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“A History of the Anglican Church—Part LIV: An Essay on the Role of Christian Lawyers and Judges within the Secular State”©

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-- Rev. Algernon Sidney Crapsey (Anglican Priest)

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The ideas expressed in this Apostolate Paper are wholly those of the author, and subject to modification as a result of on-going research into this subject matter. This paper is currently being revised and edited, but this version is submitted for the purpose of sharing Christian scholarship with clergy, the legal profession, and the general public.

PREFACE

The organized Christian church of the Twenty-First Century is in crisis and at a crossroad. Christianity as a whole is in flux. And I believe that Christian lawyers and judges are on the frontlines of the conflict and changes which are today challenging both the Christian church and the Christian religion. Christian lawyers and judges have the power to influence and shape the social, economic, political, and legal landscape in a way that will allow Christianity and other faith-based institutions to evangelize the world for the betterment of all human beings. I write this essay, and a series of future essays, in an effort to persuade the American legal profession to rethink and reconsider one of its most critical and important jurisprudential foundations: the Christian religion. To this end, I hereby present the seventy-first in this series: “A History of the Anglican Church—Part LIV.”

INTRODUCTION¹

This paper is an “evangelical Anglican” interpretation of the American Revolution (1775 – 1783) and, for that matter, it is also a “Methodist” or a “Christian” interpretation of that event. In speaking of the American Revolution, “we must speak also of the earthly city, which, though it be mistress of the nations,

¹ This is my final paper of Part One of this series on “Law and Religion,” covering “A History of the Anglican Church.” It has taken me a total period of *six years* to complete this work; and for this final submission, I am very thankful to God. This paper is dedicated to **St. Augustine of Hippo** (354 – 430 A.D.), whose *Confessions* and *The City of God* inspired me to engage in this lengthy research project in the first place. This research project was designed to achieve multiple goals, all at the same time: first, it has been a blissful experience and a joy in the Lord for me to recollect on so many wonderful personal and scholastic experiences over the past thirty years. Secondly, I have enjoyed learning about and preserving something of ancient Church theology and history, and I have also demonstrating to Christian theologians and pastors as well as the American Bar and Bench, *precisely how the Christian faith continues to play a vital and important role in western jurisprudence*, and particularly Anglo-American jurisprudence. And, finally, I have written this series with an aim toward supporting the development of Christianity in developing nations, particularly the African continent. May those readers who think that I have written too much, graciously forgive me, but let those who think that I have written appropriately join me in giving thanks to God.

[NOTE: this entire series of 71 papers are “draft copies” and are subject to future modification and editing by the author].

is itself ruled by its lust of rule. For to this earthly city belong the enemies against whom I have to defend the city of God.”² Indeed, for amongst the British and the American patriots were citizens of that “earthly city,” men who were caught up in an internal struggle over the booty to be obtained upon the North American continent—land, slaves, and material resources—and without any serious concern for “true justice.” And “[j]ustice being taken away, then, what are kingdoms but great robberies? For what are robberies themselves, but little kingdoms. The band itself is made up of men... the booty is divided by the law agreed upon.”³

Accordingly, there was amongst both the British and the American patriots a strong element of men who lived “after the flesh,”⁴ and who wanted the results of the war to result in noting more than more land confiscation from the Native Americans; more land monopoly for the privileged elites; more control over the labor of indentured servants and slaves; and greater profits from global trade. That such vices and worldly self-interests were predominant amongst the American founding fathers is self-evident. In the American *Declaration of Independence* (1776), such vices and worldly self-interests caused the following anti-slavery passage to be taken out of that document:

[King George III has waged a] cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horror might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that *liberty* of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the *lives* of another.⁵

² St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), pp. 3-4.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 441.

⁵ W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 54 (citing “Jefferson, *Works* (Washington, 1853-4), I. 23-4. On the Declaration as an anti-slavery document, cf. Elliot, *Debates* (1861), I. 89.”)

Not only was this passage taken out of the *Declaration of Independence* in 1776, but during the Constitutional Convention in 1787, that same political clique also impeded any and all *moral* arguments to the contrary:

In this debate the moral arguments were prominent. Colonel George Mason of Virginia denounced the traffic in slaves as ‘infernally;’ Luther Martin of Maryland regarded it as ‘inconsistent with the principles of the revolution, and dishonorable to the American character.’ ‘Every principle of honor and safety,’ declared John Dickinson of Delaware, ‘demands the exclusion of slaves.’ Indeed, Mason solemnly averred that the crime of slavery might yet bring the judgement of God on the nation. On the other side, Rutledge of South Carolina bluntly declared that religion and humanity had nothing to do with the question, that it was a matter of ‘interest’ alone.... The difficulty of the whole argument, from the moral standpoint, lay in the fact that it was completely checkmated by the obstinate attitude of South Carolina and Georgia. Their delegates—Baldwin, the Pinckneys, Rutledge, and others—asserted flatly, not less than a half-dozen times during the debate, that these States ‘can never receive the plan if it prohibits the slave-trade;’ that ‘if the Convention thought’ that these States would consent to a stoppage of the slave-trade, ‘the expectation is vain.’ By this stand all argument from the moral standpoint was virtually silenced, for the Convention evidently agreed with Roger Sherman of Connecticut that ‘it was better to let the Southern States import slaves than to part with those States.’⁶

And, likewise, and in a similar fashion, these same Southern delegates won concessions on the question of the taxation of slaves as “property,” as well as the apportionment of slaves as “persons” for the purpose of Congressional representation. African slaves were to be counted as “three-fifths” of human persons, and this provision was inserted into the United States Constitution as part of Article 1, Section 2, Clause 3:

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, *three fifths of all other*

⁶ Ibid., pp. 59-60.

Persons.

And for the so-called free white laborers who were indentured servants, the same U.S. Constitution afforded a similar impairment, in conjunction with regulating black slaves, in Article IV, Section 2, Clause 3, stating:

No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.

This constitutional provision applied white indentured servants as well as to black slaves. “Pierce Butler and Charles Pinckney, both from South Carolina, submitted this clause to the Constitutional Convention. James Wilson of Pennsylvania objected, stating it would require that state governments enforce slavery at taxpayers' expense. Butler withdrew the clause. However, on the next day the clause was quietly reinstated and adopted by the Convention without objection. This clause was added to the clause that provided extradition for fugitives from justice.”⁷

During the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War (1775- 1783), this slave power and its brutal suppression of the poor, vulnerable and weak (whether white or black), were readily apparent to the Rev. John Wesley (1703 1791) and to many others who raised concerns about the declared goals—such as “no taxation without representation” – proclaimed by many of the American patriots. Rev. Wesley and many others, including some of the American Founding Fathers, who were present at the Constitutional Convention of 1787, thus comprised the *invisible church*, the “city of God.” Indeed, simultaneously, co-existing amongst both the British and the American patriots was this “city of God” or the city of the saints: “For the King and Founder of this city of which we speak, has in Scripture uttered to His people a dictum of the divine law in these words: ‘God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.’ But this, which is God’s prerogative, the inflated ambition of a proud spirit also affects, and dearly loves that this be numbered among its attributes, to

‘Show pity to the humbled soul,
And crush the sons of pride.’”⁸

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Article_Four_of_the_United_States_Constitution#Clause_3:_Fugitive_Slave_Clause

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

It has been the theme of this series that Christian lawyers and judges, who are also members of this “city of God,” must not only remain cognizant of the vices, sins, and self-centeredness of the “earthly city,” but that they must also protect the church and vindicate the cause of the oppressed and the righteous, especially in the courts, in the legislative chambers, and in the halls of justice—such as the Constitutional Convention of 1787, where the “law of Christ”⁹ ought to have prevailed, with the following prophetic warning: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”¹⁰ This prophetic warning, ultimately, was the judgment of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who said:

Slavery is disheartening; but Nature is not so helpless but it can rid itself at last of every wrong. But the spasms of Nature are centuries and ages, and will tax the faith of short-lived men. Slowly, slowly the Avenger comes, but comes surely. The proverbs of the nations affirm these delays, but affirm the arrival. They say, ‘God may consent, but not forever.’ The delay of the Divine Justice—this was the meaning and soul of the Greek Tragedy; this the soul of their religion.¹¹

This prophetic warning, ultimately, was the judgment of President Abraham Lincoln, who said in his Second Inaugural Address:

The Almighty has His own purposes. ‘Woe unto the world because Of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that Man by whom the offense cometh.’ If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as to the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn

⁹ The “law of Christ is “to love ye one another” (John 15:12); “to do justice and judgment” (Genesis 18:18-19; Proverbs 21:1-3); “to judge not according to appearance but to judge righteous judgments” (John 7:24); and to do “justice, judgment, and equity” (Proverbs 1:2-3).

¹⁰ Galatians 6:7.

¹¹ Carol Bode, *The Portable Emerson* (New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books, 1981), pp. 553-554.

with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said ‘the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’¹²

And this prophetic warning was the final assessment of W.E.B. Du Bois, who concluded in Harvard doctoral dissertation:

How far in a State can a recognized moral wrong safely be compromised? And although this chapter of history can give us no definite answer suited to the ever-varying aspects of political life, yet it would seem to warn any nation from allowing, through carelessness and moral cowardice, any social evil to grow. No persons would have seen the Civil War with more surprise and horror than the Revolutionists of 1776; yet from the small and apparently dying institution of their day arose the walled and castled Slave-Power. From this we may conclude that it behooves nations as well as men to do things at the very moment when they ought to be done.¹³

And how can an organization, a city, a state, or a nation do things, to paraphrase Du Bois, “when they ought to be done,” without hearing the moral voice of God? And who better to represent that moral voice of God than the Christian Church? And who best to represent the Christian Church before the secular magistrates than Christian legislators, public officials, lawyers, and judges?

When the Southern delegates at the Constitutional Convention of 1787 convinced their brethren that “religion and humanity”¹⁴ had nothing to do with the United States Constitution, but that “it was a matter of ‘interest’ alone,”¹⁵ they unwittingly convinced the Constitutional Convention to establish commercial interests as the supreme standard for the new United States Constitution. But even then, at the Constitutional Convention, “the spirit of Puritanism” was in fierce competition with this spirit of materialism, commercialism, and predatory capitalism. And, as St. Augustine has said, the “earthly city” and the “city of God,” were intermixed together at the Constitutional Convention of 1787,¹⁶ whereby the

¹² President Abraham Lincoln, “Second Inaugural Address” (March 4, 1865).

¹³ W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 198.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, p. 477, to wit:

Accordingly, **two cities** have been formed by **two loves**: the **earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God**; the **heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self**. The

moral voice (e.g., the “spirit of the Puritan”) had to contend with the “earthly city,” as, for instance, the Rev. Algernon Sidney Crapsey as said:

The fall of Puritanism as a theological system controlling American thought, which was the consequence of this failure of the ministry as a class to see the moral question involved in the slavery agitation and which was precipitated by the Unitarian secession, left the American people without a formal theological system in which to center their thought and life, and the result is the theological chaos and the religious paralysis in the midst of which we are now living....¹⁷

With this spirit of commercialism the spirit of Puritanism is now in deadly conflict, and upon the issue of that conflict depends, not only the spiritual welfare of the people of America, but also the spiritual history and spiritual welfare of the world for ages to come. The warfare that is waging to-day is the warfare between the merchant and the minister; the minister, who believes in God, the merchant, who believes in gain; the minister, who believes that man is a person, the merchant who believes that man is a thing....

To speak of the separation of church and state is to speak of the separation of soul and body. If the state is without a church it is without warrant in the conscience of man; if the church is without a state it is without power in the life of the world. The church without the state is a disembodied spirit; the state without the church is a putrefying

former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the witness of conscience. The one lifts up its head in its own glory; the other says to its God, “Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.” **In the one, the princes and the nations it subdues are ruled by the love of ruling; in the other, the princes and the subjects serve one another in love, the latter obeying, while the former take thought for all.** The one delights in its own strength, represented in the persons of its rulers; the other says to its God, ‘I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength.’ And therefore **the wise men of the one city, living according to man, have sought for profit to their own bodies or souls, or both,** and those who have known God ‘glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise’—that is, glorying in their own wisdom, and being possessed by pride—‘they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.’ For they were either leaders or followers of the people in adoring images, ‘and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.’ But in the other city there is no human wisdom, but only godliness, which offers due worship to the true God, and looks for its reward in the society of the saints, of holy angels as well as holy men, ‘that God may be all in all.’

¹⁷ Algernon Sidney Crapsey, *Religion and Politics* (New York, N.Y.: Thomas Whittaker, 1905), p. 265.

corpse.... The present separation for the religious from the civil and political life of the nation is cause for grave apprehension for the future of the American people.¹⁸

But the “city of God” was also present at the Constitutional Convention of 1787”—men such as the delegate from Massachusetts Eldridge Gerry, a Harvard-trained lawyer and an Anglican, who refused to sign the United States Constitution due to his religious convictions and objections over the aforementioned slavery clauses;¹⁹ the lawyer and Governor Richard Bassett of Delaware, who upon befriending Bishop Francis Asbury and converting to Methodism, freed all of his own slaves and continued to sponsor anti-slavery legislation in the state of Delaware. There was also amongst this group of Christian lawyers and judges a Princeton graduate and a lawyer named Gunning Bedford, Jr. of Delaware; a Harvard graduate and lawyer named Rufus King of Massachusetts; a Princeton graduate and lawyer named William Paterson of New Jersey; a Columbia graduate and lawyer named Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania; and a lawyer named James Wilson of Pennsylvania, who was a graduate of the Universities of St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Edinburgh in Scotland, and who would become an Associate Justice on the United States Supreme Court.

Therefore, it is the final conclusion of this series on “Law and Religion,” as it pertains to the History of the Anglican Church and the Protestant Reformation, that America’s founding constitutional document are indeed “Christian” and that **the “city of God” ultimately did prevail at the Constitutional Convention, when the American Founding Fathers adopted the “Preamble” to the *United States Constitution* (1787)**, notwithstanding the fact that the transatlantic slave trade was permitted to flourish for as season until 1808,²⁰ and the institution of slavery remained in tact but with the expectation that it would die naturally within a generation.²¹ That “Preamble” states:

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 248-249.

¹⁹ See, e.g., Eldridge Gerry, Wikipedia on-line https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elbridge_Gerry#cite_note-32 (“Gerry was also vocal in opposing the Three-fifths Compromise, which counted slaves as three-fifths of a free person for the purposes of apportionment in the House of Representatives, whereas counting each slave individually would have given southern slave states a decided advantage. Gerry opposed slavery and said the constitution should have “nothing to do” with slavery so as “not to sanction it.” Gerry would ultimately not sign the final draft of the constitution because it allowed for slavery.”)

²⁰ W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings*, p. 69.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 55-56 (“Probably the whole country still regarded both slavery and the slave-trade as temporary.... The anti-slavery men had seen slavery die in their own communities, and expected it to die the same way in others, with as little active effort on their own part.”)

We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Now the “plain meaning” of the legally-operative words to this “Preamble” to the *U.S. Constitution*—i.e., establish justice,²² tranquility,²³ liberty,²⁴ general welfare,²⁵

²² See, e.g., St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 112 (“Justice being taken away, then, what are kingdoms but great robberies? For what are robberies themselves, but little kingdoms? The band itself is made up of men; it is ruled by the authority of a prince, it is knit together by the pact of the confederacy; the booty is divided by the law agreed on.”)

²³ See, e.g., St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), pp. 690-693 (“The peace of all things is the tranquility of order,” wrote St. Augustine. “**Order is the distribution which allots things equal and unequal**, each to its own place.... God, then, the most wise Creator **and most just Ordainer of all natures**, who placed the human race upon earth as its greatest ornament, imparted to men some good things adapted to this life, to wit, temporal peace, such as we can enjoy in this life from health and safety and human fellowship, and all things needful for the preservation and recovery of this peace.... But as this divine Master inculcates two precepts—the love of God and the love of our neighbor—and as in these precepts a man finds three things he has to love—God; himself, and his neighbor—and that he who loves God loves himself thereby, it follows that he must endeavor to get his neighbor to love God, **since he is ordered to love his neighbor as himself.**”)

²⁴ See, e.g., St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), pp. 693-694 (“This is prescribed by the order of nature: it is thus that God has created man. For ‘let them,’ He says, ‘have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every creeping thing which creepeth on the earth.’ He did not intend that His rational creature, who was made in His image, should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation—not man over man, but man over the beasts... for it is with justice, we believe, that the condition of slavery is the result of sin. And this is why we do not find the word ‘slave’ in any part of Scripture until righteous Noah branded the sin of his son with this name. It is a name, therefore, introduced by sin and not by nature. The origin of the Latin word for slave is supposed to be found in the circumstances that those who by the law of war were liable to be killed were sometimes preserved by their victors, and were hence called servants. And these circumstances could never have arisen save through sin. For even if we wage a just war, our adversaries must be sinning; and every victory, even though gained by wicked men, is a result of the first judgment of God... But by nature, as God first created us, no one is the slave either of man or of sin. This servitude is, however, penal, and is appointed by that law which enjoins the preservation of the natural order and forbids its disturbance; for if nothing had been done in violation of that law, there would have been nothing to restrain by penal servitude.”)

²⁵ See, e.g., St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 62 (“Scipio reverts to the original thread of discourse, and repeats with commendation his own brief definition of a republic, that it is the weal of the people. ‘The people’ he defines as being not every assemblage or mob, but an assemblage associated by a common acknowledgment of law, and by community of interests. Then he shows the use of definition in debate; and from these definitions of his own he gathers that a republic, or ‘weal of the people,’ then exists only when it is well and justly governed, whether by a monarch, or an aristocracy, or by the whole people [i.e., democracy]. But when the monarch is unjust, or, as the Greeks say, a tyrant; or the aristocrats are unjust, and form a faction; or the people themselves are unjust, and become, as Scipio for want of a better name calls them, themselves the tyrant, then the republic is not only blemished (as had been proved the day before), but by legitimate deduction from those definitions, it altogether ceases to be. For it could not be the people’s weal when a tyrant factiously lorded it over the state; neither would the people be any longer a people if it were unjust, since it would no longer answer the definition of a people—‘an assemblage associated by a common acknowledgment of law, and by a community of

and common defense²⁶— constitute the essential elements of western polity which have been incorporated into Anglo-American constitutional law and jurisprudence through the Church of England.²⁷ This was, at least, the settled opinion of the Rev. Algernon Sidney Crapsey, an Anglican priest, who said:

When the Constitutional Convention of 1787 sent forth the Constitution which it devised for the government of the nation it did so in these words:

‘We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our children, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.’

Now **can any man write a more perfect description of the Kingdom of God on earth or in the heaven than is to be found in these words?** A government resting upon such principles as these is not a godless policy; it is a holy religion....

When the people of the United States decreed by constitutional amendment that the government should never by law establish any religion, they did actually establish the only religion that could comprehend in its membership the whole American people.²⁸

And it is conclusion of this series on “Law and Religion” that the plain language of the “Preamble” to the *U.S Constitution (1787)*— together with the settled opinions of the United States Supreme Court²⁹ and the text of the *Declaration of*

interests.”)

²⁶ See, e.g., St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 27 (St. Augustine acknowledges the idea of “just war”, where he states: “And, accordingly, they who have waged war in obedience to the divine command, or in conformity with His laws have represented in their persons the public justice or the wisdom of government, and in this capacity have put to death wicked men; such persons have by no means violated the commandment, ‘Thou shalt not kill.’”)

²⁷ See, generally, St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950).

²⁸ Algernon Sidney Crapsey, *Religion and Politics* (New York, N.Y.: Thomas Whittaker, 1905), pp. 305-306.

²⁹ See, e.g., *United States v. Macintosh*, 283 U.S. 605, 625 (1931):

Independence (1776)—that the United States Constitution is fundamentally a “Christian” document, that is was the culmination of the Protestant Reformation that was launched during the 16th and 17th centuries, and that it is the American Magna Carta.³⁰ In reaching this theological and constitutional conclusion, much deference is given to Dr. Richard Hooker’s *Of the Law of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1595), which framed the context of the Anglo-American conceptualization of constitutional law for the next two centuries.

Reading this paper will be quite sobering for those jingoistic Americans who insist that the motives of the American Founding Fathers were purely divine and inspired solely by the Sacred Scriptures—although in individual instances, this was certainly true. But from the perspective of the British-American Methodist movements of the 1700s, designed as they were to carry the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the marginalized—whether they be poor or rich, slave or free, white or black, female or male—the noble proclamations *of the American Revolution fell far short of becoming a practical reality for the vast majority of Americans*. This is not the biased indictment of mean-spirited communists, Marxists, and socialists, but rather it is the judgment of fellow Englishmen and fellow Americans— fellow Christians and members of the Church of England, honorable and distinguished churchmen such as the Rev. John Wesley, Rev. Charles Wesley, Bishop Francis Asbury, Bishop Thomas Coke, Rev. Absalom Jones, Bishop Richard Allen, Bishop James Varick, and many other Anglicans or Methodists who lived through the period. In truth, the founding of African Methodism is the living testament of 18-th century Wesleyan Methodism’s final judgment on the American Revolution.

We are a **Christian people** (*Holy Trinity Church v. United States*, 143 U. S. 457, 143 U. S. 470-471), according to one another the equal right of religious freedom and acknowledging with reverence the duty of obedience to the will of God. But, also, we are a nation with the duty to survive; a nation whose Constitution contemplates war as well as peace; whose government must go forward upon the assumption, and safely can proceed upon no other, that unqualified allegiance to the nation and submission and obedience to the laws of the land, as well those made for war as those made for peace, are not inconsistent with the will of God.

³⁰ The United States Constitution and its “Preamble” should be construed in light of its constitutional history and Christian heritage: *Magna Carta* (1215), *Right of Petition* (1628), and the *English Bill of Rights* (1689); and the *American Declaration of Independence* (1776). This series on “A History of the Anglican Church” has been written largely to document and to commemorate this history.

The story of Methodism began at Oxford University during the 1720s, at a time when irreligion and deism were challenging the orthodox Christian faith. In fact, orthodox Christians, at least among the student body at Christ Church, seemed to be in the minority. For this reason, Charles and John Wesley organized the “Holy Club” in an effort to retain a sense of Christian holiness, while co-existing with worldly and indifferent fellow Christians at Oxford. This new ascetic movement drew negative attention—orthodox Christian holiness in a sea of modern agnosticism and irreligion. The “Holy Club” was derisively called “Methodists,” and Methodism soon spread to North America when John Wesley and George Whitefield went to the colony of Georgia during the 1730s.

In England, the organic structure, connectional nature, and theology of Methodism took thirty years to develop, through trial and error. By the mid-1760s, when colonial grievances started to pour in from America, Methodism had become a major player in British politics and the Rev. John Wesley, who was an elder statesman by that time, was a respected voice. Rev. Wesley’s criticisms of the American patriots and critique of the goals of the American Revolution are covered in this paper. He was highly suspicious of both the Founding Fathers and their stated goals, and much of what he said then proved to be prophetic.

However, as Providence would have it, the face of American Methodism was that of Francis Asbury’s (1745 – 1816). He was consecrated a bishop at the Christmas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in December 1784, effectively becoming the “Father of American Methodism.” Nay, he became the heir of a great Puritan tradition which holds that God, and not the King or Parliament, is the true Sovereign in America. For the reasons explained further in this paper, Bishop Asbury is also a “Founding Father” of the United States. His decision to remain in the colonies during the American Revolutionary War (1775 – 1783), notwithstanding the fact that his leader, the Rev. John Wesley, had given the command to pull all of the Methodist pastors out of the colonies and to return to England, was both brave and providential. After the Americans prevailed in the war, only Francis Asbury was the last Methodist still standing in America and, for that reason, his stature, leadership, and credibility rivalled that of John Wesley’s.

Most importantly, Francis Asbury’s *moral influence* upon the new United States is unsurpassed by most of the American Founding Fathers—including Washington, Adams, Madison and Jefferson. This moral influence was the power of American Methodism in the United States—this moral influence was to be incalculable and priceless, because it fundamentally insisted that the God of Truth and Justice should reign supreme not just in theology or in theory, but also in law,

public policy, criminal justice, over the question of slavery, and in economics. This was the Methodist idea of “social holiness.” Asbury set a very high moral standard right out of the gates, in 1784, when he visited General George Washington at Mount Vernon and pleaded on behalf of helpless African American slaves, arguing that slavery was wrong and unjust, and that the institution of slavery should be abolished. As we shall see in this paper, Asbury’s position on slavery was ahead of most of his contemporaries’, including many of the great American Founding Fathers who sat in the Continental Congress or the Constitutional Convention in 1787.

Furthermore, Francis Asbury is endeared to Black America in a very special way that none of the American Founding Fathers has even so highly esteemed by that community. First, Bishop Asbury licensed Richard Allen as the first African American Methodist preacher at the Methodist Christmas Conference in 1784. And, second, Asbury consecrated Richard Allen’s first church, Bethel A.M.E. Church in Philadelphia in 1794. This helped to launch the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the first independent African American church denomination in the history of the United States, which W.E.B. Du Bois has described as “one of the largest Negro organizations in the world.”³¹ And Ebony historian Lerone Bennett, Jr. has described the founding of the Free African Society and the A.M.E. Church as “the founding of Black America.”³² Hence, through Bishop Asbury’s affection and friendship with Rev. Richard Allen, he helped to launch one of the world’s great spiritual, moral, and social institutions in the A.M.E. Church—an institution that would bring the Wesleyan zeal for social holiness and social justice to the African American community’s fight against slavery and discrimination.³³

³¹ W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 1115.

³² <https://richardguzman.com/lerone-bennett-jr-before-the-mayflower/>

His most influential book has been *Before the Mayflower*, first published in 1962. In **Chapter 3, “The Founding of Black America,”** Bennett tells the story of the crucial role black patriots played in the American Revolution, including the legendary Crispus Attucks, who, as the first person to die in the Revolution, has been a source of immense pride for black Americans. He distinguishes four “recognizable types” in the founding of black America: Jupiter Hammon, who “went over to the enemy...producing intellectual products that...buttressed their world view;” Phillis Wheatley, a founder of American poetry, who “subtly challenged” the premises of American society “by the authority of her work;” the anonymous Othello, the outright militant; and **Richard Allen who “spoke in muted tones but created big sticks of organization,” including the AME Church and, with Absalom Jones, the Free African Society.**

³³ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990), pp. 47 – 75.

Moreover, as we shall discuss in this paper, Bishop Asbury ensured that the new United States would have the benefit of the genius of evangelical Anglicanism or Methodism within its midst. The basic theme of Methodism is that “**the Gospel of Christ knows no religion but social, no holiness but social holiness.**” This meant that the Methodist Church must at times exercise its prophetic prerogative through petitioning the secular magistrate to do justice and administer just laws. Today, “social holiness” and “social justice” are the great legacies of the Wesleyan and Methodist Churches in the United States. The Methodist’s conceptualization of the “two-tables” theory of Church-State polity had been inherited from its Anglican and Puritan roots.

Indeed, “**Methodism was originally a part of the Puritan movement within the Anglican Church...**”³⁴ And Methodism “**united with the great thrusts of Puritanism to produce the important ‘Nonconformist conscience.’**”³⁵ Although Methodism is hard to pinpoint historically, its theological roots are both Arminian-Puritan and evangelical Anglican. Its “legal tradition” is therefore reflected in Dr. Richard Hooker’s *Of the Law of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594) and its theology was taken from the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*. Methodism is essentially an Anglican evangelical expression, because there is “no essential conflict between the teachings of Methodism and the Anglican Church. It was a question of spirit, of emphasis.”³⁶

Hence, this paper focuses upon the rise of Methodism in England and America as an 18th century “religious society” movement within the Church of England. It takes the position that Methodism reflected the true “invisible church,” lodged inside of the Church of England, during a period of time when England’s and America’s leaders and elite classes—the Georgians of the 18th century—had become intoxicated with material success and global empire. As this series focuses on “law and religion,” the Rev. John Wesley’s “stress upon the need for social holiness,” general belief in sanctification through perfection evidenced by good works, attitude towards slavery and the slave trade, and general suspicions about the expressed motives of the American Founding Fathers, are addressed in this paper.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 78.

³⁵ Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1957), p. 455.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 454.

