

Church History

Senior S 4

aside from those two main points--main points for them, certain peripheral points from the viewpoint of the Scripture.

Now we spoke about how the Methodist church in America was broken loose from the mother church and we spoke about--I shouldn't say from the mother church, yes, was broken loose from the Episcopal church, which was the mother church, but from its leaders in its organization in England, it still retains its tight contact with them and Wesley appointed Asbury to be superintendent and Asbury for many years traveled up and down the coast on horseback. He did a tremendous work of calling and overseeing the work of the churches and taking a tremendous interest in their activities. In 1787, which was, you see, very soon after the revolutionary war, Asbury changed his title to bishop, from superintendent, and of course this change from superintendent to bishop was a change which represented a recognition that it was no longer a society for the improvement of the spiritual life but was in fact a church, something that Leslie had always very strongly opposed. Leslie was very ardently devoted to the Church of England and when Leslie heard of this he reprimanded him in the strongest language. He said, "How can you? How dare you--suffer yourself to be called bishop? I stutter, I start at the very thought.

Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal or a scoundrel and I am content, but they shall never by my consent call me a bishop. For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this." That was the attitude of Wesley toward Asbury's calling himself a bishop but ~~actually~~, of course, he was in line with the logic of events. It was a church. Wesley never intended to form a church but a church was there and the church needed an ecclesiastical type of organization.

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