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# ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION AS TAUGHT IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

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## I. A Problem of Terminology

This topic begins with an interesting bit of semantics. The term "entire sanctification" does not occur in Romans at all. However, this is not strange. One of the richest books on holiness in the New Testament, I John, never uses the word "holy," "holiness," nor "sanctify." Less technical and more universal words are used to express the same concept. Perhaps a still more striking observation is that the English word "atonement" appears but once in the King James Version of the New Testament, and there the less than ideal translation is corrected in the margin. Yet, redemption is the heart and fiber of New Testament teaching, with atonement in Christ Jesus the core of that redemption.

It is true that there are a few references in Romans which use the words "holy," "holiness," and "sanctified." But, for the most part, they are not used in a very discriminating theological context of Christian experience, and certainly not often in clearly definitive references to a second crisis. The one use of the word "sanctify" is to describe the "offering up of the Gentiles." One word for "holiness" (*hagiosynē*) is used but once of the "spirit of holiness" (1:4). Another word (*hagiosmos*) is used twice of the ethical goal in Christian living: "servants to righteousness unto holiness" (6:19), and "fruit unto holiness" (6:22). The only other references that include the word "holy" as related to the Scriptures are (1:2), the law (7-12), the commandment (7:12), corporate bodies of Jewish and Gentile believers (11:16), a holy kiss (16:16), and once in the great appeal for believers to present their bodies "holy and acceptable to God" (12:1). Apparently our study cannot be a simple running of references in a concordance for words that state clearly in technical theological terms the specific experience which we wish to expound from the book of Romans. The Bible simply is not written on the pattern of a systematic theology—at least not a formal theology of experience not even the book of Romans. It speaks freely of life and is addressed to life's needs. Therefore, its most pungent statements come not in technical terms for systems of thought, but in practical terms addressed to human needs—often expressed in almost homespun simplicity.

## II. Emphasis on Experience and Life

This elusive quality in the doctrine of experience is, of course, not limited to the book of Romans. It has always plagued the theorist.

It almost seems as though God were turning the key in the door against intellectual sophistication and telling man that the way into the kingdom is not through human wisdom but through divine grace. Socrates was wrong. It was not a charmer to charm away our ignorance that we needed. It was a Savior to take away our sins. And, though man by wisdom knew not God, any man who "will do his will shall know the doctrine" (John 7:17). Faith that works by obedience is the key that unlocks the door. Spiritual things are more than intellectually discerned. The spiritual is broader than theoretical knowledge. Man is too prone to worship his own neat packages of doctrinal creeds. Perhaps God is not willing that our human formulations should appear so air-tight and canonical. In any case, one must be more than a harmonizer of proof texts to mine the gold of Christian experience and consequent doctrine from Romans, or the rest of the Bible. He must be a humble believer, walking in the light. Then that which is "hidden from the wise and the prudent is revealed unto babes."

In common with the ancient fathers and the host of witnesses from more recent centuries, both inside and outside the Wesleyan tradition, we do hasten to affirm that the Bible in general, and Romans in particular, presents a fulness of transforming grace through a perfect work of God that meets man's total need. This is sometimes designated in Scripture as an entire or whole sanctification (cf. I Thess. 5:23). Since the affirmation in Scripture is so clear and strong, we have no hesitation in using the same term wherever the same provision and experience appear.

### **III. The Term "Holiness"**

But our method will require more than word study and grammatical exegesis in terms of a specific designation. It is not the term, but the experience and the life that the Scripture stresses. And the experience is of the broadest possible dimensions. Therefore it is couched in a variety of terms. First and foremost, it must be remembered that "holiness" is the principal term used to describe the nature of God. It refers to the balance of His perfections and the sum-total of His attributes. It is His utter self-consistency and the perfect harmony that exists between His inner choices and His outer actions. His holiness always expresses itself in love, and His love always seeks to bring its object to holiness. In God, holiness is absolute and underived. In man, it is relative and derived. Coming from God, it is enjoyed in a relationship with God. And that intimacy, depth, and efficacy of relationship is the deepest fact in man's holiness. As Girdlestone (*I*) implies, the moral and spiritual qualities in themselves alone do not constitute holiness in man so much as the relationship with God which demands purity and righteousness, and from which these flow. This relationship thus requires and imparts holiness in its proper sense,

which Stevens calls "characteristically godliness." He says:

It is evident that *hagios* and its kindred words are best adapted to represent the New Testament idea. They express something more and higher than *hieros*, "sacred," "outwardly associated with God"; something more than *hosios*, "reverent," "pious"; something more than *semnos*, "worthy," "honorable"; something more than *hagnos*, "pure," "free from defilement." *Hagios* is more positive, more comprehensive, more elevated, more purely ethical and spiritual. It is characteristically godlikeness, and in the Christian system godlikeness signifies completeness of life. (2)

#### **IV. Other Terms**

But the Scripture writers do not highlight a single word which can be separated from normal life, venerated, and made an object of worship instead of a way of life. New Testament sainthood is not something conferred on the exceptional after death. It is a way of life. It is "righteousness," "spiritual mindedness," "freedom from sin," "yieldedness," "living sacrifice," the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," life "in the Spirit" and "that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." To misinterpret or misapply one term does not destroy the teaching. The Scriptures in general, and Romans in particular, are full of the subject of grace adequate for man's total need.

#### **V. Entire Sanctification**

The term "entire sanctification" is not the exact equivalent of any of the above terms, but is used to describe the entrance into such an experience of fullness of grace. As sanctification, even in the new convert, is a separation from sin and a dedication to God, so entire sanctification is defined as a complete freedom from sin, and a correspondingly complete dedication to God. The term is used to denote a crisis in the believer's life in which the remains of "inner sin" or "inherited depravity" are dealt with in a manner which makes possible the scriptural experience of a full righteousness, purity, spiritual mindedness, life in the Spirit, or holiness. This, of course, presupposes definitions of sin and holiness that are sufficiently restricted to make allowance for the imperfections inherent in the human, at the same time that a real transformation is accomplished in the realm of heart, motivation, and the springs of life.

#### **VI. General Survey**

It is obvious that in a non-technical, life-centered document such as Romans, the line will not always be clear between first and second crises, or between grace known to the converted as distinct from that of the entirely sanctified. If a survey of the issues fails to spell out every technicality, and to dot every i and cross every t, at least it is hoped that something helpful can be said as to the scope and general principles of investigation that must be followed for an understanding of the subject.

## **VII. The Principle of "Totals"**

One basic observation is that the Scriptures in general, and Paul in particular, tend to refer to vast totals of experience rather than to particulars that lend themselves to theological definition. That is, the reference is generally to "sin"-not to "acquired guilt," "inherited depravity," the "sin nature," "sin in believers," or the "remains of sin." The term refers to sin in its awful completeness. To mention it is to loathe it. Right-thinking people, then, if unconverted, want to be set free from its bondage and guilt and become children of God. If they are converted, they have two interests. They want, on the negative side, to be freed from all "remains of sin" and "sinful attitudes" that survived their conversion experience. To state the positive side of the same crisis experience, they want the life of the Spirit and divine love to so fill them that they, fully renewed in the image of Christ, will be able to serve God with single eye and heart. And, secondly, they want to learn the new skills of Christian living by the power of the Holy Spirit in a manner as different from the old way of sin as possible. This unfolding life in the Spirit is the process of growing in grace and experiencing the continuing transformation that characterizes vital Christians, who "with unveiled face, continually beholding as in a mirror the manifestation of the Lord, are being transformed continually into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18). In this paper we must be alert to emphases in Romans that highlight the second crisis, but we will not be able or willing to take it out of its vital context of a dynamic, expanding experience of Christlikeness.

## **VIII. "The Righteousness of God" Concept**

One of the most misunderstood expressions in Romans is "the righteousness of God." It is generally thought of in such restricted terms that it loses its meaning. But it is a term almost as big as "holiness," as used here. There are perhaps two main reasons why Paul uses the term here instead of holiness. Though both terms make God the standard and source of the Christian life, "righteousness" lends itself more to an analysis of the ways in which sin comes into conflict with the life in grace, and the ways in which the conflict can be resolved. Then, too, the comparisons and contrasts in the Epistle were to be with "law" as a means of salvation. The connotations of "righteousness" were easier to elaborate in this context than of the more mystical and mystifying aspects of God's majesty and holiness.

## **IX. Righteousness As a "Total" Term**

"Righteousness" is used in its "total" sense of God's own "rightness," in the sense of moral propriety or integrity, and as the standard

for His moral creatures. It stands as the eternal opposite to sin and evil. Though there is a sense in which "holiness" is a still broader term, "righteousness" still bespeaks the nature of God as the absolute standard of moral rightness, and the proper source of any worthy human copy of the divine. Hence "righteousness of God," as used in Romans, is not just a description of God. It is rather a God-kind of righteousness that is communicable. Throughout human history God had demanded righteousness. What kind would satisfy Him? It is the God-kind-that which conforms to God, flows from Him, and meets His demand. Paul throws out the challenge: Whence does it come? From law or by grace through faith?

## **X. Imparted Righteousness**

Justification obviously speaks of more than an acquittal-the dismissing of charges, or even a forgiveness. It certainly refers to more than calling one righteous when he is not. Its connotations lie in the realm of "being," at least as much as in the realm of "being considered." As Paul handles the term in the first five chapters of Romans, this is very clear in the original language. And it becomes clear to all if we realize that there is no term for "just" or "justify" in Paul's writings that does not come from the same root as the word for "righteous" or "righteousness." There would be less confusion in English if the word "justify" had never been coined, and if instead the words "make righteous" had always been used. Of course that is what the Latin word "justify" means, except as it is used in the accommodated sense of a human court's ability to declare a thing so without the power to make it so. It seems that Liddon writes accurately when he says:

There is no place in Scripture in which the Righteousness of Jesus Christ is said to be imputed as distinct from being imparted. When Scripture says that Faith is reckoned to a man for righteousness, it does not thereby say that the Righteousness of Christ is imputed without being imparted. Faith is imputed for righteousness on a common sense and almost a natural principle. Faith is the initial act of all union with God or Christ. Accordingly an all-gracious God does not wait until the sinner has done such or such good works before He receives him into favour; He sees the fruit in the germ, He takes the will for the deed. (5)

## **XI. An Aspect of Holiness**

Thus, when Paul has established a "justification by faith," he has also established, in a true sense, the God-kind of righteousness as received by faith. Once this is posited, it is seen that something of eternal significance has been begun. The term "righteousness" may be caught up in the bigger and warmer term "holiness" as a result of a further crisis in "entire sanctification," but it is no loss of the one for the sake of the other. Righteousness is simply an aspect or component of the holiness which is a balance of perfections in God and a god likeness in His creatures.

## **XII. Holiness in the Justification Section**

It is most natural that the "justification section" of Romans (3:21—5:21) should sparkle and flash with something more than the minimums of saving grace. It is no wonder that the greatest of the Patriarchs (Abraham) should be the prime illustration of this righteousness by faith, and that chapter 5 should revel in the peace, hope, glory, standing grace, triumph, love of God shed abroad through the gift of the Holy Spirit, abundance of grace, the reign of grace, the reign in life, the gift of righteousness, justification of life, and the assurance of triumph. It is impossible to keep holiness, or even heaven, out of the justification section, simply because holiness is begun in the first valid experience of saving grace—the new birth, by which we become God's children partakers of His nature. The God-kind of righteousness is a total that implies a fulfillment not only in a further crisis and a daily life, but also in heaven itself. This is as natural and logical as to see in the birth of a baby a supposition in favor of adulthood, responsible living, and a worthy destiny. Such is God's provision.