SUMMARY

Dr. Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594) set forth the orthodox Anglican theology on church, government, and constitutional law. And this orthodox Anglican theology would become the fundamental foundation of British Methodism's attitude toward social reform during the 18th-century. The Church of England lacked a genuine concern for the plight of the poor, and it was genuinely unconcerned about the spiritual well-being of the British Empire. Under these conditions, the Methodist movement emerged. The Methodist movement sought to preserve the ancient, orthodox religion of the Church of England, as reflected in Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, the *Book of Common Prayer*, and the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*. The Methodist movement sought to spread "scriptural" holiness throughout England and colonial British North America. And the tangible influence of Methodism upon every aspect of English and American life proved to be monumental. Today, for Christian lawyers and judges, Methodism is a firm reminder that Anglo-American jurisprudence is deeply-rooted in an obligation of love, founded upon equitable notions of mercy and justice, and tied to higher law. This reminder is especially symbolized in "African Methodism" that was founded simultaneously with the United States Constitution in 1787.

Part LIV. Anglican Church: The Rise of the Methodist Movement In England and British North America, 1720-1800

The Methodist movement was, fundamentally, an expression of 17th-century Puritanism.³⁷ Indeed, "Methodism was originally a part of the Puritan movement within the Anglican Church...."³⁸ And Methodism "united with the great thrusts of Puritanism to produce the important 'Nonconformist conscience.'"³⁹ Without question, Wesleyan Methodism was *orthodox* Anglicanism that was deeply-rooted in the Puritan King James Version of *The Holy Bible; Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*; the *Book of Common Prayer*; and in Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594)⁴⁰, which was founded upon a fundamental understanding that the Church and State are two side of the same coin, and that secular human law must be subordinate to God's natural moral laws.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 78.

³⁹ Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 455.

⁴⁰ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* (Nashville, TN: Abington Press, 2013), p. 10.

Thus, Methodism's call for social holiness and social reform was deeply-rooted in a traditional Anglican conception of the secular magistrate (i.e., the State) as being God's vicegerent who must administer true justice. As a consequence, the "Methodist Church has remained pre-eminently the church of the working classes in Britain."⁴¹ It came into existence largely to fill a spiritual vacuum and to redress the effects of widespread poverty throughout the British Empire:

Church ←-----→ State ←-----→ Capitalism

When the Whigs prorogued the Church of England in 1718 and impaired its ability to promote civic virtue, equity, and social responsibility among the British elites, the fledgling Methodist movement stepped up to the challenge and preached "social holiness" and "social reform" in an effort to tackle the spill-over effects of predatory capitalism upon the poor.

Today, Methodism's "greatest strength is still in the industrial counties. Its steadying influence on the side of the king and the constitution helped to forestall any political revolt during the shaking years of the French Revolution.... From the early nineteenth century Methodism has given much impetus to trade unionism. Its influence touched almost every aspect English life."⁴² In British North America, Methodism remained the church of the working classes and, from its inception in 1784, it took up the mantle of anti-slavery abolitionism and has made a significant contribution to socioeconomic plight of African Americans in the United States. Thus deeply-rooted in an Anglican legal heritage that is reflected in Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594), Methodism's chief influence upon law and public policy comes from its emphasis upon social holiness and social reform.

I. Methodism and the Religious Society Movement within the Church of England

The rise of the Methodism in both Britain and America is connected to the personal biography of the Rev. John Wesley (1703 – 1791); to the story of the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG); and to the SPG's failed effort to establish the Church of England in colonial British North America during the period 1701 to 1785.⁴³

⁴¹ Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 455.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ See The Apostolate Papers, Paper No. 60, Part XLIII. Anglican Church: "A History of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) in the British North American Colonies from 1701 to 1785"

During this period, the American colonies were placed under the direct oversight of the Bishop of London, but Puritan colonial New England and most of other American colonies wanted no part of the Bishop of London’s ecclesiastical authority, jurisdiction, and influence in America. These American colonists did not want orthodox Christianity (i.e., Catholica or Anglican) or a strong Church of England on American soil.

Fundamentally, the American colonies did not want “catholic” jurisprudence, or even orthodox Puritan jurisprudence, to be interposed into American secular law—especially American commercial law, real property law, and family law. Nor did the American colonist want Anglican bishops, ecclesiastical courts, or ecclesiastical judges on American soil.

Hence, through rejecting the widespread establishment of the Church of England on American soil, the American colonists were rejected the necessary legislative, administrative, and juridical infrastructures that were essential part and parcel of English constitutional law and jurisprudence. The Church of England was, and is, unlike any other church denomination as we have come to understand the meaning of “church” and “denomination” in the United States. Instead, the Church of England has constitutional status, not unlike the British Parliament or the British Monarchy. The Church of England not only controlled vast amounts of property, but it also controlled England’s major universities, its great cathedrals, churches, and foundations, as well as England’s ecclesiastical and chancery courts.

The standard constitutional treatise in England was Dr. Richard Hooker’s *Of the Law of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594), which held generally that the Catholic legal philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas had been incorporated into the Anglican legal system; that the British Crown is the head of the Church and the State; and that the Church and the State were really two sides of the same coin. As such, in England, there is no clean break between Christian jurisprudence and British secular jurisprudence. See, e.g., Table 1, below:

Table 1. Thomas Woods in *Institutes of the Laws of England* (1720)

“As Law in General is an Art directing to the Knowledge of Justice, and to the well ordering of civil Society, so the Law of England, in particular, is an Art to know what is Justice in England, and to preserve Order in that Kingdom: And this Law is raised upon ... principal Foundations.

1. Upon the *Law of Nature*, though we seldom make Use of the Terms, *The Law of Nature*. But we say, that such a *Thing is reasonable*, or *unreasonable*, or *against*

the....

2. Upon the **revealed Law of God**, Hence it is that our Law punishes Blasphemies, Perjuries, & etc. and receives the Canons of the Church [of England] duly made, and supported a spiritual Jurisdiction and Authority in the Church [of England].

3. The third Ground are several general *Customs*, these Customs are properly called the *Common Law*. Wherefore when we say, it is so by **Common Law**, it is as much as to say, by common Right, or of common Justice.

Indeed it is many Times very difficult to know what Cases are grounded on the **Law of Reason**, and what upon the *Custom* of the Kingdom, yet we must endeavor to understand this, to know the perfect Reason of the Law.

Rules concerning Law

The *Common Law* is the **absolute Perfection of Reason**. For nothing that is contrary to Reason is consonant to Law

Common Law is common Right.

The Law is the Subject's best **Birth-right**.

The Law respects the **Order of Nature....**"

Source: Thomas Wood, LL.D., *An Institute of the laws of England: or, the Laws of England in their Natural Order* (London, England: Strahan and Woodall, 1720), pp. 4-5.

This merger of the Christian religion into England's secular jurisprudence is also constitutional. And, as such, the Church of England has long played a very important role at every level of the British government—whether in Parliament through its bishops sitting as “lords spiritual” in the House of Lords or through its various ecclesiastical, chancery, and common law courts. In order to better understand the Church of England's constitutional, administrative, and judicial role in British government, a quick review of the following chart that outlines England's ecclesiastical courts in both illustrative and instructive:

Table 2, The Ecclesiastical Courts of the Church of England, 1700 to Present

CHURCH		CHURCH COURT	
<p>General Synod of the Church of England⁴⁴</p>	<p>The General Synod is the Legislative Body of the C.O.E.</p> <p>Created by the Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act of 1919⁴⁵</p> <p>The Synod is authorized to pass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures (i.e., Acts of Parliament); and • Canons <p><u>History of the Synod:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convocation of Canterbury and York dated back to 7th century • In 1717, King George I prorogued the Convocations, preventing it 	<p>Parliament</p>	<p><u>LEGISLATIVE REVIEW/ APPROVAL:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monarchy of England • House of Lords • House of Commons <p>“The [Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act of 1919] required that, after being passed by the assembly, the measure had to be examined by a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament which prepared a report to both houses. If then approved by each House, it was submitted to the Sovereign for royal assent. If MPs or members of the House of Lords were not content with a measure then they could vote to reject it, but not amend it. Once a measure had been agreed (“deemed expedient”) by both Houses of Parliament, and received royal assent, it was (from 1926) printed with the</p>

⁴⁴ “The functions of the synod are:

Legislation:

- to pass measures dealing with the government of the church and its institutions,
- to pass canons, determining doctrine and the form of worship,[9]
- to approve the liturgy and make other rules and regulations through Acts of Synod,[10]
- to regulate relations with other churches,
- to consider and express their opinion on any other matters of religious or public interest, and
- to approve or reject the annual budget of the church.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Synod_of_the_Church_of_England

⁴⁵ In 1714, George II prorogued the Church of England’s convocation, thus preventing it from enacting legislation. Prior to the 1919 act, only Parliament could enacted laws on behalf of the Church of England, and this meant that little or not legislative enactments (i.e., “measures”) were passed.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Synod_of_the_Church_of_England

	<p>from passing legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 1850s, a strong movement to revitalize the Convocations commenced, leading to the Act of 1919. 		Acts of Parliament for the year in question.” ⁴⁶
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House of Bishops 	Most of the Bishops are from Canterbury and York. ⁴⁷		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House of Clergy 	Most of the clergymen are from Canterbury or York dioceses. ⁴⁸		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House of Laity 	Most of the lay representatives are from the Canterbury or York dioceses. ⁴⁹		
<p>Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archbishop of Canterbury (“Primate of All England”) • Archbishop of York (“Primate of England”) 		<p>Province Courts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arches Court (Canterbury) • Chancery Court (York) 	<p><u>Appellate Review by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privy Council (“Queen-in-Council”) • Commission of Review
<p>Diocese</p>	<p>The Diocese is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headed by Bishops (Diocesan) • Supported by Suffragan Bishops 	<p>Diocesan Courts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissary Court (Canterbury) • Consistory Court (all other Dioceses) 	<p><u>Appellate Review by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province Courts

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Archdeacon	<p>The Archdeaconry is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headed by an Archdeacon (Senior Priest) • An Archdeacon presides over a “district” that includes 2 or more Parishes 	<p>Court of the Archdeacon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Court handles “non-doctrinal” cases • Parish disputes and cases 	<p><u>Appellate Review by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diocesan Courts
Deanery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Deanery consists of a number of Parishes • Headed by a Senior Priest • Deanery Synod (Laity and Clergy) 	<p>Court of the Archdeacon</p> <p>(See above)</p>	
Parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headed by a Parish Priest called the “Rector” • Vicar- a priest who assists the Rector • Parish Church Council (e.g., “Vestry Committee”) consists of lay members; church wardens; and clergymen) • 	<p>Court of the Archdeacon</p> <p>(See above)</p>	
Religious Societies	<p><u>Examples of Religious Societies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Societies authorized to 		

	<p>implement the objectives and goals of the Parish, Diocese, Province, etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province-Level: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) • Province-Level: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) • Province-Level: Society for the Reformation of Manners (SRM) • Parish- Local Level: spontaneous and voluntary groups of local clergy and laity (e.g., the Methodist Societies of the 18th century). “The religious societies attacked the problem of immorality on a personal, individualistic basis.... The stated purpose of the societies was to promote ‘real holiness of heart and life.’”⁵⁰ • The Oxford 		
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⁵⁰ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013), pp. 22-23.

	<p>Society, 1720s-30s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Methodist Societies, 1730s-80s. 		
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Largely because of the Church of England’s infrastructure, Anglican bishops and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) were not popular within the American colonies. For this reason, Anglican priests who lived in colonial British North America during the period 1700 – 1775 were considered as agents and symbols of the Church of England on American soil. Thus, to be a “high churchman,” as Rev. John Wesley (1703 – 1791) and many others were, meant to symbolize both the King of England and the entire apparatus of the Church of England on American soil.

But the SPG also failed to establish the Church of England on American soil, because even in England the Whig party led a powerful movement to dismantle orthodox Christianity and the Church of England throughout the British Empire. These powerful British Whigs did not like the influential role which the Church of England’s churchmen exercised over very important matters involving secular law and public policy. For this reason, during the early 1700s, the Whig party and King George I took away almost all of the Church of England’s powers and independent authority and initiatives.⁵¹ From between 1688 and 1717 political tensions ran so high between the lower house of Convocation (i.e., the regular Anglican priests) and the upper house of Convocation (i.e., the bishops), that rather than permit these tensions to threaten England’s political stability, George I prorogued the Church of England’s Convocation in 1718. See, e.g., Table 3.

⁵¹ See *The Apostolate Papers*, Paper No. 61, Part XLIV. Anglican Church: “The Suppression of the Convocation of the Church of England- 1718 -1800”

Table 3. Methodism and the Lower Convocation

CHURCH OF ENGLAND (1714 – 1800)	
UPPER CONVOCATION (Whigs; Latitudinarian Anglicans)	LOWER CONVOCATION (Tories; High Church Anglicans)
Bishops and Archbishops	Priests
<p>“Whig governments [gave] bishoprics and deaneries to Whigs without regard for learning or piety.”⁵²</p> <p>“Many ecclesiastic preferments went to highest bidders, especially to the younger sons of nobles; such men were usually neither godly nor intelligent.”⁵³</p> <p>“Pluralism and sinecurism prevailed everywhere.”⁵⁴</p> <p>“Amidst public corruption and dim ideals venal primates and prelates arrogantly lived like princes; hard-drinking, fox hunting and pluralist parsons usurped the name of clerics.”⁵⁵</p> <p>“The cumulative effect of the expulsion of the Puritan and Nonjuring clergy, the suppression of convocation, and the political rise of the church as a reservoir of patronage was an unprecedented degree of spiritual decadence.”⁵⁶</p> <p>“There were, of course, many stalwart, virile, and hard-working Christians in the Anglican Church; but their voices were unheeded in the streets.”⁵⁷</p>	<p>“The poorer positions were opened to individuals who were incapable of making better livings elsewhere.”</p> <p>“[M]any of the humbler clergy were pious and capable.”⁵⁸</p> <p>“There were, of course, many stalwart, virile, and hard-working Christians in the Anglican Church; but their voices were unheeded in the streets.”⁵⁹</p> <p>For example, the Rev. John Wesley (1703 – 1791), Rev. Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788), and Rev. George Whitefield (1714 – 1770) were amongst this group of hard-working Anglican clergymen.</p>

⁵² Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (1957), p. 451.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

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Thereafter, the Convocation Suppression Act was passed in 1718,⁶⁰ thus crippling the Lower Convocation’s ability to meet and to influence the public policies of the British Empire.⁶¹ The Upper Convocation was moved to the House of Lords and given the title “lords spiritual.” The Upper Convocation, largely corrupt, continued to be well-favored by the British Crown, the Whig Party, and Parliament.⁶²

It is within this historical landscape that the Methodist movement arose in England during the early 1720s and 30s. There was in general a widespread feeling among Anglican priests and the British working classes that the upper echelons of the Church of England really did not care about the spiritual well-being of British commoners and that the Church of England had grown cold and corrupt. This deep-seated problem the loss of faith in church by British commoners, however, did not emerge during the early 1700s, but instead had become a problem as far back as the late 1600s during the reigns of Kings Charles II and James II. Persons who longed for the old Puritan simplicity and authentic spirituality often organized “religious societies” in order to preserve what they believed to be true religion and authentic orthodox faith.

Significantly, the Methodist movement was organized and conceptualized as a lower-level “religious society” movement. The Methodist movement thus reflected the same goals of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Part (SPG). The Methodist movement’s principal founders the Revs. John and Charles Wesley and Rev. George Whitefield were parish-level Anglican priests. Both John and Charles Wesley, who took over the leadership of the Methodist societies in England, were adamant that the Methodist societies did not consider themselves as separate churches and would never break away from the Church of England. As an Evangelical movement, the Methodists were concerned about ministering to the common man and encouraging holiness and righteous

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convocations_of_Canterbury_and_York

⁶² During the 1700s, the Whigs were moving fast towards empire-building, global mercantilism, money-making, and greater latitude towards religious tolerance—in both England and colonial British North America. The Whigs put measures in place to ensure that only clergymen who were “latitudinarian Anglicans” and who supported Whig policies would receive appointments to bishoprics. Those Anglican clergymen who held to traditional orthodoxy—such the Rev. John Wesley—were considered “high churchmen” and thus somewhat marginalized.

living. The Wesley brothers were adamant that the Methodist movement was not designed or equipped to “break away” from the Church of England. There was “no essential conflict between the teachings of Methodism and the Anglican Church. It was a question of spirit, of emphasis.”⁶³

What were the goals of Methodism? It was, stated simply, twofold: first, to spread “scriptural holiness” throughout the nation; and, secondly, to spiritually revitalize and rehabilitate the Church of England.⁶⁴

The Methodist movement utilized the same hymnals, *Book of Common Prayer*, and *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*, as did the Church of England. The Methodist movement also relied upon the same parish priests, parish churches, parish administration of the Sacraments, ecclesiastical laws and courts, episcopal leadership, and sacred history, as did the Church of England. For this reason, to be a Wesleyan Methodist during the late 18th century was to be an Anglican in every way—to be a member of the Church of England and subject to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Anglican bishops.⁶⁵

Methodism was never designed to exist independent of its orthodox Anglican roots. Nor was it ever intended that Methodism would sever its ties to the Church of England. Revs. John and Charles Wesley were “High-Churchmen” who did not support abandoning the ecclesiastical, episcopal, and hierarchical bureaucracy of the Church of England.

Nor did the Wesley brothers ever support what they believed to be the radical goals of the American Revolution. British Methodism had grown out of the “religious society” movement of the Church of England, especially the “Lower Convocation” (i.e., the House of Clergy) and its unique concerns about the

⁶³ Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1957), p. 454.

⁶⁴ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People called Methodists* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013), p. 239.

⁶⁵ In the new United States of America of 1784, the new Methodist Episcopal Church that was established, was untied and unconnected to the Church of England’s system of provinces, dioceses, and ecclesiastical laws and courts. British Methodism remained connected to a rich legal tradition that incorporated the Christian religion into is secular law for more than a thousand years, and a rich political heritage that had established the Church of England as a constitutional entity within body politic. But American Methodism—and especially African Methodism—became severed from Britain’s rich Anglican legal tradition and Anglican political heritage, to wit: Dr. Richard Hooker’s *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594). Thus cut off from direct legal and political ties to the government, and far less likely to conceptualize secular law and courts as the tools of Divine Providence, American Methodism is much more “evangelical” than British Methodism; but, as an evangelical church severed from its Anglican legal heritage, American Methodism is far less likely to hold the American civil government or the American civil magistrate accountable to God’s natural moral law.

decadent tendencies and worldliness of the “Upper Convocation” (i.e., the House of Bishops). As Tories and High Churchmen, the Wesley brothers were not opposed to the goals of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts or to establishing a strong Church of England on American soil.⁶⁶ When the SPG failed to establish the Church of England in colonial British North America from the period 1701 to 1776, it essentially failed to assist the American colonists with establishing Christian jurisprudence on American soil.⁶⁷

However, when the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts’ official mission came to an official end in colonial British North America in 1785, that mission was unwittingly and unofficially passed to the capable hand of Bishop Francis Asbury, Bishop Thomas Coke, and the new Methodist Episcopal Church. Indeed, the Methodist Episcopal Church sprung up from ashes of the SPG. This paper explores why Methodism arose and grew exponentially during the early 18th century.

II. Why Methodism Arose during the early 1700s

The Reverend John Wesley himself believed that ever since the Restoration of the Stuart Monarchy in 1660, the whole fabric of English society had started to decline morally and spiritually. In his paper “An Estimate of the Manners of the Present Times” (1785), Rev. Wesley concluded:

See then, Englishmen, what is the undoubted characteristic of our nation; it is ungodliness. True, it was not always so: For many ages we had as much of the fear of God as our neighbors. But in the last age, many who were absolute strangers to this, made so large a profession of it, that the nation in general was surfeited, and, at Restoration, ran headlong from one extreme to the other. It was then ungodliness broke in upon us as a flood; and when shall its dire waves be stayed?

When King Charles II was restored to the Monarchy in 1660 and removed the Puritan influence, thus diminishing the work of Puritans such as the Rev. Richard

⁶⁶ See The Apostolate Papers, Paper No. 60, Part XLIII. Anglican Church: “A History of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) in the British North American Colonies from 1701 to 1785”

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Baxter (1615 – 1691) and the Rev. John Westley (1636 – 1678).⁶⁸ Coincidentally, under King Charles II, the colonies of North and South Carolina were founded, and initiation of the wicked transatlantic slave trade was commenced. There was also an abrupt return to a doctrine of absolutist “divine right of kings.” The English Puritans during the late 1600s fell into two camps: Calvinists and Arminians. The English Calvinists referred to the Arminian sect as “New Methodists,” because they were “persons using this new (that is, wrong) method” regarding their “views of justification and sanctification.”⁶⁹ But regardless of perspective, both the Puritan Calvinists and Puritan Arminians were driven underground into the “religious society” movements of the late 1600s. Both John and Charles Wesley grew up in a household and a church that was a part of this “religious society” movement in the form of the Epworth Religious Society.⁷⁰

The 18th-century Methodist movement stood upon the shoulders of the “religious society” movement (late 1600s), the Society for Promoting the Christian Gospel (SPGK, founded 1698) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG, founded 1701). As shown in Table 1 above, at the “parish-level” of the Church of England, there was considerable latitude in how Parish priests were encouraged and permitted to spread, teach, and promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ. One such method was to organize religious societies in order to promote character development, social holiness, and social responsibility. John Wesley’s father, the Reverend Samuel Wesley, who was rector of Epworth parish, “became involved in this movement.”⁷¹ He started the Epworth Religious Society, thus exposing John and Charles Wesley to this style of religious organization while they were children. “The religious societies attacked the problem of immorality on a personal, individualistic basis. There was no social program to reform England in one grand stroke. The approach instead was to work toward the transformation of society by changing one person at a time.”⁷² The Wesley brothers’ mother, Susanna Wesley, “is traditionally given much of the credit for raising and nurturing

⁶⁸ **Rev. John Westley (1636–78)** was an English nonconformist minister. He was the grandfather of John Wesley (founder of Methodism). NOTE: the last name is spelled “Westley” instead of “Wesley.” “He married a daughter of John White, who was related also to Thomas Fuller. White, the “Patriarch of Dorchester”, married a sister of Cornelius Burges. Westley’s eldest son was Timothy (born 1659). Their second son was Rev. Samuel Wesley, a High Church Anglican vicar and the father of John and Charles Wesley. A younger son, Matthew Wesley, remained a nonconformist, became a London apothecary, and died on 10 June 1737, leaving a son, Matthew, in India; he provided for some of his brother Samuel’s daughters.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Westley

⁶⁹ Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists*, p. 19.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-22.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁷² *Ibid.*

her sons, Charles and John, in such a fashion that the Methodist movement might seem a natural outgrowth of the devotional life and thought of the Epworth rectory.”⁷³ In addition, while John Wesley was quite young, he became a corresponding member of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK); and after his ordination at Oxford, he would eventually become one of the first clergymen to accept an assignment to Georgia in 1734 as a clergymen whose salary was sponsored by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG).

A. Oxford University: Irreligion, Deism, and the Holy Club, 1720-1735

John Wesley matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford in 1720 and received his bachelors degree in 1724. He immediately commenced training as a deacon and prepared for ordination. Meanwhile, he also commenced studies for the Master of Arts degree, after which he would qualify for ordination as a presbyter or priest. It was during this period when he commenced preparation for ordination and studying for the masters degree that Wesley became confused about the precise requirements for justification and sanctification. Wesley then acquired and cultivated a since desire for knowledge about holy living and inward purity. He began to entertain “a conviction that holy living is essential to the nature of true Christianity.”⁷⁴ He also felt that there was a potential for back-sliding, and thus concluded that there was a need to programmatically discipline and organize one’s life around conscientious holy living. At the same time, Wesley shared his concerns and questions with his parents Samuel and Susanna Wesley.

On March 17, 1726, John Wesley won a fellowship to Lincoln College. As a Fellow of Lincoln, he was guaranteed an income (i.e., a yearly stipend for life for so long as he remained unmarried), food and lodging, and students under his charge. In June 1726, his brother Charles Wesley came to Christ Church. At that time, the Wesley brothers and their associates had not commenced their spiritual gatherings and meetings. On February 14, 1727, John Wesley graduated to the Master of Arts degree. He was ordained a presbyter on September 22, 1728.

Meanwhile, and much to his chagrin, Charles Wesley was struggling at Oxford against the influences of Deism, humanism, and irreligion. The anti-Christian spirit was so strong that Charles Wesley sought from his brother John advice on how a Christian could should conduct himself in such a worldly

⁷³ Ibid., p. 27.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 41.

academic environment. “Charles was now [John’s] willing companion: ‘If you would direct me to the same, or a like method with your own, I would gladly follow it.’”⁷⁵ Thereafter, John gave his brother Charles Wesley advice on how to conduct his spiritual life at Oxford, and soon Charles was joined by his friends William Morgan and Bob Kirkman. They began to get together occasionally for study and going to church once or twice a week. In 1729, the “little band of friends, encouraged by the presence of John, occasionally met together for study, prayer, and religious conversation, attended the Sacrament regularly, and kept track of their lives by daily notations in a diary.”⁷⁶

By late winter of 1729-30, the meetings began to be organized with regularity. In the summer of 1730, William Morgan suggested that the group begin to visit the debtors and condemned felons in the Castle prison. **“The public chose to turn a blind eye to the inequities of the law, the conditions of the prisons, and the implicit blight that such a situation presented to their social order....** The group, growing slowly to five or six members, began to set a schedule for such visits; John’s time was Saturday afternoon.... Before long, the Methodists were spending several hours a week with the poor and needy in the town.... [T]he Methodist’s scheme of social action, also began bringing together children of poor families in Oxford at least as early as the spring of 1731.”⁷⁷ Soon, other Oxford students began the derisively call this group scornful names such as “The Holy Club,” “Bible Moths,” “Supererogation Men,” etc., because of their demonstrated piety and acts of charity. Meanwhile, Rev. John Wesley became the recognized leader of this student group at Oxford, and he changed or modified his previous career plans in order to promote this new Oxford Club.

For example, Rev. Wesley started to preach at the Castle prison at least once per month, and he solicited support from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK).⁷⁸ Some time during the year 1732, John Bingham, a graduate of Christ Church, Oxford, noted that “a new set of Methodists sprung up among us,” thus referring to Rev. Wesley and the Oxford Club.⁷⁹ Somehow, the name “Methodist” stuck to Wesley’s Oxford Club, “for a variety of reasons, derogatory and otherwise.”⁸⁰ And then, suddenly, one of the members of through club,

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 43.

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 44-45.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 49.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 50.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 51.

William Morgan, died. Morgan's death created a stir at Oxford, as criticism of the Methodist's rigorous lifestyle came under scrutiny. Someone published an anonymous article titled "The Oxford Methodists" (1733), which caused Rev. Wesley to have some concerns regarding how the Holy Club was perceived. As a consequence, Rev. Wesley published his "Morgan Letter" in rebuttal. In this letter, he explained and defended the history, goals, and actions of his club. This "Morgan Letter" essentially marked the first historical marker of the Methodist movement. During the period 1733-35, the Methodist men represented some eight colleges: Christ Church, Lincoln, Queen's, Brasenose, Merton, Magdalen and Exeter.⁸¹ These college men were resisting the worldly and secular trends of Georgian society; they were fighting to preserve the authentic and primitive Christian faith of holiness and godliness, despite the growing pressures of irreligion and Deism.

B. John Wesley: In Search of Holiness and Ministry in the colony of Georgia, 1736- 1737⁸²

Now the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) tried but failed, between the period 1701 to 1785, to establish the orthodox Anglican faith upon American soil, and the experiences of the Rev. John Wesley in the colony of Georgia is a microcosm of that history. John Wesley has said that the second rise of Methodism occurred in Savannah, Georgia. But it is hard to see how his Methodist philosophy took root or made a difference, at least during these early years of 1736-1737.

As a representative of the SPG, the Reverend John Wesley was a "High-Church" Anglican in colonial Georgia. From the beginning, it does not appear that the SPG or Rev. Wesley, who was then in his early 30s and an unmarried bachelor, had been adequately briefed on the unique challenges of colonial life, particularly in the southern colonies of Georgia and the Carolinas. Rev. Wesley went to Georgia as a priest and member of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) and also at the special invitation of Governor James Oglethorpe, who was an original founder of this colony. Georgia had been founded in 1732 as a reformatory colony for debtors. It was founded upon Christian

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 54.

