

**BLACK AND WHITE AND GRAY ALL OVER:
FREEBORN GARRETTSON AND AFRICAN METHODISM**

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Historians, in describing the separation of Africans from the Methodist Episcopal Church at the turn of the 19th century, have defined that separation by the possible reasons for its occurrence rather than the context within which it occurred.¹ Although all historians acknowledge, to some degree, that racial discrimination led to separate houses of worship for congregants of African descent, few have probed the ambivalence of that separation as a source of perspective on both its cause and degree; few have both blamed and credited the stolid ambiguity of Methodist racial interaction for that separation.

Instead, some historians have emphasized African nationalism as a reason for the departure of Africans from the Methodist Episcopal Church, citing the human dignity and self-respect Africans saw in the autonomy of separate denominations. Indeed, faced with segregated seating policies and with the denial of both conference voting rights and full ordination, Africans struck out on their own to prove that they were as capable as whites of fully conducting their own religious lives.

Other historians have placed the cause for the separation within the more benign realm of misunderstandings by the Africans about denominational polity, especially concerning the rights of local congregations to own and control church property.

The accuracy of each point of view notwithstanding, black and white racial interaction in early Methodism is the defining context with which those points of view must be reconciled. Surely, a strident nationalism on the part of Africans would have required a renunciation, or even denunciation, of white Methodists and "their" church, which is simply not evident in the sources. Alternatively, problems of resource management cannot possibly account for the amount and degree of dissatisfaction expressed by African Methodists at the turn of the 19th century. Neither view precludes the other, nor does either view, however, substantiate the other, does not bolster the claims of the other to a sufficiency of motivation for the separation. Yet, attention paid to the shifting, complex nature of the relations of Africans and Whites within the Methodist Episcopal Church appears immediately rewarded by the strong suggestion of a parallel between those relations and the nature of the separation.

¹Consistent with the use of the term "African" in the primary sources consulted, in this article the term denotes African Americans as well as persons born in Africa.

Those relations were neither “black” nor “white,” but were “gray” all over. Through the life and writings of Freeborn Garrettson we may glimpse the context and the nature of those relations, and the extent to which, if any, that context, like the nature, influenced the separation of Africans from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Freeborn Garrettson, 1752–1827, is most known by Methodists as the circuit rider who traveled “near 1,000 miles in about five weeks” to summon the scattered preachers to Baltimore for the historic Christmas Conference in 1784.² Garrettson was a member of one of Maryland’s first families, the great wealth of which derived from slave labor. Yet, Garrettson is celebrated as an ardent opponent of slavery. It was upon finding the Lord that Garrettson was moved to free his slaves and he described his epiphany at length, eloquently, writing:

As I stood with a book in my hand, in the act of giving out a hymn, this thought powerfully struck my mind. “It is not right for you to keep your fellow creatures in bondage; you must let the oppressed go free.” I knew it to be that same blessed voice which had spoken to me before—till then I had never suspected that the practice of slave-keeping was wrong; I had not read a book on the subject, nor had been told so by any—I paused a minute and then replied, “Lord, the oppressed shall go free.” And I was as clear of them in my mind as if I had never owned one. I told them they did not belong to me, and that I did not desire their services without making them a compensation; and I was now at liberty to proceed in worship. . . . I kneeled to pray. Had I the tongue of an angel I could not fully describe what I felt: all my dejection and that melancholy gloom, which preyed upon me, vanished in a moment: a divine sweetness ran through my whole frame. . . .³

A member of the first class of elders ordained at the founding conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, Garrettson was prominent and influential in the denomination. From his positions as an elder and presiding elder, he had a broad reach into the developing church, a reach which gave him significant contact with African Methodists. He established an early and continuing relationship with Richard Allen, the founding Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. On November 19, 1779, at Allen’s invitation, Garrettson preached at the home of Allen’s slave master. Garrettson recounted the event in his journal as being almost disappointingly ordinary. For Allen, however, it was quite extraordinary. Recalling that same event years later Allen wrote:

. . . at length, Freeborn Garrettson preached from these words, “Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.” In pointing out and weighing the different characters, and among the rest weighed slaveholders, my master believed himself to be one of that number, and after that he could not be satisfied to hold slaves, believing it to be wrong. And after that he proposed to me and my brother buying our times, to pay him 60£. gold and silver, or \$2,000, Continental money, which we complied with. . . .⁴

²Robert Drew Simpson, ed., *American Methodist Pioneer: The Life and Journals of the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, 1752–1827* (Rutland, VT: Academy, 1984), 243.