## **XIII. Dangers in a Narrow View**

To conceive of justification apart from the grand total of which it is an aspect is to miss the meaning of the word and to throw the door open to heresy. From such narrower approaches come distressing views of the atonement, or of the lack of it, ridiculous teachings concerning sinning saints (holy sinners), and the like. But the broader view coincides perfectly with the bold generalization of the Apostle John that "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

## **XIV. Holiness Implied in Justification**

It is natural then that there should be no sharp break as one approaches the sanctification section (Rom. 6—8). Rather, a practical question is raised and answered about the new life. Shall we who have this gift of righteousness continue sinning? How ridiculous! This would nullify the whole meaning of the righteousness we received, and the way we received it through Christ. The answer to the ethical problem is not involvement in sinning, but a still deeper involvement in redemption. The provision of Calvary was not only an initial and basic restoration from the old life to an acceptance with God. It includes a crucifixion of the old sinful self in the sense of the destruction of sin as a working principle in even the depths of the heart (6:6). More than a correction of conduct and standing is involved. It is death not just to acts of sinning—but also to the sin nature. He that is dead is emancipated from sin. The appeal to Christian living becomes an

appeal to holiness of heart—to an entire sanctification. Hence it is treated in Romans 6:1-11 as freedom from sin.

This negative aspect of freedom from sin is followed by the positive idea of a holy life (12:23). Instead of sin, there is a new king reigning over us. It is grace, reigning by our consent. We have become voluntary servants of righteousness unto holiness. Now our fruits unto holiness and everlasting life.

## **XV. Greek Tenses**

At the crucial points in chapter 6 it is interesting to note the tenses of the Greek verbs. The provision for this freedom from sin as provided in the crucifixion of Christ is given in the aorist tense, as of a simple occurrence or crisis (v.6); as is the destruction of sin (v.6). Likewise the word for dying is in the aorist tense (vv. 7, 8), and the word for "present" or "yield" in the exhortations for the believer to make a full commitment to God (vv. 13 and 19). These all lend themselves to the idea of a crisis and are used in a context that appeal to those already converted. On the other hand, the verbs which speak of the process of Christian living are in the present tense, indicating continuity, for example, "living" (v. 11), "reign" and "obey" (v. 12).

## **XVI. Sanctification Not By Law**

Chapter 7 has to re-enact the battle between law and faith (or grace) as a means of salvation. But here it is in the broader context of holiness or sanctification. Grudgingly, it is assumed, the Jew had to admit that justification is by faith (chaps. 3—5). But certainly, he would argue, it is law that makes one a better Christian—that sanctifies—that brings to perfection. Paul's answer is clear. No, one's experience is quite the contrary. Law is no more able to restore the fine balance of the inner nature in holiness than it was to clarify our forensic relationships before God. Legalism can but deepen the frustration, failure, and despair of the poor soul that sees a better way and has no power to attain it. Law sharpens the conflict, but it can never resolve it. Only grace, received by faith, can solve the problem.

## **XVII. Grace For Man's Total Need**

Having tested the alternate method for victory, he now places full emphasis again on the totality of grace that is found in the finished work of Christ. Paul does not recapitulate the grace involved in justification. Nor does he seek to draw the limits of what one can have in "only a justified state." Obviously such would be impossible. A child of God can have all that his faith can embrace. And some older Christians still long for particulars which the infant faith of others has claimed early. Things and blessings are not the point, in the narrower



sense of the terms. Rather, Paul holds up to view the normal Christian life—full-orbed and free. The argument is not theological insistence on so many trips to an altar. It is the offer of Christian fullness. If one does not have this fullness, let him be assured that it is provided for him. There is but a step of faith between the fully yielded heart and this fullness. This is the scriptural method of preaching entire sanctification. It is not a plea for theological consistency so much as provision for man's total need. Though some knowledge generally precedes the crisis, the theology comes much more naturally and easily after the experience. One needs the experience and life as a basis for analysis and interpretation. Religion and life come first. Theology and rules tend to follow.

## **XVIII. Totals in Romans 8**

This totality of grace in the normal Christian life is shown first in terms of the triumph of grace in the human personality (8:1-11). The answer is not in one's own efforts under law. The victorious Christian does not walk after the patterns and inclinations of the human, but he obeys the guidance and prompting of the Spirit (v.1). Thus a higher power has entered and has gained supremacy. It is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that rules and delivers from the rule of sin and death (v.2). It was not that the human in itself was bad. God created it. But sin was the real trouble. Man's own struggling could not break sin's power. Nor could any law enable him to keep its requirement. But what law and humanity could not do, Christ did. He condemned to death the villain. Sin is destroyed. Humanity is delivered. Righteousness is then fulfilled in walking after the Spirit.

### **A. Life After the Spirit**

This brings up a fundamental question. What is meant by "after the flesh" and "after the Spirit"? Is this an outward pattern of conformity accepted as a goal or required as a law? Indeed not! It is a heart attitude. Paul defines it in terms of a "mindedness." Those who set their minds upon (*phroneō*), and give priority to the flesh, walk after the flesh. And those who mind the things of the Spirit walk after the Spirit. There are only the two ways. Sooner or later life's values become sorted to the point that a definite pattern is clear. Then one is obviously either spiritually minded or carnally minded. He cannot be both. So he is alive or dead. The carnal must be displaced by a higher principle. And indeed it will be, or the soul perishes. Again, it is the conflict between two totals: Spirit or flesh—life or death—holiness or hell. Whatever of inconsistencies or contradictions in the human heart may survive conversion, these must and will be resolved upward or downward. One will not permanently remain saved, but not "sanctified wholly." The mindedness toward the flesh

(v.7) is enmity against God. The enemy will be cast out or it will make a counter attack and recapture the soul.

Just as truly as the human is delivered and the carnal is displaced, so the spiritual is enthroned (vv. 9-11). The crux of the matter is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Through Him comes life, righteousness, and even physical enablement. A new monarch makes new reign of righteousness and well-being. This is normalcy for the Christian.

## **B. Assets of Grace**

Having the Spirit of God, we have all that we need (vv. 12-25). There is freedom from the enslaving demands of the flesh (vv. 12, 13). Sonship is not just a name; it involves a power and assurance that makes life vibrant, rich, and secure (vv. 14-17). Sonship carries a hope of fulfillment that will eventually cure the ills that now test our faith and patience. All creation will join in the final triumph (vv. 17-23). Meanwhile the hope gives motivation and meaning to the present, outweighing the trials and distresses that would otherwise mar our lives (vv. 24, 25).

## **C. Adequacy of Grace**

The utter adequacy of grace is seen in verses 26-39. At the point of our weaknesses we have the Holy Spirit interceding for us and in us (vv. 26, 27). God's good providence so shields us that nothing can happen to us but what can be used to our good and His glory (v.28). He has been working for us since long before we were born. Nothing can stop Him from taking the yielded believer clear through (vv. 29-33). Christ is also on our side as both redeemer and Intercessor (v.34). With all this in our favor, we are invincible in Him (vv. 35-39).

## **XIX. Life of Holiness**

This life in the Spirit then expresses itself in appropriate ethics—a life of holiness (chaps. 12—16). It requires more than a reluctant cease-fire. "Brethren"(12:1, converted people) have to respond to the goodness and saving mercies of God by an appropriate dedication or consecration of themselves. They do not dedicate their sins. Those are already forsaken. Rather, they yield their ransomed powers, their bodies, as living sacrifices, holy and well-pleasing to God. This is the reasonable service of the redeemed. The "presentation" (aorist tense) is decisive action. The "transformation" (present tense) is continuous. Thus the life of holiness is launched with a full consecration to God, which is followed by constant access to His renewing and transforming grace (12:1, 2).

From this launching pad of dedication to God, Christian living pro-

ceeds to a right attitude toward self (12:3-8), right attitude toward the brethren (12:9-16), to a right attitude toward all men (12:17-21). It involves good citizenship in terms of meeting one's obligations to government (13:1-7), justice in private relations (13:8-10), and holiness in personal living (13:11-14). It even includes a responsibility to those with whom one differs. It demands a basic unity even in diversity(14:1-12), a love that softens and sweetens one's liberty (14:13—15:2), and primary attention to the purpose and example of Christ (15:3-13).

## **XX. Holiness Enjoyed and Pursued**

Thus, Romans is full to the brim of scriptural holiness as a vital experience and a way of life. But this holiness is not a "thing" or an "it." Rather it is the attitude of a heart fully renewed and victorious in the love and grace of God. The pattern is God in Christ. It is God likeness, Christlikeness, fullness of life. The enabling power is the indwelling Holy Spirit. The mood is triumph in a perfect Redeemer. The goal is ever-expanding. The heavenly vision becomes clearer. As we see, so we become. There is no static goal for the Christian. The infinite Christ keeps one ever stretching. The finite is captivated by the Infinite. The life has its achievements and accomplishments, but it never loses the joy of the perpetual pursuit (Heb. 12:14).

## **XXI. The Crisis**

Where then is entire sanctification? It is the term used for the crossing over of a born-again Christian from less than a full cleansing, renewal, and fulfillment of heart motivation to such a fullness and singleness of life and purpose in the pursuit of Christlikeness. There is a sense in which the crossing is an inference of one's presence on the other side of the line. But there are also signposts along the way (as seen in the scriptural terms of crisis experience), and often memories of difficult crossings (as, for instance, when self did not want to die).

## **XXII. The Christlike Life**

Though Romans may not abound in simple proof texts for entire sanctification, it is a gold mine for one whose search is for Christlikeness, fullness of life, and a hope that is secure. This is scriptural holiness. And the gate to the fulness of this experience is called entire sanctification.

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### **Documentation**

1. Robert Baker Girdlestone, *Synonyms of The Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1897, rep. n.d.), p.175.
  2. G. D. Stevens, "Holiness," *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, II, 400.
  3. H. P. Lidden, *Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, p. 85.
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# AN APPRAISAL OF THE KESWICK AND WESLEYAN CONTEMPORARY POSITIONS

W. RALPH THOMPSON, TH.D.

## **Introduction**

The ideal of Christian perfection which Christ and the apostles expressed, and which was made available to the believer by the Spirit at Pentecost, has recurred in one form or another from age to age. I Clement echoed the New Testament standard of brotherly love as the highest expression of the Christian life. (1) Repetitions of this ideal are to be found in the writings of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (c. A.D. 110); in Chiliasm; in Montanism; in the ideal of asceticism; in monasticism; and in other individuals and movements. (2)

From the fourth to the sixteenth centuries of the Church the quest for holiness was polluted in the main by the doctrine that evil is to be associated with the human body, a teaching emphasized by Gnosticism and Manichaeism. Consequently many of those who longed for holiness united with one or another of the sects of the Cathari, or joined themselves to monasteries or convents. (3)

Nevertheless there were those during the Middle Ages who lived lives of genuine piety and taught the same. Outstanding among them were Eckart (1260-1327), Tauler (?-1361), Suso (?-1366), and the Brethren of the Common Life. Pietism in England and Germany was a more modern attempt on the part of Christians to bring life and reality back into a religion that had grown formal, dead, and corrupt. Pietism had a profound influence on John Wesley.