⁸² This section is an extension of *The Apostolate Papers*, No. 60, Part XLIII. Anglican Church: "A History of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) in the British North American Colonies from 1701 to 1785."

principles. For example, that was the interpretation of General James Oglethorpe and the proprietors of the colony of Georgia, as Historian W.E.B. Du Bois tells us:

In Georgia we have an example of a community whose philanthropic founders sought to impose upon it a code of morals higher than the colonists wished. The settlers of Georgia were of even worse moral fibre than their slave-holding and whiskey-using neighbors in Carolina and Virginia; yet Oglethorpe and the London proprietors prohibited from the beginning both the rum and the slave traffic, refusing to ‘suffer slavery (which is against the Gospel as well as the fundamental law of England) to be authorized under our authority.’⁸³

But when Rev. Wesley arrived at Savannah, Georgia, he found a colony of European settlers who seemed naturally disposed to rebel against the Christian spirit and the colonial laws prohibiting slavery, rum, and whisky. First off, he discovered that many colonists were smuggling rum and whisky into the colony notwithstanding established law, and Wesley observed drunkenness in Georgia. Moreover, the established Anglican Church in Savannah had a different “culture” than what Wesley had become accustomed to in England.

In Savannah, not much was expected from the pastor except the basic rituals and sacraments, and occasional Sunday sermons. Therefore, when Rev. Wesley came to Savannah and sought not only to preach the Gospel but to promote genuine **holiness**, to impose high ecclesiastical standards for membership, taking Holy Communion, qualifying for Baptism, serving as church officers, and the like, many members in his parish turn against him. Within the Anglican parish, Rev. Wesley found few like-minded Christians, but outside of the Anglican parish he found a group of German Pietists called Moravians (i.e., Lutherans) whom he took great affinity toward. While sailing across the Atlantic Ocean, Wesley first met the Moravians and became deeply impressed with their spirituality and firm belief in

⁸³ W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Suppression of the African Slave Trade,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 15. (See, also, Michael Thurmond, “Why Georgia’s Founder Fought Slavery,” <https://www.savannahnow.com/article/20080215/OPINION/302159906>, stating:

These original Georgians arrived in the New World, inspired by the promise of economic opportunity embodied in the Georgia plan. This bold visionary plan established Georgia as a unique economic development and social welfare experiment. The new colony was envisioned as an “Asylum of the Unfortunate,” a place where England’s “worthy poor” could earn a living exporting goods produced on small farms. From the outset, Oglethorpe and his colleagues found slavery inconsistent with the colony’s goals, arguing that it would undermine poor, hardworking white colonists. Oglethorpe later asserted that he and his fellow trustees prohibited slavery because it was “against the Gospel, as well as the fundamental law of England.”

the power of God, notwithstanding a tempest that had threatened the safety of the ship. Upon his arrival in Savannah, Rev. Wesley continued to learn more about how to attain the inner righteousness and holiness which the Moravians seemed to exhibit.

Rev. Wesley also spent time with the local Native American tribes. He began to learn their language in an effort to help carry out the mission of the SPG. But he found the Native Americans to be largely disinterested in learning the Christian faith. Wesley also traveled to South Carolina to check up on the spiritual state of African American slaves and was appalled to learn that many of them had been denied the Christian religion.⁸⁴ His impression of these slaves was much more positive than that of the Native Americans. His communications with some of the slaves caused him to believe that they had a genuine desire to learn the Christian faith. Rev. Wesley suggested that the planters ascertain which of their slaves had the ability and desire to learn the Christian faith and make provisions for them to do so.⁸⁵

Though he mentions the willingness of some gentlemen in Carolina to pursue this goal, there is no indication that the plan was ever put into effect. He was constantly reminded of the truth of his earlier comment to Georgia Trustees; ‘A parish of above two hundred miles in length laughs at the labor of one man.’ (*Letters*, 25:474). Wesley’s opposition to inhuman treatment, however, was persistent and extended also to the many instances of white enslavement that came to his attention, including the sad cases of Rachel Ure and David Jones, the latter’s suicide resulting from mistreatment at the hands of Captain Williams, a notorious plantation owner (*J&D*, 18:177, 445-46).⁸⁶

And, lastly, Rev. Wesley began to work with one of his parishioners who had already started a religious society in Savannah—it met on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday nights. This was a small group, but Rev. Wesley had decided to upbuild it, utilizing his Methodist principles, and as a way to influence and change the rest of the Anglican parish, which was “largely apathetic” and mostly “unchurched English parishioners.”⁸⁷ But the Savannah parish rejected Wesley’s spiritual

⁸⁴ 74

⁸⁵ 74.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

leadership, even going so far as to file criminal charges against him.⁸⁸ It must be admitted, then, that Rev. Wesley's mission to Georgia was a failure, but not because of any deficiencies in Wesley's motives or efforts. The fact is that most of the American colonists in Georgia simply did not want the sort of Christian holiness that John Wesley had brought over from England. "Wesley had landed in Georgia with high expectations; he left with some measure of bitterness and disappointment: 'I shook off the dust off my feet and left Georgia, after having preached the gospel there,... not as I ought, but as I was able.'"⁸⁹ Rev. Wesley

⁸⁸ At the time when Rev. Wesley was in Georgia, he was a bachelor, and probably fell into temptation as he expressed a romantic interest in one Ms. Sophy Hopkey, who was engaged to a man named William Williamson—both church members under Rev. Wesley's pastoral care. All of this led to problems, which Rev. Wesley's passions cause to unravel out of control:

Sophy Hopkey's hasty marriage to William Williamson was not only personally devastating to Wesley as a suitor, but also was ecclesiastically improper in the eyes of Wesley, the parish priest. His subsequent discovery of her secretly duplicitous behavior and her lack of penance led him to bar her from Communion (following the rubrics of the (Book of Common Prayer), a public affront that led her new husband to bring a series of charges to the grand jury in Savannah.

Thomas Causton, the chief magistrate and guardian of Ms. Hopkey, is described in Wesley's journal as having spread false rumors describing Wesley as:

'a sly hypocrite, a seducer, a betrayer of my trust, an egregious liar and dissembler, and endeavourer to alienate the affections of married women from their husbands, a drunkard, the keeper of a bawdy-house, an admitter of whores, whoremongers, drunkards, ay, and of murderers and spillers of blood to the Lord's Table, a repeller of others out of mere spite and malice, a refuser of Christian burial to Christians, a murderer of poor infants by plunging them into cold water, a Papist, if not a Jesuit, or rather, an introducer of a new religion, such as nobody ever heard of; a proud priest, whose view it was to be a bishop, a spiritual tyrant, an arbitrary usurper of illegal power; a false teacher enjoining others under peril of damnation to do what I would omit myself, to serve a turn; a denier of the King's supremacy, an enemy to the colony, a sower of sedition, a public incendiary, a disturber of the peace of families, a raiser of uproars, a ringleader of mutiny'—in a word, such a monster 'that the people would rather die than suffer him to go on thus.' (J&D, 18:540-41)

The Georgians brought ten "true bills" of indictment against Rev. Wesley, as follows:

1. By writing and speaking to Mrs. [Sophy] Williamson against her husband's consent.
 2. By repelling her from the Holy Communion.
 3. By dividing the Morning Service on Sunday.
 4. By not declaring my adherence to the Church of England.
 5. By refusing to baptize Mr. Parker's child by sprinkling unless the parents would certify it was weak.
 6. By repelling Mr. Gough from the Holy Communion.
 7. By refusing to read the Burial Service over Nathanael Pollhill, an Anabaptist.
 8. By calling myself Ordinary of Savannah.
 9. By refusing to receive William Aglionby as a godfather, because he was not a communicants.
 10. By refusing Jacob Matthews for the same reason....
- These would have provided the basis of a trial, had Wesley not slipped out of the colony before the matter came to court.

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 78-79.

thus left Georgia a “suffering servant,” bruised and battered, and with a new perspective of living the Christian faith.

As Rev. Wesley returned to England, his friend the Reverend George Whitefield was leaving England and traveling to the Georgia colony. And so Providence ensured that the spirit of Methodism would continue spread in the colonies. Meanwhile, the Georgia Trustees in London were surprised at Rev. Wesley’s sudden return. Rev. Wesley gave a “depressing report on the state of affairs”⁹⁰ in the Georgia colony. “His account of Causton⁹¹ ‘was enough to make all [the Trustees] quit,’ according to one of the Trustees, the Earl of Egmont, who felt Wesley was certainly guilty of ‘indiscretion’ but that Causton was ‘much more to blame,’ being guilty of ‘gross mis-administration.’”⁹² Indeed, the Georgia “[t]rustees were discovering that establishing religion in the colony was much more difficult that they had imagined.”⁹³

As I have previously mentioned in this series,⁹⁴ the failure of the SPG and the collapse of the orthodox Anglican faith in Georgia and the other twelve colonies signaled the deprecation of *the Christian foundation* of Anglo-American jurisprudence in colonial British North America⁹⁵—and this was true particularly in the South, where the positive law was used to defraud Native Americans of land, to cheat indentured servants and the poor, and to support chattel enslavement of Africans. Under such political and social conditions as in Georgia, Virginia,⁹⁶ and

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 82.

⁹¹ Thomas Causton was chief magistrate in Savannah, Georgia.

⁹² Ibid., pp. 81-82.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 82.

⁹⁴ See *The Apostolate Papers*, No. 60, Part XLIII. Anglican Church: “A History of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) in the British North American Colonies from 1701 to 1785.”

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ See Thomas Jefferson, *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1984), pp. 288 – 289, stating:

There must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The **whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other.** Our children see this, and learn to imitate it; for man is an imitative animal. This quality is the germ of all education in him. From his cradle to his grave he is learning to do what he sees others do. If a parent could find no motive either in his philanthropy or his self-love, for restraining the intemperance of passion towards his slave, it should always be a sufficient one that his child is present. But generally it is not sufficient. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose to his worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. . . .

With **the morals of the people, their industry also is destroyed.** For in a warm climate, no man will labour for himself who can make another labour for him. This is so true, that of the

the Carolinas, the social holiness of Wesleyan Methodism was a pestilential abhorrence.⁹⁷

C. **John Wesley: Evangelical Conversion and Methodist Leadership, 1738 -1770**

On May 24, 1738, in Aldersgate Street, London, during a meeting composed largely of Moravians under the auspices of the Church of England, Rev. John Wesley experienced an evangelical conversion from the Holy Ghost, just as the Moravian ministers were reading Martin Luther’s preface to the commentary of St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans. This radical and revolutionary Christian experience had been described in Act 2:1-13, where the first Apostles heard “a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were standing. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost....”⁹⁸

St. Augustine of Hippo had described this type of conversion in his work *On Grace and Free Will*,⁹⁹ where God removes the “stony heart” from the sinner. St. Augustine uses the symbolism of the “stony heart” to depict men and women who are unwilling to turn towards God’s grace for assistance with fulfilling the royal laws of God. St. Augustine describes the assistance of grace as a process of conversion—much similar to the sort of conversions which later depicted the primitive Methodist revivals of the 18th century-- whereby an individual person

proprietors of slaves a very small proportion indeed are ever seen to labour. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, **a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God?** That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep for ever: that considering numbers, nature and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events: that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest.—But it is impossible to be temperate and to pursue this subject through the various considerations of policy, of morals, of history natural and civil. We must be contented to hope they will force their way into every one’s mind.

⁹⁷ “The efforts to plan a version of High-Church mediative piety within a colony struggling to maintain basis civility and order did not gain a large following among **a population not inclined towards matters of religion.**” Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 103.

⁹⁸ Acts 2:2-3.

⁹⁹ Saint Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will* (Louisville, Kentucky: GLH Publishing, 2017).

will receive a “new heart,”¹⁰⁰ as is stated in the Book of Ezekiel, 36:22-27, where it is written: “[a] new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and the stony heart shall be taken away out of your flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”¹⁰¹

In *On Grace and Free Will*, St. Augustine describes a conversion experience that resembles the sort of Christian revival experiences that Christians were experiencing in Europe, England, and colonial British North America—in the First Great Awakenings and the Evangelical Revivals, as many Christians were experience the process of being “born again.”¹⁰² It was the same conversion process that Martin Luther had experienced in 1517.¹⁰³ This conversion process was markedly different from the Anglican liturgical practices of the 18th century, thus leading to significant conflict within the Church of England, when Rev. George Whitfield, Rev. Charles Wesley, Rev. John Wesley and the Methodist

¹⁰⁰ *On Grace and Free Will*, pp. 55-56; 73-74.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁰² I note here especially that this mode of induction into the Christian faith, that is to say, to rely upon God’s grace, has remained predominant in the African American faith tradition. For example, in his autobiography *Life and Times*, Frederick Douglass recalled his own conversion experience as follows: “Previously to my contemplation of the anti-slavery movement and its probable results, my mind had been seriously awakened to the subject of religion. I was not more than thirteen years old, when, in my loneliness and destitution, I longed for someone to whom I could go, as to a father and protector. The preaching of a white Methodist minister, named Hanson, was the means of causing me to feel that in God I had such a friend. He thought that all men, great and small, bond and free, were sinners in the sight of God: that they were by nature rebels against his government; and that they must repent of their sins, and be reconciled to God through Christ. I cannot say that I had a very distinct notion of what was required of me, but one thing I did know well: that I was wretched and had no means of making myself otherwise. I consulted a good colored man named Charles Lawson, and in tones of holy affection he told me to pray, and to ‘cast all my care upon God.’ This I sought to do; and though for weeks I was a poor, broken-hearted mourner, traveling through doubts and fears, I finally found my burden lightened, and my heart relieved. I loved all mankind, slaveholders not excepted, though I abhorred slavery more than ever. I saw the world in a new light, and my great concern was to have everybody converted. My desire to learn increased, and especially did I want a thorough acquaintance with the contents of the Bible. I have gathered scattered pages of the Bible from the filthy street-gutters, and washed and dried them, that in moments of leisure I might get a word or two of wisdom from them.” *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1994), p. 538.

¹⁰³ This “born-again” experience in 1517 essentially eviscerated in Martin Luther’s mind the necessity of the Sacrament of Penance and several other Catholic practices, which Luther defined as a “doctrine of good works,” which could never achieve salvation. Luther thus became convinced that man could be justified through becoming born again (i.e., through “faith alone”) and not through the “works” imposed by the Roman Catholic Church through the Sacrament of Penance and other canon laws. Luther essentially adopted Saint Augustine’s theology in *On Grace and Free Will*, wherein Augustine set forth a simple and cogent argument for the doctrine of “justification through faith alone, and not works.” Luther would later take up the same theme in his masterpiece *On the Bondage of the Will*, which set forth the cogent argument that human beings were completely powerless to earn their way, through good works or through carrying out the Sacraments, into the kingdom of heaven, without God’s grace. In the process, Luther’s theology would essentially dismantle at least five of the Seven Sacraments that were enforced through the Roman Catholic Church.

movement introduced this “evangelical” conversion experience into Anglican orthodox practice.

When Rev. Wesley returned to England from his 18-month ministry in Georgia, the Methodist societies are vibrant and operating in London, Oxford, and Bristol. Rev. Whitefield had opened up the Bristol region with his open-air and field preaching. As Wesley was returning to England, Whitefield was leaving England and headed to Georgia. Whitefield asked Wesley to take over the leadership of the Methodist societies in Bristol. Whereas the societies in London and Oxford were orderly and urbane, the societies in Bristol were boisterous, blue-collar, and characterized as unruly and work-class.

In Bristol, the local parish priests did not like the Methodists, so there was also tension. The local government officials and the parish priests incited the local citizens to infiltrate the Methodists and to disrupt their meetings. Rev. Wesley and the Methodist itinerants were often physically attacked. The locals even ran bulls through one of their open-air gatherings. But instead of giving up, the Bristol Methodist societies flourished. Prior to taking over this Bristol ministry, Rev. Wesley had never, or rarely, done any open-air preaching. But now filled with the Holy-Ghost, as it was received following his Aldersgate experience, Rev. Wesley would be transformed by his ministry in Bristol.

In London, about the year 1740, Rev. Wesley raised funds to purchase a Foundry where for the first time he established a permanent headquarters all of the different Methodist groups from throughout England who were in “connexion” with him. Not all of the independent religious societies were affiliated with the Methodists, even though some of them loosely referred to themselves as Methodists. At London, Rev. Wesley started the Foundry Society, and all of the other societies throughout England, which were in connection with him, were called the “United Societies.” Both Wesley brothers John and Charles organized these United Societies into circuits and they visited and tended to each of them, preaching in open-air venues along the way. Two features thus became associated with Wesleyan Methodism—itinerant preaching and connectional ties between its societies.

During the early 1740s, Rev. Whitefield and Rev. Wesley fell into open debate over various soteriological theologies on justification, predestination, the

doctrine of assurance (perseverance), the doctrine of irresistible grace, and the doctrine of perfection. Both men claimed to be followers of the letter and spirit of the Third-Nine Articles of Religion (Church of England), but Whitefield took the Calvinist view of justification, whereas Wesley took the Arminian view. To the extent that these two great pastors disagreed, they agreed to disagree but to work together for the good of the Methodist movement.

About this same time, Rev. Wesley also experienced unfortunate confrontation from his Moravian (i.e., Lutheran) brothers within the Fetter Lane Society, which broke away from the Methodists about this time. The problem with the Moravians is that they tended to de-emphasize the “law” in favor of “grace,” and this, according to Rev. Wesley, tended toward antinomianism. Rev. Wesley was adamant that the “law” leads to “holiness” and was never abrogated by Christ’s sacrifice. In the end, Wesley’s conflict with Whitefield and the Moravians was good for the Methodist movement, because it forced Rev. Wesley to better define his own theology as well as the identify of the Methodist movement. Significantly, “[t]he opposition of Methodists to slavery was expressed officially in the original General Rules set forth by Wesley in 1743 and in the rules adopted at the 1784 Christmas Conference.”¹⁰⁴

During the 1740s and 50s, the Wesley brothers developed a uniformed structure for conducting meetings, qualifying lay stewards, trustees, and lay preachers. They organized the societies into “classes” and appointed “class leaders.” These classes were the most basic meeting for “beginners” and persons new to the Christian faith. These classes were typically open to the public. The “class leaders” were often itinerant preachers or leaders whom Rev. Wesley personally trusted. The emphasis of these classes was teaching men and women the basics of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and encouraging them to encourage each other in their walk of holiness.

The next level group within these societies were the “bands.” There were two types of bands: “select bands” and “penitential bands.” The select bands were for men and women who were growing in the grace of the Holy Spirit and who were living exemplary Christian lives. The “penitential bands” were similar to mini-reformatories, designed for men and women wrestling with specific

¹⁰⁴ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 50.

problems, such as alcohol addiction or gambling or adultery. The goal of the penitential bands was to encourage Christians to help each other with overcoming life's challenges and difficulties. The meetings of these bands, along with the classes, were typically in homes or other convenient private quarters. But by the early 1750s, the classes and bands became so popular and populous that the Methodist movement struggled to find adequate accommodations for the meetings. When the Wesley brothers slowly began to secure accommodations for these gatherings, and as more and more unchurched and non-traditional Christians began to join the Methodists, the question of whether the Methodist movement was still a part of the Church of England began to confront Rev. Wesley.

Many of the new Methodists converts had never been members of the Church of England and had no affinity towards attending Anglican services. Some were former Baptists, Quakers, and Independents. They began to demand baptisms and the Lord's Supper from the Methodist itinerant preachers, most of whom were "lay preachers" who had never been ordained. Rev. Charles Wesley had been placed in charge of training these preachers and ensuring that they met proper standards. As John Wesley began to liberalize these qualifications and to permit these preachers to take more responsibility, Charles Wesley became more critical of his brother John. Charles Wesley was adamant that un-ordained ministers not be allowed to minister the sacraments and that the Methodist "meeting houses" or "preaching houses" not be called "churches." At the same time, the itinerant preachers were putting pressure on John Wesley for more authority.

In order to resolve these conflicts, the first "Annual Conference" was called by Rev. John Wesley in 1745. This was the beginning of the next distinctive feature of the Methodist Movement—the itinerant preachers who were in connexion with Rev. Wesley were called to various conferences and an Annual Conference, in order to address doctrine, discipline, and administrative matters. By the year 1748, these the "Annual Conference" was no longer ad hoc but rather a necessary and permanent feature of the Methodist movement.

By the early 1750s, it became obvious to some, although Revs. John and Charles Wesley refused to acknowledge or admit it, that the Methodist movement was fast become its own distinct and separate church. But in the mind of the Rev. John Wesley, the Methodist movement remained a vital and vibrant component of the Church of England's local "religious society" programme. The Methodist

movement was never designed to function as a “church” on the scale of the Church of England; and it retained all of the doctrines and disciplines of the Church of England. At the Annual Conferences, the Wesley brothers made this clear. The problem of issuing the sacraments was resolved largely by working with ordained Anglican clergymen to visit the Methodist societies to issue the Lord’s Supper and baptisms.

The Wesley brothers continued to encourage Methodist society members to attend weekly church services at the local parish churches within the Church of England. The expressed directive during the 1760s was as follows:

(1) Let all our Preachers go to church. (2) Let all our people go constantly. (3) Receive the sacrament at every opportunity. (4) Warn all against niceness in hearing, a great and prevailing evil. (5) Warn them likewise against despising the prayers of the Church. (6) Against calling our Society a Church, or the Church. (7) Against calling our Preachers Ministers, our houses meeting-houses (call them plain preaching-houses). (8) Do not license them as such.... (9) Do not license yourself till you are constrained. (Minutes, 867-68).¹⁰⁵

“Wesley clung to his vision of Methodism working hand in hand with the clergy in reviving the Church.”¹⁰⁶ Some Anglican clergymen were sympathetic and in agreement with Wesley, such as Thomas Coke, who held a doctorate degree from Oxford and was an ordained Anglican presbyter. But by in large the upper echelons of the Church of England continued to frown upon the Methodists. Even Wesley’s beloved Christ Church, Oxford had grown cold towards him. Even in Epworth, which was Rev. Wesley’s own hometown, the curate for the church, where Wesley’s own father was pastor, had once refused to allow Rev. Wesley into the pulpit. As Rev. Wesley himself recalled, he instead went and stood atop of his father’s grave and preached: ““*The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*””¹⁰⁷ The manner and mode

¹⁰⁵ 240

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ <https://lexloiz.wordpress.com/2009/12/28/john-wesley-preaching-on-his-father%E2%80%99s-grave/>

of orthodox Methodism thus remained at odds with the latitudinarian Anglicanism of the Upper Convocation.

III. Why American Methodism Developed into an Independent Church Denomination

The American landscape, with its republican values and religious diversity, made it difficult for Methodist societies to operate in the same mode and manner as did British Methodism in England. American Methodism, as it existed informally under the leadership of the Rev. George Whitefield during the 1730s and 40s, was purely an evangelical revival movement. American Methodism became popular, because Whitefield's preaching and style of worship-service suited the culture and habits of most Americans. Americans did not take too well to the High-Church Anglican style of worship. Accordingly, American Methodism would not likely have grown under Rev. Wesley's British-Methodist style of teaching, preaching and evangelization. During the 1760s, Whitefield's evangelical style of preaching was borrowed by the young itinerant preacher, Francis Asbury, who seemed to fit perfectly into the American culture. When the American Revolutionary War ended with British defeat and American independence, the mantle of Methodist leadership in North America fell into the hands of Francis Asbury, who became the leader of the Methodist church in America.

A. George Whitefield: the First Great Awakening and Methodist Leadership, 1738 – 1770

As previously mentioned, the colony of Georgia did not appear to be disposed to serious religion. When Church of England minister Rev. George Whitefield came to that colony in 1738, he did not display the same level of interest as did Wesley in supporting new Methodist societies, upholding Anglican ecclesiastical standards, or in developing the religious community in the colony.¹⁰⁸ Unlike Wesley, Rev. Whitefield was not the assigned parish priest in Savannah.¹⁰⁹ Instead, as the colonial chaplain, Rev. Whitefield commenced his own new ministry project, an Orphan-house—which he planned to make his life's work. At the same time, Rev. Whitefield was somewhat dismissive of the bishops and other

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁰⁹ see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Whitefield (“[George Whitefield] went to the Georgia Colony in 1738 following John Wesley's departure, to serve as a colonial chaplain at Savannah.”)

Anglican priests, accusing them of being pleasure-seekers and lazy.¹¹⁰ Whitefield supervised the “the dispersion of the Methodist from the colony of Georgia, taking some of them with him as he worked his way up the Atlantic seaboard through Virginia to Pennsylvania.”¹¹¹

Rev. Whitefield’s heartfelt desire was to be an itinerant preacher.¹¹² “Whitefield's itinerant preaching throughout the colonies was opposed by Bishop Benson who had ordained him for a settled ministry in Georgia. Whitefield replied that if bishops did not authorize his itinerant preaching, God would give him the authority.”¹¹³ Rev. Whitefield felt that his talent was preaching, not church planting, organizing, or tending to Methodist societies. His style and methods, then, were more suitable to the American situation. His fame quickly spread throughout the colonies, influencing major influencers such as Benjamin Franklin¹¹⁴ and Jonathan Edwards.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.,

¹¹² “In England, by 1738 when he was ordained priest, Whitefield wrote that “the spirit of the clergy began to be much embittered” and that “churches were gradually denied me”. In response to Whitefield’s Journals, the bishop of London, Edmund Gibson, published a 1739 pastoral letter criticizing Whitefield. Whitefield responded by labeling Anglican clerics as “lazy, non-spiritual, and pleasure seeking”. He rejected ecclesiastical authority claiming that “the whole world is now my parish.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Whitefield

¹¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Whitefield (“In an age when crossing the Atlantic Ocean was a long and hazardous adventure, he visited America seven times, making 13 ocean crossings in total. It is estimated that throughout his life, he preached more than 18,000 formal sermons, of which 78 have been published. In addition to his work in North America and England, he made 15 journeys to Scotland—most famously to the “Preaching Braes” of Cambuslang in 1742—two journeys to Ireland, and one each to Bermuda, Gibraltar, and the Netherlands. In England and Wales, Whitefield's itinerary included every county.”)

¹¹⁴ “Benjamin Franklin attended a revival meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and was greatly impressed with Whitefield’s ability to deliver a message to such a large group. Franklin had previously dismissed as exaggeration reports of Whitefield preaching to crowds of the order of tens of thousands in England. When listening to Whitefield preaching from the Philadelphia court house, Franklin walked away towards his shop in Market Street until he could no longer hear Whitefield distinctly—Whitefield could be heard over 500 feet. He then estimated his distance from Whitefield and calculated the area of a semicircle centred on Whitefield. Allowing two square feet per person he computed that Whitefield could be heard by over 30,000 people in the open air.... A lifelong close friendship developed between the revivalist preacher and the worldly Franklin.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Whitefield

¹¹⁵ “Despite these setbacks and the cooling of religious fervor, word of the Northampton revival and Edwards's leadership role had spread as far as England and Scotland. It was at this time that Edwards became acquainted with George Whitefield, who was traveling the Thirteen Colonies on a revival tour in 1739–40. The two men may not have seen eye to eye on every detail. Whitefield was far more comfortable with the strongly emotional elements of revival than Edwards was, but they were both passionate about preaching the Gospel. They worked together to orchestrate Whitefield's trip, first through Boston and then to Northampton. When Whitefield preached at Edwards's church in Northampton, he reminded them of the revival they had undergone just a few years before. This deeply touched Edwards, who wept throughout the entire service, and much of the congregation too was moved.”

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Edwards_\(theologian\)#Great_Awakening](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Edwards_(theologian)#Great_Awakening)

The Church of England did not assign [Rev. Whitefield] a pulpit, so he began preaching in parks and fields in England on his own, reaching out to people who normally did not attend church.

Like Jonathan Edwards, he developed a style of preaching that elicited emotional responses from his audiences. But Whitefield had charisma, and his loud voice, his small stature, and even his cross-eyed appearance (which some people took as a mark of divine favour) all served to help make him one of the first celebrities in the American colonies. Whitefield included slaves in his revivals and their response was positive. **Historians see this as ‘the genesis of African-American Christianity.’**¹¹⁶

To Whitefield "the gospel message was so critically important that he felt compelled to use all earthly means to get the word out." Thanks to widespread dissemination of print media, perhaps half of all colonists eventually heard about, read about, or read something written by Whitefield. He employed print systematically, sending advance men to put up broadsides and distribute handbills announcing his sermons. He also arranged to have his sermons published.

