

WESLEYAN THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A Call for Papers

for the November 1996 meeting

After speaking at eight pastors conferences (PALCONs) during the summer of 1995, I am more convinced than ever that no topic would be more relevant for the 1996 WTS meeting than *worship*. Again and again, the 3,000 pastors I addressed showed that confusion reigns when it comes to worship in the Holiness Movement. This leads to a rash of brash experiments unguided by any coherent theology of worship. In search of effectiveness, popularity, and something that will keep up with the charismatic appeal of the neighboring pentecostal program, pastors are trying anything and everything.

Though I met no one who has bought into the laughing, roaring, barking Toronto blessing, just about everything else is being tried out. The pastor of one large holiness church (1,300 in worship) was determined to make a "seeker" church out of his traditional congregation. To help things along, he used a chancel display that included beer cans and liquor bottles. "We are a church of the people," he believed the display testified.

One of our PALCON consultants/counselors said that after a couple of conferences, his interviews became predictable. The pastor would say something like this: "Eight months ago, I started a contemporary worship service...and now it looks as if I'm going to have to leave."

I believe that WTS can do our movement a great service not by preserving the pedantic, but by exploring the biblical, theological, and cultural foundations, boundaries, and guidelines for Christian, Protestant, Evangelical, Wesleyan/Holiness worship.

Following is a "thought starter" list of *possible* topics. This is not a prescriptive list, but a prompting list. Feel free to propose other topics that are in some direct way connected with worship.

1. How Worship Informs Theology
2. A History of Worship (or some element of worship) in the Wesleyan Tradition
3. Worship and the Means of Grace in Wesley
4. Exegeting Culture: A Guide for Worship
5. Theological Analysis of Contemporary Worship
6. Sociological Analysis of Contemporary Worship
7. Toward a Wesleyan Theology of Worship
8. Exegeting a Local Congregation as a Guide to Preaching and Worship
9. Biblical, Theological Foundations for the Job Description of the Worship Leader
10. Charles Wesley Evaluates Contemporary Christian Music
11. Drama as Worship
12. Preaching as an Element of Worship
13. John Wesley's Use of the Anglican Liturgy in Worship *or* Where Can a High Church Wesleyan Go to Worship?

14. Worship as the Church's Primary Activity *or* Worship as Not the Church's Primary Activity
15. Christian Service as Worship
16. Essentials for Worship Through Holy Communion
17. Baptism as an Act of Worship
18. Family Worship in the Wesleyan Mode
19. Use of Scripture in Worship
20. Wesley's Use of Prayer in Worship
21. Robert E. Webber's Writings on Worship Placed in the Wesleyan Scale
22. Theology as Worship in Geoffrey Wainwright's *Doxology*
23. Worship as Evangelism (Inviting Unbelievers into the Presence of God)
See *Worship Evangelism*, Sally Morgenthaler, Zondervan, 1995.
24. Theological/Biblical Analysis of Holy Laughter/the Toronto Blessing
25. Pentecostalism and Worship in the Wesleyan Mode
26. Changing Worship Styles: Opportunity for Growth or Schism?
27. The Reformed (Westminster Catechism) Preoccupation with Worship
28. The Docetic Preoccupation with Worship
29. Worship: Festival or Carnival (Entertainment)
30. Current Trends in Worship and Where They Might Lead
31. An Evaluation of *The Complete Library of Christian Worship* (Word Books)
32. What a Pastor Should Teach the Worship Committee
33. Planning for Change in Worship Practice in the Local Church

Again, the above list is intended to fill a "thought starter" role. We may have omitted very important topics. If you choose to write on one of the above that has to do primarily with *praxis*, remember that for our society, the focus should be on the biblical/theological foundations from which the *praxis* springs.

Please send a 1-3 page proposal and curriculum vita no later than March 15, 1996, to Wesley D. Tracy:

by post: Wesley D. Tracy
Herald of Holiness
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64141

by fax: 816-333-1748

Be sure to identify your document as a WTS proposal and include a self-addressed stamped envelope for response. The executive committee will evaluate the proposals and notify the authors no later than April 15, 1996.

...Wesley D. Tracy
Second Vice-president, WTS