Contemporary emphases on victorious Christian living are represented by those groups related to the Wesleyan and Keswick movements. It is with an appraisal of the contemporary positions of these two schools of thought that this paper deals.

## **I. The History of the Wesleyan and Keswick Movements**

### **A. Wesleyanism**

In order to achieve chronological orientation, the Wesleyan movement is surveyed first.

The origin of the Wesleyan movement centered around John Wesley, a clergyman of the Church of England, who lived during most of the eighteenth century. The movement began within the bounds of the established Church. When that institution closed its doors to Wesley and his followers, they moved to secular buildings, to the open fields, and to wherever they could get a

hearing. Later, necessity forced them to form the Methodist Societies in order to conserve and perpetuate the work which had been begun. Wesley himself, however, never withdrew from the Church of England.

The Methodist revival spread into Ireland and Wales, and then leapt the channel onto the continent. The Methodist circuit riders soon became familiar figures in America, and Methodist missionaries circled the earth.

Such zeal brought tremendous growth. Before many generations had passed, Methodist membership in America, for example, surpassed that of any other religious group. (4) Methodism's wealth also exceeded that of any other Protestant body. Methodism was big business.

With prosperity, however, came spiritual decline and a relaxation of those principles which made Methodism great. While her book of discipline continued to retain the same standard of doctrine and conduct which had been in effect under Wesley, and Coke, and Albury, a general relaxation in the application of those standards and in her emphasis on personal religion ensued.

Some of Methodism's leaders and a goodly number of her members continued to hold to the original principles, and chose to remain within the Methodist Church. Others left the church or were forced from it. These endeavored to preserve and perpetuate the aims of primitive Methodism by establishing their own denominations after the spiritual likeness of early Methodism.

Noteworthy among Methodism's more conservative children today are the following: The Wesleyan Methodist Church of America (1843), The Free Methodist Church of North America (1860), the Salvation Army (1865), The Pilgrim Holiness Church (1897), The Church of the Nazarene (1907), and The Evangelical Methodist Church (1939). A number of other groups which have not come so directly from Methodist backgrounds as the above, nevertheless endeavored to preserve the doctrinal position of early Methodism.

## **B. The Keswick Movement**

The Keswick movement had its beginnings in England about 1870, but its roots reached into America. An interest in the higher life had been stimulated in Britain by the Plymouth Brethren, by the evangelistic campaigns of D. L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey, and by the writings of such American teachers as Walter Marshall (*The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*), W. E. Boardman (*The Higher Christian Life*), Robert Pearsall Smith (*Holiness Through Faith*), and Hannah Whitehall Smith (*The Record of a Happy Life*). (5)

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pearsall Smith's higher-life meetings and conferences in England did much to set the pattern for the Keswick movement. Their emphasis arose as the result of their own entry into deeper spiritual experiences. Stephen Barabas' account of Mrs. Smith's struggle for a victorious Christian life is so typical of the search made by the early leaders both of Wesleyanism and Keswick that his statement is quoted at length at this point:

Mrs. Pearsall Smith says that she knew herself to be a child of God, but was unable to act like one, and this made her wonder whether she had not

missed something which would have given her victory. She determined to find out, if possible, what that something was. Older Christians whom she questioned about it all told her the same thing: she had not missed anything; a life of sinning and repenting was inevitable because of the weakness of the flesh, and was all she could ever hope for. She continually cried out with the apostle, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Yet the fact stared her in the face that Paul had not only asked that question but answered it and said triumphantly, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In her discouragement she began to be afraid that she would lose every bit of religion she possessed. She and her husband, she says, had "learned thoroughly the blessed truth of justification by faith, and rejoiced in it with great joy. But here we had stopped. The equally blessed twin truth of sanctification by faith had not yet been revealed to us."

This new revelation came to Mrs. Pearsall Smith about 1867, through a young Baptist theological student who was living in her home as a tutor, and a Methodist dressmaker who lived in the little New Jersey village of Millville to which they had removed. From the tutor she learned that the way of victory was by faith and from the dressmaker, that there was an experience called the "second blessing," which brought one into a place of victory. (6)

Early conferences were held at Broadlands (1874), Oxford (1874), Brighton (1875), and finally at Keswick (1875). Keswick soon became the recognized center of the movement, which today has conventions around the world.

Speakers always have come from various lands. At the Oxford Convention, for example, there appear the names of Otto Stockmayer', of Switzerland; Theodore Monod, of Paris; W. E. Boardman and Asa Mahan, from America; and Evan Hopkins, of England.

It should be noted, too, that convention speaker's represent several denominations. F. B. Myer was a Baptist. A. T. Pierson, J. Elder Cumming, and George H. C. MacGregor' were Presbyterians. Andrew Murray belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church. H. C. G. Moule, II. W. Webb-Peploe, W. H. Griffith Thomas, and J. Stuart Holden were Anglicans. Such were representative of those who have followed.

This brief survey of Wesleyan and Keswick history must suffice for the purpose of this study. We shall now turn to an appraisal of the teachings and contemporary status of these movements.

## **II. Similarities Between Wesleyanism and the Keswick Movement**

Certain basic similarities between the two schools of thought, especially with respect to their doctrinal positions, should be noted. If at times quotations or points of view are cited from men who are no longer contemporary, it is because neither movement has departed theologically from the position held by their founders; and both quote their earlier leaders when presenting their own contemporary positions.

A basic doctrinal agreement between them is to be noted with regard to their appraisal of the condition of unregenerate man. Both find him to be a sinner by nature, and consequently unable to cease

from sinning, or to save himself from the wrath of a just God. (7) Both schools of thought base their hope for man's salvation squarely on the redemptive work of God through Jesus Christ.

Both believe that justification is by faith in Christ, that it is attended by regeneration, and that the sinner is thereby made a child of God.

Both recognize that although transgressions are forgiven in justification, at which time also sanctification is begun, yet the principle of sin with which man is born remains in the justified believer. They agree that a life of complete victory in Christ comes usually through a definite crisis experience, or second work of grace. Wesleyans generally consider that the "second-blessing experience" is the normal procedure in the economy of God, as He works toward the ultimate salvation of the believer. (8) Keswick teachers emphasize that the second-crisis experience is usually a practical necessity not because it is in the purpose of God that it should come later than justification, but because of sinful man's ignorance of his need to be filled with the Holy Spirit and of God's provision for that need. (9)

Both Keswick and Wesleyanism believe that the sanctified believer continues to grow in grace so long as he lives. Both believe, too, that sanctification can be lost.

These are some of the basic similarities in doctrine which Wesleyan and Keswick teachers have. But it should also be noted that they possess important doctrinal differences.

### **III. Differences Between the Wesleyan and Keswick Positions**

An important difference in the teachings of Wesleyanism and Keswick is seen in their analysis of what happens in the believer's heart at the moment of sanctification. Wesleyanism teaches that the soul itself is delivered from all sin. Keswick, on the other hand, teaches that the sanctified themselves are not made holy, but only that they are made completely victorious over the sin nature, which still remains in their hearts. They distinguish between a state of holiness and a condition of holiness. They say that if the sanctified were in a state of holiness he would have no need for God to keep him thus, therefore they reject the doctrine as untenable. H. W. Webb-Peploe voiced Keswick's objection in the following words:

The man who believes in a sanctification which eradicates sin from his person, as a principle, must be satisfied with his own condition, and be able to take his place more or less independent of the Savior, even while he may say that he is dependent upon that Savior or his vital joys and power from moment to moment. (10)

Wesleyans see no such difficulty in connection with the doctrine. They believe that the sanctified is made holy initially, and kept holy moment by moment, through the atoning grace of Christ. In speaking of the sanctified relationship to God, Charles V. Fairbairn says: "Just as natural life is maintained by daily sustenance, so with the

spiritual; it must be renewed 'day by day.' "(11) D. Shelby Corlett asks this question: "In the work of entire sanctification is the sinful nature brought into more perfect control, or is it entirely removed from the heart of the Christian?" His answer is:

It is entirely removed from the heart of the Christian, because this sinful nature is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be (Romans 8:7), it cannot be incorporated into the Christian life, it cannot be harmonized with the nature of God, nor can it be brought under perfect control. The only remedy is removal or deliverance. Hence, "the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). (12)

Wesley says: "The body of sin, the carnal mind, must be destroyed; the old man must be slain, or we can not put on the new man, which is created after God . . . , in righteousness and true holiness." (13)

Webb-Peploe stated at a Keswick convention that he could not understand how "dear John Wesley" could be so self-deceived as to suggest that a Christian could be free from sin in this life. Reader Harris, in answer to Webb-Peploe, offered one hundred pounds for the production of a single text of scripture which taught that sin is a necessity in the life of a Spirit-filled Christian. The one hundred pounds was never claimed. (14)

Evan Hopkins, one of the most quoted spokesmen among Keswicks, uses illustrations to prove that sin remains in the soul of the sanctified. One of his most effective analogies is that of an ascending balloon. Since it is so characteristic of several illustrations which Keswick speakers use, it is quoted here at length:

When a balloon with a car attached to it is ascending from the earth its tendency is upward-it has no tendency at all downwards, it has lost its tendency to fall. So when the Lord cleanses my heart from all evil-gives me a 'clean heart'-I have no tendency to sin. I am liable to sin, but I have no tendency to sin.

Is this the reasoning of any of our readers? The illustration is a good one, but the inference is fallacious, and most misleading in its spiritual application.

First, as to the balloon, we would say it has not lost its tendency downwards, though it continues to rise. We must remember that its movement upwards is but the resultant of opposing forces. Suppose we say the weight of the materials of which it is composed, or, in other words, its tendency downwards, is equal to four, and the lifting power of the gas by which it is filled is equal to six. As these two forces are diametrically opposed, the power by which it actually ascends is only equal to two.

Now to say that the balloon has lost all tendency downwards, because it has ceased to move in that direction, but on the contrary is steadily moving upwards, would be to talk after the popular mind, but it would not be an accurate statement of fact. Its tendency to sink, equal to four, remains the same, though it is counteracted by the superior power of six in the opposite direction.

The very fact that 'the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus' must be ever in force as a continual necessity, is a proof that the tendency to sin is not extinct, but is simply counteracted.

On the other hand, this does not imply that I need be conscious of that tendency. If we walk in the Spirit, the strain is borne by the Spirit. The



privilege of the believer is this, that he may so live in the Spirit, and be filled with the Spirit, that, speaking from his consciousness, he may be tempted to say the flesh no longer exists; that he has now only one nature. But let us not be ignorant of Satan's devices. It is then that we are in danger of being shunted off the rails of soberness and truth on to the line of spiritual delusion, which sooner or later terminates in disaster. (15)

Experientially, then, both schools of thought stood together. It is at the point of the doctrine of what happens to the heart of the sanctified believer that they differ.

The basis for the radical doctrinal cleavage at this point appeal's to be due to a fundamental difference in the two schools' definitions of sin. Adherents to the Keswick position are recruited, for the most part, from those churches which accept the Calvinistic definition of sin (16), while Wesleyans are Arminian in doctrine. Since Calvinism looks upon those human weaknesses which produce a lack of conformity to the perfect will of God (mistakes, lapses of memory, ignorance, etc.) as sin, it is not conceivable that followers of Keswick could think of a perfect cleansing of the individual in this world. Wesleyans on the other hand, have no such theological impediment, for "sanctification" denotes for them the cleansing of the affections and motives, but not the undoing of the normal effects of the Fall.