Whitefield sought to influence the colonies after he returned to England from his 1740 tour in America. He contracted to have his autobiographical *Journals* published throughout America. These *Journals* have been characterized as "the ideal vehicle for crafting a public image that could work in his absence." They depicted Whitefield in the "best possible light". When he returned to America for his third tour in 1745, he was better known than when he had left.

Much of Whitefield's publicity was the work of William Seward, a wealthy layman who accompanied Whitefield. Seward acted as Whitefield's "fund-raiser, business co-ordinator, and publicist". He furnished newspapers and booksellers with material, including copies of Whitefield's writings.

When Whitefield returned to England in 1742, a crowd Whitefield estimated at 20,000 and William M'Culloch, the local minister, at 30,000, met him. One such open-air congregation took place on Minchinhampton common. Whitefield preached to the "Rodborough

¹¹⁶ "Whitefield is remembered as one of the first to preach to slaves. Phillis Wheatley wrote a poem in his memory after he died, while she was still a slave." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Whitefield

congregation" - a gathering of 10,000 people - at a place now known as "Whitefield's tump."¹¹⁷

Hence, American Methodism took on a different character under Rev. Whitefield's leadership. Aside from his fiery preaching, Rev. Whitefield's own unique brand of Methodism, was much more Calvinistic and therefore more welcomed in the scholarly Congregational churches of colonial New England than in the South. Under Rev. Whitefield, Methodism did not take on the tasks of established separate so-called Methodist churches or a separate church denomination. Indeed, there the "Methodist Church" had not been created. Nor did Rev. Whitefield seek to encourage the American colonists to adopt an Anglican-style episcopacy, with provinces headed by archbishops, diocese headed by bishops, etc. This would have been impracticable. Instead, the emphasis of Rev. Whitefield's preaching was almost wholly on soteriological matters: justification, sanctification, assurance of the saints, and predestination. Thus, during the early 1700s, Methodism in colonial British North America was simply an evangelical revival meeting where a fiery sermon on justification and grace could be heard. It was not a separate church denomination and it did not plant separate churches. American Methodism was unofficially a constituent outreach ministry of the Church of England. In 1739, Rev. Whitefield returned to England in order to raise funds for his Bethesda Orphan-house. While in England, Rev. Whitefield officially turned his ministry in Bristol over to Rev. John Wesley. He then returned to North America in 1740, when he commenced preaching his famed "Great Awakening" sermons. In Pennsylvania, he connected with a group of Moravians and collaborated on building an orphanage for African American children there. Today, this orphanage is known as the Whitefield House and Gray Cottage.¹¹⁸

Rev. George Whitefield died in Massachusetts in 1770 at the age of 55.

¹¹⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Whitefield

¹¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitefield_House_and_Gray_Cottage?fbclid=IwAR0USkq0LIP-R0H1KogqqPhnWZQUZlaqQ5gzlBCQ2nhBCh1A3C3hs_55gA8

("The Whitefield House is a stone building measuring 56 feet long and 35 feet wide. It is named for George Whitefield (1714–1770), who hired a group of Moravians from Georgia to build the house as a school for orphaned slaves. Only a foundation was built however, after theological disputes between Whitefield and the Moravians caused the group to purchase the town of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. It was here they established a Moravian community. When Whitefield went bankrupt, the Moravians purchased 5000 acres of land from him, which would later become the town of Nazareth. They completed the Whitefield House in 1743, just in time for it to be used as a home for 32 couples coming over from England. The house has been in Moravian hands for years, and has operated as a place of worship, boarding school, place for mission work, nursery, the Moravian Theological Seminary, and apartments for furloughed missionaries. Currently, the Moravian Historical Society uses the building as its historical museum, administrative offices, and gift shop.")

B. John Wesley: American Methodism and New Leadership, 1770 - 1785

From the period 1738 to 1770, the organizational structure of the Methodist movement in colonial British North America fell under the undisputed leadership of the Rev. George Whitefield. However, during the last decade of Whitefield's life, Methodist societies in North America were weak or non-existent, as Whitefield himself was a multinational itinerant preacher who was unable to settle down in one parish in order to nourish any particular congregation. And what the Methodist movement lacked in North America were planters, local preachers, and preaching houses.

During the late 1760s, Rev. Wesley began to receive pressing requests for preachers to be sent to America—especially to Philadelphia and New York. But this was a very hard proposition, as very few itinerant preachers wish to take on the American circuits.¹¹⁹ Rev. Wesley had devised a plan to send some young preachers to America, to be supervised by Whitefield, but in 1770 Whitefield died before he could put that plan into effect.¹²⁰ At the 1771 Conference, two volunteers who were also itinerant preachers came forward and volunteered to go to America: Richard Wright and Francis Asbury, both only in their mid-twenties.¹²¹ The future of American Methodism would rest in the hands of Francis Asbury who would go on to become a great American evangelist, organizer, church planter, and, eventually, the first American Methodist bishop.

By the time of the American Revolution (1775 – 1783), the American Methodist movement—based upon the Wesleyan model—was almost non-existent in colonial British North America. In 1771, the minutes showed total Methodist membership in America at only 500 members with a total of four Methodist preachers:

In 1766, Reverend Laurence Coughlan arrived in Newfoundland and opened a school at Black Head in Conception Bay. In the late 1760s, two Methodist lay preachers emigrated to America and formed societies. Philip Embury began the work in New York at the instigation of fellow Irish Methodist Barbara Heck. Soon, Captain Webb from the British Army aided him. He formed a society in Philadelphia and traveled along the coast.

¹¹⁹ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013, pp. 272-274.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 274.

In 1770, two authorized Methodist preachers, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor, arrived from the British Connexion. They were immediately preceded by the unauthorized Robert Williams who quietly set about supporting himself by publishing American editions of Wesley's hymnbooks without obtaining permission to do so. These men were soon followed by others, including Francis Asbury. **Asbury reorganized the mid-Atlantic work in accordance with the Wesleyan model.** Internal conflict characterized this period. Missionaries displaced most of the local preachers and irritated many of the leading lay members. During the American Revolution, "the mid-Atlantic work" (as Wesley called it) diminished, and, by 1778, the work was reduced to one circuit. Asbury refused to leave. He remained in Delaware during this period.¹²²

Hence, as Professor Lorraine Boettner has correctly stated: “[t]here were practically no Methodists in America at the time of the Revolution....”¹²³ Prior to 1770, there were no “Methodist societies” in colonial British North America. In the period 1772 to 1779, there were less than 1,000 Methodists in North America.¹²⁴ In 1787, there were about 3,000 Methodist in North America.¹²⁵ And in 1791, upon the death of Rev. John Wesley, there were about 8,000 American Methodists in North America and about 7,000 British Methodists in England.¹²⁶

During the early 1770s, Rev. Wesley, who was a pacifist, issued instructions to the American Methodists preachers to take a neutral position on the growing conflict between the American colonists and the mother country. “In March 1775, Wesley had advised the preachers in America to ‘be peace-makers, to be loving and tender to all, but to addict yourselves to no party.’”¹²⁷ And by 1777, all of the Methodist preachers who had been appointed to the American colonies by Wesley—with the exception of Francis Asbury¹²⁸—returned England.¹²⁹

C. Political Climate in England during the Outbreak of the American Revolution

¹²² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Methodism_in_the_United_States#Early_missionaries_to_America

¹²³ Kenneth Talbot and Gary Crampton, *Calvinism, Hyper-Calvinism and Arminianism* (Whitefield Media Publishing: Lakeland, FL, 1990), p. 135.

¹²⁴ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 294.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

¹²⁸ Rev. Asbury's “sympathies rested with the Americans.” *Ibid.*, p. 295.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

The reign of King George III commenced in 1760. He was a celebrated young king with great promise and potential. The Tories cheered him on in hopes that he would restore the traditional British constitution: e.g., the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*, the *Book of Common Prayer*, and Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594). Lord Bolingbroke's prescription for George III was that he would restore England's sacred constitution, as head of church and state, and rule England as a "patriot king." It is not clear as to whether the Whigs, who were influential in America as well as England, put together a transatlantic plot to overthrow King George III and his vision of restoring tradition. The Tories and the High Church Anglicans certainly had hopes that George III would restore the power and prestige of the Church of England. However, Whig propaganda has its own spin: King George III appeared instead to be replicating the old doctrine of "divine right of kings," and needed to be stopped.

Throughout the years leading up to the American Revolution, Rev. Wesley himself had criticized general corruption within England, particularly with regards to the problems of poverty and inequality, which he insinuated were attributable to the King's administration. For example, in 1773, prior to the American Revolutionary War, Rev. Wesley wrote in *Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions* that people were "starving" and "perishing for want in every part of the nation," because there was no work, employers could no longer employ a sufficient number of workers, food prices had skyrocketed beyond control, small-scale farms had declined, and large-scale farms no longer produced what the general population needed. Rev. Wesley noted that Britain's economy was designed to bring "in a large revenue to the King," but, he asked, "Is this an equivalent for the lives of his subjects? ... O, tell it not in Constantinople, that the English raise the royal revenue by selling the flesh and blood of their countrymen!"¹³⁰

In *Present Scarcity of Provisions*, Rev. Wesley concluded: "[t]o sum up the whole: Thousands of people throughout the land are perishing for want of food. This is owing to various causes; but above all, to **distilling, tax[es], and luxury.**"¹³¹ Finally, he noted that throughout Great Britain "there is no fear of God" and that "there is such a deep, avowed, thorough contempt of all religion, as I never saw, never heard or read of, in any other nation, whether Christian, Mahometan, or Pagan." Almost prophetically pointed to the way of the American Revolution, Rev. Wesley concluded by saying: "It seems **as if God must shortly**

¹³⁰ John Wesley, "Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions" (1773), *The Works of Wesley* [citation omitted].

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

arise and maintain his own cause. But, if so, let us fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of men.”¹³²

When Rev. Wesley published *Present Scarcity of Provisions* in 1773, King George III had already begun to implement policy changes that had effectively rendered himself as his “own prime minister,” and as “a ‘patriot king.’”¹³³ He had already replaced the “Whigs” and the “Tories” with “the ‘King’s Friends.’”¹³⁴ These “King’s Friends” paid cash (i.e., “the ‘golden pills’ of George III) for votes in Parliament. “Newcastle had made bribery and jobbery the basis of Whig strength, George III was using the same means to advance the royal power. He used royal revenue to buy parliamentary seats as well as votes; the price of seats rose to £4,000. He scrutinized the lists of votes in Parliament and distributed rewards and punishments accordingly. Parliament would grow, he hoped, into the instrument of his will.”¹³⁵ Hence, between 1765 and 1782, there had been “collapse of cabinet government,” as King George III began to exert royal power not seen since the days of King Charles I. As historian Goldwin Smith notes:

Meanwhile the influence of George III and the ‘King’s Friends’ grew apace. The mounting power of the crown provoked Edmund Burke’s *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (1770) and the anonymous *Letters of Junius* (1769-1772). The personal system of the king and the unrepresentative Parliament was dangerously at odds with the manifest will of the people.¹³⁶

The truth of the matter is: Rev. John Wesley, as minister in the Church of England, was likely not at liberty to take a contrary position to that of George III, without dire and serious adverse consequences to the Methodist movement. This does not mean that his criticisms of the American colonists were not genuine—I believe that they were. In his essay *Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power* (1772), which was published prior to the American Revolutionary War, Rev. Wesley invoked Romans 13:1 and argued that “There is no power but of God.”¹³⁷ Throughout the period of the American Revolution, Wesley would repeat that same theme: “There is no power but of God.”

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1957), pp. 468, 472.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., pp. 460-469.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 471.

¹³⁷ John Wesley, “Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power” (1772), *The Works of Wesley* [citation omitted].

But King George III made no bones about the fact that his intentions were to establish Lord Bolingbroke's idea of a "patriot king" and to bring authority, power, splendor, and dignity back to the British monarchy. In thus making these proclamations, he alarmed the Puritans and the Whigs in both England and colonial British North America, who now saw George III as a threat to the parliamentary system and limited, constitutional monarch. The historian Goldwin Smith thus describes the situation as follows:

In 1770 George III accepted Grafton's resignation and Lord North became prime minister. The Tories and the 'King's Friends' in Parliament provided an apparently unshakable majority. The king at last had obtained a subservient cabinet, a corrupted and pliable majority in Parliament. The Whigs were no longer a threat. George III was the real prime minister. For twelve years (1770 – 1782) he ruled as he pleased through Lord North. For a time cabinet government was at an end. These years marked the rise and advance of the American Revolution.¹³⁸

Earlier, during the mid-1760s, George III had won a victory in the area of the suppression of the free speech of his critics in the case of John Wilkes, who published a journal called *North Briton*. In that journal, Wilkes published several articles that criticized the Treaty of Paris, and George III and his cabinet felt that these articles were libelous and scandalous. Although Wilkes won in the courts, George III's influence over the House of Commons caused Wilkes to be ejected as a Member of Parliament. "George III had won a costly victory in the fray. The arbitrary methods used by the government to suppress freedom of speech had roused London. Members of Parliament were mobbed. The cry 'Wilkes and Liberty!' rolled over England. Six years later the failure of the prosecution against the mysterious 'Junius' for his Letter to the King established the right of the press to criticize the king himself. Popular opposition to the rough interference with a freedom long held inviolate created an ominous atmosphere. However, as the masses of the people had no vote the immediate political consequences of the widespread hostility to the king and his government were negligible."¹³⁹ Hence, under these conditions, with suppression of John Wilkes and others, it may have been extremely dangerous for Rev. John Wesley to speak out publicly while taking an adversarial and critical position of Lord North (prime minister) and George III

¹³⁸ Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 472.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 470.

during the middle of the war. As a Tory and a High Churchman, Rev. Wesley was undoubtedly called upon to close ranks, together with Dr. Samuel Johnson and others, in support of the British cause.¹⁴⁰ During the war, Rev. Wesley expressed grave concerns about the legitimacy of the American patriots' motivations and slogan, "No taxation without Representation!"

D. John Wesley: Unfavorable Views on the American Revolution of 1776

In 1775, the year when the Revolutionary War broke out, the Rev. John Wesley was 72 years old. By that time, he was probably quite typical of most men of that age during that period—somewhat cynical and suspicious of political leaders and declared political proclamations from both the British and the Americans. The problems of the American colonies were an unfortunate development, according to Rev. Wesley. And, in all honesty, he did not see one side as being wholly right or wholly wrong; but he concluded that, for the most part, there could be no real winners. But before we look at Rev. Wesley's comments on the subject of the American Revolution, it is important to first review his fundamental theology on "law and grace" and on "God's sovereignty," because these theological perspectives provide the foundation upon which we can understand his advice to both the Americans and the British.

First off, Rev. Wesley believed that there is no power but that is from God. Relying upon Romans 13:1, which says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is **no power but of God**: the powers that be are ordained of God." For this reason, Rev. Wesley repeatedly paraphrased this particularly Scripture when analyzing American grievances.

Secondly, adopting the orthodox Anglican doctrine of Dr. Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594) and others, Rev. Wesley also believed that all law—secular and sacred—comes from God. He preached this in his sermons.¹⁴¹ According to Rev. Wesley, God's **natural moral law** predates Moses or the law of Moses.¹⁴² This moral law is God's "eternal mind" and it is "coeval

¹⁴⁰ It should be noted here that in 1745, when Prince Charles, the Young Pretender, invaded Scotland in an effort to overthrow King George II, Rev. Wesley was called upon to assure the mayor of Newcastle and George II that the Methodists had remained loyal to the British Crown. Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013), pp. 178-179.

¹⁴¹ See, generally, William M. Arnett, "John Wesley and the Law," *The Asbury Seminary*, [citation omitted], pp. 22-31.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 23. (NOTE: the words in quotations marks are Rev. Wesley's own words taken from his printed sermons).

with his nature.”¹⁴³ This law is also the “immutable rule of right and wrong.”¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, this moral law is instinctively placed inside of human beings and constitute the “inmost spirit” of the human conscience.¹⁴⁵ Significantly, this law is “supreme, unchangeable reason; it is unalterable rectitude; it is the everlasting fitness of all things that are or ever were created.”¹⁴⁶ The moral law may be said to constitute God Himself and (or) the will of God. At this point, we should pause here and notate that Rev. Wesley’s view of “moral law” was orthodox, catholic, and Anglican. It reflected the classic Greco-Roman view of Cicero and the theological views of St. Paul, St. Augustine of Hippo, and St. Thomas Aquinas.

Third, Rev. Wesley was not a latitudinarian Anglican and he was unwilling to embrace the doctrine that “Christianity is a republication of natural religion,” and simply commit the administrative arms of church and state to the wheels of fortune. “In his sermon on the Catholic Spirit Wesley condemns both 'speculative' and 'practical' latitudinarianism which, for him, entailed an indifference towards: all theological opinions, all forms of public worship and all forms of church government.... Wesley does not use the term latitudinarian positively at any point in his writings.”¹⁴⁷ This does not mean that Rev. Wesley was unwilling to work with other orthodox Christians, such as Calvinists, Moravians, Baptists, Quakers, and the like, who shared different theological views on various points—this was the extent of what he called the “catholic spirit.”¹⁴⁸ As the Methodist movement had been both misunderstood and oppressed, Rev. Wesley wanted religious rights and religious freedom. However, Rev. Wesley did not readily agree with the High-Church Whigs and the Latitudinarian Anglicans such as Matthew Tindal, Bishop William Warburton, Bishop Joseph Butler, and Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon, who *seemingly* were willing to deconstruct certain essential laws and customs that preserved balance of power between Church and State in England.¹⁴⁹ To that end, Rev. Wesley was a member of the Lower Convocation and a Tory. While his first allegiance was to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he also acknowledged his oath of allegiance to King George III as well.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Daniel Pratt Morris-Chapman, “High and Low? The Heritage of Anglican Latitudinarianism in The Thought of John Wesley” [citation omitted], pp. 83-99.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

Instead, Rev. Wesley held to the classical Puritan and Anglican theological view of the *two-tables theory* of Church and State. The Mosaic law contained both the natural moral law (i.e., the Ten Commandments) and the ceremonial law (i.e., the religious and civil laws). “In his comment on Exodus 20:1, relating to ‘the law of the ten commandments,’ Wesley says ‘this law God had given to man before, it was written in his heart by nature.’”¹⁵⁰ The civil polity or the civil magistrate were, according to Rev. Wesley, thus vicereagents of God. Rev. Wesley thus stated in his sermon “Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power,”¹⁵¹

Now, I cannot but acknowledge, I believe an old book, commonly called the Bible, to be true. Therefore I believe, ‘there is no power but from God: The powers that be are ordained of God.’ (Romans 13:1.) There is no subordinate power in any nation, but what is derived from the supreme power therein. So in England the King, in the United Provinces the States are the fountain of all power. And there is no supreme power, no power of the sword, of life and death, but what is derived from God, the Sovereign of all.

Here, Rev. Wesley does not take the position that Kings and States may exercise authority in an arbitrary or capricious manner—indeed, his final point is that God ultimately is the sovereign. In England, the British Constitution had established a limited monarchy, deeply-rooted in the natural moral law of God, as well as the traditions and customs of the Church of England. And so, when Rev. Wesley confronted the grievances of the American colonists, this was his starting point when making his analysis.

In 1775, after fighting broke out in Concord and Lexington in New England, Rev. Wesley sent a letter to the Earl of Dartmouth and to Prime Minister Lord North stating:

I do not intend to enter upon the question whether the Americans are in the right or in the wrong. Here all my prejudices are against the Americans; for I am an High Churchman, the son of an High Churchman, bred up from my childhood in the highest notions of passive obedience and non-resistance. And yet, in spite of all my long-rooted prejudices, **I cannot avoid thinking, if I think at all, these, an oppressed people, asked for nothing more than their**

¹⁵⁰ William M. Arnett, “John Wesley and the Law,” *The Asbury Seminarian*, [citation omitted], p. 24.

¹⁵¹ *The Works of Wesley*, Volume XI.

legal rights, and that in the most modest and inoffensive manner that the nature of the thing would allow. (JWL, 6:161).¹⁵²

In the same letter, it has been reported, Rev. Wesley cautioned against escalating the military cause and he felt that the real enemies were in England—the declared enemies of King George III who would stop at nothing.¹⁵³ Although Rev. Wesley immediately took a neutral position and wished to serve as a peace-maker, in the American colonies, he was perceived as a staunchly loyal Tory—his letter in favor of the colonists to Lord North and Lord Dartmouth was unpublished and largely unknown at the time.¹⁵⁴

During the meanwhile in 1775, Rev. Wesley insisted that his preachers in North America be “peace-makers.”¹⁵⁵ He also requested that all of the Methodist preachers return to England—only Francis Asbury stayed behind in support of the American cause.¹⁵⁶ Then, suddenly, the famed literary critic Dr. Samuel Johnson¹⁵⁷ published his essay *Taxation No Tyranny* in 1775. Dr. Johnson’s essay was critical of the American grievances, exposing their weaknesses, inconsistencies and implausibility. When he compared the American colonists to the African American slaves within their midst, he struck a powerful blow against the colonists’ credibility, stating:

We are told, that the subjection of Americans may tend to the diminution of our own liberties; an event, which none but very

¹⁵² Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013), p. 294.

¹⁵³ Ibid. See also, “A Calm Address to Our American Colonies” (1775), where Rev. Wesley states: “My opinion is this: We have a few men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy. Whether they hate His present Majesty on any other ground than because his is a King, I know not. But they cordially hate his office, and have for some years been undermining it with all diligence, in hopes of erecting their grand idol, their dear commonwealth, upon its ruin. I believe they have let very few into their design; (although many forward it, without knowing anything of the matter;) but they are steadily pursuing it, as by various other means, so in particular by inflammatory papers, which are industriously and continually dispersed throughout the town and country; by this method they have already wrought thousands of people even to the pitch of madness. By the same, only varied according to your circumstances, they have likewise inflamed America. I make no doubt but these very men are the original cause of the present breach between England and her colonies.... So that, although the Americans in general love the English, and the English in general love the Americans, (all, I mean, that are not yet cheated and exasperated by these artful men,) yet the rupture is growing wider every day, and none can tell where it will end.”

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 290.

¹⁵⁷ Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1784), often called Dr Johnson, was an English writer who made lasting contributions as a poet, playwright, essayist, moralist, critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer. He was a devout Anglican and a committed Tory—meaning that he was a defender of traditional and orthodox Christian values and a great champion of the Church of England. “Johnson was a devout conservative Protestant Anglican and believed in a unity between the High Church and the Crown (the State).”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_views_of_Samuel_Johnson#Slavery

perspicacious politicians are able to foresee. If slavery be thus fatally contagious, how is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?”...

It has been proposed, that the slaves should be set free, an act, which, surely, the lovers of liberty cannot but commend. If they are furnished with firearms for defence, and utensils for husbandry, and settled in some simple form of government within the country, they may be more grateful and honest than their masters.¹⁵⁸

This essay *Taxation No Tyranny* (1775) must have had a powerful influence upon Rev. John Wesley, because after he read it, he “changed his mind on the political situation in America almost overnight.”¹⁵⁹ Rev. Wesley did not believe that the American colonists’ numerous grievances met the high standards to justify disregarding the Pauline injunction “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God...”¹⁶⁰ Rev. Wesley “decided that the colonists’ arguments, such as ‘no taxation without representation,’ held no moral or legal weight and that their cries for liberty were... irresponsible...”¹⁶¹ Rev. Wesley told the American colonist that **“you ‘profess yourselves to be contending for liberty.’ But it is a vain, empty profession; unless you mean by that threadbare word, a liberty from obeying your rightful Sovereign, and from keeping the fundamental laws of your country.”** To that end, in late 1775, he published *A Calm Address to our American Colonies*, which briefly discussed several rebuttal points:

In *A Calm Address to our American Colonies*, Rev. Wesley asked the American colonists to calmly consider the origins of the present crisis. First, says Rev. Wesley, there was the Seven Year’s War (i.e., the French and Indian War) (1754-1763) whereby the colonists asked the mother country (England) to defend them against the French. The mother country (England) did this: “your mother-country, desiring to be reimbursed for some part of the large expense she had been at, laid a small tax (which she had always a right to do) on one of her colonies. But how is it possible, that the taking this reasonable and legal step should have set all

¹⁵⁸ Samuel Johnson, *Taxation No Tyranny* (1775) [citation omitted].

¹⁵⁹ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013), p. 292.

¹⁶⁰ Romans 13:1.

¹⁶¹ Heitzenrater, p. 292.

America in a flame?”¹⁶² Rev. Wesley then goes on to express, in no uncertain terms, his lack of trust in the republican form of government, stating:

But, my brethren, would this be any advantage to you? Can you hope for a more desirable form of government, either in England or America, than that which you now enjoy? After all the vehement cry for liberty, what more liberty can you have? What more religious liberty can you desire, than that which you enjoy already? May not every one among you worship God according to his own conscience? What civil liberty can you desire, which you are not already possessed of? Do you not sit, without restraint, ‘every man under hi own vines?’ Do you not, every one, high or low, enjoy the fruit of your labor? This is real, rational liberty, such as is enjoyed by Englishmen alone; and not by other people in the habitable world. Would the being independent of England make you more free? Far, very far from it. It would hardly be possible for you to steer clear, between anarchy and tyranny. But suppose, after numberless dangers and mischiefs, you should settle into one or more republics, would a republican government give you more liberty, either religious or civil? By no means... Republics show not mercy.¹⁶³

Rev. Wesley implored the American colonists to consider the very real possibility, and probability, that they were being manipulated by anarchists (likely Whigs) in England. “The designing men... are in England.... They love neither England nor America, but play one against the other, in subserviency to their grand design of overturning the English Government.... Let us not bite and devour one another, lest we be consumed one of another!”¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² In “A Calm Address to Our American Colonies” (1775), Rev. Wesley answer this question as follows: “My opinion is this: We have a few men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy. Whether they hate His present Majesty on any other ground than because his is a King, I know not. But they cordially hate his office, and have for some years been undermining it with all diligence, in hopes of erecting their grand idol, their dear commonwealth, upon its ruin. I believe they have let very few into their design; (although many forward it, without knowing anything of the matter;) but they are steadily pursuing it, as by various other means, so in particular by inflammatory papers, which are industriously and continually dispersed throughout the town and country; by this method they have already wrought thousands of people even to the pitch of madness. By the same, only varied according to your circumstances, they have likewise inflamed America. I make no doubt but these very men are the original cause of the present breach between England and her colonies.... So that, although the Americans in general love the English, and the English in general love the Americans, (all, I mean, that are not yet cheated and exasperated by these artful men,) yet the rupture is growing wider every day, and none can tell where it will end.”

¹⁶³ John Wesley, “A Calm Address to our American Colonies” (1775), *The Works of John Wesley* [citation omitted].

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Rev. Wesley candidly informed the American colonists that “[v]ainly do you complain of being ‘made slaves.’ Am I or two millions of Englishmen made slaves because we are taxed without our own consent?”¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, Rev. Wesley asked, “[w]ho then is a slave?” Look into America, and you may easily see. See the Negro, fainting under the load, bleeding under the lash! He is a slave.”¹⁶⁶ Rev. Wesley defended England’s “virtual representation” system, and he pointed out that not all English had the right to vote, was the situation with the Americans. He traced the Americans’ legal predicament to the actual colonial charters themselves, which set forth the provisions of their rights, stating, “[a]n English colony is, a number of persons to whom the king grants a charter, permitting them to settle in some far country as a corporation, enjoying such powers as the charter grants, to be administered in such a manner as the charter prescribes.”¹⁶⁷ So far as Rev. Wesley could ascertain, none of these charter rights had been violated by the British crown.¹⁶⁸ “A corporation can no more assume to itself privileges which it had not before, than a man can, by his own act and deed, assume titles or dignities.”¹⁶⁹ Significantly, Rev. Wesley took issue with the American colonists who were placing the foundations of political sovereignty in “the people” and in the “right of consent.” “I object,” says Rev. Wesley, “to the very foundation of your plea: That ‘every freeman is governed by laws to which he has consented.’”¹⁷⁰

To make his point, Rev. Wesley pointed out that in the American colonies only about one-tenth¹⁷¹ of the colonists were eligible to vote, due to property requirements and restrictions of the votes to white male adults!¹⁷² In *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies*, Rev. Wesley posed some very forward-thinking and intriguing questions: Why were women and adult men without property denied the right to vote?¹⁷³ And why were the principles of American liberty not applied to African American slaves?¹⁷⁴ He then counseled non-violence and obedience to lawful authority as the preferred method of conflict resolution. Rev. Wesley seemed to be forewarning the common Englishmen and the common

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ “[B]y the people they mean scarce a tenth part of them,” wrote Rev. John Wesley in “Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power” (1772), *The Works of John Wesley* [citation omitted].