³Simpson, 48.

⁴Richard Allen, *The Life Experience and Gospel Labors of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1983), 17.

Garrettson's appointment in 1793 as the Presiding Elder of the Philadelphia circuit was undoubtedly an opportunity for him to remain in touch with Allen. The eventful 1793–94 conference year was the time of the great yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia, as well as the year in which work on the African Church of Philadelphia—later renamed The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas—was completed. Plans were also made for Bethel, a separate African Methodist Church under Richard Allen's leadership.

Garrettson's journal for most of that year has not survived, but we can confidently assume that Allen's prominence in city affairs and ties to the Methodist Episcopal Church kept him in touch with Garrettson, who developed a great respect for Allen. In the anti-slavery tract Garrettson published in 1805 he stated:

Many years ago I preached a sermon, in the State of Delaware, on, "Thou are weighed in the balance and found wanting. . . . Richard Allen, a colored man, told me some time ago, it was a means of his spiritual, and bodily freedom. He is now a man of note and fortune, and a minister in the African church, in Philadelphia.⁵

For Garrettson, Allen was a sterling example of what Africans could achieve if freed from the constraints of slavery.

Even after his reassignment to the New York area after 1794, Garrettson continued to visit the Methodist societies along the East Coast. Inevitably these trips included stops in Philadelphia, and often visits with Allen and the African Methodists. Garrettson, in a letter to his wife, Catherine, in 1809, reported,

Mon. Morning. Yesterday I had a great day. In the Academy Church I had great freedom to preach in the morning. . . . In the afternoon I preached in St. Georges with freedom. . . . In the evening Mr. Allin [sic], the African Minister sent his Coach for me and took me to the New African Church, a stately building, a large Congregation and much of the power of *God*. Several they say were Converted during the meeting. When I left the Congregation they were shouting, jumping, Clapping, and praising *God*. Allin told me that there are about 700 members in that Church. There are many happy souls in Philadelphia both white and black. I have seldom had a more profitable day.⁶

A year later he wrote to Catherine, stating,

The Coloured people insisted on my giving them a Sermon before I left the City, so that I did not get to this place till last Wed. . . . I set down my last Philadelphia visit among the most agreeable, and usefull ones I ever made to that place.⁷

⁵Freeborn Garrettson, *A Dialogue Between Do-Justice and Professing Christian* (Wilmington, DE: Brynberg, 1805), 35–36.

⁶Letter of Freeborn Garrettson to Catherine Garrettson, Philadelphia, 6/17/1809, Garrettson Collection, box "Freeborn and Mary Garrettson," file #9. It is possible that the arrangement of appointments was usual when Garrettson passed through Philadelphia; he reported in his journal a similar preaching schedule in 1805: "Sunday [April] 6—Preached and administered sacrament in the Academy Church. In the afternoon preached in St. George's Church, and surely the power of God was among the people. . . . Having received a note from the Africans I preached in the evening. Without a doubt, but that the power of God was among them." Simpson, 303.

⁷Freeborn Garrettson to Catherine Garrettson, Wilmington, 3/16/1810, Garrettson Collection, box marked "Freeborn and Mary Garrettson," File #9.

There is no reason to assume that Garrettson, with the pivotal role he played in Allen's early life, was not a beneficiary of the warm hospitality and cordiality Allen regularly extended to Thomas Coke, William Colbert, Dr. Benjamin Rush and Bishop Francis Asbury. Allen, without prompting, even purchased a horse for Asbury in 1804.⁸ No doubt the warm relationships Allen had with prominent white Methodist leaders encouraged him to remain under the discipline and authority of the Methodist Episcopal Church.⁹ And yet the pull towards separation remained, as interracial fellowship around the dinner table did not become interracial fellowship around the conference table.