#### **IV. Criticisms of Certain Keswick and Wesleyan Positions and Practices**

The writer now proposes to indicate what he believes to be inconsistencies and/or weaknesses of the Keswick and Wesleyan positions and/or practices.

##### **A. Keswick position and practices**

While the writer is happy with the intense Keswick desire for complete victory in Christ; while he rejoices at their zeal in proclaiming that victory, and at the soundness of much of their doctrine, and at the holy lives of many of their number; he finds their emphasis upon sanctification as a sustained condition to be unsound.

In the first place, a number of Scriptures clearly indicates that God would sanctify His people themselves, as well as give them victory over sin. The emphasis upon personal cleansing in the following passages is noteworthy: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that the Church might be presented before him in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27, RSV). "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly" (I Thess. 5:23, RSV). "As he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, ' You shall be holy, for I am holy' "(I Pet. 1:15,16, RSV). "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the

blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. . . . If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:7, RSV). Keswick teachers have found no Scripture which, rightly interpreted, teaches otherwise. Where Evan Hopkins, in his illustration of the balloon above, quotes Scripture, he stops too soon. He says: "The very fact that the 'law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus' must be ever in force as a continual necessity, is a proof that the tendency to sin is not extinct, but is simply counteracted." (17) But if he had quoted the full scriptural statement, instead of a mere phrase, it would have contradicted the very point which he was making. It reads, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2 RSV).

Even in his use of analogies, Mr. Hopkins proves too much. If, for example, the downward pull of the ascending balloon illustrates that the sinful nature remains in the heart of the sanctified—he raises some serious theological problems.

Take the case of Adam. Consistency demands that Mr. Hopkins assume either that Adam was not subject to temptation, or that he did not have the upward "pull" of the Spirit of God; or, if neither of these conclusions is tenable, that he simply did not sin. This fallacy cannot be dismissed on the ground that our Keswick brethren mean that while the downward "pull" remains in the heart of the sanctified believer it was not in the heart of Adam. The writer would call attention to a statement by Stephen Barabas, Keswick's approved historian and the codifier of their theological position. He says, "There would . . . be no need to abide in Christ and rely upon Him for victory over temptation if sin were no longer in us." (18) By this statement he seems clearly to mean that the sinful nature is the basis for temptation.

The same consistency in the application of the doctrine which Mr. Hopkins derived from his illustration of the balloon would lead to more serious conclusions yet with regard to Jesus: either His temptations were not real, if we follow Mr. Hopkins reasoning, or Jesus too had a sinful nature, for He was tempted "in all points" (Heb. 4:15).

The teaching that the sanctification of the believer is a counteraction of sin, but does not make the man himself holy, actually is no sanctification at all, any more than the sealing of a cesspool might be called a cleansing.

In their attempt to find scriptural support for the doctrine that sanctification is a sustained condition of victory, but is not also a state of purity, the Keswick teachers quite clearly quote certain passages of Scripture out of context. I John 1:8 is an example. John says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Keswick teachers interpret this verse as applicable to the victorious Christian just the same as it applies to any other person. But to interpret it then forces the apostle to contradict himself. John has

just stated that if we walk in the light as God is in the light we are cleansed from all sin. He cannot mean, then, in the next verse, that no people are without sin; obviously one cannot be cleansed from all sin and have a sinful nature at the same time. The apostle makes his meaning clear in verse 10: "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar." In verse eight John is saying, then, that all men are sinners in need of cleansing; but he clearly assumes that some have been, or at least may be, cleansed "from all sin." To isolate verse 8 is to do violence to the sense of the passage.

## **B. Wesleyan position and practices**

Some Wesleyans fall into the same verbal error as that of Keswick mentioned above. Thomas Cook, for example, says, "We teach not a state of purity, but a maintained condition of purity." (19) By reading his statement in its context, however, one concludes that what he really means to say is that the sanctified believer needs the Spirit's power continually in order to remain sanctified, to which both Wesleyanism and Keswick agree.

The use of the term "eradication," on the part of certain Wesleyans, to describe what happens at sanctification, seems to the writer to be a weakness. If by "eradication" it is meant that an essential part of the person is removed, then the writer would ask for scriptural substantiation of that doctrine. It must be remembered that inbred sin is not an essential part of the nature of man. If it is, then Jesus was not a true man. Nor was Adam before the Fall. When God made man in His "own image," He made him without a carnal nature. Sanctification, therefore, is not the removal of an essential part of the human personality; it is the cleansing of that personality. The word "eradication" is greatly misunderstood and misinterpreted by some non-Wesleyans. "Cleansing" is a scriptural term and carries better connotations. It would seem, therefore, that it should replace "eradication" in Wesleyan vocabulary.

While entire sanctification still is taught by the leaders of those branches of Wesleyanism which are known as "holiness" churches, and while a number of their pastors are faithful in the proclamation of the doctrine, the writer sees a slackening of its emphasis among them' general leaders, and a disturbing lack of preaching and teaching of the doctrine at the grass roots. Wesley urged that "all our preachers make it a point to preach perfection to believers constantly, strongly and explicitly." (20) And Adam Clarke said, "If the Methodists give up preaching entire sanctification, they will soon lose their glory." (21) Any slackening of emphasis on the subject among Wesleyans, then, becomes disturbing.

The writer believes the reasons for the lessened emphasis on the subject of entire sanctification in churches of the Wesleyan tradition to be several in number.

First, a number of her pastors have never entered into the experience

themselves. While some would riot admit it publicly, they are confused on the subject, hence do not preach it.

Second, many laymen of the Wesleyan tradition have never been sanctified wholly and do not "groan after" the experience, though they may have promised to do so when they joined the church. Because of this fact, some laymen too cease to speak clearly on the subject.

Third, many Wesleyans who have come to a crisis experience of entire sanctification have supposed that it is self-perpetuating. Through carelessness with respect to prayer and the devotional reading of the Bible; through a lack of careful obedience to God; through a loss of zeal to win others; and through ceasing to hunger and thirst continually after righteousness, the Spirit has been grieved away. The experience of full salvation for them has ceased to be alive and meaningful. While they may continue to hold to a profession of this grace, and though they may contend for the teaching itself, their lives, far from attracting the sinner, bring reproach upon the very doctrine which they profess.

Fourth, a desire to grow numerically causes some among us to modify, or to keep silent about the doctrine of holiness, lest some who have begun to attend the services should be offended. In so doing, we forget that this doctrine is our reason for being, and our glory.

Fifth, the decline in emphasis on the doctrine of entire sanctification has come, to no small degree, as a result of the decline of the class meeting.

Sixth, churches of the Wesleyan tradition have failed to "sell" the doctrine of holiness because too often it has been presented primarily as something negative, while its positive aspects have been neglected. Wesleyans could learn from Keswick teachers at this point.

## **V. Summary and Conclusions**

The rise of Wesleyanism and the Keswick movement have been given briefly in this paper. In an analysis of their similarities, it has been noted that both believe in the crisis experiences of justification and sanctification by faith in the Christ of Calvary. Both believe in complete victory over sin in personal living. Both can count among their numbers outstanding saints. And both have done much to promote God's kingdom in the world.

Differences between the Wesleyans and Keswick stem from basic dissimilarities in their definitions of sin. This results in a distinct cleavage of thought with regard to what happens in the heart of the sanctified. Wesleyans maintain that the heart itself is cleansed, while Keswicks affirm that the sin nature is only counteracted in the sanctified heart.

Keswickism is weak in its scriptural foundation, but strong in its proclamation. Wesleyanism is doctrinally sound, but lacks in zeal

and in positive presentation. Each has something to learn from the other. While learning it, let neither oppose the other, nor yield to the other's weaknesses.

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### Documentations

1. George Allen Turner, *The More Excellent Way* (Winona Lake, md.: Light and Life Press, 1952), p.122.
2. *Ibid.*, p.128.
3. *Ibid.*, p.129.
4. Wilson T. Hogue, *History of the Free Methodist Church* (Chicago: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1918), I, 17.
5. Stephen Barabas, *So Great Salvation* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1952), pp.15-16.
6. *Ibid.*, pp.17-18.
7. It is not to be supposed, however, that these schools of thought see eye to eye on this and other doctrines listed in this paper, when such doctrines are analyzed fully.
8. Cf. D. Shelby Corlett, *The A.B.C. 's of Holiness* (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press), p. 26. Also, Harry F. Jessop, *Foundations of Doctrine* (Chicago: The Chicago Evangelistic Institute), p.48.
9. Barabas, op. cit., pp 134-135.
10. Herbert H. Stevenson, ed., *Keswick's Authentic Voice* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1959), p.31.
11. Charles V. Fairbairn, *Tarry Ye* (Winona Lake, md.: Light & Life Press, 1943), p.61.
12. *Op. cit.*, p.37.
13. Quoted by W. B. Godbey, *Sanctification* (Louisville, Ky.: The Kentucky Methodist Publishing Company, 1896), p.55.
14. Jack E. Ford, *What the Holiness People Believe* (I Palm Grove, Birkenhead, Chesire: Emmanuel Bible College and Missions, n.d.), p.51.
15. Barabas, op. cit., pp.49-50.
16. Evan Anglicanism, from which Keswick draws a part of her constituency, and some of her ablest leaders, is mildly Calvinistic (see "Church of England," The New Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. IV).
17. Barabas, op. cit., p.49.
18. *Ibid.*, p.73.
19. Thomas Cook, *New Testament Holiness* (London: The Epworth Press, 1902), p.43.
20. Godbey, op. cit., p.14.
21. *Loc. cit.*

## BIBLICAL CONCEPTS OF SIN

KENNETH KINGHORN, PH.D.

There is no precise biblical *definition* of sin. The Bible is concerned more with the remedy for sin than with a definition of sin. This study attempts to arrive at the biblical *concepts* of sin, and to show the relevance of these concepts in the contemporary world.

It is true of the doctrine of sin, as it is true of other doctrines, that the concept of progressive revelation is important. To arrive at a biblical view of sin is only possible after a study of the doctrine of sin in both Testaments. Only gradually does the doctrine of sin unfold throughout the centuries of God's dealing with the human family. Even as a student gradually comprehends truth so the human family has only gradually grasped God's teaching concerning sin.

In the Old Testament there are numerous Hebrew terms for the concept of sin; indeed, more than the terms for goodness. The enormous number of times sin is mentioned in the Old Testament is a fair index for its preoccupation with this theological doctrine. Most standard Bible dictionary articles on sin will show the peculiar difficulty in defining precisely the meaning of this array of words. The difficulty is increased because the Hebrew words have a secular as well as a religious meaning. Thus, one can best arrive at the doctrine of sin in the Old Testament by a study of the concepts it teaches, rather than by limiting oneself strictly to word study.

God's early dealings with the Human family are progressive. Sin was first learned as something outward before it was learned as something inward. Sin was regarded in earliest times as an act. Sin as an act dominated the Hebrew concept. Although the sin of our first parents was certainly inward before it was outward, nevertheless, they were not punished until the deed became overt. Sin was seen as breaking a law or behaving in a certain way. The Hebrews first conceived of sin as an overt act of wrongdoing. The line was clear; it was a black or white issue. A more profound view of sin, although seen in germinal forms, was not generally understood at first.