¹⁷² John Wesley, “A Calm Address to our American Colonies” (1775), *The Works of John Wesley* [citation omitted].

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

Americans that the entire political establishment, whether in England or America, did not act from the authority of “the people” but only exercised their power through the ordination, grace, and sovereignty of God.¹⁷⁵ And his major concern with the American colonists is that they appeared to have been deceived into believing the “sovereignty” could rest in the “will of the people,” when in reality it could only rest in the “will of God.” For this reason, after looking over the grievances of the American colonists, Rev. Wesley did not believe that the “will of the people” (i.e., of the American colonists) reflected the “will of God.”

In 1776, he published a follow-up essay *Some Observations On Liberty*, in which he pressed the same point, stating:

The supposition, then, that the people are the origin of power, or that ‘all government is the creature of the people,’ though Mr. Locke himself should attempt to defend it, is utterly indefensible. It is absolutely overturned by the very principle on which it is supposed to stand, namely, that ‘a right of choosing his Governors belongs to every partaker of human nature.’ If this be so, then it belongs to every individual of the human species; consequently, not to freeholders along, but to all men; not to men only, but to women also; not only to adult men and women, to those who have lived one-and-twenty years, but to those that have lived eighteen or twenty, as well as those who have lived threescore. But none did ever maintain this, nor probably ever will; therefore, this boasted principle falls to the ground, and the whole superstructure with it. So common sense brings us back to the grand truth, ‘**There is no power but of God.**’¹⁷⁶

In 1777, while again stressing St. Paul’s injunctions in Romans 13:1, as the foundation of his objections and criticism of the American patriots, Rev. Wesley wrote:

One might reasonably expect, that all of you would be cheerfully ‘subject to the higher powers;’ seeing you are agreed ‘there is no power,’ whether supreme or subordinate, ‘but of God.’ Nay, one would expect that you would be continually reminding all you had any intercourse with, that they ‘must needs be subject, not’ only ‘for wrath, but’ also ‘for conscience’ sake.’ How is it, then, that any of

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ John Wesley, “Some observations on Liberty” (1776), *The Works of John Wesley* [citation omitted].

you espouse the cause of those [American patriots] that are in open rebellion against their lawful Sovereign?¹⁷⁷

In his *A Seasonable Address to the More Serious Part of the Inhabitants of Great Britain* (1776), Rev. Wesley opined that “[t]he counsel therefore to separate cannot be from God. It has no foundation in the nature and fitness of things beneficial, either to them or us....”¹⁷⁸ Rev. Wesley did not believe that King George III or Parliament had violated any of the fundamental natural rights of the American colonists, and that the doctrine “no taxation without representation” could not be substantiated. His position reflected the general public opinion of “the average Englishman, who was also a taxpayer” and who “was not generally favorable to America.”¹⁷⁹

As the colonial grievances grew louder and more intense, Rev. Wesley began to express concerns about the real motivations and the hypocrisy of many of the American patriots.¹⁸⁰ Rev. Wesley’s concerns that some the American patriots were ruffians and pirates was not wholly unsubstantiated or misplaced. He tried to explain the “real state of those affairs” which lead to the Revolutionary War.¹⁸¹ As early as 1737 and 1739, respectively, Rev. Wesley notes that his brother Charles Wesley and another “gentleman,” spent time in Boston, and there was even then frequent talk amongst the Bostonians of shaking off the English yoke—forty years

¹⁷⁷ John Wesley, “A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England” (1777), *The Works of John Wesley* [citation omitted].

¹⁷⁸ John Wesley, “A Seasonable Address to the More Serious Part of the Inhabitants of Great Britain” (1776), *The Works of John Wesley* [citation omitted].

¹⁷⁹ Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1957), p. 481 (“The opinion of the average Englishman, who was also a taxpayer, was not generally favorable to America. He felt that the colonies should be subject to taxation and control by the mother country. He asked why the colonists refused to contribute to their own defense. He did not understand what the Americans meant by the phrase ‘no taxation without representation.’ The colonists meant, of course, that the taxation should be imposed by a body, such as a colonial assembly, in which they felt that they were somehow more directly represented than in the British Parliament. Englishmen who thought about the problem at all remarked that almost every adult male in England paid some taxes, but only about ten percent had the vote. The rest were really not represented in Parliament to a much greater extent than the colonists across the Atlantic.”)

¹⁸⁰ In making this assessment, I have relied largely upon over twenty-five years of carefully studying Gustavus Myers’ *History of the Supreme Court of the United States* (1912), which concludes that the “real forces behind” the American Revolution were largely economic interests that were concentrated into hands of a few American and even British elites.

¹⁸¹ John Wesley, “A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England” (1777), *The Works of John Wesley* [citation omitted]. (“**I have had abundance of letters from persons in America, on whose judgment, veracity, and impartiality I could safely depend**; especially from the provinces of New York, Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. I have likewise had the opportunity of conversing freely and largely with many that came from those provinces, and of comparing together the accounts of those who were attached to one or the other party. And I shall endeavor to deliver the plain facts....”)

before the American Revolution!¹⁸² The people of Boston thus had always been belligerent towards the English monarchy, no matter what.¹⁸³ At the same time, those American colonists enjoyed complete religious and civil liberty.¹⁸⁴ Both the numbers and wealth of the American colonists steadily increased from the 1730s to the 1770s.¹⁸⁵ “At the same time, it could not be but their shipping would increase in the same proportion with their trade....”¹⁸⁶ As the American colonists’ wealth increased, so, too, did their desire for independence.¹⁸⁷ But this desire for independence had nothing to do with civil or religious liberty—nor did it have anything to do with British taxation policy.¹⁸⁸ At the same time, in the seaport towns, the Americans commenced the practice of “defrauding His Majesty of his customs.”¹⁸⁹ “And it is notorious, that one of the greatest dealers in this kind was the celebrated Mr. Hancock.”¹⁹⁰ Unfortunately, the local American courts and magistrates refused to enforce the custom laws—“for they were too good patriots to condemn their countrymen!”¹⁹¹ “By this means the customs of North America, which ought to have brought in so considerable a sum as would have gone far toward defraying the expense of the government, were reduced to a very small pittance.”¹⁹²

Following the French and Indian War (1754 – 1763), and after the mother country had come to the aid of the colonists, the Parliament passed “a small duty upon the stamps in America.”¹⁹³ But this caused an uproar in America that was unjustifiable! The Americans—“the New England men in particular”—found friends in England, who support their cause.¹⁹⁴ The Stamp Act was quickly repealed.¹⁹⁵ Later, Parliament determined that every part of the British Empire needed to contribute its fair share in taxes, and imposed a tax on tea imports. But Mr. Hancock and others orchestrated the “Boston Tea Party,” through tea into the sea, thus causing Parliament to close the Boston harbor.¹⁹⁶ During this period, the

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

Americans paid lip service to their allegiance to King George III, stating that they only wanted their rights as Englishmen, and almost everyone, including Rev. Wesley, were inclined to believe.¹⁹⁷ But in reality, says Rev. Wesley, the Americans were acting behind the scenes in bad faith.¹⁹⁸ Encouraged by friends in England, the Americans “wholly threw off the mask” and seized His Majesty’s stores and ships.¹⁹⁹ They then declared themselves “independent.”²⁰⁰ In England, says Rev. Wesley, there were many who refused to call the Americans “rebels.”²⁰¹ “Their privateers swarmed on every side, both in the American and European seas. They were plentifully furnished with provision from the resources they had within themselves, and with all sorts of arms and ammunition, by our good allies, the Dutch and French.”²⁰² At this point, says Rev. Wesley, all talk of liberty came to an end—the Americans now only wanted “independence”—not liberty.²⁰³ In fact, “civil liberties” came “to an end.”²⁰⁴ “If any one dared to speak a little in favor of the King,” wrote Rev. Wesley, “or in disfavor of the Congress, he was soon taught to know his lords and masters, whose little finger was heavier than the loins of Kings.”²⁰⁵

Did the American patriots—the American founding fathers and everyone else in support the American cause—only want “independence” but not true “liberty” for every adult American? This was Rev. John Wesley’s ringing and searing indictment of the American Revolution.²⁰⁶ By most historical accounts, Rev. Wesley’s assessment was *partly* accurate:²⁰⁷ the American Revolution proved to be socially, politically, and economically conservative.²⁰⁸ Following the American Revolution, there were very few, if any, substantial changes to the law of master and servant,²⁰⁹ that were designed to alleviate the burdens of servants; indentured servitude and debtors prisons continued to shackle poor white workers²¹⁰; there were little or no changes between the status of rich and poor,²¹¹

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ See, e.g., Gustavus Myers, *History of the Supreme Court of the United States* (Chicago, IL: John F. Higgins Pub., 1912), pp. 1-196.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

because land redistribution policies after the war favored the very well-to-do planters and corporations²¹²; in the American South, chattel slavery remain firmly intact²¹³; most persons who were unable to vote before the war still could not vote after the war²¹⁴; the American legal and judicial system largely favored the aristocracy²¹⁵; and the American landed elite maintained control of the local and national governments.²¹⁶ In summation, Rev. Wesley was partly correct about his assessment; the results of the American Revolution were mixed—it was partly revolutionary and partly only a conservative restatement of British constitutional law and jurisprudence.²¹⁷

1. Political Climate of colonial British North America during the American Revolution

Now Philadelphia was the national capital of the new United States and there a constitutional convention was convened in 1787 in order to deliberate upon and to ratify a new constitution. “The Constitutional Convention was a meeting of delegates from 12 out of the 13 states that was held in Philadelphia from May to September 1787. George Washington was elected president of the Convention, and other delegates included James Madison, Ben Franklin, and Alexander Hamilton.”²¹⁸ Up to that period, the United States was governed by the Articles of Confederation, which did not provide for an executive branch of government or a national supreme court that could adjudicate federal laws. The only national branch of government provided for in the Articles was a unicameral Continental Congress, which was presided over by a President of the Continental Congress. This Congress did not have the power to tax and could not force the states to raise revenue to support the Continental Army. When post-war discontent and rebellion

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Ibid. For more about this legacy, see, generally, **Frederick Douglass’s speech “What to the Slave if the Fourth of July” (1852)**: <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/speeches-african-american-history/1852-frederick-douglass-what-slave-fourth-july/>

²¹⁴ See, e.g., Gustavus Myers, *History of the Supreme Court of the United States* (Chicago, IL: John F. Higgins Pub., 1912), pp. 1-196.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ “Constitutional Convention: the Birth of the Constitution” https://academy4sc.org/video/constitutional-convention-the-birth-of-the-constitution/?hsa_ad=502492829989&hsa_grp=118077117266&hsa_tgt=kwd-757849755&hsa_ver=3&hsa_src=g&hsa_cam=12468338857&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_kw=constitutional%20convention%20of%201787&utm_campaign&hsa_mt=b&hsa_acc=2755491261

broke out in various parts of the country, America's public officials decided that the Articles of Confederation needed to be amended or replaced.

It has been reported that the Constitutional Convention was controversial at the time. For this reason, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay issued various papers in support of the new federal constitution, called *The Federalist Papers*. Two groups emerged: the Federalists (who were conservative Whigs) and the Anti-Federalists (who were liberal Whigs). As political descendants of the British Whigs, both groups of American politicians had decided upon a federal constitution that would represent republican values based upon a natural-law tradition that was both Greco-Roman and Christian. To be sure, the new federal constitution would compliment the American *Declaration of Independence* (1776).

But there were other problems presented by the federal constitutional : social and economic forces appeared to be reformulating American government and society, so as to permanently disenfranchise the working classes, including African American slaves, white indentured servants, and small farmers. Almost immediately it became clear that the men who were representatives at the federal constitutional convention in Philadelphia did not speak for, or represent, all of the varied classes of Americans—perhaps Rev. John Wesley had been right in his assessment that the American Revolution had never promoted real “liberty” for “the people,” but rather it was about “independence” so that a small minority of persons, on both sides of the Atlantic, might profit. This was the conclusion of Gustavus Myers, whose grand work, *History of the Supreme Court of the United States* (1912), purported that the federal constitutional convention was “held in secrecy”²¹⁹; that Luther Martin, Attorney-General of Maryland, complained about this secrecy and non-public nature of the proceedings²²⁰; that the delegates to the constitutional convention “lacked trust in the intelligence of the people”²²¹; that the debates on the federal constitution was not published until after the constitution was already ratified²²²; that the “popular view” of the federal constitution was that it “was designed to perpetuate the powers of the aristocracy”²²³; that “the land magnates” used all their power and influence to ensure that the federal constitution

²¹⁹ 129-130.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid., p. 130.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

was not rejected²²⁴; that “banks controlled” delegates such as “Hamilton, Wilson, Robert Morris... and other delegates”²²⁵; and that “many of them would have been still more pleased wit the new Constitution, had it been more analogous to the British Constitution.”²²⁶ Professor Myers certainly does affirm Rev. John Wesley’s suspicions about the lack of real inclusivity of the fundamental aims of the American Revolution, where he writes:

Immense tracts of land in New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Carolinas and other sections were held wholly or partly by British lords, or by companies composed of titled nobles and native personages....²²⁷ But the confiscatory laws were... diminished by legislative enactment. Jefferson further says that monies so turned over were declared to be the property of the British subject, and if used by the State were to be repaid....²²⁸

[G]reat manorial estates... continued intact.... [T]he manorial lords were not... dislodged. For half a century many of the old seignorial landed families remained potent political and social factors by reason of their ancient wealth, and by stimulation from the new acquisitions of land and the added wealth that they obtained from various projects during, and after, the Revolution....²²⁹

The creation by law of a new division of the all-powerful landed class when on steadily during the critical years of the Revolution. These newer landholders became vested with large areas of what had been public land; and the time came when they and their successors in practice shared, and then outranked, in importance the manorial lords...²³⁰

The way prepared for huge land seizures²³¹... for the benefit of a powerful clique of land speculators among whom were some of the notable “Fathers” of the country, as also some of the distinguished

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 131.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid., p. 132.

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 93

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 94.

²²⁹ Ibid., pp. 94-95.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 96.

²³¹ Ibid., p. 102.

patriots who drafted the Constitution of the United States, and at least one future Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States....²³²

“The protest against giving millions of acres of the public domain to an unprincipled band of speculators soon, but impotently, made itself heard in Congress. The spoliation going on could not be deterred by mere protests....²³³

Meanwhile, during the Revolution and the drafting of the Constitution, what were the actual acts of the majority of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and of those who drew up the Constitution? These were the functionaries who were among the most active and influential in the different colonies. They were, many of them, officials of the Continental Government, and later held the highest posts in the State or Federal Governments. While acts were being passed disqualifying, dispossessing and imprisoning the poor, what were the interests and motives animating those great dignitaries of the Revolution?... What were the particular material interests of most of the leaders of the Revolution, and those of the drafters of the Constitution of the United States?... They were human, all of them, and proved it so to their own gratification. Nor did they profess to pose as humanitarian, engrossed in promoting the good of the whole human race. Their acts revealed that the special interests they were furthering were those of a particular class, and that class their own. Many of them left the fullest evidences in the real annals that they were not so inactive as to allow splendid opportunities for self-enrichment to pass ignored. During the Revolution and afterwards, they and other notabilities took instant advantage of their power, their inside knowledge of affairs, and the stress of the times to accomplish schemes involving the most extensive land jobbing, and the procurement of other self-beneficial legislative acts. The Revolution was as excellent a cover for the successful carrying out of these enterprises.... Among those participating in this jobbery during, and after, the Revolution were several who became distinguished Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. But even more: Between the large and ambitious projects and schemes then accomplished or

²³² Ibid., p. 104.

²³³ Ibid., p. 127.

imitated, and the subsequent character and decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, there lay a connection and sequence of the very gravest significance.²³⁴

Rev. Wesley's dire and worst suspicions about the American Revolution not really being for "the people" were further affirmed in Myers' *History of the Supreme Court of the United States*. While the Congress was authorizing that millions of acres of land be accessible only to the extremely wealthy, the state laws that disqualified the property classes from voting remained intact, says Myers. "At the very height of the Revolution," he writes, "State constitutions were adopted, depriving the propertyless of any voice in government."²³⁵

At the same time, the "iron laws designed to shackle the working class continued, or were supplemented by others equally rigid. Imprisonment for debt continued inexorably in some States for half a century more, and other like or worse conditions obtained. In the very city in which the *Declaration of Independence* was drawn up, convicts were long regularly imported, and sold like slaves."²³⁶ Under these conditions, the American bar and bench served as the glue, the oil, and the lubricants that made this system a smoothly-operating machine, says Myers.²³⁷ The "lawyers themselves sprang from the ruling class," says Myers, "but with the fewest and most creditable exceptions, all others of that profession sought to ingratiate themselves into the favor of the rich by flattering, pleasing and serving them with an excess of zeal in stamping down the worker still further by statutes ingeniously borrowed from medieval law, or by harrowing the worker in the courts with lawsuits in which these attorneys by every subtle argument appealed to the prejudices of the judge, already antagonistic to the worker and prejudiced against him. Even if the judge, perchance, were impartially and leniently disposed, the laws, as they were, left him no choice. Reading the suits and speeches of the times, one sees clearly that the lawyers of the masters outdid even their clients in asserting the masters' lordly, paramount rights and powers, and in denying that any rights attached to the under class."²³⁸

2. British and American War Policy and Slavery, 1775 – 1783

²³⁴ Ibid., pp. 92-93.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 85.

²³⁶ Ibid., p. 88.

²³⁷ Ibid., p. 68, 133-134.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 68.

Rev. John Wesley's suspicions and critical assessment of the American patriots' true motives, at least from the perspective of African American slaves, may also have been revealed by how both the British and the Americans conducted the war effort and treated African Americans. By every reasonable assessment—economically, politically, and morally—this war was not generally viewed by African Americans as a war in which they had a real stake or interest, *unless one side or the other made firm commitment to liberate them from bondage*. And as this war progressed, only the British committed themselves to the standard of *universal liberation for African American slaves* when, on June 30, 1779, British Army General Sir Henry Clinton issued the “**Philipsburg Proclamation**,” which offered freedom to all African American slaves, whether they fought for British Loyalist forces or not. Thousands of African Americans took advantage of this Proclamation and were able to gain their freedom—resulting in relocations to the British West Indies, West Africa, or Canada. During the entire war, the American Continental Congress nor any of the American generals ever issue such a proclamation.

Here, the experience of the Baptist Rev. George Lelie, who was the first licensed African American Baptist preacher, and who is credited with founding the First African Baptist Church of Savannah, Georgia in 1777, is illustrative:

George Leile, a slave who in 1773 was the first African American licensed by the Baptists to preach in Georgia, played a part in the founding of the Savannah church by converting some of its early members. His initial licensing as a Baptist was to preach to slaves on plantations along the Savannah River, in Georgia and South Carolina.

Leile's master, a Baptist deacon, had freed him before the American Revolutionary War. Over the next few years, Leile converted and baptized slaves in the area. These included David George, one of eight slaves who were baptized and formed a congregation called the Silver Bluff Baptist Church in Aiken County, South Carolina, across the river from Augusta. George was appointed an elder and preacher, and attracted nearly 30 members over the next few years.

After the Revolutionary War started, in 1778 Leile made his way to the British-occupied city of Savannah, to ensure his security behind British lines. The British had offered freedom to slaves

who escaped their rebel masters. After the British occupied Savannah, the Patriot master of David George and his followers fled to another area. All the members of the Silver Bluff church went to the city to go behind British lines for freedom. They joined with some of Leile's group. Others were converted by Leile's preaching, including Andrew Bryan and his wife Hannah in 1782. Bryan became a preacher and leader in the congregation.

In 1782 hundreds of blacks were evacuated from Savannah by the British, who transported many to Nova Scotia and other colonies, and some to London. Leile and his family sailed with the British for freedom to Jamaica. David George and his family went with Loyalists to Nova Scotia. Both founded Baptist congregations in their new locations. Later George and his family migrated to Sierra Leone, where he planted another Baptist church.

Bryan, who had purchased his and his wife's freedom, was the only one of the three early black Baptist preachers in the colonies to stay in Savannah and the new United States. He continued to preach and organize other slaves in the Savannah area despite persecution from local Episcopal authorities. He called people together as the church's first pastor....²³⁹

Not only were the British the only party to this conflict to offer general freedom to the African American slavers, but the historical records show that most African Americans served in the Loyalist or British Army during the American Revolutionary War. "It is estimated that 20,000 African Americans joined the British cause, which promised freedom to enslaved people, as Black Loyalists. Around 9,000 African Americans became Black Patriots.... [A]bout 20,000 escaped enslaved people joined and fought for the British army. Much of this number was seen after Dunmore's Proclamation,²⁴⁰ and subsequently

²³⁹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_African_Baptist_Church_\(Savannah,_Georgia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_African_Baptist_Church_(Savannah,_Georgia))

²⁴⁰ "**Dunmore's Proclamation** is a historical document signed on November 7, 1775, by **John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore**, royal governor of the British Colony of Virginia. The proclamation declared martial law and promised freedom for slaves of American revolutionaries who left their owners and joined the royal forces, becoming Black Loyalists. Most relevant historians agree that the proclamation was chiefly designed for practical and militaristic reasons rather than moral reasons, such as humanitarianism. Formally proclaimed on November 15, its publication prompted between 800 and 2000 slaves (from both patriot and loyalist owners) to run away and enlist with Dunmore. It also raised a furor among Virginia's slave-owning elites (again of both political persuasions), to whom the possibility of a slave rebellion was a major fear. The proclamation ultimately failed in meeting Dunmore's objectives; he was forced out of the colony in 1776, taking about 300 former slaves with him."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dunmore%27s_Proclamation

the Philipsburg Proclamation²⁴¹ issued by Sir Henry Clinton. Though between only 800–2,000 people who were enslaved reached Dunmore himself, the publication of both proclamations provided incentive for nearly 100,000 enslaved people across the American Colonies to escape, lured by the promise of freedom.”²⁴²

It thus appears that during the Revolutionary War, African Americans had no real loyalties but selfish interests that depended upon whichever of the combatants would offer them liberty. Historical records do reflect that some African Americans conscientiously supported the American cause. For example, an African American man named Crispus Attucks was one of the first Americans to die in the cause of American freedom during the Boston Massacre of 1770. And African Americans served in various northern militias from the battles at Lexington and Concord on through the American Revolutionary War.

However, since the American Revolutionary War (1775 – 1783) was not purposefully waged to include the goal of freeing African slaves from slave masters, and many of the American patriots were slave owners, African Americans were generally barred from serving as soldiers in the American Continental Army from the period November 12, 1775 to February 23, 1778. African Americans could serve in the various militias in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island—but they could not serve not the Continental Army. After February 1778, the policy barring African Americans from serving in the Continental Army changed due to manpower shortages and the Continental Army was authorized to recruit blacks and *to offer freedom for their military service*.

²⁴¹ **[Philipsburg Proclamation]**: “The proclamation extended the scope of Dunmore's Proclamation, issued four years earlier by Virginia's last Royal governor, Lord Dunmore, granting freedom to slaves in Virginia willing to serve the Royal forces. The new document, issued from Clinton's temporary headquarters at the Philipsburg Manor House in Westchester County, New York, proclaimed **all slaves** in the newly established United States belonging to American Patriots **free, regardless of their willingness to fight for the British Crown. It further promised protection, freedom and land to any slaves who left their master**. The move was one of desperation on the part of the British, who realized that the Revolution was not going in their favor. In a way it was too successful: so many slaves escaped (over 5,000 from Georgia alone), that Clinton ordered many to return to their masters. Following the war, about 3,000 former slaves were relocated to Nova Scotia, where they were known as Black Loyalists. Many continued on to Sierra Leone, where they established Freetown, its capital.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philipsburg_Proclamation

²⁴² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Americans_in_the_Revolutionary_War

In response to the Continental Army's manpower shortages, the province of Rhode Island organized an all-black regiment (i.e., battalion) called the **1st Rhode Island Regiment** (1778 – 81). This unit was one of the few units to serve throughout the entire war, as African American troops on average served longer combat tours than did whites. During the war, it was known as the “**Black Regiment**,” even though it included some Native American soldiers as well. On January 1, 1776, this regiment was reorganized into eight companies and re-named the **9th Continental Regiment**. “It was then ordered to Long Island and took part in the disastrous New York and New Jersey campaign, including the Battle of Long Island and the Battle of Harlem Heights, retreating from New York with the Main Army.”²⁴³ In 1777, the Continental Army was again reorganized, that the 9th Continental Regiment was redesignated the 1st Rhode Island Regiment. Its command was given to Colonel Christopher Greene. The unit saw action in 1777 at the Battle of Red Bank, in which is successful defended against an assault from British-Hessian forces. During the winter of 1777-78, the unit spent the winter with General Washington and the Continental Army near Valley Forge, enduring extreme cold and hunger.

The valiant efforts of African American slaves, civilians, and soldiers who supported the American Continental Congress and the Continental Army were seemingly unworthy of mention in any of *The Federalist Papers* that were written and published by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay. And at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia 1787, there was no mention at all of crediting the African American race with patriotic bravery during the war, and manumitting that entire race in full compliance and spirit of the American Declaration of Independence. During the War, as early as 1774, when pressure was on the Americans, the Continental Congress passed a strong anti-slave trade resolution, stating:

We will neither import, nor purchase any Slave imported after the First Day of December next; after which Time, we will wholly discontinue the Slave Trade, and will neither be concerned in it

²⁴³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st_Rhode_Island_Regiment

ourselves, nor will we hire our Vessels, nor sell our Commodities or Manufactures to those who are concerned in it.²⁴⁴

But by 1776, this anti-slave trade attitude among the American patriots seems to have been weakened,²⁴⁵ such that South Carolina and Georgia insisted that the following words be taken out of the Declaration of Independence, which was drafted and presented later during the same year:

[King George III has waged a] cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain.... And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact distinguished from the rest, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms against us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another....²⁴⁶

The Continental Congress that ratified the Articles of Confederation in 1781 did not touch the question of slavery or the slave trade.²⁴⁷ Notwithstanding the anti-slavery activities of various groups such as the Quakers and the Methodists, there was no mention of any proceeding within the Continental Congress of propositions or proclamations that the ideals proclaimed in the *American Declaration of Independence* (1776) were inconsistent with the institution of slavery and the slave trade.²⁴⁸ Hence, thus far we have not evidence to refute the Rev. John Wesley's worst suspicions—at least from the perspective of an African American—that the goals of the American Revolution were “liberty” on behalf of “the people.”

3. Slavery and the Federal Constitutional Convention in 1787

²⁴⁴ W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Suppression of the African Slave Trade” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 50.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Turning now to the peculiar institution of African slavery as it then presented itself to the federal constitutional convention in 1787, the person of South Carolina's delegate John Rutledge and general silence of the slavery question by the Constitutional Convention or by *The Federalist Papers*, are most peculiar:

Slavery occupied no prominent place in the Convention called to remedy the glaring defects of the Confederation for the obvious reason that few of the delegates thought it expedient to touch a delicate subject which, if let alone, bade fair to settle itself in a manner satisfactory to all. Consequently, neither slavery nor the slave trade is specifically mentioned in the delegates' credentials of any of the States, nor in Randolph's, Pinckney's, or Hamilton's plans, nor in Paterson's propositions. Indeed, the debate from May 14 to June 19, when the Committee of the Whole reported, touched the subject only in the matter of the ratio of representation of slaves. With this same exception, the report of the Committee of the Whole contained no reference to slavery or the slave-trade, and the twenty-three resolutions of the Convention referred to the Committee of Detail, July 23 and 26, maintain the same silence.²⁴⁹

As we have previously discussed, the "opposition of Methodists to slavery was expressed officially in the original General Rules set forth by Wesley in 1743 and in the rules adopted at the 1784 Christmas Conference."²⁵⁰ The Methodist view represented the settled opinion of Puritan New England, the Church of England, and various court decisions, easily from the year 1772 up through the year 1784.²⁵¹ Nevertheless, the Constitutional Convention of 1787 maintained its silence on the subject matter of liberty, freedom, and the natural rights of African American slaves.

