

## INTRODUCTION

The grace that leads an individual to salvation tends to be the biggest dividing line between the various denominations of Christianity. We can tolerate one another's varying eschatological views, varying interpretations of Gen 1-2, and virtually any other "non-essential" theological topic. But grace is our hill to die on.

With that, there seems to be a gap in Christian theology and Evangelical theology in particular. On the one hand, Arminians of all different stripes posit that prevenient grace, in a blanketing effect over all humanity, has enabled all persons everywhere to believe. On the other hand, those in the Reformed tradition posit that only particular electing grace, coming in the form of an irresistible call, can enable one to believe. In fact, they claim that regeneration of the individual is first necessary in order for one to arrive at this sort of saving faith. Both agree that individuals are totally depraved and unable to save themselves. Yet the former tends toward a practical quasi-Pelagianism in that all are on a neutral ground because of prevenient grace, able to believe or disbelieve. The latter does away with man's freedom and makes the election to salvation and reprobation of individuals a matter completely outside of human decision. Are these the only options evangelicals have for their view of grace?

It is not the purpose of this paper to provide a centrist position that seeks some way to reconcile those on both sides. Attempts of this sort tend to create more problems than they solve and raise more questions than they answer, essentially creating a third position that neither of the two original sides could agree with. No, the purpose of this paper is to argue from a Wesleyan Arminian perspective, with a NT theological method, for the biblical doctrine of prevenient grace. In keeping with this purpose, I will point out where modern Wesleyans have erred in their understanding of grace and, rather than provide for them a new perspective, call them back to a distinctively Wesleyan, biblical one. My goal with this paper will be to demonstrate that prevenient grace is best not viewed as grace that has enabled all of humanity to believe. It does enliven the mind and conscience toward God, as Wesley observed, but it is salvifically insufficient which is certainly not to say insignificant. Convincing grace is the

intermediary step, and sometimes missing piece for modern Wesleyans, which is that grace given in the moment of conviction of sin and subsequent repentance on an individual basis and at varying times for varying individuals not in a blanketing universal effect. I will first begin by offering some popular and scholarly definitions of prevenient grace.

### PREVENIENT GRACE IN THE MINDS OF MOST

There are many in the Wesleyan tradition who recognize that prevenient grace itself is not sufficient to save anyone. However, most all posit that prevenient grace specifically leads one to repentance. As in Steve Harper's more popular definition of prevenient grace, "It is the operation of God that moves us to repentance."<sup>1</sup> Leo Cox said, "The Wesleyan teaches that the prevenient grace leads one to saving grace, prepares for it, and enables a person to enter into it."<sup>2</sup> Thomas Oden calls prevenient grace, "the grace that begins to enable one to choose further to cooperate with saving grace."<sup>3</sup> These descriptions are quite typical and, in some ways helpful, yet they say a bit more than Wesley said with his definition being "the first wish to please God, the first dawn of light concerning his will, and the first slight transient conviction of having sinned against him."<sup>4</sup> The aforementioned definitions lead many Wesleyans to conclusions that John Wesley never drew and, more importantly, that cannot be drawn from Scripture.

On a positive note, they do help us to see that Wesley viewed salvation as a process that began with prevenient grace.<sup>5</sup> However, what Wesley meant by the "process" of salvation must be distinguished from what he termed "proper Christian salvation." After describing prevenient grace, he states, "Salvation is carried on by 'convincing grace', usually in Scripture termed 'repentance', which

---

<sup>1</sup>Steve Harper, *The Way to Heaven: The Gospel According to John Wesley* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 35.

<sup>2</sup>Leo G. Cox, "Prevenient Grace—A Wesleyan View," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 12 no 3 Sum 1969, 144.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Oden, *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity: A Plain Exposition of Teaching on Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 243.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, 236.