This objective view of sin as an act is seen in the provisions connected with the Levitical law. Sins of ignorance were still sins because they were acts contrary to the command (Lev. 4:13, 14). Although they were sins of ignorance, they were sins, and they needed forgiveness. In Leviticus 5:17 it is said, "And if any one sin, and do any of the things which Jehovah hath commanded not to be done, though he knew it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity." The ethical concept of sin is eclipsed here, and it is the legalistic concept which prevails. The central idea here is not the free will, but a law which is broken. By an ethical concept of sin is meant the involvement of

the human will in an act. By a legalistic concept of sin is meant the breaking of a rule, whether knowingly or unknowingly.

Developing at the same time, although slower to be understood is the concept of inward sins which are not manifested in outward acts. This is seen in the Deuteronomic law which holds one guilty of murder only if one killed willfully. Here, the motive is isolated from the act. Perhaps the tenth commandment is the best evidence for the concept of inward sin. God was teaching and preparing the soil for the later witness of men like Jeremiah and Ezekiel who insisted on the corruption of man's heart (cf. Jer. 17:9).

It must be emphasized that there is no neat pattern of the development of the idea of sin to be found in the Old Testament. Some men like Enoch were greatly ahead of their age, and others like the legalists to whom the prophets ministered were behind their age. At the same time, there is a general growth of the understanding of sin which may be discerned in the Old Testament.

The covenant was another advance in the concept of sin. The covenant promises of God are contingent upon human obedience (Num. 15:30-31). Here the relationship is not to a law, but to a person. Man is in a covenant relationship with God, and sin is the breaking of this covenant. This is especially the witness of the prophets who insist that sin is a rebellion against God. Sin against God, or against one's fellow man who is a member of the covenant people, is all ethically responsible act. Social sin and religious sin are both against God. Man's relationship to God as a person is at the basis of the covenant. Sin is more than breaking a law, it is a defection from the one who gives the law. The prophets often say, "Thus saith the Lord," not "This is the law." External laws were seen as the will of Jehovah. Joseph understood this when he said "How can I sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9). The Psalmist said, "Against Thee, and Thee only have I sinned" (Ps. 51:4). The ethical concept of sin is prominent in the Old Testament (Prov. 4:23). Personal responsibility and the motive of the heart are emphasized. Indeed, one can sin even when he externally keeps the law.

The concepts of sinfulness and a sinful nature are also seen in the Old Testament. The Psalmist declares, "Behold I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 51:5, 10). A keen awareness of the sinful state of the heart is evident. The more sensitive souls of the Old Testament understood sin as an inward principle which produced outward sin.

In the Old Testament a very serious account is taken of sin. Sin is universal (I Kings 8:46; Prov. 20:9; Ecc. 7:20; Job 4:17-21; Psa. 5: 130:3; 143:2), sin always destroys communion with God, (Isa. 59:2), and sin puts man in a hopeless situation (Hos. 13:9). Sin is not connected with man's humanity, nor is sin inherent in the flesh. Man's finitude is not sin (Gen. 1:27).

Thus, the concept of sin in the Old Testament develops progressively, although not steadily nor without lapses and setbacks. The New Testament completes the Old Testament concepts of sin.

By the time of Jesus the concept is well developed that sin may be more than an external breaking of the law. While Jesus does not discuss sin's origin or nature, nevertheless, in some way He deals with this doctrine in almost all of His teachings and parables. In the teaching of sin, as in other areas, Jesus came to complete and to fulfil. Jesus emphasized the attitude of the heart (Matt. 5:8). He insists that publicans and harlots may enter the kingdom of God before the moralistic Pharisees (Matt. 21:31). Sin has to do with one's relationship to and fellowship with the heavenly Father.

To return again to the illustration of the student: in the elementary stages of teaching certain rules are given, as it were, in black and white. For example, in elementary grammar certain things may be done, and certain other things may not be done. But later, after the student matures, the teacher begins to unfold certain cases when the rules may be broken in order to produce a better piece of literature. The rules are to serve the literature, and literature is not to serve the rules. If certain of these legalistic concepts of sin are evident in the Old Testament, the New Testament interprets them in the spirit of the gospel. The New Testament in general and Paul in particular, seek to show the depths to which sin has penetrated human nature; and, at the same time, to show the remedy which grace affords. Sin in the New Testament is not primarily a breaking of a law or a covenant. It is anything which interrupts one's relationship with God.

This accounts for the primary New Testament witness that sin is known by the law (Rom. 3:20; 5:20). Paul observes, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7). This does not mean that before the law one does not sin, it means that before the knowledge of the law, one is not guilty. "For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13; see also Gal. 3:19; I Tim. 1:9).

Sin is universally present in all persons, and one is made aware of this sin through the law. Thus, it seems to do violence to the Bible to assume all actions of men as bringing guilt simply because they fall short of the perfections of God. This is the mistake of many neo-orthodox theologians. To call all of man's deeds sinful because they are human is to blur the biblical concept of sin. (Adam was not sinful before his fall, although he was completely human.) Human infirmities are not sin, and are taken into account by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26). To make humanity coequal with sinfulness is to become almost, if not altogether, gnostic. On the other hand, sin may be present when one is not cognizant of it. Here is the point at which the concept of guilt is important. There may be sin, or transgression, without guilt.



Wesleyans have stoutly maintained that they do not hold to a sinless perfection. The obvious admission is, therefore, that in the best of men there is sin. But this sin does not bring guilt until it has the consent of the will. Yes, it is possible to sin without knowing it, and all such sin needs the benefit of Christ's atonement. While any sin, be it a sin of the will, or a sin of ignorance-must be covered by the atonement, one may conceivably sin without culpability. Paul, writing to the Roman congregation, declares that all have sinned (*hemarton*, aorist) and fall short (*husterountai*, present) of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Obviously no one absolutely conforms to God's perfect will. Jesus urges us to pray daily for forgiveness (Matt 6:12; Luke 11:4). No state of grace excludes these involuntary transgressions, and men need pardon constantly (Matt 6:12; 18:23 ff.; I John 1:8, 9).

Thus, if one insists on the statement that sin is a "willful transgression of a known law," he must be prepared immediately to qualify it. For example, that which has traditionally been called original sin in infants is anything but willful. But one can say original sin without implying original guilt.

This is why the clarification of guilt is necessary when discussing sin. All guilt presupposes sin, but all sin does not presuppose guilt

If the question be raised, "But why call transgressions sin? Why not call them unfortunate human failings?," the answer is that the biblical concept is that these are sins. Jesus does not limit sin to only a class of people in open willful rebellion to God. One of His most striking statements relates sinfulness to "righteous" men. He observes, "If ye then being evil . . ." (Matt 7:11). Elsewhere He has remarked that there is none good but God (Matt 19:17; cf. I Kings 8: 46; Prov 20:9; Gal. 3:22). To over-emphasize the subjective and ethical aspects of sin is to be in danger of the snare into which Abelard fell. Sin became, for him, relativistic and subjectivistic. Any act is sinful only if one willingly consents to evil. For him a deed is wrong only if one thinks it is wrong. Plainly, the conscience of man is not that trustworthy (I Con 8:7). Our guide must ever be "What saith the Lord?"

There must be some objective standard, and the scriptural terms most used for sin in the Old Testament (*chattath*) and in the New Testament (*hamartia*) give us help at this point. Sin is a missing of the mark or 'a falling short. Indeed, this is the basic scriptural meaning for the term sin. However, as indicated, guilt comes only when one's will consents to disobedience to, or neglect of, God's will.

Anyone only slightly familiar with the history of Lutheran and Reformed doctrine recognizes that sin as falling short is basic as a definition. Those of Wesleyan persuasion do not feel that the definition of sin as anything less than the perfection of God is adequate. Wesleyans feel this definition overdraws the biblical concept, unless it is qualified. However, Wesleyans must be careful not to be too radical in

their rejection of this definition in the face of the basic meaning of sin as a falling short or a missing the mark. To be driven to an extreme, and to insist that something is sin only if one believes it to be sin, is less than scriptural. The combined witness of the Lutheran and Reformed attempts to understand the biblical concept of sin must not be hastily branded with the cliché, "That is Calvinism." One is always the loser if he fails to learn the motives of his Christian brethren, and fails to appreciate what they are seeking to say.

An example of sin as missing the mark follows. Suppose a person is engaging in a sin, and has done so for years because he has grown up in a certain social climate where this sin was common practice. The person is ignorant of the fact that this is sin, but in spite of his ignorance he needs the atonement. However, guilt is not attached to this sin until the person becomes enlightened as to the fact that he is engaging in sin.

It is not a case of either-or, that is, an objective view or a subjective view of sin. The two concepts, which are both biblical, must be kept in a tension. Any biblical view of sin must take into account the aspects of human volition and the failure to reach the mark.

Essentially, the biblical concept of sin is a wrong relationship with God. Anything in thought, deed, or disposition which disrupts one's relationship with God is sin. This disrupted relationship with God may be a result of willful transgression, or it may be a result of one's failure to continue to grow in grace and the knowledge of God. This harmonizes exactly with the basic meaning of the terms for sin- viz. to fall short, or to miss the mark. Sin is anything which disrupts one's relationship with God.

Thus, there are two basic concepts of sin taught in the Scriptures. 1. There is the biblical concept of sin as willful transgression of the known will of God. This is the subjective view, often called the ethical view of sin. 2. There is also the biblical concept which emphasizes the falling short or missing the mark of a standard of God. This is the objective view often called the legal view of sin. It would seem that both concepts are biblical, and each concept is a part of the total truth. They must be held in tension because either view, if carried to an extreme, leads to error.

It must be emphasized that these two biblical concepts of sin need to be part of the present-day Wesleyan witness to contemporary society. First, Wesleyans need to keep sharp their traditional emphasis upon sin as willful transgression of the known will of God. Failure to keep this emphasis will lead to either of two evils. On the one hand, it can cause one to call every human act sinful because it is not sublimely perfect. The fallacy here has been noted. On the other hand, a failure to keep this emphasis sharp could lead to quite the opposite effect. It could lead to a rationalizing away of the sins in one's own life. For example, when the conscience stabs for wrong doing, one may

tend to rationalize that the deed was not really willful after all, it was only a human infirmity. And instead of recognizing the faithfulness of the Holy Spirit in His conviction of a sinful act, one might only attribute such a stab of conscience to the Devil who is tempting one to doubt one's Christian experience. This is a particular pitfall into which one who professes to be "free from sin" is especially in danger of falling. Such a mistake not only hinders spiritual progress but makes the voice of God in the soul only the voice of a doubting conscience. Instead of advancing God's glory, this brings dishonor to His name. This is sin any way one looks at it. Any willful transgressions is sin— not error, not wounded id, not ignorance— but sin. No one in any state of grace is exempt from the possibility of willful sin in this life.

The second biblical witness that sin is a falling short of a mark is likewise relevant in today's society. The earnest Christian must not be satisfied to hide behind the statement that "sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). Sanctification is infinitely more than crisis. It is also progress. There is need for all emphasis upon growth in Christlikeness in this life. All holiness admits of growth. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit . . ." (Matt 5:3). That is, blessed is the one who sees the need of growth. If one wonders, "What does this have to do with a biblical concept of sin?," let him hear the words of St. James: "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17). To know of the possibilities of growth and to fail to progress in that growth is to miss the mark—it is to sin.