Hence, Rev. John Wesley's worst suspicions—at least from the perspective of African Americans—that the goals of the American Revolution were really not about "liberty" for "the people" appears justifiable. Because even if the Continental Congress or the Constitutional Convention of 1787 has been even

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 58.

²⁵⁰ C. Erick Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, p. 50.

²⁵¹ For example, in England, the Case of *Somerset v. Stewart* (1772) 98 ER 499, (1772) 20 State Tr 1, (1772) Lofft 1 upheld the same antislavery view. And in colonial British North America, successful court challenges to the institution of African slavery occurred in Vermont (1777), followed by Pennsylvania (1780), Massachusetts (1783) and Connecticut (1784).

remotely concerned about getting rid of this horrible institution of slavery in a gradual manner, thus guaranteeing some compensation for former slave-owners and the natural rights of the slaves, it would have seriously engaged the prevailing debates on “gradual emancipation” that were being discussed during that era. For example, Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon, who was the Presbyterian divine and president of the College of New Jersey, believed that American slavery should be phased out, or die out naturally, within a generation:

In this connection it may be noted that in 1790 President Witherspoon, while a member of the New Jersey Legislature, was chairman of a committee on the abolition of slavery in the state, and brought in a report advising no action, on the ground that the law already forbade the importation of slaves and encouraged voluntary manumission. He suggested, however, that the state might enact a law that all slaves born after its passage should be free at a certain age—e.g., 28 years, as in Pennsylvania, although in his optimistic opinion the state of society in America and the progress of the idea of universal liberty gave little reason to believe that there would be any slaves at all in America in 28 years’ time, and precipitation therefore might do more harm than good.²⁵²

And on this very same point, W.E.B. Du Bois writes:

Meantime there was slowly arising a significant divergence of opinion on the subject. Probably the whole country still regarded both slavery and the slave-trade as temporary; but the Middle States expected to see the abolition of both within a generation, while the South scarcely thought it probable to prohibit even the slave-trade in that short time. Such a difference might, in all probability, have been satisfactorily adjusted, if both parties had recognized the real gravity of the matter. As it was, both regarded it as a problem of secondary importance, to be solved after many other more pressing ones had been disposed of. The anti-slavery men had seen slavery die in their own communities, and expected it to die the same way in others, with as little active effort on their own part. The Southern planters, born and reared in a slave system, thought that some day the system might change, and possibly disappear; but active effort to this end on their part was ever

²⁵² John Witherspoon, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1912), p. 74.

farthest from their thoughts. Here, then, began that fatal policy toward slavery and the slave-trade that characterized the nation for three-quarters of a century, the policy of *laissez-faire, laissez-passer*.²⁵³

But South Carolina's constitutional delegate John Rutledge, who served as an Associate Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court and who was later appointed Chief Justice of the same tribunal, opposed the abolition of both slavery and the slave trade at the Constitutional Convention in 1787. "The people of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia,' he had then declared, 'will never agree to the proposed Constitution unless their right to import slaves be untouched.' He had finally acceded in the Convention, however, to the proposal that the importation of slaves should be prohibited prior to the year 1808."²⁵⁴ And the Federal Constitution, as explained by either Alexander Hamilton or James Madison in No. 54 of *The Federalist Papers*, fully acknowledged African American slaves as being partly the "property" of other human beings:

But we must deny the fact, that slaves are considered merely as property, and in no respect whatever as persons. The true state of the case is, that they partake of both these qualities: being considered by our laws, in some respects, as persons, and in other respects as property. In being compelled to labor, not for himself, but for a master; in being vendible by one master to another master; and in being subject at all times to be restrained in his liberty and chastised in his body, by the capricious will of another, the slave may appear to be degraded from the human rank, and classed with those irrational animals which fall under the legal denomination of property. In being protected, on the other hand, in his life and in his limbs, against the violence of all others, even the master of his labor and his liberty; and in being punishable himself for all violence committed against others, the slave is no less evidently regarded by the law as a member of the society, not as a part of the irrational creation; as a moral person, not as a mere article of property. **The federal Constitution, therefore, decides with great propriety on the case of our slaves, when it views them in the mixed character of persons and of property.** ... This is in fact their true character. It is the character bestowed on them by the laws under which they live; and it will not

²⁵³ Ibid., pp. 55-56.

²⁵⁴ Myers, *A History of the Supreme Court*, p. 218.

be denied, that these are the proper criterion; because it is only under the pretext that **the laws have transformed the negroes into subjects of property**, that a place is disputed them in the computation of numbers; and it is admitted, that if the laws were to restore the rights which have been taken away, the negroes could no longer be refused an equal share of representation with the other inhabitants.... Let the case of the slaves be considered, as it is in truth, a peculiar one. Let the compromising expedient of the Constitution be mutually adopted, which regards them as inhabitants, but as debased by servitude below the equal level of free inhabitants, which regards the SLAVE as divested of **two fifths of the MAN**.

The United States Constitution thus memorialized the subordinate status of slaves, all of whom were “negroes,” and counted them for the purpose of apportionment as three-fifths of men. And this was done in plain view of clearly-established Anglo-American jurisprudence that had held the slavery was “odious” and unsupportable by any “reasons, moral or political.”²⁵⁵ In Article I, Section II, Clause III of the *United States Constitution*, the “Three-Fifths Compromise” is stated exactly as follows:

Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included in this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other persons.

This “Three-Fifths Compromise” was very pleasing to John Rutledge and the southern planters. It was placed in the federal constitution as a compromise measure in order to placate the South’s slave-holding interests.²⁵⁶ The American Founding Fathers knew that slavery was morally wrong; that slavery was inconsistent with the declared goals of the American Revolution; and slavery should be abolished. They understood the plain logic of Christianity and the

²⁵⁵ For example, in England, the Case of *Somerset v. Stewart* (1772) 98 ER 499, (1772) 20 State Tr 1, (1772) Lofft 1 upheld the same antislavery view. And in colonial British North America, successful court challenges to the institution of African slavery occurred in Vermont (1777), followed by Pennsylvania (1780), Massachusetts (1783) and Connecticut (1784).

²⁵⁶ “The Three-Fifths Compromise was proposed by James Wilson in 1789 in order to gain Southern support for the new framework of government by guaranteeing that the South would be strongly represented in the House of Representatives. Naturally, it was more popular in the South than in the North.” <https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/text-51-60#s-lg-box-wrapper-25493430>

decrees of men such as the Reverend John Wesley and other Methodists that slavery was unchristian. (Rev. Wesley's declaration against slavery was published in the Methodist *General Rules* in 1743; Rev. Wesley's *Thoughts Upon Slavery* was published in Philadelphia in 1778; the Methodist Episcopal Church's declaration against slavery was ratified at its Christmas Conference in 1784; and Methodist bishops Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke had met General Washington as his home in Virginia in 1785, as well as many others, in order to petition against slavery.)

By the time of the federal Constitutional Convention in 1787 in Philadelphia, the American Founding Fathers were fully aware of the Methodist Church's anti-slavery position—an anti-slavery position that shared at that time by the Bishop of London Beilby Porteous (1731 – 1809), one of history's great abolitionists. Nevertheless, the American Founding Father's compromised with the deadly sin of slavery—and it proved to be very costly compromise.

A great evil swept over the city of Philadelphia in 1787, inside of the closed-door sessions of the Constitutional Convention, at the seat of the national government. It was under these circumstances when the true Methodist spirit was confronted by slavery and hatred and racism, and gave birth to African Methodism! As the historian W.E.B. Du Bois says:

It was the plain duty of the Constitutional Convention, in founding a new nation, to compromise with a threatening social evil only in case its settlement would thereby be postponed to a more favorable time: this was not the case in the slavery and the slave-trade compromise; there never was a time in the history of America when the system had a slighter economic, political, and moral justification than in 1787; and yet with this real, existent, growing evil before their eyes, a bargain largely of dollars and cents was allowed to open the highway that led straight to the Civil War. Moreover, it was due to no wisdom and foresight on the part of the fathers that fortuitous circumstances made the result of the war what it was, nor was it due to exceptional philanthropy on the part of their descendants that that result included the abolition of slavery.

With the faith of the nation broken at the very outset, the system of slavery untouched, and twenty years' respite given to the slave-trade to feed and foster it, there began, with 1787, that system of

bargaining, truckling, and compromising with a moral, political, and economic monstrosity, which makes the history of our dealing with slavery in the first half of the nineteenth century so discreditable to a great people.... How far in a State can a recognized moral wrong safely be compromised? ... No persons would have seen the Civil War with more surprise and horror than the Revolution of 1776; yet from the small and apparently dying institution of their day arose the walled and castled Slave-Power. From this we may conclude that it behooves nations as well as men to do things at the very moment when they ought to be done.²⁵⁷

Hence, at least from the perspective of African Methodism, the Rev. John Wesley's critique of the American Revolution's being not truly about "liberty" or for "the people," proved to be prophetic and wholly accurate. And it was also eerily coincidental, if not altogether prophetic, that in 1787 the foundations of African Methodism and African-American Anglicanism were founded in Philadelphia, the same venue and time of the Constitutional Convention.

E. Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke take over the Leadership of the American Methodist Movement following the Revolutionary War

As Professor Lorraine Boettner has correctly stated: "[t]here were practically no Methodists in America at the time of the Revolution...."²⁵⁸ Prior to 1770, there were no "Methodist societies" in colonial British North America. In the period 1772 to 1779, there were less than 1,000 Methodists in North America.²⁵⁹ In 1787, there were about 3,000 Methodist in North America.²⁶⁰ The great George Whitefield had died in 1770. And when Rev. Wesley pulled all of his Methodist preachers out of North America in 1775 and 1776, only Rev. Francis Asbury stayed behind in Delaware as a committed American patriot. This would make Rev. Asbury the unquestioned leader of American Methodism following American independence in 1783. Following the war, Rev. Wesley sent his chief lieutenant, the Reverend Doctor Thomas Coke. Dr. Coke held the Doctor of Civil Law degree from Oxford and was himself an ordained presbyter in the Anglican Church. He was sent to North American in 1784 in order to assist Rev. Asbury. By this point,

²⁵⁷ W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), pp. 197-198.

²⁵⁸ Kenneth Talbot and Gary Crampton, *Calvinism, Hyper-Calvinism and Arminianism* (Whitefield Media Publishing: Lakeland, FL, 1990), p. 135.

²⁵⁹ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 294.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

the political landscape had changed drastically and the future of the American Methodist movement was destined to ripen into its own independent church. This caused Rev. John Wesley to consider other options for ordinations—radical times required radical actions:

During the fall and winter of 1783/84, Wesley discussed the American problem with Coke, including a possible plan for Wesley to ordain episcopal leaders to supervise the Methodist work in America. At this point, Wesley seems to have been ready to move faster than Coke, who wanted first to observe the American scene and report back to Wesley. Coke finally gave in to Wesley's plan, which included his own ordination before going to America. During the Conference at Leeds in August 1784, Wesley asked for volunteers to accompany Coke to America, and from the volunteers chose two, Thomas Vasey and Richard Whatcoat. Wesley discussed the possibility of ordinations with only his senior advisors, or Cabinet. According to one of them, John Pawson, the group advised against the idea but could tell that Wesley had made up his mind. Wesley consulted Fletcher, who was against it; a group of clergy in Leeds, who were against it; James Creighton, a new clergy in Leeds, who were against it; James Creighton, a new clergy assistant from Ireland, who was against it. Charles Wesley was not consulted at all.

In spite of all the opposition and in recognition of the potential criticism, Wesley pressed ahead with the plan.... Although already an ordained presbyter of the Church of England, Coke agreed after the Conference that it was expedient to receive what amounted to episcopal ordination, that is, 'the power of ordaining others,' by the imposition of Wesley's hands.²⁶¹

On September 1, 1784, Rev. Wesley ordained two preachers as deacons; and on the next day, those deacons were ordained again as presbyters, so that Dr. Coke could have two assistants when he travelled to North America. On that same date, September 2, Rev. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke a "superintendent." Dr. Coke travelled to North America in 1784 and met with Rev. Asbury, who as a Methodist itinerant preacher had never been ordained. Much to Dr. Coke's surprise, Rev. Asbury would not agree to Rev. Wesley's plans, unless all the other American

²⁶¹ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 319.

Methodist preachers agreed in Conference. Furthermore, Rev. Asbury insisted that he and Dr. Coke would serve as “superintendents” only if the American Conference elects them. Coke agreed to call a Conference on Christmas Eve 1784 at the Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore. During the meanwhile, Asbury took Coke on a 900 mile horseback tour of American Methodism. The Christmas Conference met as planned on Christmas Eve. At this Conference, the American Methodists discussed Mr. Wesley’s revised plan and adopted them. They also created “the Methodist Episcopal Church” as a separate and new denomination.²⁶² At the Christmas Conference, “Asbury was ordained a deacon, presbyter, and superintendent on three successive days.”²⁶³

Soon both Coke and Asbury began work on building the Methodist Episcopal Church in the new United States of America. They changed their official titles from “supervisor” to “bishop,” much to the chagrin of Rev. Wesley; and, inter alia, the co-founded Cokesbury College in Maryland, as the first Methodist college in the United States.²⁶⁴ From the beginning, Coke and Asbury took up the issue of slavery in America. And at this same Christmas Conference held in Baltimore in 1784 was a former African American slave named Richard Allen, whom Asbury officially licensed to preach in the new Methodist Episcopal Church.²⁶⁵ Rev. Allen would later found the African Methodist Episcopal Church

²⁶² “But although it had all the prerequisites of a church, it looked like a church, and acted like a church, its soul was still Wesleyan in that it still thought of itself as a society. It relied heavily upon the precedents of the British Wesleyans and acknowledged a polite respect for Wesley.” Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 325.

²⁶³ Ibid., p. 324.

²⁶⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cokesbury_College

²⁶⁵ See, e.g., <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Allen>

“**Richard Allen**, (born February 14, 1760, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania [U.S.]—died March 26, 1831, Philadelphia), founder and first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, a major American denomination.

“Soon after Allen was born, to slave parents, the family was sold to a Delaware farmer. At age 17 he became a Methodist convert and at 22 was permitted to preach. Two years later (1784), at the first general conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Baltimore, Allen was considered a talented candidate for the new denomination’s ministry. In 1786 he bought his freedom and went to Philadelphia, where he joined St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church. Occasionally he was asked to preach to the congregation. He also conducted prayer meetings for blacks. Restrictions were placed on the number permitted to attend these meetings, and Allen, dissatisfied, withdrew in 1787 to help organize an independent Methodist church. In 1787 he turned an old blacksmith shop into the first church for blacks in the United States. His followers were known as Allenites.

In 1799 Allen became the first African American to be officially ordained in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The organization of the Bethel Society led in 1816 to the founding of the African

and would become its first bishop in 1816.²⁶⁶ During the meanwhile, Coke and Asbury pushed an anti-slavery and abolitionist agenda throughout the United States.²⁶⁷ These early Methodists were convinced that the true spirit of the American Revolution was against all forms of slavery, and they were certainly moved the spirit of established law as it had been evolving in England and New England.²⁶⁸ In 1785, Methodists superintendents Bishop Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke met personally with future President George Washington at his home at Mount Vernon. They both asked Gen. Washington to sign their abolition petition to be submitted to the Virginia legislature. Gen. Washington stated that he shared their abolition sentiments but felt that it would not be appropriate for him to sign any petition, but that if the Virginia legislature brought the matter to the floor, then he would give his opinion on the subject. Unfortunately, the Virginia legislature killed the petition and it was never presented to the floor for discussion.

The great legacy of the Methodist Church in both England and North America is that its foundations were laid by principled and capable leadership. Methodism taught and stressed a form of “social holiness” that was destined to influence law and public policy on both sides of the Atlantic. The Methodist Church is, in the authors opinion, the greatest legacy of the Church of England on American soil:

There was no essential conflict between the teachings of Methodism and the Anglican Church. It was a question of spirit, of emphasis. Even after separate chapels were built and a government for the

Methodist Episcopal Church, which elected Allen its first bishop.”

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ The Methodist Church engaged in a valiant anti-slavery protest movement during the late 1780s. See, e.g., <http://consulthardesty.hardspace.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Hardesty-timeline-Rev10.pdf>, stating:

[On April 9 1785] Coke and Asbury personally inform General Washington (four years prior to his election as President) of their opposition to slavery.

Coke is stalked by an assassin - then violently threatened in Virginia - for equating slavery with injustice. Instead of accepting a bounty for giving Coke a hundred lashes with the whip, a local magistrate – after hearing the evangelist preach in a barn – emancipates his 15 slaves. A chain reaction ensues, wherein perhaps an additional nine souls are freed from servitude. Coke organizes church members in North Carolina to petition their legislature that manumission become legal. Failing, Coke returns to Virginia to lead calls for legislative change. This effort too is unsuccessful. Two counties set out indictments against him.

²⁶⁸ For example, in England, the Case of *Somerset v. Stewart* (1772) 98 ER 499, (1772) 20 State Tr 1, (1772) Lofft 1 upheld the same antislavery view. And in colonial British North America, successful court challenges to the institution of African slavery occurred in Vermont (1777), followed by Pennsylvania (1780), Massachusetts (1783) and Connecticut (1784).

Methodist established they insisted that they were still within the Church of England...

The New Testament preaching of brotherly love, of social righteousness, held a particular appeal for the masses. The leaders of the Methodist movement always stressed the brotherhood of all men. For example, John Wesley denounced slavery in direct, graphic, vehement language.... He spoke against the liquor traffic. He joined the Quakers in condemning the insanity of war....

Throughout the teachings of Methodism there was the constant stress upon the need for social reform. "The Gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social, no holiness but social holiness."²⁶⁹

The genius of the Wesleyan system is that its conference system was perfectly adaptable to the American scene. The American Methodist Church adopted this Wesleyan system and further molded it to accommodate local American conditions. But the weakness of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which is shared by many evangelical churches, is that it was never designed to replicate the Church of England's ability to administer a system of ecclesiastical courts or to influence secular legislation and public policy—thus providing a voice of the Christian Church to secular legislature, bar and bench. And, for that matter, no American church, following the American Revolution of '76, was permitted to have the same level of influence upon American law and public policy, as did the Church of England upon England's law and public policy.

Although Bishop Coke held the doctor of civil law degree from Oxford, the American Methodist Church would not develop a rich legal tradition or a cadre of ecclesiastical chancellors, lawyers, and judges which could serve the interest of the church in a variety of roles throughout society, as in England. In short, Methodist bishops, such as Coke and Asbury, would never hold the same level or type of responsibility as, the Bishop of London, the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Archbishop of York in England. Methodist bishops would not be given seats in the upper chambers of American state and national legislatures, as the Anglican bishops were given seats in the House of Lords. Indeed, the Methodist Episcopal Church would have no provinces, dioceses, archbishops, convocations, or ecclesiastical courts, anywhere near the magnitude of the Church of England's. Instead, the Methodist Episcopal Church's emphasis was on evangelism and social

²⁶⁹ Goldwin Smith, *A History of England*, pp. 454-455.

holiness—not court administration, legal reform and public policy. It had emerged as a wholly independent church denomination that had grown up from the British **religious society** movement. And in many ways, it never stopped functioning as a large religious society.²⁷⁰

This does not mean that the Methodist Episcopal Church would not influence law and public policy in America—it certainly did, and it continues to do so. An instance of this can be seen in the relationship that Bishop Francis Asbury had with Richard Bassett, a signer of the U.S. Constitution and governor of Delaware. Due to Asbury’s influence, Governor Bassett converted to Methodism, freed his own slaves, and sponsored anti-slavery legislation in the Delaware state legislature.

But the Methodist Episcopal Church has created no Christian jurisprudence for the United States, because “law and religion” are conceptually separated entities by the American constitutional doctrine known as the “separation of church and state.” However, as we have seen throughout this paper, “Methodism” is the creature of orthodox Anglicanism, designed by theologians who assumed, as a given, the Christian foundations of constitutional or fundamental law, as well as the church-state apparatus of 18th-century England (i.e., the legacy of Dr. Richard Hooker’s *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594)²⁷¹—where the Church was an established component of the State; the “two-tables” theory of Church-State polity was axiomatic; the civil magistrate was deemed a vicegerent of God; and secular human law was subordinate to God’s natural moral laws. The whole point of Methodism is “The Gospel of Christ knows no religion but social, no holiness but social holiness,” meaning that “stress upon the need for social reform” implies Methodist interaction with the secular government and court system, in some form or another—i.e., an intersection where the Social Gospel meets secular public law and policy. The Puritan-Anglican conceptualization of the “two-tables” theory of Church-State polity is the theological foundation of Methodism’s zeal of social holiness and social justice. In other words, the church must at times exercise its prophetic prerogative through petitioning the secular magistrate to do justice and administer just laws. Today, “social holiness” and “social justice” are the great legacies of the Wesleyan and Methodist Churches in the United States.

²⁷⁰ “But although it had all the prerequisites of a church, it looked like a church, and acted like a church, its soul was still Wesleyan in that it still thought of itself as a society. It relied heavily upon the precedents of the British Wesleyans and acknowledged a polite respect for Wesley.” Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Methodists*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 325.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

IV. African American Methodism Develops in Response to Systematic Racism and Slavery, 1787 to 1820

When the Constitutional Convention was being convened in Philadelphia in 1787, African Americans were developing a sense of self-preservation, self-determination, racial consciousness, and a definite program to combat race prejudice and slavery. Fundamentally, their aims and aspirations were deeply-rooted in the Christian religion. Racism and slavery were wrong, because they violated the “law of Christ,” which, in the minds of African Americans, was a “higher law” of God and, for that matter, the fundamental law of the land. Just as British Methodism began as a “religious society,” so too did African Methodism begin—and both movements arose from the need to bring the Gospels to the most marginalized citizens. Just as the British Methodist movement retained the same theology of the Church of England, African Methodism retained the same theology of British Methodism—the only difference between them were matters of theological emphasis and cultural expression. But deeply-rooted in African Methodism, although hidden, is the whole history of the Church of England, of the influences of Richard Hooker’s *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594), of the 17th-century Puritans movements, and of British Methodism. In addition to asserting African self-consciousness through salvation and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, African Methodism seeks African and African American liberation through reaffirmation of the Christian foundations of Anglo-American constitutional law. African Methodism is deeply political.

A. The Free African Society founded in 1787 in Philadelphia

Now the spirit of racism—not brotherly love—had fomented in Philadelphia in 1787. One morning, at St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, while kneeling to pray in a gallery, Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, and other black worshipers were pulled from their knees and directed to go to a segregated section of that church. Instead, the black group of parishioners completed their prayers, got up off of their knees, and left the St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church, never again to return. At the time of this incident, Richard Allen had received his license to preach from Bishop Francis Asbury at the Christmas Conference in 1784. He had preached in New Jersey and in Pennsylvania. Because of his prior experiences with racism among the whites, he had started to think of creating a separate meeting place for African Americans to

worship. But when he mentioned his interest in creating a separate meeting place to white Methodist leaders, they discarded the proposal. Richard Allen had also worked with Absalom Jones in launching a mutual aid society for benevolent purposes and “without regard to religious tenets.”²⁷² The named this mutual society the “Free African Society.”

The Free African Society assumed religious as well as secular functions, meeting initially in a rented storeroom. From 1788 to 1791 the society met at the Friends Free African School House, and there they began holding regular worship services in 1790. In the interim Allen and Jones began soliciting subscriptions to build a meeting house but with the intention of remaining under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Church. However, upon completing this ‘African Church,’ as Allen termed it, he was rebuffed first by the Methodist Church which refused to supply a minister, and then by the members of the society, the majority of whom voted to affiliate with the Church of England.... On July 17, 1794, the original building the Free African Society had erected was dedicated to St. Thomas’ African Episcopal Church and Absalom Jones, after being ordained the first black Protestant Episcopal priest, became the pastor.²⁷³

It should be noted here that African Methodism (led by Rev. Richard Allen) was a close tie to the Anglican Church in Philadelphia, which was headed by Bishop William White. Bishop White had served as a mentor to both Rev. Absalom Jones (Episcopal/Anglican) and to Rev. Richard Allen (Methodist). During the 1780s, when Richard Allen had converted to Methodism, the Methodist movement was still a part of Church of England—so technically Richard Allen was himself an Anglican who decided to remain within the Methodist Episcopal Church, due in large measure to his friendship with Bishop Francis Asbury. “Richard Allen had first been asked to pastor St. Thomas’s, but insisting that he could ‘not be anything else but a Methodist’ he declined that honor. He was confident... that ‘no religious sect or denomination would suit the capacity of the colored people as well as the Methodist.’”²⁷⁴

²⁷² Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, p. 51.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

While Rev. Absalom Jones became the first black Anglican priest at the St. Thomas African Episcopal Church in 1787, Rev. Richard Allen “succeeded in having Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury dedicate the building he had purchased, and Bethel Church of Philadelphia, as it was named, became the mother church of what was to be a new denomination, the African Methodist Episcopal Church.”²⁷⁵ As there were several societies of freed African Americans in the surrounding states of New Jersey, New York, Maryland, and Delaware, the A.M.E. denomination quickly spread into those regions, and Rev. Allen helped to organize those churches as well.²⁷⁶

Closely affiliated with Richard Allen and the “Allenites” were a separate group of black Methodist from the state of New York. They, too, had encountered similar discriminatory experiences in the Methodist Episcopal Church in New York. Like Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, they pulled out of the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City, in order to start their own, separate denomination in 1796. Their first church was built in 1800. For a while, the Black Methodists in New York was loosely-affiliated with Richard Allen’s church, but the two groups of black Methodist could never reach common ground. By the year 1820, the black Methodists of New York officially voted to call themselves the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, in order to distinguish itself from the “Allenites.”²⁷⁷ In 1822, James Varick was elected its first bishop.²⁷⁸ It became known as the “Freedom Church” because of its participation in the Underground Railroad, and because of its long list of abolitionist luminaries, such as Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Rev. Jermain Louguen, Catherine Harris, Rev. Thomas James, and Frederick Douglass,²⁷⁹ “who was licensed as a local A.M.E. Zion preacher.”²⁸⁰

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 52.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 57.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Frederick Douglass had as a slave visited the Bethel A.M.E. Church in Baltimore. He had been long positively influenced by Methodist preachers and the Methodist Church. When he gained his freedom and lived in New Bedford, Massachusetts, he was determined to join a predominately-white Methodist Episcopal Church, and he joined the Elm Street Methodist Church. But when he observed blatant racial segregation and discrimination, even in the administration of the Sacraments, he refused to return. He then joined an AME Zion Methodist Church in New Bedford, which made him a class-leader and a local preacher. Douglass, however, was disappointed with the Zion Methodists’ lack of willpower to fight against slavery and racism. For this reason, Douglass left the Zion Methodist Church and joined William Lloyd Garrison’s Anti-Slavery Society. See, e.g., Frederick Douglass, *Autobiographies* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1995), pp. 359-363.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 58.

Thus, it can truly be said that both the A.M.E. Church and A.M.E. Zion Church best reflected the Wesleyan anti-slavery position than any other church within the Methodist family of denominational churches. For instance, “[t]he ‘Mission and Purpose of the Church,’ presented in the Discipline as a preface to the Wesleyan ‘Articles of Religion,’ declares that:

Each local church of the African Methodist Episcopal Church shall be engaged in carrying out the spirit of the original Free African Society out of which the A.M.E. Church evolved, that is, to seek out and save the lost and serve the needy through a continuing program of: (1) preaching the gospel, (2) feeding the hungry, (3) clothing the naked, (4) housing the homeless, (5) cheering the fallen, (6) providing jobs for the jobless, (7) administering to the needs of those in prisons, hospitals, nursing homes, asylums and mental institutions, senior citizens’ homes, caring for the sick, the shut-in, the mentally and socially disturbed, and (8) encouraging thrift and economic advancement.²⁸¹

The African Methodist churches thus symbolized and carried out Methodism’s original anti-slavery position,²⁸² as reflected in Wesley’s *Thoughts Upon Slavery*,²⁸³ which the predominantly-white, slave-holding Methodist Episcopal Church (South)²⁸⁴ had, after 1844, officially rejected. Most significantly, the African Methodist churches fought to overturn the legal and constitutional foundations of American slavery that were established in the United States Constitution; and they stood in direct opposition to the settled pro-slavery views of Convention Delegate John Rutledge of South Carolina, and of many other pro-slavery delegates who attended the Constitutional Convention in 1787.

²⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 54-55.

²⁸² The Methodist Church engaged in a valiant anti-slavery protest movement during the late 1780s. See, e.g., “The Long Road: Francis Asbury and George Washington,” (October 1, 2015), <https://www.francisasburytriptych.com/francis-asbury-and-george-washington/>

For example, in 1785, Methodists superintendents Bishop Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke met personally with future President George Washington at his home at Mount Vernon. They both asked Gen. Washington to sign their abolition petition to be submitted to Virginia legislature. Gen. Washington stated that he shared their abolition sentiments but felt that it would not be appropriate for him to sign any petition, but that if the Virginia legislature brought the matter to the floor, then he would give his opinion on the subject.

²⁸³ See Appendix A, “Notes on Rev. John Wesley’s *Thoughts Upon Slavery* (1778).”

²⁸⁴ See, “Methodist Episcopal Church- South” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodist_Episcopal_Church,_South

Bishop Asbury would also indirectly spread Methodism to West Africa when he ordained an African American named Rev. Daniel Coker (1780 -1846). Rev. Coker “was an African American of mixed race from Baltimore, Maryland; after he gained freedom from slavery, he became a Methodist minister. He wrote one of the few pamphlets published in the South that protested against slavery and supported abolition.”²⁸⁵ Rev. Coker was also an associate of Bishop Richard Allen, because in 1816, Coker helped Allen and other black Methodists in founding the African Methodist Episcopal Church. “In 1820, Coker took his family and immigrated to the British colony of Sierra Leone, where he was the first Methodist missionary from a Western nation. There Coker founded the West Africa Methodist Church.”²⁸⁶

B. African Methodism, Slavery, and the U.S. Constitution

Throughout its history, African Methodism has remained a staunch supporter and defender of the United States Constitution. African Methodism has always sought to reaffirm the U.S. Constitution and its fundamental laws and values. Both the A.M.E. and A.M.E. Zion Churches have continued to preach liberation and human rights through adherence to its general principles set forth in the American Declaration of Independence and in the “Preamble” to the U.S. Constitution. Although most of the framers of these documents owned slaves, or were willing to accommodate slave-holders, African Methodism has insisted that principles enunciated in America’s constitutional documents lead to universal freedom and justice for everyone.

The African Methodist Frederick Douglass and other abolitionists insisted, throughout the nineteenth century, that the United States Constitution was an “abolition” document—not a proslavery document. They were inspired by the famous *Somerset* case (1772),²⁸⁷ and they believed that the laws of nature (i.e., natural religion) and the law of the Gospels (i.e. revealed religion)—as set forth in Rev. John Wesley’s *Thoughts Upon Slavery* (1778)—joined forces to form the

²⁸⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Coker

²⁸⁶

²⁸⁷ For example, in England, the Case of *Somerset v. Stewart* (1772) 98 ER 499, (1772) 20 State Tr 1, (1772) Lofft 1 upheld the view that slavery was “odious” and could be justified by any “reasons, moral or political.” And in colonial British North America, successful court challenges to the institution of African slavery soon occurred in Vermont (1777), followed by Pennsylvania (1780), Massachusetts (1783) and Connecticut (1784).

fundamental law of the United States Constitution and, as such, the institution of slavery was unconstitutional.

Prior to 1865, it had since become the settled opinion, among African Methodists, that the *United States Constitution* (1787) could be read and interpreted as being inherently an anti-slavery document, by virtue of its “**Preamble**,” which rendered the entire practice and institution of slavery “unconstitutional.” This view was expressed by Frederick Douglass, who was then an active member of the A.M.E. Church and a former local preacher in an A.M.E. Zion Church, where he writes:

My new circumstances compelled me to re-think the whole subject, and to study, with some care, not only the just and proper rules of legal interpretation, but the origin, design, nature, rights, powers, and duties of civil government, and also the relations which human beings sustain to it.

By such a course of thought and reading, I was conducted to the conclusion that the constitution of the United States—inaugurated ‘to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty’—could not well have been designed at the same time to maintain and perpetuate a system of rapine and murder like slavery; especially, as not one word can be found in the constitution to authorize such a belief.

Then, again, if the declared purposes of an instrument are to govern the meaning of all its parts and details, as they clearly should, the constitution of our country is our warrant for the abolition of slavery in every state in the American Union.²⁸⁸

That “**Preamble**,” which Frederick Douglass references here, is in essence the “**fundamental law**” which serves as the foundation of the *United States Constitution*. As such, this “Preamble” to the United States Constitution is the first-principle upon which American constitutional jurisprudence is based. When this “Preamble” is construed *constitutionally*, it reflects the “fundamental law” of the land; when construed *philosophically*, it represents natural justice; and when

²⁸⁸ Frederick Douglass, *Autobiographies* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1995), pp. 392-393.

construed *theologically*, it represents the “law of Christ,”²⁸⁹ or the “Golden Rule”²⁹⁰ in all of its equitable manifestations.²⁹¹ This was, at least, the settled opinion of the Rev. Algernon Sidney Crapsey, an Anglican priest, who reached the same conclusion in his *Religion and Politics* (1905).²⁹² African Methodism has taken the same view as Rev. Crapsey’s, and, as previously mentioned in the “Introduction” to this paper, this view is substantially justified, notwithstanding the fact most of the framers of U.S. Constitution either owned slaves or compromised on the question of slavery or the slave trade.

CONCLUSION

The Methodist movement in America picked and succeeded where the Church of England’s Society for the Propagation of the Gospels in Foreign Parts (SPG) had previously failed. The reason for this is that the SPG represented and symbolized both the British Crown and the Church of England, two institutions that most Americans did not want to see firmly established in American soil. The other reason is that the SPG was not evangelical and was wholly representative of traditional style and mode of High-Church Anglicanism. It might be argued that Rev. John Wesley’s minister in Georgia did not succeed because his style of minister reflected this High-Church Anglican style. Rev. George Whitefield and, later, Bishop Francis Asbury, on the other hand, brought an evangelical style of Methodism to colonial British North America, and this style was most suited to American culture.

From the beginning, Methodism has always remained firm in its position that Methodist theology was no different than the orthodox theology of the Church of England: the *Holy Bible*, the *Book of Common Prayer*, the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*, and Dr. Richard Hooker’s *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594).

²⁸⁹ The fundamental “Law of Christ,” to wit, is to “love ye one another” (John 15:12); to do justice and judgment (Genesis 18:18-19; Proverbs 21: 1-3); to judge not according to appearance but to judge righteous judgments (John 7:24); and to do justice, judgment, and equity (Proverbs 1:2-3).

²⁹⁰ Matthew 7:12 (“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”)

²⁹¹ In other words, “Christianity is a republication of natural religion.” See, e.g., Matthew Tindall, *Christianity as Old as the Creation* (1730); William Warburton, *An Alliance of Church and State* (1736); Joseph Butler, *An Analogy of Religion*; and John Witherspoon, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy* (1770-90).

²⁹² Algernon Sidney Crapsey, *Religion and Politics* (New York, N.Y.: Thomas Whittaker, 1905), pp. 305-306.

Hooker's conceptualization of natural moral law, the magistrate as God's vicegerent, and the relation of the church and the state as being two sides of the same coin, was part and parcel of Rev. Wesley's standard sermons and polemics on theological and political questions of this time. Methodism was in essence orthodox Anglicanism, with the only difference being an emphasis on social holiness, which the 18th-century British Empire seemed to lack. Methodism promoted the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God; it was anti-slavery from its inception. And its legacy and positive influence upon both England and the new United States was significant. For, indeed, Methodism truly reflected God's invisible church on earth.

THE END

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APPENDIX A

Notes on the Reverend John Wesley's

Thoughts Upon Slavery (1778)

By

Roderick O. Ford, Litt.D.

The downfall of Rev. Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith from the presidency at Princeton in 1812 signaled the weaknesses in Calvinistic Puritanism's conceptualization of biblical text as God's unshakable word, such that any crevice that allowed for seemingly contradictions from science would open the door to "Arminianism," and therefore heresy. The "New Methodists," or the Arminian Puritans did not have the same pitfalls. The great heir of Richard Baxter's Arminian "New Methodism" was the Rev. John Wesley, who adopted a four-fold view of Christian theology that allowed for the following four sources of theology: (a) the Sacred Scriptures; (b) the Sacred Traditions of the Church; (c) Reason (i.e., the laws of nature); and (d) Experience (i.e., common sense, human conscience of self-evident truths). The method of theological analysis allowed Rev. Wesley to apply the tools of reasoning advanced by philosopher Francis Bacon, Edward Coke, John Locke, Isaac Newton, and many others to the truths of the *Holy Bible*. For Rev. Wesley, the principles of justice and equity were restatements of the golden rule or the "law of Christ," and he was fully capable of speaking about human affairs in both the language of revealed religion (i.e., the *Holy Bible*) and natural religion (i.e., natural law). In *Thoughts Upon Slavery (1778)*, Rev. Wesley attacked the institution of domestic slavery in the academic language of an Oxford scholar while utilizing a discourse that was rooted in science, reason, and natural law.

Indeed, in *Thoughts Upon Slavery (1778)*, Rev. Wesley documents in clear and persuasive language the evil effects of global British mercantilism upon the African continent. In part I of this work, Rev. Wesley correctly points out that the Christian religion—its spirit and letter—led naturally to the gradual fall and decline of slavery throughout the Roman empire.²⁹³ "[A]fter Christianity

²⁹³ John Wesley, *Thoughts Upon Slavery* (London, England: John Crukshank Publisher, 1778), p. 4.

prevailed,” wrote Wesley, “[slavery] gradually fell into decline in almost all parts of Europe. This great change began in Spain, about the end of the eighth century.”²⁹⁴ Rev. Wesley’s opinion is supported by the writings of the great French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville.²⁹⁵ Hence, Rev. Wesley asks the important question, How and why was slavery revived. In a word, 16th-century European mercantilism revived slavery. “[S]lavery was nearly extinct,” writes Rev. Wesley, “till the commencement of the fifteenth century, when the discovery of America, and of the western and eastern coasts of Africa, gave occasion to the revival of it.”²⁹⁶ When slavery was first introduced into Spain, the nature Christian response was to denounce this practice as evil, as Rev. Wesley states:

In 1540 Charles the fifth, then king of Spain, determined to put n end to the negro-slavery: giving positive orders, That all the negro slaves in the Spanish dominions should be set free. And this was accordingly done by Lagasea, whom he sent and impowered to free them all, on condition of continuing to labour for their masters. But soon after Lagasea returned to Spain, slavery returned and flourished as before. Afterwards other nations, as they acquired possessions in America, followed the examples of the Spaniards; and slavery has now taken deep root in our American colonies.²⁹⁷

For England, the first involvement in the slave trade began in about 1566 with the voyages of Sir. John Hawkins off of the coast of western Africa to the West Indies.²⁹⁸ But British mercantilism, which was built upon the slave trade, did not begin in earnest until the reign of King Charles II after about the year 1660, and for Englishmen the slave trade became of significant national concern after the Assiento contract of 1713, which granted to England a monopoly over the Spanish-American slave trade for thirty years.

In Part II of *Thoughts Upon Slavery*, Rev. Wesley turns to first-hand accounts for support of his discussion on effects which British mercantilism and

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Thus commenting on this subject, the great French social theorist Alex De Tocqueville opined that “[a]ntiquity could only have a very imperfect understanding of this effect of slavery on the production of wealth. Then slavery existed throughout the whole civilized world, only some barbarian peoples being without it. **Christianity destroyed slavery by insisting on the slave’s rights; nowadays it can be attacked from the master’s point of view; in this respect interest and morality are in harmony.**” Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York, N.Y.: Harper Perennial, 1988), p. 348.

²⁹⁶

²⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 15.

slave-trading had upon the coasts of western Africa. The area up for discussion is described as follows:

That part of Africa when the negroes are brought, commonly known by the name of Guinea, extends along the coast, in the whole, between three and four thousand miles. From the river Senegal, (seventeen degrees north of the line) to Cape Sierra Leona, it contains seven hundred miles. Thence it runs eastward about fifteen hundred miles, including the Grain-Coast, the Ivory-Coast, the Gold-Coast, and the Slave-Coast, with the large kingdom of Benin. From hence it runs southward, about twelve hundred miles, and contains the kingdoms of Congo and Angola.²⁹⁹

Rev. Wesley next relies upon several first-hand accounts which verifies that the African peoples who populated these regions were civilized, orderly, and law-abiding civilizations. Some of them had professed the Muslim faith. Africans of Congo and Angola were described as “generally a quiet people.”³⁰⁰ What corrupted these African civilizations and led to the transatlantic slave trade? Rev. Wesley asked. It was European merchants “by prevailing upon them to make war upon each other, and to sell their prisoners—till then they seldom had any wars.”³⁰¹ The wars between the Africans were thus instigated by greedy European merchants—supplemented by the sale of rum to the Africans.³⁰² Hence, men-stealing, in violation of the Sacred Scriptures, became the order of the day.

Now the Middle Passage—the trip from West Africa to the Americas—was horrific. Rev. Wesley also lucidly describes in *Thoughts Upon Slavery* the whippings, brandings, burnings, and suicides which occurred right off the coasts of West Africa, where the captives were loaded as cargo onto the slave ships. Rev. Wesley recounts:

You know the people were not stupid, not wanting in sense, considering the few means of improvement they enjoyed. Neither did you find them savage, fierce, cruel, treacherous, or unkind to strangers. On the contrary, they were in most parts a sensible and ingenious people. They were kind and friendly, courteous and obliging, and remarkably fair and just in their dealings. Such are the

²⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

³⁰¹ Ibid., p. 17.

³⁰² Ibid.

men whom you hire their own countrymen, to tear away from this lovely country; part by stealth, part by force, part made captives in those wars, which you raise or foment on purpose. You have seen them torn away, children from their parents, parents from their children: Husbands from their wives, wives from their beloved husbands, brethren and sisters from each other. You have dragged them who had never done you any wrong, perhaps in chains, from their native shore. You have forced them into your ships like an herd of swine, them who had souls immortal as your own: (Only some of them have leaped into the sea, and resolutely stayed under water, till they could suffer no more from you.) You have stowed them together as close as ever they could lie, without any regard either to decency or convenience.—And when many of them had been poisoned by foul air, or had sunk under various hardships, you have seen their remains delivered to the sheep, till the sea should give up his dead. You have carried the survivors into the vilest slavery, never to end but with life: such slavery as is not found among the Turks at Algiers, no, nor among the heathens in America.³⁰³

Next, Rev. Wesley clearly lays the blame for this evil in the trade in human beings upon the British merchants and the mercantilist system. “It is you that induce the African villain,” wrote Rev. Wesley, “to sell his countrymen; and in order thereto, to steal, rob, murder men, women and children without number: by enabling the English villain to pay him for so doing.... It is your money, that is the spring of all....”³⁰⁴ True indeed, for as St. Paul has written, “[f]or the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”³⁰⁵

Now the influence of natural rights philosophy and the 18th-century Enlightenment upon Rev. Wesley’s moral theology is quite clear in *Thoughts Upon Slavery*, which advances a higher law argument that subordinates secular human law to the “law of nature and reason.” Rev. Wesley’s *Thoughts Upon Slavery* is the plainest expression of the absolute sovereignty of God’s providence, will, and law over human affairs. Rev. Wesley writes:

³⁰³ Ibid., pp. 50-51.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 52-53.

³⁰⁵ I Timothy 6:10.

But waving, for the present, all other considerations, I strike at the root of this complicated villainy. I absolutely deny all slave-holding to be consistent with any degree of even natural justice.

I cannot place this in a clearer light, than that great ornament of his profession, judge Blackstone has already done. Part of his words are as follows:

‘The three origins of the right of slavery assigned by Justinian, are all built upon false foundations. 1. Slavery is said to arise from captivity in war. The conqueror having a right to the life of his captive, if he spares that, has then a right to deal with him as he pleases. But this is untrue, if taken generally, That by the law of nations, a man has a right to kill his enemy. He has only a right to kill him in particular cases in cases of absolute necessity for self-defense. And it is plain, this absolute necessity did not subsist, since he did not kill him, but made him prisoner. War itself is justifiable only on principles of self-preservation. Therefore it gives us no right over prisoners, but to hinder their hurting us by confining them. Much less can it give a right to torture, or kill, or even to enslave an enemy when the war is over. Since therefore the right of making our prisoners slaves, depends on a supposed right of slaughter, that foundation failing, the consequence which is drawn from it must fail likewise.

It is said, Secondly, slavery may begin, by one man’s selling himself to another. And it is true, a man may sell himself to work for another: But he cannot sell himself to be a slave, as above defined.... His property likewise, with the very price which he seems to receive, devolves ipso facto to his master, the instant he becomes his slave: In this case therefore the buyer gives nothing, and the seller receives nothing....

We are told, Thirdly, that men may be born slaves, by being the children of slaves. But this being built on the two former rights, must fall together with them. If neither captivity, nor contract can by the plain law of nature and reason, reduce the parent to a state of slavery, much less can they reduce the

offspring.’ It clearly follows, that all slavery is as irconcilable to justice as to mercy.

That slave-holding is utterly inconsistent with mercy, is almost too plain to need a proof. Indeed it is said, ‘That these negroes being prisoners of war, our captains and factors buy them merely to save them from being put to death. And is not this mercy?’ I answer, 1. Did Sir John Hawkins, and many others, seize upon men, women, and children, who were at peace in their own fields and houses, merely to save them from death? 2. Was it to save them from death, that they knock’d out the brains of those they could not bring away? 3. Who occasioned and fomented those wars, wherein these poor creatures were take prisoners? Who excited them by money, by drink, by every possible means, to fall upon one another? Was it not themselves? They know in their own conscience it was, if they have any conscience left. But 4. To bring the matter to a short issue. Can they say before GOD, That they ever took a single voyage, or bought a single negro from this motive? They cannot. They well know, to get money, not to save lives, was the whole and sole spring of their motions.³⁰⁶

This “law of nature” or natural-rights philosophy was also the foundation of the American *Declaration of Independence* (1776), whose original draft dealt specifically with the immoral nature of the transatlantic slave trade, and held King George III of having violated the natural rights of the enslaved Africans. Hence, if Christianity is a republication of natural religion and natural law,³⁰⁷ the Old Testament’s prohibition against men-stealing³⁰⁸ is likewise a republication of the natural rights of every human being to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” On this very subject, historian W.E.B. Du Bois says:

The *Declaration of Independence* showed a significant drift of public opinion from the firm stand taken in ‘Association’ resolutions. The

³⁰⁶ John Wesley, *Thoughts Upon Slavery* (London, England: Joseph Crukshank Publisher, 1778).

³⁰⁷ See, e.g., Matthew Tindal, *Christianity as Old as the Creation* (1730); William Warburton, *The Alliance of Church and State* (1736); and Joseph Butler, (1736).

³⁰⁸ Exodus 21:16 (“And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.”)

clique of political philosophers to which Jefferson belonged never imagined the continued existence of the country with slavery. It is well known that the first draft of the Declaration contained a severe arraignment of Great Britain as the real promoter of slavery and the slave trade in America. In it the king was charged with waging a ‘cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.’ ...

Jefferson himself says that this clause ‘was struck out in complaisance to South Carolina and Georgia, who had never attempted to restrain the importation of slaves, and who, on the contrary, still wished to continue it. Our northern brethren also, I believe,’ said he, ‘felt a little tender under those censures; for though their people had very few slaves themselves, yet they had been pretty considerable carriers of them to others.’³⁰⁹

Here we find an interesting reference to the unification of economic interests in slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, between merchants on both sides of the Atlantic. Following the war, economic motives for maintaining slavery, and reopening the slave trade, suddenly confronted American merchants in both the South and the North. “The economic forces of the country,” writes W.E.B. Du Bois, “which had suffered most, sought to recover and rearrange themselves; and all the selfish motives that impelled a bankrupt nation to seek to gain its daily bread did not long hesitate to demand a reopening of the profitable African slave-

³⁰⁹ W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Suppression of the African Slave Trade,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 54.

trade.”³¹⁰ Following the end of the American Revolutionary War, the American economic interests were allowed to do whatever it wished with both slavery and the slave-trade—and this it did, unregulated, for the next “three-quarters of a century,” under a policy of “*laissez-faire, laissez-passer*.”³¹¹

The results of all this, perhaps, is best expressed by Founding Father Alexander Hamilton in Federalist Paper # 54, which clearly set forth the fixed attitude of the American founding fathers toward the natural rights of African slaves. In *The Federalist*, Paper # 54, Alexander Hamilton writes:

THE next view which I shall take of the House of Representatives relates to the appointment of its members to the several States which is to be determined by the same rule with that of direct taxes. It is not contended that the number of people in each State ought not to be the standard for regulating the proportion of those who are to represent the people of each State. ...

Slaves are considered as property, not as persons. They ought therefore to be comprehended in estimates of taxation which are founded on property, and to be excluded from representation which is regulated by a census of persons. ...

The true state of the case is, that they partake of both these qualities: being considered by our laws, in some respects, as persons, and in other respects as property. In being compelled to labor, not for himself, but for a master; in being vendible by one master to another master; and in being subject at all times to be restrained in his liberty and chastised in his body, by the capricious will of another, the slave may appear to be degraded from the human rank, and classed with those irrational animals which fall under the legal denomination of property. In being protected, on the other hand, in his life and in his limbs, against the violence of all others, even the master of his labor and his liberty; and in being punishable himself for all violence committed against others, the slave is no less evidently regarded by the law as a member of the society, not as a part of the irrational creation; as a moral person, not as a mere article of property. The federal Constitution, therefore, decides with great propriety on the

³¹⁰ Ibid., p. 55.

³¹¹ Ibid., p. 56.

case of our slaves, when it views them in the mixed character of persons and of property. ...

This is in fact their true character. It is the character bestowed on them by the laws under which they live; and it will not be denied, that these are the proper criterion; because it is only under the pretext that the laws have transformed the negroes into subjects of property, that a place is disputed them in the computation of numbers; and it is admitted, that if the laws were to restore the rights which have been taken away, the negroes could no longer be refused an equal share of representation with the other inhabitants....

Let the case of the slaves be considered, as it is in truth, a peculiar one. Let the compromising expedient of the Constitution be mutually adopted, which regards them as inhabitants, but as debased by servitude below the equal level of free inhabitants, which regards the SLAVE as divested of two fifths of the MAN.³¹²

That American economic interests—i.e., American merchants—were given *a free hand* to economically exploit the situation in British North America, following the end of the American Revolutionary War, and to preserve the *institution of slavery*, and to *avail itself of the transatlantic slave trade*, was cause for great concern to both Americans and Englishmen who questioned the motives of the American patriots. In his *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies* (1775), Rev. Wesley concluded that the real motive power behind the American Revolutionary disturbance was the interests of a few “republicans,” on both sides of the Atlantic, who wished to undermine King George III. “We have a few men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy.... They love neither England nor America, but play one against the other, in subserviency to their grand design of overturning the English Government.”³¹³ Furthermore, in *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies* (1775), Rev. Wesley seriously doubts the authenticity of the colonists’ claims that “no taxation without representation” was the same as “slavery.” Rev. Wesley states:

‘Who then is a slave?’ Look into America, and you may easily see. See that Negro, fainting under the load, bleeding under the lash! He is

³¹² *The Federalist Papers*, Paper #54. <https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/text-51-60#s-lg-box-wrapper-25493430>

³¹³ John Wesley, “A Calm Address to Our American Colonies” (1775).

a slave. And is there ‘no difference’ between him and his master? Yes; the one is screaming, ‘Murder! Slavery!’ the other silently bleeds and dies!

‘But wherein then consists the difference between liberty and slavery?’ Herein: You and I and the English in general, go where we will, and enjoy the fruit of our labors: This is liberty. The Negro does not: This is slavery.

Is not then all this outcry about liberty and slavery mere rant, and playing upon words?³¹⁴

Similarly, his *Some Observations on Liberty* (1776), Rev. Wesley stated:

Slavery is a state wherein neither a man’s goods, nor liberty, nor life, are at his own disposal. Such is the state of a thousand, of ten thousand, Negroes in the American colonies. And are their masters in the same state with them? In just the same slavery with the Negroes? Have they no more disposal of their own goods, or liberty, or lives? Does anyone beat or imprison them at pleasure; or take away their wives, or children, or lives; or sell the like cows or horses? This is slavery; and will you face us down that the Americans are in such slavery as this?³¹⁵

Since the American patriots clearly maintained a double standard with respect to the fundamental rights of African slaves to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” and there was no other evidence that the American colonists enjoyed fewer rights than similarly-situated British commoners, Rev. Wesley seriously questioned the authenticity of the American Revolution’s motives. Chief among his concerns was that the American republic’s mottos “We the People” and “Liberty” had the tendency to place the will of the American people above God’s will and sovereignty. Rev. Wesley felt that true liberty comes from submission to God’s will, not through a plurality of opinions held by “the people.” On this point, Rev. Wesley wrote:

To inflame them still more, you go on: ‘Liberty is more or less complete, according as the people have more or less share in the Government.’ This is altogether contrary to matter of fact: The

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ John Wesley, “Some Observations on Liberty” (1776).

greater share the people have in the Government, the less liberty, either civil or religious, does the nation in general enjoy. Accordingly, there is most liberty of all, civil and religious, under a limited monarchy; there is usually less under an aristocracy, and least of all under a democracy. What sentences then are these: ‘To be guided by one’s own will, is freedom; to be guided by the will of another, is slavery?’ This is the very quintessence of republicanism; but it is a little too bare-faced; for, if this is true, how free are all the devils in hell, seeing they are all guided by their own will! And what slaves are all the angels in heaven, since they are all guided by the will of another! See another stroke: ‘The people have power to model Government as they please.’ What an admirable lesson, to confirm the people in their loyalty to the Government! Yet again: ‘Government is a trust, and all its powers a delegation.’ It is a trust, but not from the people: ‘There is no power but of God.’ It is a delegation, namely, from God; for ‘rulers are God’s ministers,’ or delegates. How irreconcilable with this are your principles! ³¹⁶

Rev. Wesley’s observations of the American principle of liberty was that, fundamentally, it failed, at least explicitly, to acknowledge the sovereignty of God and that civil magistrates are God’s vicegerents. The American Revolution appeared to Rev. Wesley to be nothing more than a power-grab by a few elite British-American Whig politicians and merchants who wished to overthrow of both King George III and Church of England, and all the sacred principles and traditions that these two institutions represented. It did not appear to Rev. Wesley, who was himself a Tory-Anglican, that an American republic, governed by the sovereignty of “We the People,”³¹⁷ – which meant scarcely one-tenth of the total American population³¹⁸ -- could maintain sufficient fidelity to the natural-law principle of “[t]here is no power but of God.”³¹⁹

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ In “Some Observations on Liberty” (1776), Rev. Wesley says, “See now to what your argument comes. You affirm, all power is derived from the people; and presently exclude one-half of the people from having any part or lot in the matter.... Hitherto we have endeavored to view this point in the mere light of reason; and, even by this, it appears, that this supposition, which has been palmed upon us as undeniable, is not only false, not only contrary to reason, but contradictory to itself; the very men who are most positive that the people are the source of power, being brought into an inexplicable difficulty, by that single question, ‘**Who are the people?**’ reduced to a necessity of either giving up the point, or owning that by the people, **they mean scarce a tenth part of them.**”

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Romans 13:1-2.