<sup>5</sup>John Wesley, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," (1785, sermon 85), *The Works of John Wesley* 26 vols, vol 3 (Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1986), 3:203-4.

brings a larger measure of self-knowledge, and a farther deliverance from the heart of stone. Afterwards we experience the proper Christian salvation. . .”<sup>6</sup> At this point in Wesley, it seems erroneous to view prevenient grace in itself as that leading up to the moment of conversion. In this case, since all have received this universal prevenient grace, and Wesley certainly believed that they had, they would all be prepared for conversion at any moment. Although some Wesleyans may have a more theologically sophisticated way of describing it, this is, unfortunately, the type of definition one encounters regularly. With that, my suggestion is that we, as Wesleyans, place more of an emphasis on the concept of convincing grace as “special grace” beyond and not as an extension of prevenient grace that one experiences in the moments before their conversion. I will make my case for the salvific insufficiency of prevenient grace starting with NT data examining prevenient grace in the witness of creation and within us.

#### PREVENIENT GRACE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

*Prevenient Grace in Creation as Salvifically Insufficient and Resistible—Romans 1:18-32; Acts 17:22-31*

Romans 1:18-32 is a fitting place to start when discussing the creation witness’s role in prevenient grace, mostly because of its universal scope. At this point in the Pauline metanarrative, we find humanity in a position of having rejected the witness of creation. Certainly, not all of humanity has done so, but the passage has universal application in that it includes every generation of humanity “since the creation of the world” (1:20). Even though this is a negative statement implying rejection of the grace of the creation witness, we can learn much about prevenient grace by examining the content of the grace Paul’s subjects rejected. Here I will assume that the creation witness is prevenient grace but not that it encompasses all of prevenient grace.

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, 204.

The message of creation is that the eminent God is knowable (1:19). It may not only be a Jewish understanding that Paul draws from but also the Stoic philosophy “that there is an innate rapport between the divine and the human because the divine logos immanent throughout the world is immanent also in man as the power of reason.”<sup>7</sup> The presence of God in one's reasoning faculties may be a benefit of the grace Paul's subjects experienced, especially in light of what is said about them in v. 21, but the primary point is that the created things point toward God's invisible attributes and, thus, leave Paul's subjects without excuse (1:20).<sup>8</sup>

Next, we will see from Rom 1:19-21a that prevenient grace in itself is not salvifically sufficient and that it is resistible. With regard to the first point, it should be recognized that Paul assumes all persons to know God through his creation witness. However, this knowledge is considered insufficient by Paul. Not only does one have to know God, which is the clear intent of the creation witness for all humanity, they also must “honor him as God [and] give thanks to him” (v. 21b). Essentially, Paul relates that while knowing God which appears from v. 19 to be the intended effect of prevenient grace in the creation witness, they did not acknowledge him as God.

My second point, that prevenient grace is resistible, will articulate the result of what happens to the one who refuses to acknowledge God for who he is. Kenneth Collins writes, “...prevenient grace in terms of the call of God upon the soul may be resisted, and indeed often is, but the graciously restored faculties, the first aspect of prevenient grace, cannot be refused.”<sup>9</sup> However, 1:24 seems to indicate that one can be returned to a base state of mind without the knowledge of God that he had once been graciously given. Collins goes on to point out that Wesley viewed this verse as God withdrawing

---

<sup>7</sup>James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC vol 38a (Dallas: Word Publishers, 1988), 71.

<sup>8</sup>We must ask, “Does this contradict Acts 14:16 where it seems that God has allowed and overlooked the unbelievers' failure to acknowledge him?” In Paul's message at Lystra in this text, he claims that the giving of rains and fruitful seasons demonstrated that God had not left himself without a witness. So did he simply overlook their rejection of what he had made plain? The term *ἕως* would not indicate this but only that God had permitted it. It is more consistent with the context of Acts 14:16-17 to see that while God had permitted their ignorance at the time, he would still hold them accountable.

<sup>9</sup>Kenneth Collins, *The Scripture Way of Salvation: The Heart of John Wesley's Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 44.