For example, the church is to be a light set upon a hill and any person, any church, or any movement which fails to be a light in this generation sins. Even as a light is seen only when it is taken from under a bushel and set upon a hill, so a Christian is effective as a witness only as he becomes involved in the age in which he finds himself. To fail to become involved in social issues is to miss the mark, it is to fall short. One must grow in his usefulness to God and man, and to fail to grow in this way is to sin. Twentieth century Christians dare not fall short of the mark of social effectiveness because of an exclusiveness. They dare not fall short of the mark of theological contribution because of a love of tradition more than a love of truth. They dare not fall short of meeting human need because of a preoccupation with methods. The biblical witness to sin as a falling short speaks a relevant note at the point of emphasizing the process of growth in sanctification— an emphasis in some places long overdue. To fall short of the growth which comes in progressive sanctification is sin.

We come finally to a definition of the biblical concept of sin. Sin is both willful transgression and a falling short. It is both objective and subjective, it is both ethical and legal. These concepts must be kept in tension. A failure to keep these in balance is to hold a concept of sin which is less than biblical. Sin is any deed, thought, or disposition which is destructive of one's relationship with God.

## SIN IN BELIEVERS

LEO G. COX, PH.D.

When I began an investigation on the subject of holiness and the human element back in the early forties, I was quite disturbed at the lack of clear teaching on the subject of sin in believers as distinguished from failures in the lives of entirely sanctified persons. My findings of that time are in an unpublished thesis entitled, "In Earthen Vessels."

In the late fifties, another investigation of Wesley's view of sin and perfection still revealed little new on the subject. The encouraging discovery here was the clear and biblical exegesis of John Wesley and his understanding of the "sins" of ignorance and infirmity in the lives of persons possessing perfect love. I was also impressed with Wesley's strong language describing the sin in believers which is destroyed in entire sanctification.

It was gratifying indeed to discover, when I sought help for this paper, the increased amount of material on the subject of sin in believers, as seen over against sanctified human nature published during the last few years. Especially would I refer to articles by Merne Harris and Roy Nicholson in *Insights into Holiness*, and by Ortho Jennings, Cornelius Haggard, Leslie Marston and Lewis Corlett in *Further Insights into Holiness*. Some of the subjects — "Christian Holiness: Its Psychological Frame of Reference," "Holiness and Nervous Reactions" — reveal the nature of these writings.

In the study conference conducted one year ago by the NHA, papers on the subject of sin and holiness were presented that give further definition to sinfulness in believers. The book, *The Word and the Doctrine*, contains a wealth of very helpful discussion. The publication of W. Curry Mavis's book, *The Psychology of Christian Experience*, gives added light in this field.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze some of these discussions, and to seek for a clearer definition of the sinful nature and its manifestations in the Christian believer. If inbred sin in the believer cannot be distinguished from the sinful state of the unbeliever on the one hand, or from the faulty nature of the entirely sanctified on the other hand, then the message of holiness stands in jeopardy in the hands of its own theological surgeons.

**I. Sinfulness in the believer must be distinguished from the state of sinfulness existent in the unbeliever.** It is possible to place the standard of the regenerate life so high that only entirely sanctified people can live it, or allow it to fall so low that believers are "miserable sinners still." It is very important that clarity be attained at this point.

One of the clearest definitions of the sin in unbelievers is found in I John 3. John wrote, "Every one who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness" (I John 3:4, NASB). No one who abides in God commits this kind of sin (v.6); in fact, a person in the state of the new birth is unable to sin in this manner (v. 9). Such a person who thus sins "is of the devil" (v.8), and has no spiritual vision or knowledge of God (v. 6). The use of the present tense in these verses clearly portrays the total surrender of the person to a career of lawless rebellion against God. Many other Scriptures can be cited giving this same view of the person apart from God.

It is important to recognize the beneficial effects of prevenient grace in the lives of many people who are not yet Christians. Some people by training may have refined their outward actions to the point of a good life, while still their heart practices lawlessness. In Romans 7 the Apostle pictures himself as such a person. Though desiring God's law, and longing for obedience, Paul finds himself controlled by a sinful nature and left helpless and wretched under a body of sin. To reckon this man regenerate is inconsistent with John's declaration in I John 3:9. Yet he may be living a socially respectable outward life. Wherein then is he a sinner?

Merne Harris and Richard Taylor give an excellent treatment on the subject of sin in their article, "The Dual Nature of Sin." (1) There they make very clear that sin, strictly speaking, is "ethical sin" as over against "legal sin," and it is "accountable wrongness before God." Further, they say that if inherited depravity is called sin, the term is then used in an "accommodated, sub-ethical sense." Sin in act, then, when it is voluntary, against God, and with some degree of knowledge, is the only basis for eternal damnation.

However, it must further be observed that when a responsible person sins in this ethical sense, he gives himself over to his depraved heart, and by these acts of sin makes his heart-sinfulness his own. Paul points out that when men sinned, "God gave them over to a depraved mind" (Rom. 1:28, NASB), and such persons became "haters of God," and "although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them" (Rom. 1:30, 32, NASB). Obviously, surrender to evil is not only in action, but also in a state of mind. In this sense a sinful nature becomes ethical sin, or "accountable wrongness," in the unbeliever. Apparently this is the "lawlessness," or career of sinning, John defined in his epistle. Even though prevenient grace modifies this sinning condition in many unbelievers (Paul said he "acted ignorantly in unbelief" before his conversion, I Tim. 1:13), yet basically the sinner has given himself over to an evil within, and has become a slave to that evil. This is the kind of sinning a believer does not, and cannot, be doing.

**II. The sin in the believer must be distinguished from the failures that are still present in the entirely sanctified.** Some very excellent distinctions in this area have been recently made which aid greatly in understanding this problematic area in the doctrine of Christian holiness. To state the doctrine of perfection in a way that makes impossible its attainment by human beings is not scriptural. To lower the standard of purity to a level inferior to a full victory in Christ mutilates the Wesleyan message. Care must be exercised at this point. Leslie Marston fears the possibility that "from the psychoanalytic reservoir called the subconscious there has developed a murky seepage into the stream of holiness teaching beclouding it with alien concepts." (2)

In the first place it must be said that there are results of the fall that will remain as flaws in one's basic human nature until the resurrection. Holiness of heart is not a grasping for resurrection glory. It is well that personality traits, basic human desires, and human limitations are recognized as no bars to Christian holiness. Furthermore, the careful distinctions made by W. Curry Mavis between repressed complexes and carnality are greatly needed. (3) Such discussions make one realize how naive is the claim that all struggle after entire sanctification is on the outside. The pure in heart must learn to distinguish between the sinful and human battles within.

Some of John Wesley's questions to persons professing the great blessing seem almost overdone in the light of repressed complexes.

Do you find no interruption or abatement at any time of your joy in the Lord? Do you continually see God; and without any cloud, or darkness, or mist between? Do you pray without ceasing, without ever being diverted from it by anything inward or outward? Are you ever hindered by any person or thing? by the power or subtlety of Satan, or by weakness or disorders of body, pressing down the soul? Can you be thankful for every thing without exception? And do you feel all working together for good? Do you do nothing, great or small, merely to please yourself? Do you feel no touch of any desire or affection but what springs from the pure love of God? Do you speak no words but from a principle of love, and under the guidance of his Spirit? (4)

If complexes produce "fearful phantoms," "fear of failure," "distracting anxieties," "belligerent actions," and "other forms of maladjustive behavior that constitute frustrations in the Christian life," (5) then preachers of holiness must learn to ask the right questions when probing the hearts of seekers. Unless there is success at this crucial point of cleavage between carnality and humanity, our profession of freedom from sin will be merely academic.

**III. What then is the sin in the believer that remains after justification, but is gone in the entirely sanctified?** In what way is the carnal believer different from the wicked man on the one hand, and from the pure-in-heart saint on the other? Wesley describes the carnal believer as follows:

These continually feel a heart bent to backsliding, a natural tendency to evil; a proneness to depart from God, and cleave to the things of the earth. They are daily sensible of sin remaining in their heart, pride, self-will, unbelief; and of sin cleaving to all they speak or do, even their best actions and holiest duties. (6)

After Wesley has said that this remaining sin in believers does not reign, and does not condemn, and does not have the consent of the will, he can describe it in strong terms. The believers have in them the "seeds of pride and vanity, of anger, lust, and evil desire, yea, sin of every kind." This is a "matter of daily experience" with them. The "babes in Christ" at Corinth were believers in a "low degree" because "much of sin remained in them, and the carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God." They "feel the flesh, the evil nature in them," but they "do not yield thereto," nor give place to the devil, but "maintain a continual war with all sin" so that "God is well-pleased with their sincere, though imperfect obedience." Wesley insisted further concerning the believer:

Although they are continually convinced of sin cleaving to all they do; though they are conscious of not fulfilling the perfect law, either in their thoughts, or words, or works; although they know they do not love the Lord their God with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; although they feel more or less of pride, or self will, stealing in and mixing with their best duties; although even in their more immediate intercourse with God, . . . they are continually ashamed of their wandering thoughts, or of the deadness and dullness of their affections; yet there is no condemnation to them still, either from God or from their own heart. (7)

Though some would question whether this person, so described by Wesley, is a Christian at all, and others would doubt the Christianity of the Corinthians who possessed envy, strife and divisions, yet if language is at all dependable, both Wesley and Paul believed that they were describing Christians. Paul, farther on in this third chapter of Corinthians, stated that these people were on the foundation (vv. 11, 12), and even if their materials used in the building are burned, yet they themselves will be saved (v. 15). Clearly jealousy, strife and other manifestations of carnality (v.3) are not the same as unrighteousness, fornication, idolatry, and robbery (I Cor. 6:9, 10). No one described by this latter group can inherit the kingdom of God.

What then is the essential difference between this sinfulness in believers, and these wicked deeds of the unbeliever? Surely it is not in the outward deeds alone. A person may be a thief or murderer without performing the outward deed. A thief is one who gives full consent to greed in his heart; a murderer is one who yields to hate in the soul. This willing yielding to evil makes one the condemned sinner.

On the other hand one who has spiritual life through faith in Christ cannot fully yield to sin in his heart. Rather than yielding to the evil within, he struggles against it, and longs for deliverance. At times he is nearly overwhelmed, but he keeps penitent and faithful, and continues in favor with God. In this struggle a believer need not sin, that

is, allow the sin nature in him to reign (I John 2), even for a moment. However, if he sins, that is gives in to sin for a moment, he has an Advocate with the Father (I John 2:1) Who restores the fallen and forgives his sin. So long as he is penitent, trusts in the Advocate, and resists the evil, the believer does not fall from saving grace. Only when he persists in yielding to sin does spiritual life depart and saving faith die. Wesley described this loss of life as follows:

(1) The divine seed of loving, conquering faith, remains in him that is born of God. "He keepeth himself," by the grace of God, and "cannot commit sin." (2) A temptation arises; whether from the world, the flesh, or the devil, it matters not. (3) The Spirit of God gives him warning that sin is near, and bids him more abundantly watch unto prayer. (4) He gives way, in some degree, to the temptation, which now begins to grow pleasing to him. (5) The Holy Spirit is grieved; his faith is weakened; and his love of God grows cold. (6) The Spirit reproves him more sharply, and saith, "This is the way walk thou in it." (7) He turns away from the painful voice of God, and listens to the pleasing voice of the tempter. (8) Evil desire begins and spreads in his soul, till faith and love vanish away: he is then capable of committing outward sin, the power of the Lord being departed from him. (8)

Notice carefully that Wesley stated that the believer "gives way, in some degree, to the temptation." It is not a full yielding of the will, only a partial. This partial yielding to sin on the part of the believer explains the use of the word "sin" by John (I John 2:1), over against the full practice of sin which no believer can do (3:9). John further distinguished between the "sin unto death" from the "sin not unto death" (5:16). This latter sin, the one not unto death, may show up in a brother, but need not culminate in death if the Church prays for continued life.