Following the establishment of the new United States government in 1787, circumstances proved Rev. Wesley’s moral concerns to be justified,³²⁰ not just with respect to African American slaves, but also with respect to many other disenfranchised groups, including Army veterans, the working classes, small farmers, and various other minority groups—everywhere the concern was that the American Revolution had betrayed the trust of the average American who labored under the same repressive restrictions as before the revolution. The Methodist Church in America perpetuated Rev. Wesley’s zealous anti-slavery advocacy,³²¹ petitioning Gen. George Washington,³²² and even sacrificing liberty, life and limb for the cause of the enslaved Africans.³²³ And the horrible treatment that many of these Methodists received at the hands of pro-slavery ruffians proved Rev. Wesley’s concerns regarding the general substance and scope of “American liberty” and the plight of the African-American slaves to be prophetic.

THE END

Appendix B

“The Signers of the American *Declaration of Independence* (1776)”

³²⁰ John Wesley, “Some Observations on Liberty” (1776).

³²¹ The Methodist Church engaged in a valiant anti-slavery protest movement during the late 1780s. See, e.g., “The Long Road: Francis Asbury and George Washington,” (October 1, 2015), <https://www.francisasburytrptych.com/francis-asbury-and-george-washington/>

For example, in 1785, Methodists superintendents Bishop Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke met personally with future President George Washington at his home at Mount Vernon. They both asked Gen. Washington to sign their abolition petition to be submitted to Virginia legislature. Gen. Washington stated that he shared their abolition sentiments but felt that it would not be appropriate for him to sign any petition, but that if the Virginia legislature brought the matter to the floor, then he would give his opinion on the subject.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ The Methodist Church engaged in a valiant anti-slavery protest movement during the late 1780s. See, e.g., <http://consulthardesty.hardspace.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Hardesty-timeline-Rev10.pdf>, stating:

9 April 1785 Coke and Asbury personally inform General Washington (four years prior to his election as President) of their opposition to slavery. Coke is stalked by an assassin - then violently threatened in Virginia - for equating slavery with injustice. Instead of accepting a bounty for giving Coke a hundred lashes with the whip, a local magistrate – after hearing the evangelist preach in a barn – emancipates his 15 slaves. A chain reaction ensues, wherein perhaps an additional nine souls are freed from servitude.

Coke organizes church members in North Carolina to petition their legislature that manumission become legal. Failing, Coke returns to Virginia to lead calls for legislative change. This effort too is unsuccessful. Two counties set out indictments against him.

By

Roderick O. Ford , Litt.D.

This is a summary of the American Founding Fathers who signed the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. What is noticeably conspicuous is the lack of clergymen included on this roster. The only active clergyman to sign this Declaration was the Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon, who was then president of the College of New Jersey (Princeton), where he taught Founding Father James Madison and several others. The commercial representative of “planter,” “lawyer” and “merchant” are overwhelming represented. These three groups represented the chief commercial or capitalistic elements of 18th and 19th century American economy. Throughout this series, we have focused on the influence of Whig capitalism upon the church and state, and on the slow evolution of the primacy of capitalistic enterprises over the privileged position of the Church of England.

Church ←----→ State ←----→ Capitalism

The Revolution of '76 was in part a major component within this historic evolution, whereby modernity and commercialism vied for supremacy over both the Church and the State. In the case of the *Declaration of Independence* (1776), it is quite clear that American commercial interests utilized Christian natural law philosophy and jurisprudence in order to camouflage their grievances with moral philosophy and Christian natural-law theology. This was the work of Puritan theologians such as Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon (the President of the College of New Jersey) who were willing to merge commercial interests with the interests of Calvinism and Presbyterianism.

Table 1. List of founding father 1776 dec of independence signers³²⁴

Name	State	Place of Birth	Birth Year	Death Year	Occupation	Religion
Adams, John	Massachusetts	Quincy, MA	1735	1826	Lawyer	Congregationalist/ Unitarian
Adams, Samuel	Massachusetts	Boston, MA	1722	1803	Merchant	Congregationalist
Bartlett, Josiah	New Hampshire	Amesbury, MA	1729	1795	Physician	Congregationalist

³²⁴ <https://www.usconstitution.net/declarsigndata.html>

Braxton, Carter	Virginia	Newington, VA	1736	1797	Plantation Owner	Anglican/Episcopalian
Charles Carroll of Carrollton	Maryland	Annapolis, MD	1737	1832	Merchant/Plantation Owner	Roman Catholic
Chase, Samuel	Maryland	Somerset Co., MD	1741	1811	Lawyer	Anglican/Episcopalian
Clark, Abraham	New Jersey	Elizabethtown, NJ	1741	1794	Lawyer/Surveyor	Presbyterian
Clymer, George	Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, PA	1739	1813	Merchant	Anglican/Episcopalian/Quaker
Ellery, William	Rhode Island	Newport, RI	1727	1820	Lawyer/Merchant	Congregationalist
Floyd, William	New York	Brookhaven, NY	1734	1821	Land Speculator	Presbyterian
Franklin, Benjamin	Pennsylvania	Boston, MA	1706	1790	Scientist/Printer	Deist/Congregationalist
Gerry, Elbridge	Massachusetts	Marblehead, MA	1744	1814	Merchant	Anglican/Episcopalian
Gwinnett, Button	Georgia	Down Hatherley, England	1735	1777	Merchant/Plantation Owner	Anglican/Episcopalian
Hall, Lyman	Georgia	Wallingford, CT	1724	1790	Physician/Minister	Congregationalist
Hancock, John	Massachusetts	Quincy, MA	1737	1793	Merchant	Congregationalist
Harrison, Benjamin	Virginia	Charles City Co., VA	1726	1791	Plantation Owner/Farmer	unknown
Hart, John	New Jersey	Hunterdon Co., NJ	1711	1779	Land Owner	Presbyterian
Hewes, Joseph	North Carolina	Kingston, NJ	1730	1779	Merchant	Presbyterian
Heyward Jr., Thomas	South Carolina	St. Helena Parrish, SC	1746	1809	Lawyer/Plantation Owner	Anglican/Episcopalian

Hooper, William	North Carolina	Boston, MA	1742	1790	Lawyer	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Hopkins, Stephen	Rhode Island	Providence, RI	1707	1785	Merchant	Baptist/ Congregationalist
Hopkinson, Francis	New Jersey	Philadelphia, PA	1737	1791	Lawyer/Musician	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Huntington, Samuel	Connecticut	Windham, CT	1731	1796	Lawyer	Congregationalist
Jefferson, Thomas	Virginia	Albermarle Co., VA	1743	1826	Lawyer/ Plantation Owner	Deist/ Anglican/ Episcopalian
Lee, Francis Lightfoot	Virginia	Mt. Pleasant, VA	1734	1797	Plantation Owner	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Lee, Richard Henry	Virginia	Stratford, VA	1732	1794	Plantation Owner/Merchant	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Lewis, Francis	New York	Llandaff, Wales	1713	1802	Merchant	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Livingston, Philip	New York	Albany, NY	1716	1778	Merchant	Presbyterian
Lynch Jr., Thomas	South Carolina	Prince George's Parrish, SC	1749	1779	Lawyer	Anglican/ Episcopalian
McKean, Thomas	Delaware	Chester Co., PA	1735	1817	Lawyer	Presbyterian
Middleton, Arthur	South Carolina	Charleston, SC	1742	1787	Plantation Owner	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Morris, Lewis	New York	West Chester Co., NY	1726	1798	Plantation Owner	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Morris, Robert	Pennsylvania	Liverpool, England	1734	1806	Merchant/Land Speculator	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Morton, John	Pennsylvania	Ridley Township, PA	1724	1777	Farmer	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Nelson Jr., Thomas	Virginia	Yorktown, VA	1738	1789	Merchant/ Plantation Owner	Anglican/ Episcopalian

Paca, William	Maryland	Abington, MD	1740	1799	Lawyer/ Plantation Owner	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Paine, Robert Treat	Massachusetts	Boston, MA	1731	1814	Lawyer/Scientist	Congregationalist
Penn, John	North Carolina	Carolina Co., VA	1740	1788	Lawyer	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Read, George	Delaware	Northeast MD	1733	1798	Lawyer	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Rodney, Caesar	Delaware	Dover, DE	1728	1784	Plantation Owner/Soldier	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Ross, George	Pennsylvania	New Castle, DE	1730	1779	Lawyer	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Rush, Benjamin	Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, PA	1746	1813	Physician	Presbyterian
Rutledge, Edward	South Carolina	Christ Church Parrish, SC	1749	1800	Lawyer/Plantation Owner	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Sherman, Roger	Connecticut	Newton, MA	1721	1793	Lawyer	Congregationalist
Smith, James	Pennsylvania	Northern Ireland	1719	1806	Lawyer	Presbyterian
Stockton, Richard	New Jersey	Princeton, NJ	1730	1781	Lawyer	Presbyterian
Stone, Thomas	Maryland	Charles Co., MD	1743	1787	Lawyer	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Taylor, George	Pennsylvania	Ireland	1716	1781	Merchant	Presbyterian
Thornton, Matthew	New Hampshire	Ireland	1714	1803	Physician	Presbyterian
Walton, George	Georgia	Cumberland Co., VA	1741	1804	Lawyer	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Whipple, William	New Hampshire	Kittery, ME	1730	1785	Merchant	Congregationalist

Williams, William	Connecticut	Lebanon, CT	1731	1811	Merchant	Congregationalist
Wilson, James	Pennsylvania	Carskerdo, Scotland	1742	1798	Lawyer	Deist/ Anglican/ Episcopalian
Witherspoon, John	New Jersey	Gifford, Scotland	1723	1794	Minister	Presbyterian
Wolcott, Oliver	Connecticut	Windsor, CT	1726	1797	Lawyer	Congregationalist
Wythe, George	Virginia	Elizabeth City Co., VA	1726	1806	Lawyer	Anglican/ Episcopalian

28 Anglicans
14 Congregational
11 Presbyterian
1 Roman Catholic
2 Unknown

56 Total

- Only 13 did not own slaves³²⁵

³²⁵ John Adams, Samuel Adams, George Clymer, William Ellery, Elbridge Gerry, Samuel Huntington, Thomas McKean, Robert Treat Paine, Roger Sherman, Charles Thomson, George Walton, William Williams and James Willson.

Appendix C

“Signer of the *Declaration of Independence* (1776) and Their Views on Slavery”

by

Roderick O. Ford, Litt.D.

Table 1. Slavery and the Views of the Founding Fathers who Signed the *Declaration of Independence* (1776)

Name	State	Owned Slaves?	Opposition to Slavery?	Immediate Emancipation	Gradual Emancipation	Religion
Adams, John	MA	No	Yes	No	Yes ³²⁶	Congregationalist/ Unitarian
Adams, Samuel	MA	No	Yes	No	Yes ³²⁷	Congregationalist
Bartlett, Josiah	NH	Yes	No	Unknown	Unknown	Congregationalist
Braxton, Carter	VA	Yes	No	No	No	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Charles Carroll of Carrollton	MD	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Roman Catholic
Chase, Samuel	MD	Yes	Yes	Yes ³²⁸	Yes ³²⁹	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Clark,	NJ	Yes	No	No	No	Presbyterian

³²⁶ <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/john-adams-abolition-slavery-1801>

³²⁷ <https://boston1775.blogspot.com/2009/01/samuel-adams-and-slavery-public-man.html?m=1#:~:text=Adams%20expressed%20a%20distaste%20for,American%20politicians%20in%20doing%20so.&text=Adams%20supported%20mild%20anti%20slavery%20measures%20in%20Massachusetts.>

³²⁸ <https://www.god-and-country.info/SChase.html#:~:text=In%201784%2C%20he%20introduced%20a.support%20the%20abolition%20of%20slavery.>

³²⁹ Ibid.

Abraham						
Clymer, George	PA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ³³⁰	Anglican/ Episcopalian/ Quaker
Ellery, William	RI	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ³³¹	Congregationalist
Floyd, William	NY	Yes	No	unknown	unknown ³³²	Presbyterian
Franklin, Benjamin	PA	Yes	Yes ³³³	No	Yes	Deist/ Congregationalist
Gerry, Elbridge	MA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Gwinnett, Button	GA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Hall, Lyman	GA	Yes	No	unknown	Unknown	Congregationalist
Hancock, John	MA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown ³³⁴	Congregationalist
Harrison, Benjamin	VA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	unknown
Hart, John	NJ	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Presbyterian
Hewes, Joseph	NC	Yes	No	No	No	Presbyterian
Heyward Jr., Thomas	SC	Yes	No	No	No	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Hooper, William	NC	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/ Episcopalian

³³⁰ <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/george-clymer/m01mpsj?categoryid=historical-figure>

³³¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Ellery

³³²

³³³ Franklin was elected president of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery in 1787.

³³⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Hancock

Hopkins, Stephen	RI	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ³³⁵	Baptist/ Congregationalist
Hopkinson, Francis	NJ	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Huntington, Samuel	CT	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ³³⁶	Congregationalist
Jefferson, Thomas	VA	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ³³⁷	Deist/ Anglican/ Episcopalian
Lee, Francis Lightfoot	VA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Lee, Richard Henry	VA	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ³³⁸	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Lewis, Francis	NY	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/ Episcopalian
Livingston, Philip	NY	Yes	No	No	No ³³⁹	Presbyterian
Lynch Jr.,	SC	Yes	No	No	No ³⁴⁰	Anglican/

³³⁵ “In 1765, Stephen Hopkins authored a pamphlet entitled *The Rights of the Colonies Examined*, in which he wrote: ‘Liberty is the greatest blessing that men enjoy, and slavery the heaviest curse that human nature is capable of.’ An ardent patriot in the cause of American Independence, Hopkins would also make some strides toward the abolition of slavery in Rhode Island, although not without personal struggle.... Against this backdrop—when thoughts of independence were rooting and the Society of Friends (Quakers) continued to pressure its members to reject slavery—Stephen Hopkins penned this document of emancipation. Two years later, in 1774, he spearheaded a bill in the Rhode Island General Assembly that prohibited the importation of slaves into the colony. A decade later, in February 1784, the General Assembly passed ‘An Act Authorizing the Manumission of Negroes, Mulattoes, and Others, and for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery.’ It stipulated that no persons born in Rhode Island on or after March 1, 1784 were to “servants for life, or slaves.”... Although Hopkins freed Saint Jago when pressured by his Quaker associates, his refusal to free other household slaves led to his expulsion from the increasingly antislavery religious meeting.” <https://www.sethkaller.com/item/807-Four-Years-Prior-to-Signing-the-Declaration.-R.I.%E2%80%99s-Stephen-Hopkins-Declares-His-Slave%E2%80%99s-Independence>

³³⁶ <https://www.nga.org/governor/samuel-huntington/#:~:text=At%2022%2C%20Huntington%20studied%20law,entered%20politics%20in%20Norwich%2C%20Connecticut.&text=Huntington%20also%20was%20a%20proponent,the%20Old%20State%20House%20Building>.

³³⁷ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Jefferson_and_slavery#Notes_on_the_State_of_Virginia_\(1785\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Jefferson_and_slavery#Notes_on_the_State_of_Virginia_(1785))

³³⁸ <https://leefamilyarchive.org/reference/theses/virginia/04.html>

³³⁹ Very active slave trader. <https://columbiaandslavery.columbia.edu/content/3-livingstons>

Thomas						Episcopalian
McKean, Thomas	DE	No	No	unknown	unknown	Presbyterian
Middleton, Arthur	SC	Yes	No	No	No	Anglican/Episcopalian
Morris, Lewis	NY	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/Episcopalian
Morris, Robert	PA	Yes	No	No	No ³⁴¹	Anglican/Episcopalian
Morton, John	PA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/Episcopalian
Nelson Jr., Thomas	VA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/Episcopalian
Paca, William	MD	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/Episcopalian
Paine, Robert Treat	MA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ³⁴²	Congregationalist
Penn, John	NC	Yes	No	No	No	Anglican/Episcopalian
Read, George	DE	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/Episcopalian
Rodney, Caesar	DE	Yes	No	No	Yes ³⁴³	Anglican/Episcopalian
Ross, George	PA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/Episcopalian
Rush,	PA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ³⁴⁴	Presbyterian

³⁴⁰ “Less than a month after signing the Declaration of Independence Lynch threatened that South Carolina would secede from the United States in a threat representing the interests his constituents. ‘If it is debated, whether their Slaves are their Property, there is an End of the Confederation.’” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Lynch_Jr.

³⁴¹ Very active slave trader. <https://foundersandslavery.wordpress.com/2015/04/19/updated-robert-morris/>

³⁴² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Treat_Paine

³⁴³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar_Rodney

³⁴⁴ Slave owner who became a staunch abolitionist: “For Rush, slavery was not simply unjust; it was a transgression

Benjamin						
Rutledge, Edward	SC	Yes	No	No	No ³⁴⁵	Anglican/Episcopalian
Sherman, Roger	CT	No	No	No	No ³⁴⁶	Congregationalist
Smith, James	PA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Presbyterian
Stockton, Richard	NJ	Yes	No	unknown	unknown ³⁴⁷	Presbyterian
Stone, Thomas	MD	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/Episcopalian
Taylor, George	PA	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Presbyterian
Thornton, Matthew	NH	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Presbyterian
Walton, George	GA	No	No	unknown	unknown	Anglican/Episcopalian
Whipple,	NH	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ³⁴⁸	Congregationalist

against natural law and a blight against God—a serious charge for the devout Presbyterian Christian. He believed that the new nation could not continue to maintain such a scourge without a reckoning. ‘Remember that national crimes require national punishments,’ he wrote about slavery, “and without declaring what punishment awaits this evil, you may venture to assure them that it cannot pass with impunity, unless God shall cease to be just or merciful.” https://www.dickinson.edu/info/20043/about/3480/benjamin_rush

³⁴⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Rutledge#American_Revolution

³⁴⁶ Although Sherman did not own slaves, he openly supported both slavery and the slave trade. “Roger Sherman opened debate the next day by adopting a familiar pose. He declared his personal disapproval of slavery but refused to condemn it in other parts of the nation. He then argued against a prohibition of the slave trade. First, he asserted that “the public good did not require” an end to the trade. Noting that the states already had the right to import slaves, Sherman saw no point in taking a right away from the states unnecessarily because ‘it was expedient to have as few objections as possible’ to the new Constitution. Here Sherman assumed it was necessary to defuse southern opposition to the Constitution, which might result from a ban on the slave trade, but he did not think it necessary to placate those who might oppose the Constitution if it allowed the slave trade to continue. Sherman was prepared to appease those who supported the slave trade, but he apparently was unconcerned about the strong opposition to the slave trade in his own region. Revealing his true priorities, Sherman urged the delegates to hurry and finish their business, noting, no doubt, that they had been in session for almost three months.”

<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2000/winter/garrisons-constitution-2.html>

³⁴⁷ <https://libertyandprosperity.com/richard-stockton-slave-statue-removed-stockton-u/>

³⁴⁸ “During the remaining years of Mr. Whipple’s life, he filled several important offices. In 1780, he was elected a representative to the general assembly of New Hampshire, the duties of which office he continued to discharge during several re-elections, with much honor to himself, and to the general acceptance of his constituents. After freeing his own slaves, Whipple wrote as follows to Josiah Bartlett, ‘The last accounts from South Carolina were

William						st
Williams, William	CT	No	No	unknown	unknown	Congregationalist
Wilson, James	PA	No (?) ³⁴⁹	No	Yes	Yes	Deist/ Anglican/ Episcopalian
Witherspoon, John	NJ	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ³⁵⁰	Presbyterian
Wolcott, Oliver	CT	Yes	No	unknown	unknown	Congregationalist
Wythe, George	VA	Yes	Yes ³⁵¹	unknown	Yes	Anglican/ Episcopalian

favorable. A recommendation is gone thither for raising some regiments of blacks. This, I suppose, will lay a foundation for the emancipation of those wretches in that country. I hope it will be the means of dispensing the blessings of Freedom to all the human race in America.” <https://www.dsdi1776.com/william-whipple/>

³⁴⁹ “While Wilson was an opponent of slavery (despite owning a slave himself), and would forcefully argue that the Constitution laid the foundation for “banishing slavery out of this country”, he remained relatively quiet on the issue at the convention, taking only minor steps like objecting to the fugitive slave clause on technical grounds so as to prevent roiling pro-slavery delegates, whose support was needed to ratify the new constitution. Even with his strong opposition to slavery, Wilson himself proposed the Three-fifths Compromise, which counted slaves as three-fifths of a person for the purpose of representation in the House of Representatives, in an effort to placate southern antipathy towards the House of Representatives; as the Convention proceeded, however, he would come to disavow the compromise.” [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Wilson_\(Founding_Father\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Wilson_(Founding_Father))

³⁵⁰ “In this connection it may be noted that in 1790 President Witherspoon, while a member of the New Jersey Legislature, was chairman of a committee on the abolition of slavery in the state, and brought in a report advising no action, on the ground that the law already forbade the importation of slaves and encouraged voluntary manumission. He suggested, however, that the state might enact a law that all slaves born after its passage should be free at a certain age—e.g., 28 years, as in Pennsylvania, although in his optimistic opinion the state of society in America and the progress of the idea of universal liberty gave little reason to believe that there would be any slaves at all in America in 28 years’ time, and precipitation therefore might do more harm than good.” John Witherspoon, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1912), p. 74.

³⁵¹ ?One scholar states, without extensive documentation, that the problem of slavery preoccupied Wythe in his last years. In 1785, Jefferson assured English abolitionist Richard Price that Wythe's sentiments against slavery were unequivocal.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Wythe#Slavery

Appendix D

“Who were the Delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787?”

By

Roderick O. Ford , Litt.D.

This Chart provides the names of the Delegates who attended the Constitutional Convention in 1787. What is noticeably conspicuous on this list is the lack of clergymen included on this roster. The commercial representative of “planter,” “lawyer” and “merchant” are overwhelming represented. These three groups represented the chief commercial or capitalistic elements of the 18th and 19th century American economy. Throughout this series, we have focused on the influence of Whig capitalism upon the church and state, and on the slow evolution of the primacy of capitalistic enterprises over the privileged position of the Church of England.

Church ←-----→ State ←-----→ Capitalism

This Chart demonstrates how by the time of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, commercial interests and capitalism had become predominant in the colonial British North America. The institution of the Church of England and other Christian denominations had almost completely receded into the background, so that the Christian foundation of constitutional law and jurisprudence became more and more obscured, if not altogether obliterated in American law.

This Chart also reveals the names of those constitutional delegates who owned slaves. Slave ownership did not necessary reveal how a particular delegate felt about the institution of slavery. Some slave owners wished to end slavery, and some non-slave-owners did not wish to end slavery because they were slave-traders who had a financial stake in slavery. But, overall, each of the Delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 agreed to tolerate the institution of slavery through the “Three-Fifths Compromise” and to permit the continuation of the slave trade up to the year 1808.

Table 1. Delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787

Name	State	Occupation	College	Religion	Owned Slaves	Supported the 3/5 Compromise
Oliver Ellsworth	CT	Lawyer	Yale/ Princeton	Congregationalist	No	Yes
William S. Johnson	CT	Lawyer	Yale/ Harvard	Anglican	Yes	Yes
Roger Sherman	CT	Lawyer/ Merchant		Congregationalist	No	Yes
Richard Bassett	DE	Lawyer		Methodist	Yes * but freed them after converting to Methodism	Yes
Jacob Broom	DE	Surveyor/ Farmer/ General Business		Anglican	Yes	Yes
John Dickenson	DE	Lawyer	Middle Temple Inn of Court (London)	Congregationalist/ Quaker	Yes	Yes
George Read	DE	Lawyer		Anglican	Yes	Yes
Abraham Baldwin	GA	Minister	Yale	Congregationalist	Yes	Yes
William Few	GA	Farmer/ Business/ General Business	Inner Temple- Inn of Court (London)	Anglican	No	Yes
William L. Pierce	GA	Planter	College William & Mary	Anglican	No	Yes

Daniel Carroll	MD	Planter	College of St. Omer (France)	Roman Catholic	Yes	Yes
Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer	MD	Magistrate/ Planter		Anglican	Yes	Yes
Luther Martin	MD	Lawyer	Princeton	Anglican	Yes	Yes
James McHenry	MD	Physician		Presbyterian	Yes	Yes
John F. Mercer	MD	Lawyer	College of William & Mary	Anglican	Yes	Yes
Elbridge Gerry	MA	Merchant	Harvard	Anglican	No	No
Nathaniel Gorham	MA	Merchant		Congregationalist	No	Yes
Rufus King	MA	Lawyer	Harvard	Anglican	No	Yes
Caleb Strong	MA	Lawyer	Harvard	Congregationalist	No	Yes
Nicholas Gilman	NH	Lawyer/ Merchant		Congregationalist	No	Yes
John Langdon	NH	Merchant		Congregationalist	No	Yes
David Brearly	NJ	Lawyer	Princeton	Anglican	No	Yes
Jonathan Dayton	NJ	Lawyer	Princeton	Presbyterian/ Anglican	Yes	Yes
William C. Houston	NJ	Lawyer	Princeton	Presbyterian	Yes	Yes
William Paterson	NJ	Lawyer/ Justice	Princeton	Presbyterian	Yes	Yes
Alexander	NY	Lawyer	Columbia	Anglican	No	Yes

Hamilton						
John Lansing, Jr.	NY	Lawyer		Dutch Reformed	Yes	Yes
Robert Yates	NY	Lawyer		Dutch Reformed	Yes	Yes
William Blount	NC	Farmer		Presbyterian/ Anglican	Yes	Yes
William R. Davie	NC	Lawyer	Princeton	Presbyterian	Yes	Yes
Alexander Martin	NC	Merchant	Princeton	Presbyterian	Yes	Yes
Richard Dobbs Spaight	NC		Glasgow University (Scotland)	Anglican	Yes	Yes
Hugh Williamson	NC	Physician/ Merchant/ Educator	Penn	Presbyterian	No	Yes
George Clymer	PA	Merchant		Anglican/ Quaker	No	Yes
Thomas Fitzsimons	PA	Merchant		Roman Catholic	No	Yes
Benjamin Franklin	PA	Scientist/ Publisher/ Inventor			Yes	Yes
Jared Ingersoll	PA	Lawyer	Yale	Presbyterian	No	Yes
Thomas Mifflin	PA	Merchant	Penn	Lutheran/ Quaker	No	Yes
Gouverneur Morris	PA	Lawyer	Columbia	Anglican	No	Yes
Robert Morris	PA	Merchant		Anglican	Yes	Yes
James Wilson	PA	Lawyer/ Justice on	Univ. of St. Andrews	Presbyterian/ Anglican	No	Yes

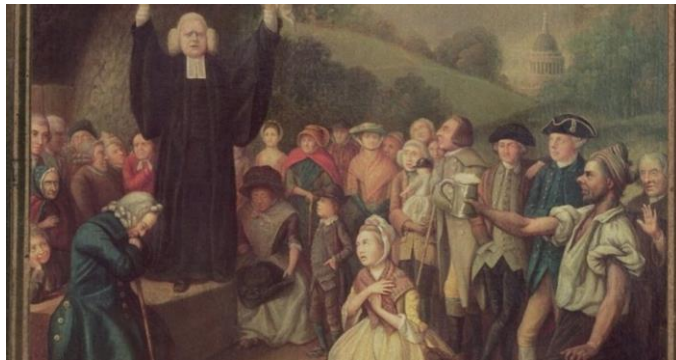
		U.S. Supreme Court	(Scotland)			
Pierce Butler	SC	Soldier		Anglican	Yes	Yes
Charles Pinckney	SC	Lawyer		Anglican	Yes	Yes
Charles Cotesworth Pinckney	SC	Lawyer	Oxford	Anglican	Yes	Yes
John Rutledge	SC	Lawyer/ Planter/ Justice on U.S. Supreme Court	Middle Temple- Inn of Court (London)	Anglican	Yes	Yes
John Blair	VA	Lawyer	College of William and Mary	Presbyterian/ Anglican	Yes	Yes
James Madison	VA	Lawyer/ Planter	Princeton	Anglican	Yes	Yes
George Mason	VA	Planter		Anglican	Yes	Yes
Edmond J. Randolph	VA	Lawyer	College of William and Mary	Anglican	Yes	Yes
George Washington	VA	Planter/ Surveyor		Anglican	Yes	Yes
George Wythe	VA	Lawyer	College of William and Mary	Anglican	Yes	Yes

THE END

THIS PAPER IS THE END OF PART I

OF THIS SERIES ON

**“CHRISTIANITY AND LAW: A HISTORY OF THE
ANGLICAN CHURCH”**



~ Luke 10: 25-37