Garrettson's consistent anti-slavery stance, along with the respect and admiration he held for Allen and the ministry at Bethel, did not necessarily translate into radical egalitarian views of the relations between Africans and Whites. For example, early in his ministry, while preaching in Virginia and North Carolina, Garrettson recorded the following:

Sunday June 22nd [1777], in Roan-oak chapel I preached to about five hundred whites, and almost as many blacks who stood without; I found freedom of mind, and tears trickled down the faces of many, both white and black.¹⁰

Preaching to segregated audiences and leading segregated classes were normal activities, nor did segregation pose an ethical problem; it was more important that the word of salvation be proclaimed and that sinners of all colors be convicted and converted.¹¹

Garrettson's views on racial equality are discernible in his anti-slavery tract titled, *A Dialogue Between Do-Justice and Professing-Christian*. The tract was designed to convince slaveholders who have not questioned the institution of slavery and offers practical advice to them on how to become extricated from the system. The *Dialogue* is an allegory modeled after John Bunyan's classic work, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The main character introduces himself as follows:

⁸Asbury's journal for June 1804 states: "I desired Isaac James to ride thirty miles, going and coming, and purchase me another little Jane, at eighty dollars; he did so, with great good will. I came to Philadelphia, and found that Richard Allen had bought me a horse for ninety dollars; so I had two, one to sell for sixty dollars: so much for my haste." Elmer T. Clark, et al., eds., *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury in Three Volumes* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1958), Vol. II, 432. See also Vol. II, 433 for a note from William Colbert's Journal about lodging with Allen and Mrs. Allen's superior cooking. Benjamin Rush dined and had tea with Thomas Coke at Allen's house; see George Corner, ed., *The Autobiography of Benjamin Rush, His "Travels Through Life" together with his Commonplace Book for 1789-1813* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1970), 239, 250.

⁹See the "Articles of Association of the Trustees And Members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church called 'Bethell Church,'" (1796) especially Articles 9, 10, and 11, found in Frederick A. Norwood, ed., *Sourcebook of American Methodism* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1982), 210-211.

¹⁰Simpson, 63.

¹¹For a view of the segregated class system that preceded Bethel, see Dee Andrews, "The African Methodists of Philadelphia, 1794-1802." Found in Russell Richey et al., eds., *Perspectives on American Methodism: Interpretive Essays* (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books/Abingdon Press, 1993), 145-155.

My name is Do-Justice, I came from the City of Destruction, and am bound for Mount Zion, the City of the great King, and desire others to travel the heavenly road.¹²

Other characters include “Tender-Conscience” and “Professing-Christian,” who resides in the “village of self-interest.” Professing-Christian is a slaveholder who, through his extended conversations with Do-Justice, becomes convinced of the iniquity of the practice, frees his slaves, and is re-named “Real-Christian.”

Through Do-Justice, Garrettson quite plainly states his own experiences with slavery. For example, the character claims that, “It was neither man nor books, but the pure Spirit that convinced me [that slavery is evil].”¹³ Do-Justice even claims to have preached the sermon that led to Richard Allen’s freedom. We may presume that Garrettson would have preferred for all slaveholders to renounce the institution through the same mystical experience that animated his own opposition to the practice, but the pamphlet recommends a number of gradual emancipation schemes and ways to ameliorate slavery in states where manumission was outlawed.¹⁴

Garrettson addressed the problems of interracial contact that would inevitably result if slaves were freed in significant numbers. He dismissed the “problem” of intermarriage with Whites if freed persons were to remain “among us and to obtain property and respectability” by stating that he knew of “but few instances of it . . . from Susquehanna to Boston.”¹⁵ Garrettson promoted colonization as a way of separating the races, and proposed setting aside a portion of the Louisiana Territory for liberated Africans. In his Christian scheme colonists would not be sent “away empty handed, for this would not be doing as we would be done by;” he optimistically—and naively—asserted that “many philanthropists would cheerfully engage in so glorious a work, as that of promoting their freedom and happiness.”¹⁶ Garrettson revealed his sense of the inferiority of Africans when, in relation to his colonization idea he stated, “No doubt, a large proportion of them would rather stay with their white brethren, and be hewers of wood, and drawers of water for them.”¹⁷ Garrettson obviously viewed Richard Allen as an exception to the rule; apparently very few Africans could be expected to “obtain property and respectability,” as the majority would happily remain the servants of Whites.

¹²Garrettson, *A Dialogue Between Do-Justice and Professing Christian*, 3.