“restraining grace from the unbeliever.”<sup>10</sup> It is not clear that Wesley viewed this as a withdrawal of prevenient grace, and it would be unlikely that he did. But the text indicates that the object being taken from the one who rejects God is the actual knowledge of him received as grace from God in the first place, and, because of his refusal, he is now given a debased mind (1:28). This would seem to fit with the first description, in v. 21, of the unbeliever who has rejected the creation witness where Paul states, “...they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish heart was darkened.” Based on the preceding clause which states the reason for their descent into futility of thinking, the prevenient grace in the creation witness was thwarted (1:21a). They “knew God.” It is possible that γνόντες is a gnomic aorist which Paul employs to apply the description across the spectrum of time. However, the flow of the argument seems to support an actual past tense idea. They knew God prior to becoming futile in their thinking. Thus, in Paul’s rhetoric, I see a regression and reversal from knowledge of God into futility of thinking and a debased mind (1:21, 28). One might see a parallel in Eph 4:17-18 where Paul states that the Gentiles are “alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart” (Eph 4:18b)—the key term being ἄγνοιαν. While Wesley certainly did not articulate this idea of resistible prevenient grace, we do find that he understood the possibility in light of his statement, “There is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of God.”<sup>11</sup>

Lastly, strong emphasis is placed on the consequence of their rejection of the creation witness with Paul’s thrice repetition of παρέδωκεν (vv. 24, 26, 28). There is a sense in which their punishment is actually their being given over to the basest desires of their nature. As Käsemann states, “Paul paradoxically reverses the cause and the consequence: Moral perversion is the result of God’s wrath, not the reason for it.”<sup>12</sup> Dunn helpfully points out, “[God] did not, it should be noted, give them their

---

<sup>10</sup>Ibid, 43.

<sup>11</sup>John Wesley, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” *Works*, 3:207.

<sup>12</sup>Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 47.

desires, rather he gave them to what they desired and the consequences of what they desired.”<sup>13</sup>

Indeed, the term Paul employs here, *παρέδωκεν*, implies transference of the ownership of God to the ownership of their sinful desires. Their base nature owns and enslaves them in a sense.<sup>14</sup> I conclude here that their being given over in this way eliminates the ability to choose to come out of this—an ability that had once been granted them through prevenient grace.

If Rom 1:18-32 details prevenient grace through God’s eminence in creation, Acts 17:22-31 details prevenient grace through God’s providence in creation. Paul’s description of God in his Areopagus address may harken back to Isa 42:5 as he is pictured as the one who not only creates but sustains the earth, actively giving life and breath to its inhabitants. He expands on Isaiah’s description to include the fact that God has also “determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place...” (17:26). The provident Creator had an explicit reason for giving this grace to humanity: “that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him” (17:27a). It does not appear that God is changing any salvation plan at all.<sup>15</sup> What we actually find in the text is that God has been making himself known to humanity through his providence and presence in creation, providing a way for them to seek him, and he is only now calling men to account for it by requiring specific action in commanding their repentance (v. 30). In fact the Areopagus address may serve to strengthen the point that God had given prevenient grace in times past, but in the moment of Paul’s preaching is providing a special, convincing grace which we find to be efficacious in some who were present (17:34).

### *Prevenient Grace Within Us*

In addition to prevenient grace in the physical creation, we find an internal aspect to prevenient grace. Much of our theologizing on prevenient grace becomes inference at this point. We start with the

---

<sup>13</sup>Dunn, 73.

<sup>14</sup>See Paul’s description of the dishonorable passions of homosexuality in 1:26-27 and the vice list in 1:29-32.

<sup>15</sup>Contra Johannes Munck in *The Acts of the Apostles* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1967), 171. Munck states, “[A]s mankind had not found God through the creation, God had changed his plan of salvation and decided to let the course of this world end with a day of judgment which will then be reason enough for all men to repent.”

same foundation as Wesley in his sermon “On Original Sin” where Rom 3:10-18 is appealed to as the primary passage describing the nature of humanity.<sup>16</sup> How can we affirm that there is none who seek after God (Rom 3:11) when we know very well that some do have the ability to seek God (Acts 17:27)? How is it that none are righteous (Rom 3:10), yet some may do good (Luke 11:13)? If Rom 3:10-18 refers to the base nature of humanity, our only logical inference would be that the source of their good actions or seeking after God must be from something outside themselves. As we stated above, Wesley saw this ability to do good in the unregenerate as coming from prevenient grace.

