HEROES OF REFORMATION

(JOHN WESLEY)

HE OPPOSED ERRORS OF ANTINOMIANISM: Wesley steadfastly opposed the errors of the Antinomian teachers, and showed that this doctrine which led to Antinomianism was contrary to the Scriptures. “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.” [Titus 2:11; 1 Timothy 2:3-6.] The Spirit of God is freely bestowed, to enable every man to lay hold upon the means of salvation. Thus Christ, “the true light,” “lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” [John 1:9.] Men fail of salvation only through their own willful refusal of the gift of life.

HE DECLARED THERE IS UNITY BETWEEN GOD’S LAW AND THE GOSPEL: Wesley declared the perfect harmony of the law and the gospel “There is, therefore, the closest connection that can be conceived, between the law and the gospel. On the one hand, the law continually makes way for and points us to, the gospel; on the other, the gospel continually leads us to a more exact fulfilling of the law. The law, for instance, requires us to love God, to love our neighbor, to be meek, humble, or holy. We feel that we are not sufficient for these things; yea, that ‘with man this is impossible;’ but we see a promise of God to give us that love, and to make us humble, meek, and holy; we lay hold of this gospel, of these glad tidings; it is done to us according to our faith; and the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, ‘through faith which is in Christ Jesus.’”

HE MAGNIFIED THE LAW: Thus while preaching the gospel of the grace of God, Wesley, like his Master, sought to “magnify the law, and make it honorable.” Faithfully did he accomplish the work given him of God, and glorious were the results which he was permitted to behold. At the close of his long life of more than fourscore years—above half a century spent in itinerant ministry—his avowed adherents numbered more than half a million souls. But the multitude that through his labors had been lifted from the ruin and degradation of sin to a higher and purer life, and the number who by this teaching had attained to a deeper and richer experience, will never be known till the whole family of the redeemed shall be gathered into the kingdom of God. His life presents a lesson of priceless worth to every Christian. Would that the faith and humility, the untiring zeal, self-sacrifice and devotion of this servant of Christ, might be reflected in the churches of today! The Great Controversy, 88 pp. 261 - 264.