¹³Garrettson, *A Dialogue Between Do-Justice and Professing Christian*, 45.

¹⁴The pamphlet acknowledged a difference between slaves who were inherited or owned from birth and those that were purchased. Inherited male slaves were to be freed at age twenty-one, females at age eighteen. The past service of purchased slaves was to be estimated with the assistance of “two or three pious friends” to determine how long they would need to labor to make up their purchase price. See Garrettson, *A Dialogue Between Do-Justice and Professing Christian*, 50.

¹⁵Garrettson, *A Dialogue Between Do-Justice and Professing Christian*, 38; Garrettson makes no mention of forced miscegenation as a continuing problem.

¹⁶Garrettson, *A Dialogue Between Do-Justice and Professing Christian*, 54.

¹⁷Garrettson, *A Dialogue Between Do-Justice and Professing Christian*, 54.

Another indication of Garrettson's attitude towards African Methodists can be gleaned from his relationship with Harry Hosier. "Black Harry" Hosier, the phenomenal illiterate preacher who was at times a companion of, and replacement preacher for, Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, accompanied Garrettson on his exploratory tour of New England in the summer of 1790. Garrettson had known of Hosier at least as early as 1784, and must have gotten to know him well during their travels together. It is significant that in his journals Garrettson consistently refers to Hosier as "Harry," because Garrettson was scrupulous in using a title for *everyone* he mentioned by name or initial in his published and unpublished journals: Mr., Mrs., Rev., Dr., brother (or "my brother," to specify an actual sibling), and even "lady" are used throughout. This rule did not apply to persons of African descent, who invariably were not addressed by title and often were not referred to by name. The exceptional case of Richard Allen being addressed as "Mr." in a personal letter to Catherine has been noted above.¹⁸

The importance of these distinctions ought not to be overlooked, given the clear patterns Garrettson established in his writing and the significance of language for him and his colleagues. In a recent analysis of language among early Methodists, Russell Richey has discussed the use of the title "brother":

The term 'brother' and 'sister' distinguished those with whom one shared intense Christian bonds from those with whom one did not. . . . The journals of the period evidence the selective employment of the terms. . . . That very selectivity accented Methodism's radical spiritual egalitarianism. 'Brother' and 'sister' shattered the lines drawn by the world—lines of race, class, family, language—by drawing a line between Methodism and the world.¹⁹

In spite of having shared the hardships of the road with Hosier, and in spite of having some appreciation for the efficacy of his preaching, Garrettson did not consider him a true colleague. When on the trip to Boston Hosier encountered what was almost certainly racial hostility, Garrettson noted it with little comment:

Monday 8—As there was a degree of persecution against Harry, I thought it expedient to leave him behind. A large congregation came together—Blest be God the word was attended with power.²⁰

The problem was solved simply by leaving Hosier behind so that worship could go on without distraction! Another journal entry is as follows:

¹⁸In his published journal Garrettson makes a solitary reference to "a black man, by the name of M---t," whom he criticized for disrupting his ministry in Nova Scotia. The man was John Marrant, a preacher ordained in England through Lady Huntingdon's Connection; even though he is mentioned by last name, he is still not referred to as "Mr.," or "Rev.," or "Brother." Several paragraphs later Garrettson refers to his pilot as "A.E.," who becomes Mr. E. within a few sentences. See Simpson, 128.

¹⁹Russell E. Richey, *Early American Methodism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 6.

²⁰Simpson, 237.

I got into Boston, about seven o'clock, after riding forty-eight miles. I boarded Harry at the master Mason for the Africans, and I took my own lodgings with a private gentleman. . . .²¹

If Hosier lodged with Prince Hall, it is probable that he was comfortably accommodated.²² As Garrettson's sole mention of having to board Hosier separately, perhaps separate arrangements were a deviation from the norm; if so, racial considerations precluded joint accommodations with the private gentleman. As recorded, there is no hint that Garrettson found separate arrangements to be unusual or inappropriate.

