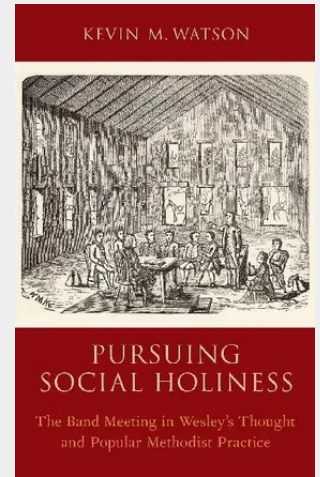


Watson

Pursuing Social Holiness

The Band Meeting in Wesley's Thought and Popular Methodist Practice

Kevin M. Watson offers the first in-depth examination of the early Methodist band meeting: a small group of five to seven people focusing on the confession of sin in order to grow in holiness. The "social holiness" of the band meeting figures significantly both in the development of eighteenth-century British Methodism and in understanding shifting forms of community in the context of rapidly changing British society. Arguing that neither John Wesley's theology nor popular Methodism can be understood independent of each other, Watson shows how Wesley synthesized important aspects of Anglican (an emphasis on a disciplined practice of the means of grace) and Moravian (an emphasis on an experience of justification by faith and the witness of the Spirit) piety in his own version of the band meeting. The small groups were of particular significance in John Wesley's theology of discipleship because the bands united his emphasis on the importance of holiness with his conviction that Christians are most likely to make progress in the Christian life together, rather than in isolation.



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