In the Epistle of James one obtains more light on this sin in believers. In temptation, lust, or desire, gives birth to sin when the lust conceives. Yet this beginning of sin does not bring death until sin is accomplished (As. 1:14,15). Obviously this completing of sin is the full yielding of the will to it. This can only be done when life and faith have fled. All failure before this point in the believer is properly called sin in the believer, which has the forgiveness of God, and need not separate one from God's favor. Such believers should press on to an experience of full deliverance from this sinfulness, but they are not condemned because it remains.

When a believer attains complete sanctification through the Spirit, no longer in temptation does the desire conceive and bring forth sin. So long as perfect love reigns in the heart, even though through natural desire one is enticed, the pure heart repels the evil suggestions, and sin is not conceived. However, the entirely sanctified person, through neglect and coldness, may again in strong temptation experience the birth of sin in his heart. If and when this occurs, he has yielded to a degree, and his heart has become impure. By humility, confession and renewed trust, such a person can be restored to full victory again.



The real problem in the entirely sanctified is in determining, when desire is enticing in temptation, just where sin really begins. The drawing away desire may be enhanced by lack of knowledge, infirmity, repressed complex or a faulty physical condition. The line between a marred natural desire and a sinful moral desire is there, but may be hard to see in experience. However, one can be certain that God the Holy Spirit will guard His citadel if the sanctified will let Him. He is there to warn when danger lurks. If one heeds His Voice, clings to Christ by faith, resists the Devil, takes time for renewal, his holiness of heart is maintained. It is pleasant to dwell in that Light where sin may never come.

In conclusion it must be repeated that sin in believers is more than just the possession of a defiled nature. It is that, but sinfulness may manifest itself in partial failure in the moment of temptation. This sinful failure is not so much outward as inward, and the believer needs the atoning blood. But more than this, he should claim the full cleansing in the blood of Jesus Christ, which is the heritage of all believers.

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#### Documentations

1. Merne A. Harris and Richard S. Taylor, "The Dual Nature of Sin," *The Word and the Doctrine*, ed. Kenneth Geiger (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1966), pp.89-117.

2. Leslie R. Marston, "Christian Holiness: Its Psychological Frame of Reference," *Further Insights Into Holiness.*, ed. Kenneth Geiger (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1963), p.306.

3. W. Curry Mavis, "Repressed Complexes and Christian Maturity," *The Word and the Doctrine*, ed. Kenneth Geiger (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1965), pp. 30~309.

4. John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, authorized ed. pub. by the Wesleyan Conference, London, 1872 (14 Vol.; photo offset ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), XI, 217-218.

5. W. Curry Mavis, *The Psychology of Christian Experience* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), pp.66-67.

6. *Op. cit.*, V, 148.

7. *Ibid.*, V.92.

8. *Ibid.*, V, 231.

## THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

LT.-COLONEL MILTON S. AGNEW, B.D.

In preparing this paper it has seemed to the writer that the compass of the assignment excluded certain areas. Those facets of the study of the Spirit which are eliminated include the Person and the Divine attributes of the Holy Spirit, sins against the Holy Spirit, the emblems of the Holy Spirit, the means of receiving the Spirit, and the fruit and the gifts of the Spirit.

An attempt has been made, then, to see the Holy Spirit at work in the Old Testament, in Jesus, and then in man under the dispensation of the Spirit. It is to be recognized that the Holy Spirit is the divine executive of the Godhead. James McKee Adams says that "God the Father is the originating cause; God the Son is the mediating cause; and God the Holy Spirit is the effecting cause." (1) It is in that light that we shall view Him again and again.

In the Old Testament dispensation it was the Spirit who brooded over the waters (Gen. 1:2); it was the Spirit who breathed into man that he might become a "living soul" (Gen. 2:7) "in the image and likeness of God." Job expressed it thus (Job 33:4): "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." While the psalmist (Ps. 104:30) declares of the creation, "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth." He, the Holy Spirit, was active in the creation

Wiley sees the Holy Spirit in His relation to mankind after the fall assuming four principal forms, of which Abel, Abraham, Moses and the prophets are representative types. There is first the direct striving of the Spirit with the consciences of men in a purely personal and private manner, accepted by Abel, but rejected by Cain, and then by subsequent generations until God cried out, "My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3). Second, there is the operation of the spirit through the family of Abraham. Thirdly, there is the giving of the law through Moses, in which "the finger of God" is an expression which is interchangeable with "The Spirit of God" (cf. Matt. 12:28 and Luke 11:20). Fourth, the Spirit's operations are found in the voice of the prophets: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:21). (2)

The Holy Spirit is found preparing men for special service throughout the Old Testament through supernatural gifts given for a divine purpose or end. There were, for example, special powers bestowed during the time of such Judges as Othniel (Jud. 3:10), Gideon (Jud. 6:34), Jephthah (Jud. 11:29); and Samson (Jud. 13:25; 14:6). There was the gift of wisdom and skill for various purposes, such as the building

of the tabernacle (Exod. 31:2-4; 35:21); of the temple (I Kings 7:14; II Chron. 2:14). Wisdom and skill were the fruits of the Spirit as bestowed on Joseph (Gen. 42:38), on Joshua (Num. 27:18), on Daniel (Dan. 4:8; 5:11-14; 6:3).

Again the Spirit imparted moral and spiritual character. In the statement of Psalm 51:11 and Isaiah 63:10, He is the HOLY Spirit. He gives fear of the Lord in Isaiah 11:2-3; judgment and righteousness in Isaiah 32:15-17; devotion to the Lord in Isaiah 44:3-5; and a new heart in Ezekiel 36:26-29. Thus we see that the Old Testament in numerous ways recognizes the Holy Spirit as the source of inward moral purity, although the thought is not as well developed as in the New Testament.

In reviewing Old Testament history, we observe a twofold tendency regarding the Holy Spirit: first, a turn from the outward gift of the Spirit for special service, toward a deepening sense of the inner need of the Spirit for saving, cleansing, and purifying. Then there is the broadening from a gift to individuals within the Israelitish nation to a gift to all believers, young and old, Jew and Gentile alike. (3)

In one other area, and one of the most important, the Holy Spirit was active in the Old Testament dispensation- that was in the inspiration of the Scriptures. The Old Testament makes its own claim to this. It is recorded of David in II Samuel 23:2 that he declared: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." Micah (3:8) proclaimed: "But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin." Ezekiel (2:2) declared: "And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me." And again (8:3):" And the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God." This can be compared to Peter's forthright statement (II Pet. 1:20, 21):" Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The inspiration by the Spirit of the former prophets", namely Joshua through Esther, is attested by Zechariah 7:12:" Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets."

And, recognizing that the Breath of God is the Spirit of God, Paul speaks of the saturation of the Old Testament by the Holy Spirit when he writes (II Tim. 3:16):" All scripture is given by inspiration of God [God-breathed], and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Blackwood has pointed out:

The verb "inspire" means literally "breathe in." It suggests that the Holy Spirit has "breathed" life into the Scripture as once He breathed into

man the breath of life when man became a living soul. The word "inspiration" is found only these two times within the Bible. (4)

The workings of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament are more manifest, more specific, and more widely recognized.

He is to be found in the Gospels working in the life of Jesus, and promised to the believer. He is to be found in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit working in and through the disciples the church, and the believer.

It is very fitting that this Sacred Person of the Trinity should be the instrument to establish that holy and unique union between the eternal and uncreated and the human and created natures in the One Person, Jesus Christ. The mystery of the Incarnation is told tenderly by Luke the physician (Luke 1:26, 30, 34, 45): "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary . . . and the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. . . . Then said Mary unto the angel How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee wherefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

On this passage Wiley makes the following observation:

The mystery of the Incarnation made possible the unveiling of the Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Trinity. Until the Annunciation, the Holy Spirit had never been revealed as a distinct Personal Agent. Never before had He been called by His own name. Previous to that time He was always mentioned in connection with the other Divine Persons. In the Penitential Psalm it is "take not thy holy spirit from me (Ps. 51:11)"; and in Isaiah 63:10), "they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit." Consequently the term is used relatively and not in the absolute sense. The full disclosure of His personality and perfections was not made until the set time for His inauguration. (Furthermore) only when Christ had been fully glorified at the right hand of the Father could the Holy Spirit come in the fullness of His Pentecostal glory. (5)

Very little is said about Jesus' boyhood and early years. He very evidently was under the influence and guidance of the Spirit. as declared in Luke 2:40, 51, 52 where it states in part, "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him. . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." But the Holy Spirit's action is assumed rather than declared.

The occasion of our Lord's baptism was obviously not an occasion of cleansing from sin, nor of filling with the Spirit, for the Spirit already dwelt in Him without measure (John 3:34), and He was "without sin." Rather it was the occasion of His anointing with the Spirit (6), that preparation for life service which had been typified in the

Old Testament in the anointing of the priest (Exod. 28:41; 40:13; Levi 4:3), the king (I Sam. 9:16; 10:1; 16:3), and the prophet (I Kings 19: 16). This anointing was, as Jesus Himself said, the fulfillment of prophecy (Luke 4:16-21):" This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears;" and as declared by Peter, it was the formal public anointing for His Messianic work (Acts 4:27; 10:38):" God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him." It was in this power that He cast out demons (Matt. 12:28), faced temptation (Luke 4:1), taught (Luke 4:14,15), endured weariness and preached the gospel.

Hear the citation from Isaiah which describes His quiet, tender, spiritual ministry to the Gentiles:

"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust" (Matt. 12:18-21).

Finally, we see the Holy Spirit at work in connection with Christ's death and resurrection. Hebrews 9:14 states: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Again, hear Paul testifying to the Spirit in Romans 1:3, 4:" Concerning his Son. . . designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead" (RSV); and again in (Rom. 8:11): "the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead. . . ." How appropriate! His incarnation, His death, His resurrection, all by the same Spirit!

The dispensation of the Holy Spirit came at last. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come" (Acts 2:1), says Carter, bespeaks the culmination of the divine plan of redemption and the full preparation of the Christian disciples to receive the special effusion and dispensation of the Holy Spirit. . . . It was that 'fullness of time' to which Paul later referred (Gal. 4:4)." (7) It had been a matter of prophetic promise by Jesus during his life. His earliest statement seems to be that of Luke 11:13:" How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" which, as Pope has pointed out, bears the same relation to the Holy Spirit as the protevangelium bears to the work of the Son. Again, on the last day, that great day of the feast of the Tabernacles, Jesus stood and was crying with a loud voice, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink," to which John adds by way of explanation, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:37, 39). It was on the eve of His crucifixion, however, that He gave the much

more extensive and exacting promises recorded in John, chapters 14, 15, and 16. These we shall see, at least in part, in the discussion which follows.