Hosier was variously described by his Methodist companions as a servant, guide, driver, and preacher, so Garrettson was neither alone nor especially cruel or mean in the way he talked about Hosier.²³ It is quite conceivable that Hosier, given his association with Richard Allen and his loyalty to the Methodist Episcopal Church, did not experience a racial insult from Garrettson or other white Methodists that was significant enough to prompt a permanent alignment with African Methodists.²⁴ But at least two preachers referred to Hosier in their writings by using his first and last name in a way indistinguishable from the manner in which they referred to Whites.²⁵ So, in the midst of a pervasively racist environment, Garrettson was neither the most progressive nor the most conservative. Hosier himself embodied the ambiguities of Methodist race relations by being hailed as the best preacher in the world and, at the same time, servant, and he endured indignities without separating from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1826, a year before Garrettson's death, he addressed the New York Annual Conference in a sermon that marked the fiftieth anniversary of his call to the itinerant ministry. In the sermon he reflected on a number of developments he had observed over the life of the young church, including the departure of Africans into separate Methodist denominations. Looking back on these splits he remarked:

[The Africans] have been injured by being induced to become independent of us; and I think if I was now young, I should labor hard to bring them into the place which they once occupied; for I am convinced that those of them who have kept under the old itinerant system of doctrines and discipline, prosper more than those who have gone to themselves.²⁶

²¹Simpson, 268.

²²Smith, "Harry Hosier: Black Preacher Extraordinary," *Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, Vol. 7 (1979–80), 121.

²³Smith, *Harry Hosier: Circuit Rider* (Nashville, TN: The Upper Room, 1981), 44. See also John Vickers, *Thomas Coke: Apostle of Methodism* (London: Epworth Press, 1969), 83.

²⁴In all likelihood Hosier did not find discrimination to be so uncomfortable as to restrict his service to the church. Unlike Hosier, Richard Allen declined an invitation to travel with Asbury precisely because of concern over accommodations and other indignities and dangers. See Allen, 22–23.

²⁵See one of Asbury's notes in Clark, Vol. I, 403, and excerpts from William Colbert's journal in Smith, "Harry Hosier: Black Preacher Extraordinary, 124–125. Occasionally the phrase, "a black man," is parenthetically included after Hosier's name.

²⁶Simpson, 391.

Garrettson was definitely in a position to promote healing and prevent schism in at least two important cases: he was a presiding elder in Philadelphia during the year when Richard Allen built Bethel, and was a senior member of the New York Conference throughout the difficulties experienced by African Methodists with St. John's Church. He most certainly was kept up to date about all significant church developments. Yet in his own writings, until his 1826 sermon, there is silence concerning the departure of Africans from the mother church.

We do not know what Garrettson considered to be the "injury" suffered by the African Americans who left the church. Was he concerned that non-white leadership was less than competent in doctrine or less than effective in making new converts? Essentially, the disciplines adopted by the new denominations were identical to those of the parent body, and Garrettson's rejoicing over the way in which God moved through the African congregants suggests that he had some confidence in the efficacy of their leadership. His concern that those who separated had not prospered as they ought strongly suggests that his concern was not simply for the reduction in total Methodist Episcopal membership.

Garrettson's position in regard to these splits remains ambiguous due to his apparent continuing connections with African Methodists. He reported having preached at "the Methodist African Church" in Philadelphia in 1821, which was likely another visit, by invitation, to Allen's Bethel five years after the formation of the independent African Methodist Episcopal denomination.²⁷ In New York City Garrettson had established a residence by July 1805 which he maintained for a number of years and he attended the Quarterly Conferences of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in New York.²⁸ Garrettson's signature appears with James Varick's on a certificate dated 4/27/1815, recommending Deacon's Orders to Zion's George White.²⁹ Garrettson even attended the "first Yearly Conference" of what eventually became known as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion denomination and "advised the [African] brethren to proceed, and do as well as they could, until the next General Conference of the white preachers, when, he thought, an African Conference would be established

²⁷Simpson, 338. Although Zoar Chapel had been established by this time, it was described as being in Campingtown, PA, so it is most probable that the African Church referred to was, as usual, Bethel. See Clark, Vol. II, 102. Richard Allen was still alive and active, and there is no reason to assume that personal relations between him and Garrettson would be severed as a result of African denominational autonomy.

