



The Poor and the People Called Methodists

Richard P. Heitzenrater

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"The Poor and the People Called Methodists merits serious attention by all United Methodists who are committed to understanding and appropriating Wesleyan theology and tradition. The contributors to this informative, inspiring, and provocative volume clearly demonstrate that relationships and ministry with the economically poor are constitutive of Christian theology and discipleship as understood by John and Charles Wesley. Focus on the central theme in these essays could transform 'the people called Methodists' in the 21st century as it did in the 18th century." --Kenneth L. Carder, Bishop Mississippi Area, United Methodist Church "John and Charles Wesley's concern for the poor is well-known, and the contributors to this volume spell out the 18th century context within which their efforts took place. Sixty-five percent of Methodist class members worked in jobs (when they had jobs) where the pay was below the poverty line. Nevertheless, they brought their penny a week to assist those who were in even more desperate straits than themselves. The poor ministered to the poor, mutually sharing in the 'works of mercy,' which the Wesleys were convinced were means of grace. They knew that an encounter with the love of God is inseparable from the care of others. Practices developed that made this mutual care possible: the Strangers' Friend Society, sacramental offerings, medical clinics, visitation of the sick and those in prison. These authors not only make all of this come alive but also help us see how it can apply to the life of the church today." Theodore Runyon, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta This book gives an in-depth examination of the Wesleyan attitude toward and programs with the poor from the time of John Wesley to the present. The chapters consist of revised versions of presentations given at a major symposium on "The Wesleys and the Poor: The Legacy and Development of Methodist Attitudes Toward Poverty: 1729-1999," In October 1999 at the Bridwell Library of the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. Contributors: William J. Abraham, Jose Miguez Bonino, Ted A. Campbell, Richard P. Heitzenrater, S T Kimbrough Jr., Gareth Lloyd, Tim Macquiban, Randy L. Maddox, Joerg Rieger, Carlton R. Young

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