Since Wesley's categories of prevenient and convincing grace are more distinct than many modern Wesleyans acknowledge, and since prevenient grace is insufficient to lead one to repentance, we have to deal with the idea that there may be more similarities between the Reformed understanding of common grace and the Wesleyan concept of prevenient grace than those from both sides of the theological debate may wish to acknowledge.<sup>17</sup> Reformed theologian Richard Mouw suggests that there are ways of describing God's gracious disposition toward humanity without falling into salvific categories. It may be possible that God cares about the actions and thoughts of those whom Mouw terms the “non-elect.”<sup>18</sup> In other words, there is great significance to their goodness even if it is not to be considered a salvific goodness. Of course, prevenient grace, as presented thus far in this essay, differs in that, while it is not salvifically sufficient, it is at least intended to lead one up to a moment of special grace. All are not in a position to repent, but all have been granted prevenient grace which may lead to convincing grace. It does seem reasonable, even from a Wesleyan framework, to think that the Holy Spirit may do a work of grace that is not intended for “proper Christian salvation,” and that the

---

<sup>16</sup>For a discussion of the prominence of Original Sin as perhaps the most important piece of John Wesley's theology, see Gregory Crofford, *Streams of Mercy: Prevenient Grace in the Theology of John and Charles Wesley* (Lexington, KY: Emeth Press, 2010), 72-6.

<sup>17</sup>Herbert Boyd McGonigle, *Sufficient Saving Grace: John Wesley's Evangelical Arminianism* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2001), 153-177. McGonigle provides a helpful discussion in this work about Wesleyan theology coming to “the very edge of Calvinism,” as Wesley puts it. Pertinent to our present discussion, he lays out Wesley's closeness to Calvinism with regard to goodness of humanity being ascribed totally to the grace of God.

<sup>18</sup>Richard J. Mouw, *He Shines in All That's Fair: Culture and Common Grace*, The 2000 Stobb Lectures (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 33.

grace given may be salvifically insufficient requiring a further act of the Spirit granting special, convincing grace. At any rate, despite the differences with our Calvinist brothers, some of the Reformed categories may help us think through our own.

Mouw summarizes the 1924 Christian Reformed declarations' statements on common grace stating that it includes "(1) 'natural' blessings such as rain and sunshine; (2) the restraining of evil human affairs; and (3) positive acts of civic righteousness."<sup>19</sup> We have already discussed the aspects of points (1) and (3) above and find that the Wesleyan concept of prevenient grace comports well with them, but is (2) a category that will be found biblical? Certainly, in the OT, we would find examples where God thwarts and restrains human will against their evil intentions (Gen 20:6; 31:7). While the OT examples could be viewed from the perspective of God favoring and protecting his people against the evil actions of outsiders, it is certainly always gracious act on God's part to prevent someone from being as bad as their nature would otherwise allow.

The last category that Mouw summarized, concerning civic acts of righteousness are the outflow of God's work in enlivening the conscience thus allowing for correct moral choices to be made by unbelievers. When the NT data on the conscience of the unbeliever is considered, they speak almost unanimously to the defilement of their consciences (cf. 1 Tim 4:2; Titus 1:15; Heb 9:9, 14; 10:22). What we gain in these passages for our present theological discussion is that their consciences must have been whole before they were defiled. They also may help us to understand the outcome of prevenient grace resisted. In 1 Tim 4:2, the liars who were the false teachers are described with the passive participle *κεκαυστηριασμένων*. In light of what I demonstrated above concerning Rom 1 and the giving over to a "debased mind," it is very possible that this may be a divine passive. Titus 1:15, speaking of the Cretans who are said to have defiled minds and consciences, helps to emphasize the connection between false teaching and a defiled conscience in that the "circumcision party" among

---

<sup>19</sup>Ibid, 40. Mouw actually views these categories as insufficient, expressing the need for a broader category of goodness that seems to extend beyond "positive acts of civic righteousness."

them was attempting to place the burden of ritualistic purity on the congregation at Crete (1:10). What led to this state must have certainly been a resisting of God's grace, and they now found themselves in such a condition that it is unclear if they will ever be able to recover from it. I would count this as further evidence that prevenient grace, once resisted to this extent, is devoid in many individuals and that only an act of special convincing grace could restore such a person.

### PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In light of the theological aims of this essay, I must emphasize that no one in Scripture is said to have followed the light of prevenient grace alone into a saving knowledge of the one true God. Herein lies the pervasiveness of this topic as it is addressed in Scripture—failure. In the clearest passages on prevenient grace, we mainly find a negative response, thus the difficulty of clearly articulating what occurs when a positive response is in view. Even in scriptural examples where it appears that one has followed the universal light God has given, we find that the individual is still left in a state of spiritual darkness often confused about how to repent and believe, requiring a special grace from God working in the moment to draw them to faith.<sup>20</sup> There seems to be no actual ability to repent and believe on the sole basis of their seeking after God. At best, one could posit that God proceeds to grant convincing grace as a result of their following the light of prevenient grace. This certainly does not diminish the work that the Holy Spirit had done in these individuals prior to their being given special grace to convert them. It simply points out that there was an insufficiency in the work that had to be completed by special grace in the moment of the proclamation of the Gospel which led them repentance.

---

<sup>20</sup>Space will not permit a full treatment of convincing grace in this paper, but some examples of this come to mind and serve to illustrate the necessity of special convincing grace over and beyond prevenient grace. The Ethiopian Eunuch was seeking to worship God and was trying to understand the Scripture (Acts 8:27-28)—both clear responses to prevenient grace. However, no ability to understand the Scripture or how to believe had been granted to him (8:30-31). It took God working through Philip as special grace in the moment to bring him to faith. Cornelius (Acts 10-11) was an individual who sought God and feared him, yet God granted special grace to him in order to bring about his salvation. Lydia also was seeking to worship God, but it was in the moment of Paul's preaching that her heart was opened to receive the gospel (16:14). Notice this was not an ability she had already been granted based on a universal effect of grace or even her positive response to prevenient grace. It was a work of God in the moment of the proclamation of the gospel. This moment of grace is described by Christ in John 6:44 as the time in which the Father draws the individual. It is the moment before which one was unable to come to Christ in repentance and faith and after which one was able to do so.

In spite of the above discussion, verbiage still persists in Wesleyan Arminian theology that confuses the point. Thomas Oden's explanation of a Wesleyan view of prevenient and convincing grace is not very helpful as far as clarification. When we analyze his statements on the subject we find very little at all by which to distinguish them. Seeking to add insight to Wesley's definition of prevenient grace, he elaborates by stating that it "[is] bringing us in time to despair over our own righteousness."<sup>21</sup> Yet, he describes convincing grace as that which "brings one to despair over one's own righteousness under the law..."<sup>22</sup> He states, "Prevenient grace does not justify, but readies for justification, giving us the desire for faith, which is the one condition of justification."<sup>23</sup> But it seems, based on his description, that convincing grace is also essentially something that readies for justification, which is brought on by repentance. Notice he states, "Convicting [convincing] grace enables one to grow toward repentance."<sup>24</sup> Based on Oden's framework, I can only conclude that convincing grace is little more than prevenient grace intensified. At least, he maintains the categories and some distinction between the two. But if the best way we can describe convincing grace is as an intensified form of prevenient grace, it should come as no surprise that the average layman sees little value in using precise terms or in accounting for them in his evangelistic methodology. With that, it is not a problem of describing grace as a progression into salvation. The problem comes with Oden's explanation in which he assigns certain aspects that should only be true of convincing grace to prevenient grace.