²⁸Garrettson Collection, box marked "Freeborn and Mary Garrettson," File #14; see letters from Freeborn to Catherine, 7/2/1805; 7/16/1805; 7/22/1805; 9/10/1805; 9/25/1805; 7/3/1807. He remained informed about the affairs of the African Church in New York; see letter from Freeborn to Catherine, 2/8/08.

²⁹Garrettson Collection, box marked "Freeborn and Mary," file #9. Garrettson's signature also appears with Varick's on a similar certificate dated 4/21/1811, although only the bottom portion with date and names has survived. It is significant that Garrettson was the Presiding Elder in New York from 1811-1814, and retained contact with Zion, along with some authority throughout 1815 even though he was formally without appointment.

by that body, to be governed by the same rules as the whites.”³⁰ A separate conference was not established, and I have seen no evidence that reveals Garrettson’s advocacy on behalf of the African petitioners.

So, what exactly was the “place once occupied” by Africans that Garrettson, at the close of his life, wished they could have retained? On the surface, Garrettson was clearly referring to the place of Africans within the Methodist Episcopal institutional hierarchy. On a deeper level, however, Garrettson’s non-egalitarian views of white racial superiority cannot allow us to rule out the prospect that the “former place” of Africans referred as well to their subordinate position within a broader social hierarchy. Why did he not labor harder in his younger days to keep the Africans in their place? There are a number of possibilities.

It must be remembered that throughout this early period the young Methodist Episcopal Church was evolving a permanent institutional structure out of a loose band of wandering evangelical preachers. With little or no past experience to inform its decisions, each year conferences dealt with new, often unanticipated issues of which race was just one. In all probability, Garrettson and his white peers did not see the creation of separate, segregated worship facilities as possibly leading to eventual schism. Racially segregated classes had been the norm, and the segregated worship facilities that emerged out of the classes were, to a great extent, a normal outgrowth. In addition, segregated worship was not a problem, but a solution to the problems of overcrowding, differences in worship styles, and the mingling of races on equal terms. Just as easily as Garrettson left Hosier behind when racial animosity became evident on their joint tour through Boston, it was easy to accept, and even welcome, separate African chapels.

On a personal level, Garrettson was, again, neither the most progressive nor the most conservative of Methodists when it came to issues of race. He was a consistent champion of abolition, even if gradual. For him the abolition of slavery was a religious imperative with potentially cosmic consequences. He suffered persecution on account of his anti-slavery views and even endured a beating from his own cousin.³¹ He claimed to have “frequently inculcated the doctrine of freedom in a private way” to slaves, and it is not possible to assess what fruit resulted in later years from the small seeds he may have discretely planted.³² Nevertheless, it is possible to discern in his writings a deep empathy for slaveholders in a state of sin and mere pity for the plight of their slaves. In significant ways his own profound religious awakening did not move him to fully transcend his aristocratic, southern, slaveholding heritage.

³⁰Rush, *A Short Account of the Rise and Progress of the African M.E. Church in America* (New York: Christopher Rush et al, 1866), 69–70.

³¹Simpson, 49–50; see also Garrettson’s *Substance of the Semi-Centennial Sermon, Before the New-York Annual Conference, at its Session, May, 1826* (New York: N. Bangs and J. Emory for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1827), 14.

³²Simpson, 65.

Garrettson's relationship with African Americans, from freeing his slaves, to his contacts with the emerging African denominations, to the publication of his anti-slavery pamphlet, was, like most human relationships, complex and multi-faceted. His sincerity and the good he accomplished for African Americans throughout his ministry ought not be belittled, but evaluated and understood in the light of his background and his times. Further, the impact of his anti-slavery preaching on the life of Richard Allen has already been noted, and deserves due credit for its historical significance.

The progressive nature of Methodist race relations, as exemplified by Garrettson, encouraged Africans to continue to embrace Methodism and to resist affiliating separate worship facilities into autonomous denominations. Nevertheless, it cannot be disputed that the conservative nature of Methodist race relations encouraged over time the complete separation of Africans into separate Methodist denominations.

The shifting "gray" area in which the race relations of early Methodism occurred no doubt accounts for the willingness of African Methodists to remain within the Methodist fold even as they fought racial indignities and second-class status. The mixed and even conflicting views that African and white Methodists held of each other allowed for warm and even friendly and supportive relationships to exist despite the non-egalitarian views of African progress and civil rights held by Garrettson and others.