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, and Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, 588.

35. Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue*, 238.

faith tradition. In Paul, God's work is the liberation of the entire creation. No place is to be excluded from this divine activity, and we are summoned to remain open to this liberative work in others in pursuit of the common good.

Closely related to the centrality of the Reign of God is a third matter about the role of the other. It is worth noting in Paul that certain differences are not overcome even in his use of the baptismal formula declaring unity in Christ. For example, while God in Christ has ended the division between Greek and Jew (everyone), nevertheless Jews continue to practice torah and Greks/Gentiles continue not to do so. It is clear in Paul that reconciliation is not the obliteration of difference but the coming of a unity that encompasses it.

Finally, recalling our discussion above, Furnish instructs us in the rich ways in which Paul engages those beyond the assemblies. They were called not only to love and care for the household of faith but to work for the good of all. Paul committed himself to be all things to all people in order to save some. He calls the ecclesia of Rome to be subject to the government and civil order and to maintain "cordial relations" with those outside its membership. Recognizing the "righteous Gentile" and the honorable and the noble as seen in the sight of all, he believed in a certain correspondence between the offerings of the morality and wisdom of pagan society and "the good and acceptable and perfect" will of God. This suggests that Paul does not call for his assemblies to escape from the world, but rather for a "critical engagement," in Furnish's phrase, with that world.

Reading Wesley through Paul

Where then does this leave us? What would John Wesley's theology look like in a preferred future that engaged seriously with the theology of Paul? First, it will involve a new placement of Wesley's theology in the wider vision of Paul. This does not mean there is nothing that Wesley can offer to Paul, as we shall see, but the more encompassing vision will be that of Paul. This move begins with Paul's understanding of rectification and the placement of Wesley's theology in this wider vision. It means that the first impact of God's action in Christ is the deliverance of humankind and the cosmos from enslavement to the powers. In this context there

is an important place for forgiveness and pardon and for formation and maturation in grace.

Second, the emphasis of Wesley's theology is to be placed on the faith of Christ and then, in response, to faith in Christ. This refocus on Christ's suffering obedience can correct abstract intonations of love in our culture and provide a pattern for the church, one that can also counter the fluffy and saccharine views of love bandied about today. This move is not a long step in Wesley's thought. The very heart of Wesley's understanding of Christian love is christological. In his context, with its Calvinist views of predestination, Wesley rejected the imputation of Christ's obedience on the elect that had antinomian implications. But for Wesley, Christ embodies the ultimate meaning of "God is love." Furthermore, Wesley's understanding of maturation in love, so understood, brings a rich note of formation for the building of sensibilities, dispositions, and character in the church and a counter to the categories and constructions of the world.³⁶

Third, Wesley's theology can learn from Paul the enslavement of the powers and call the church not only to a faithful subjection to them but to an active resistance as well. Such a grasp of the role of the powers will be good tonic to counter the idolatries of the state and the economic orders of our time, but also the role of the powers in the structure of the church and other places where the ordering of the world occurs. Wesley's identification and engagement with the poor and others on the bottom of the society will take on a fuller grasp of what enslaves the world and offer us again his important witness.

Fourth, a new Wesleyan theology will turn from the individual/society dual conceptuality of modernity to that of the cosmos/new creation of Paul with a new antidote for the individualism of our culture and re-vitalized ways to analyze the challenges before us. It can thereby offer a new understanding of the church that begins with the calling out of the ecclesia, not just the saving of individuals into heaven. Here Wesley's concerns for a new creation can find a rightful place with Paul's encompassing vision.

36. I am indebted to Henry Knight for help with this statement of Wesley's christological understanding of love. I am, of course, responsible for any misstatements of this important matter in Wesley's thought. Personal correspondence with Henry H Knight III, March 16, 2010.

Finally, a Wesleyan theology so formed will bring to it a justice defined by the righteousness of God in Paul's gospel. Wesley's high valuation of the person as bearing the image of God is biblical and, of course, valuable; it is a way for the church to address the issue of rights before the nation-state. But Wesley's understanding of the good and Paul's concern for the good of all provide a beginning for a justice of the common good so desperately needed in our time and in the foreseeable future. At the very core of all these things is the righteousness of God. From God's action we learn and are shown in the faith of Jesus Christ that justice is ultimately redemptive, merciful, and reconciling. This justice has already come into the world. It will come in its fullness in God's time. This is the basis from which all worship and witness begin. It is an already reality we are called to live into, to be, and to enact.

In the words of the old song, "I'm Methodist born and Methodist bred, and when I'm gone there'll be a Methodist dead." My hope is that what I have done here is a very Methodist thing in the spirit of John Wesley. He read many books, but he always contended that he was a man of one book, the Bible. In our time we benefit from more than two hundred years of biblical study since Wesley's time, but Wesley was one who took biblical scholarship seriously. I like to think that Wesley would have carefully engaged biblical scholarship and that he would want to be corrected by Paul. What I have done here is simply to say that Wesleyans have tended to read Paul through Wesley; it is time for us in the future to read Wesley through Paul.