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RADICAL GRACE

Justice for the Poor and Marginalized — Charles Wesley's Views for the Twenty-First Century

S T Kimbrough, Jr.

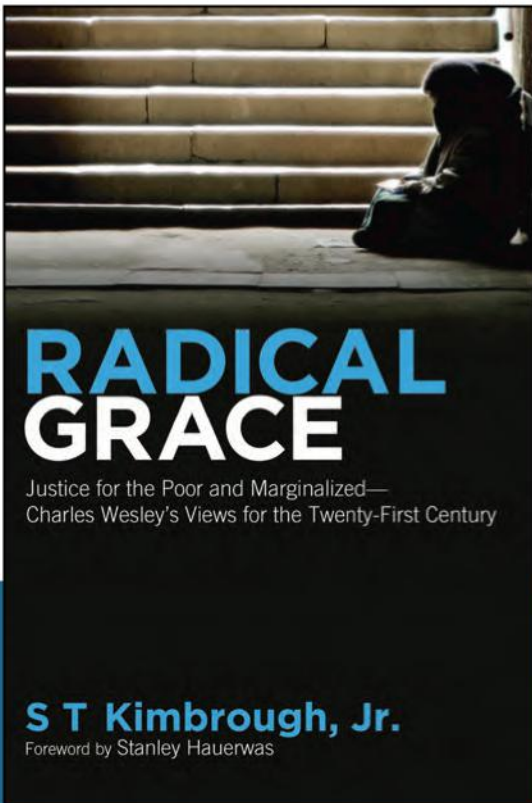
Foreword by **Stanley Hauerwas**

This volume brings together for the first time the writings of Charles Wesley on the theme of justice for the poor and marginalized, drawing upon his sermons, manuscript journal, poetry, and a few letters. Most of his poems/hymns that address poverty and justice were left unpublished at his death. The author studies the theology of these texts for the first time in relation to relevant themes in his sermons, manuscript journal, and letters, and evaluates it in the light of its application and implementation in the eighteenth century and its viability for the twenty-first-century church and Christian. Charles's views of how Christians may "use the grace divine" in seeking justice for the poor are indeed radical, for they advocate behavior that is often quite contrary to what is generally accepted as Christian practice. This volume makes clear that the radical grace he espouses is consistent with Holy Scripture and should indeed be practiced by Christians today.

The liturgies and musical settings of some of the hymn texts that address the poor and marginalized at the end of the volume provide a pragmatic means for the worshipping community to integrate the principles of radical grace into their theology and praxis.

Forthcoming from Cascade Books . . .

S T Kimbrough, Jr. is a Research Fellow of the Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition of Duke Divinity School and founder of The Charles Wesley Society. He is editor of its journal, *Proceedings of The Charles Wesley Society*, and author/editor of several books on Charles Wesley, including: *The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley* (3 vols.), *The Manuscript Journal of The Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.* (2 vols.), and *The Lyrical Theology of Charles Wesley: A Reader*.



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"S T Kimbrough has provided serious Christians with yet another practical and useful work grounded in the Wesleyan heritage. In this readable book, he uses his expert grasp of Charles Wesley's poetry to explain and illustrate how the Wesleyan hymns demonstrate in a worshipful but explicit manner a central feature of the Christian life—that the poor and marginalized can bring the experience of radical grace into the daily lives of all of us through our exercise of God's presence and power. Historically grounded, theologically sound, and poetically illustrated, this study fits solidly into the current attempts to apply careful interpretations of the Wesleyan tradition to contemporary life."

Richard P. Heitzenrater, The Divinity School, Duke University

"S T Kimbrough, Jr. has introduced us to Charles Wesley the great lyrical theologian. In this wonderful book, *Radical Grace*, he introduces us to Wesley the prophetic, poetic friend of the poor and the dispossessed. Here, in the genius of Wesley, we see poetry in service to a just and loving God. This book sings, and the song it sings is justice for the poor!"

Bishop William Willimon, United Methodist Church

"Dr. Kimbrough's thorough and unique study of Charles Wesley's neglected hymns and perspectives on justice for the poor and marginalized also includes practical ways (contemporary musical settings and liturgies) for their teaching and use in the church and elsewhere."

Carlton R. Young, Editor, *The United Methodist Hymnal*

"If Methodism, as I think is true for all mainstream churches, can regain an empowering vision of the future through intimacy with the poor, this book will be a valuable map of the Wesleyan devotion to what God is doing among the poor. Kimbrough artfully brings to light Charles Wesley's poetry, a poetry suffused by just the biblical and theological signposts we need to rediscover in a church looking for new directions."

M. Douglas Meeks, Vanderbilt University Divinity School

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