Witherington has observed this problem among Wesleyans in his work *The Problem with Evangelical Theology*. He argues against the idea of a universal prevenient grace because it fails to take into consideration the depths of human depravity.<sup>25</sup> To be fair, he has contemporary theological issues in mind, but it is unfortunate that he did not do more diligence in his criticism to distinguish

---

<sup>21</sup>Oden, *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*, 246.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid, 247.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid, 247.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid, 247.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid, 208.

between Wesley and modern Wesleyans on the issue. Nonetheless, he comes to the same conclusion that I have been arguing for in this essay when he states, “I would prefer to say that sinners are enabled by grace, in the moment of crisis and crying out, to respond to the gospel.”<sup>26</sup> What Witherington does not see is that this is completely compatible with a Wesleyan and biblical framework of prevenient grace. His criticism that a Wesleyan framework of grace is exegetically weak is only on target if we are merely encountering explanations like the one from Oden above.

Maintaining and choosing to emphasize the category of convincing grace, as Wesleyans, will have multiple other practical effects than simply providing clarity of thought as I have emphasized. This should also have drastic effects on evangelism. Sadly, many modern Wesleyans have adopted a practical quasi-Pelagianism. This I find to be a result of their view on prevenient grace. If one holds the position that all of humanity is already enabled to repent and believe, then one’s job in evangelism is merely to convince them to do so. A good argument, an emotional plea, a manipulation of fear—anything to do the trick—becomes one’s method of evangelism when little emphasis is placed on the necessity of the Holy Spirit’s work in bringing convincing grace before one can repent and believe.<sup>27</sup> In the suggested framework, however, one must evangelize in total reliance on the power of the Spirit to draw the individual and enable them to come to faith. This will bring about more of a fidelity to the Gospel in that we will know that only God can convert an unbelieving heart. We will seek to please him rather than our hearers, in hopes that he will bless our efforts and enable the sinner to repent. Lastly, carefully distinguishing prevenient from convincing grace will bring us back to a bibliocentric view of grace and will hopefully bring the trend of deemphasizing conversion to a halt. One must distinguish between what Wesley saw as a salvation process and what he termed “proper Christian salvation.” Accepting the idea of a process of salvation is not the same as forgetting that true

---

<sup>26</sup>Ibid, 209.

<sup>27</sup> Again, this is not to diminish the work of the Spirit with regard to prevenient grace, but it is only to say that this work must be followed by a special, definitive work of convincing grace before conversion.

conversion is passing from death to life, from darkness to light, and that not gradually but instantaneously!

### CONCLUSION

In this essay, I approached prevenient grace through a NT theological method including careful consideration of the important passages. In each point, Scripture corrected certain aspects of a modern Wesleyan understanding of prevenient grace that I find to be in error. If I was successful in delineating these errors and scriptural corrections, one should see the coherence of a theological framework in this essay that limits prevenient grace to that which enlivens the mind toward a knowledge of the divine through physical creation and transcendent reason and enlivens the conscience through an understanding of morality yet is insufficient with regard to enabling all of humanity to repent and believe. Further, it was suggested that prevenient grace could be resisted thus resulting in a state of futility of the mind which provides seemingly little hope of recovery apart from further, special grace. In either case, the recipient of prevenient grace is always left with a need for further grace in order to bring about his/her regeneration.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Collins, Kenneth. *The Scripture Way of Salvation: The Heart of John Wesley's Theology*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.
- Cox, Leo G. "Prevenient Grace—A Wesleyan View." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 12 no 3 Sum 1969, 143-9.
- Crofford, Gregory. *Streams of Mercy: Prevenient Grace in the Theology of John and Charles Wesley*. Lexington, KY: Emeth Press, 2010.
- Dunn, James D. G. *Romans 1-8*, WBC vol 38a. Dallas: World Publishers, 1988.
- Harper, Steve. *The Way to Heaven: The Gospel According to John Wesley*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.
- Käsemann, Ernst. *Commentary on Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.
- McGonigle, Herbert Boyd. *Sufficient Saving Grace: John Wesley's Evangelical Arminianism*. Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2001.
- Mouw, Richard J. *He Shines in All That's Fair: Culture and Common Grace*, The 2000 Stobb Lectures. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Munck, Johannes. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1967.
- Oden, Thomas. *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity: A Plain Exposition of Teaching on Christian Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Wesley, John. *The Works of John Wesley* (Bicentennial ed.) 34 vols. Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1986.
- Witherington III, Ben. *The Problem with Evangelical Theology*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2005.