

Axiom:

The life of a Wesleyan leader is motivated by personal holiness to love others into holiness for the glory of the Father.

Thesis:

Through prevenient grace, God has invited us into relationship through Christ, into community with God's people, and into personal holiness. Therefore, the Wesleyan leader is called to partner with the Holy Spirit to love others into relationship with Christ, personal holiness, and community with God's people – for the sake of the world.

Prevenient Grace

The life of a Wesleyan leader should be traceable back to a personal experience and acknowledgement of prevenient grace in ones own life. Said leader should have a clear understanding of how God has moved and worked in the past, leading up to an occasion on which there was opportunity to accept the reconciling forgiveness and salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. In so doing, one will be able to share that it is not only about the decision to accept Christ, but also about his mercy extended during our rebellious and wayward life beforehand.

Relationship w/ Christ

It has been said time and again, but is worth reiterating. Christianity, and implicitly Wesleyan faith, is built upon a relationship and not only a set of religious tenets. The leader must be in continual fellowship with Christ, in order not only to have the empowerment and fervor to lead his congregation, but to revitalize and encourage his own soul. A Wesleyan leader must be aware of the possible danger of getting so caught up in doing things for God that he loses touch with simply having a relationship with God. The greatest leader must also be the most teachable, approaching the throne with a childlike faith and trust in God.

Community of God's People

This was important during Wesley's own life and ministry, as he was constantly working on ways to bring people closer together. It is of utmost importance that the leaders in the Wesleyan vein continue to emphasize the communal aspect of our faith. Even during Wesley's own lifetime, his friend George Whitfield said in retrospect that he wished he had built up communities as well, fearing that he had only "begot children for the murderer," and acknowledging that his followers had "become as a rope of sand." It is because of this intentional building of faith communities that Methodism still survives today.

Personal Holiness

This is the cornerstone upon which the effectiveness of a Wesleyan leader rests. If this is not actively and humbly pursued, failure will surely follow. This was a distinctive emphasis of Wesley himself, so much so that people criticized his definition of “perfect in love.” The contemporary Wesleyan leader must be both continually striving for this on a personal level, as well as seeking to instill a profound sense of dependence on God in his flock. Personal holiness therefore, is not something that should be uniquely Wesleyan. Rather, it is simply walking out the command of “be holy, as the Lord your God is holy.” Such is to be seen as an attainable goal, and not merely a suggestion.

Partner w/ Holy Spirit

This is another crucial point in Wesleyan leadership, that one accepts the need for full reliance upon the Holy Spirit. There is only so much that one person can do before facing the inevitable burnout that comes by doing work solely on ones own strength. Therefore, we must first beseech God for his Holy Spirit to brood over us, lest our ministry be in vain. It is only when the Holy Spirit fuels the fire of our inner passion that the yoke is easy and the burden is light. Should we attempt to take up this task of our own accord the weight of responsibility would crush us.

**Love Others, Relationship w/ Christ
Personal Holiness & Community**

This is where the rubber meets the road, so to speak. It is the culmination of ones own relationship with Christ, pursuit of personal holiness, and actively seeking and living in community. As a natural overflow of these key principles, there is a spilling over of the blessing in the life of the leader to those he encounters. It could be said this way: The Wesleyan leader is burning so hot for God that when he meets others, even for a brief moment, they leave the encounter with contact burns. May it be that we as aspiring leaders would model this same attitude. It is a contagious cure, now having God’s love the task at hand is to give it away.

For Sake of World

When the Lord blessed Abraham, he said that he would multiply and prosper him in order that “all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.” Too often, we as Christians have an *us and them* mentality, in which we are the church and socialize people towards our way of life. Only then do we welcome them into our sanctuary. This was not the intent of our God when he blessed Abraham. *Set apart* is not to be read as a monastic experience. Rather, we are to be the peculiar people of God, sent into the world to love them as he loves them. Let what grieves the heart of the father also move us to action, never forgetting that the only difference between us and them is that we have responded to the good news. If we do not go, then who will tell them?