Of this Walter Conuor declares:

Thus the Holy Spirit stands for the experiential element in the Christian religion. Christ is more than a figure in history who lived and died centuries ago. He can become the inner life of the soul. . . Through the Spirit the crucified and risen Savior is incarnated in those who believe in him. Without the Spirit, our religion could not be a living experience. (8)

As Wiley says further, "The Holy Spirit could not come as the administrator of Christ's atoning work until His earthly mission was completed . . . He was fully revealed at Pentecost."

What this means to mankind is of paramount importance. It means, first of all, a "birth of the Spirit" that Salvation from sin purchased by Christ's atoning death, that regeneration which moves the soul from death unto life. This birth "from above" (John 3:1-10) is a different kind of birth, for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The new birth is not a change of nature; it is rather the communication of the divine nature. It is, Paul declares (Eph. 2:1-10), a quickening, a resurrection of those who were once "dead in trespasses and sins." For this Jesus died, that the Spirit might again "breathe into man's nostrils the breath of life"- eternal Life.

But before a man can be "born from above of the Spirit" he must be convinced (convicted) "of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." This is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7, 8).

As a result of this new birth the believers receive assurance through the "Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father; The Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8-15-17).

Furthermore, the new-born Christian possesses the Holy Spirit, for "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9).

However, it is one thing to possess the Holy Spirit, and quite another to be *possessed by* the Holy Spirit. It is one thing to receive the Holy Spirit, as Ockenga observes, and yet another thing to be *filled by* the Holy Spirit. When the believer becomes a child of God through the *birth of the Spirit* he is eligible to be inducted into the full privileges of the New Covenant through a subsequent experience—the baptism *with* the spirit. The Holy Spirit, to the unsaved man, becomes "the Lord and giver of Life," to the saved man He is "a sanctifying Presence."

This baptism with the Spirit was identified with Pentecost in three respects, namely, anointing (Acts 1:8), filling (Acts 2:4), cleansing (Acts 15:9). There is no chronological order to these they are simul-

taneous in the mind and act of God but they may be a logical order, possibly the reverse of that listed above. We shall view them in that order.

Although at justification sins are forgiven, the inherent sin remains. It must be removed by cleansing (I John 1:9): "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It must be removed by being "carried away" (John 1:29): "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Although at regeneration man is given a new nature, the old nature remains and must be purged. So Peter, in reviewing Pentecost after several years, recalls, not the wind, not the other strange tongues in which they spoke, but rather the "tongues, like as of fire" that purged and cleansed "each of them," for he declared of the Gentiles (Acts 15:8, 9): "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

A second aspect of the baptism with the Spirit is the infilling. Here in Acts 15:9 this is identified as "giving them the Holy Ghost." It is to be observed that "giving" and "purifying" are aorist participles, describing two aspects of the same act, viewed as a single whole. The full impact of the infilling is to be found in Acts 2:2, 4: "And suddenly they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Ockenga suggests that the Christian should be filled with the Holy Spirit at the time of conversion. "But if a Christian does not become filled with the Holy Spirit at that time", he declares "it is necessary for him . . . to pass through a crisis experience when the Spirit comes upon him in His fulness."

This infilling at conversion may be true in some cases, but the exhortation to the believer remains, that "through the Spirit" the deeds of the body be mortified (Rom. 8:13); that the inherited principle of "sin" be cleansed (II Cor. 7:1); that he, through the governing principle of the Spirit, be "made free" from the controlling power of sin and death (Rom. 8:2); and thus that he might be filled. Is it because he is cleansed that he becomes filled? Is it through being filled that he is cleansed? Probably both in a sense are true. The fact remains that the two belong together, as on the day of Pentecost.

Furthermore, the experiences recorded in the Bible and elsewhere testify to the second blessing aspect. The disciples, who could "rejoice because their names were written in heaven" (Luke 10:20), and for whom the Lord prayed so earnestly in John 17 as His very own-"tarried for the promise of the Father." To Saul of Tarsus who had already met Jesus on the Damascus road, Ananias was sent (Acts 9: 17), that Saul might receive his sight "and be filled with the Holy Ghost." The men at Ephesus "believed" without having had this baptism of the Holy Spirit, but were greatly empowered when the Spirit did come in His fullness (Acts 19).

The Bible demonstrates, however, that it is the normal Christian

experience to be "full of the Holy Ghost" (Luke 4:1; Acts 6:5; 7:55; Acts 11:24); and to be "filled with the Holy Ghost" on repeated occasions (Acts 4:8; Acts 4:31; Acts 13:9; Acts 13:52): and the command is, "Be filled [present tense again and again] with the Spirit" (Eph. 5: 18).

To the child of God who has been cleansed by the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit, there is also the third aspect of the baptism at Pentecost, namely the anointing of the Spirit (Acts 1:8). As it was said of Jesus that "God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and power" (Acts 10:38), and as Jesus said of Himself, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach . . . to heal . . . to set at liberty," so it is said of the believer, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me." This is the service part, the practical aspect of the Baptism with the Spirit, by which the believer is prepared for his work, even as Jesus was for His. What does John say in after years? "But ye have an anointing from the Holy One" (I John 2:20), and again, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things" (I John 2:27).

Of this Baptism with the Holy Spirit, as promised in Mark 1:8 by John the Baptist, "I indeed have baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit," Ralph Earle states:

In view of the clear assertion of John the Baptist here, it is difficult to understand the almost universal neglect in the Christian Church of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. There was nothing particularly unique about John's method of water baptism. Judaism baptized new converts with water. Water baptism is thus not distinctively a Christian rite. The only distinctive and utterly unique Christian baptism is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. That cannot be duplicated by any other religion. It is peculiarly Christ's: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (9)

The Sealing with the Spirit is a further aspect of this second work of grace. In conversion the believer receives the testimony of God and "sets his seal to it that God is true" (John 3:33). On the other hand, in sanctification God sets His seal upon man that the believer is true. "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God: who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Cor. 1:21, 22). Gordon suggests that "The last is God's 'Amen' to the Christian, verifying the Christian's 'Amen' to God."

Paul (II Tim. 2:19) declares that there are two imprints upon the seal: "The Lord knoweth them that are his"—the mark of ownership; and, upon the reverse side, "Let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness"—the mark of holiness. The one is not complete without the other, but the one comes after the other. The Ephesians, who received the Holy Spirit after they believed (Acts 19), also were sealed "after that" they believed (Eph. 1:13; in each case



an aorist participle, *pisteusantes*). "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." The "earnest" was a small portion of that which was to be given in its entirety at a future, eternal date. The Spirit filled life is indeed "a foretaste of Glory Divine." It is of interest to note that *arrabona* in Modern Greek is an engagement ring (Abbott-Smith, *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* I.). The gift of the Spirit marks the betrothal which is to be consummated in marriage when He comes for His bride.

A seal was used for a variety of purposes. It was used as recognition of truth, as a guarantee of quality, and as a guarantee of safety and security. So then, as Paul declares, the gift of the Holy Spirit is God's protection placed upon a man.

The Holy Spirit works through the Spirit-filled man in a variety of ways. For example, while Jesus declared that the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, it is quite evident that this was to be true when He possessed a man. "If I depart I will send the comforter unto you. And when he is come unto you he will reprove the world of sill . . ." (John 16:7, 8). As suggested by Ralph Herring, God uses light to convict. But sinful man's back is to God, facing away from the light. The first light that the sinner sees is the light of God reflected in the life of the Spirit-filled Christian. God uses a witness to convict. That witness comes from a Spirit-filled Christian. God uses confession to convict. It is the confession of the spiritual man which God uses; and to which we add, it is no wonder that Jesus declared, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

The converse of this is that the Spirit-filled Christian becomes a *man of conviction*. For convictions are born of the Spirit—convictions regarding sin, regarding righteousness, regarding judgment. In what other area does the man of God need convictions to be used of God to win souls?

The Holy Spirit works in the Spirit filled man in various ways, of which time and space allow but a mention. He is within man, not as the Spirit of fear, but as the Spirit of love, i.e. motive, of power, i.e. drive, and of a sound mind, i.e. wisdom (II Tim. 1:7). He works within man as the comforter—the *paraclete*, one called along-side to help in time of need, one who is the indwelling strength and counsel of almighty God. Within man he works in silent reticence as teacher, a revealer, a reminder. He glorifies, not Himself, but Jesus (John 15: 26, 16:12-14). His work includes an assurance, a witness "that we are the children . . . heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:16,17). It is the same Spirit who aids mightily in prayer, "helping our infirmi-

ties" (Rom. 8:26), who empowers for the preaching of the gospel (I Peter 1:12), who, through opening the Scriptures, makes known "The mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:14-16), who works mightily in that man who steadfastly looks upon the glory of the Lord, transfiguring him into "the same image from glory to glory" (II Cor. 3:18).

In conclusion, see the church marching in the power of the Spirit through the book of Acts. Commencing with Acts 1:8 where the Spirit gives power to witness "unto the uttermost part of the earth" He is to be seen in the selection of missionaries "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul" (13:2), He thrusts them forth into the field: "So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed" (13:4). He prompts them to speak: "Then Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, said" (13:9). He is to be seen sustaining them in persecution: "And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost" (13:52), in setting the divine seal upon their ministry among the Gentiles: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us" (15:8), in guiding in important questions of missionary policy: "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (15:28), in giving restraint when they would have gone where they should not have gone: "forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel in Asia . . . the Spirit suffered them not" (16:6, 7).

As we gaze upon the awesome, startling wonder of the dynamic, Spirit-filled church marching through the first century at the command of the divine executive of the Godhead, may we reverently cry: O Mighty Spirit, in my heart through my life, perform thy works anew.

Spirit of the living God  
Fall fresh on me  
Break me  
Melt me  
Mold me  
Fill me  
Spirit of the living God — Fall fresh on me.

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#### Documentations

1. Quoted by Ralph Herring, *God Being My Helper*, p.9.
2. H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology* (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1960), III, 305.
3. L. Y. Mullins, *ISBE*, "The Holy Spirit" (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), pp.
4. Andrew B. Blackwood, *The Holy Spirit In Your Life*, p 25.
5. *Op. Cit.*, p.308.
6. Biederwolff, *A Help to the Study of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1936), p.33, represents those who would disagree when he declares "The reception of the Holy Spirit at His Incarnation may certainly with propriety be called His first anointing, and may in a sense be considered as His only one. While as regards the baptismal anointing . . . it is not to be thought of as implying another and distinct reception of the Spirit, but the rather that the Spirit already in

Him in fulness manifested Himself in a way annunciatory of Christ's official capacity."

7. Chas. W. Carter and Ralph Earle, *The Evangelical Bible Commentary: "Acts"* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1959), p.28.

8. Walter Connor, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, p.5.

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# THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR THE DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS

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## Introduction

This study is based upon the premise, and the writer holds the view, that both the Old and New Testaments constitute the divinely inspired Word of God, inerrant in the originals, and the final authority for life and truth. This is the official position of the National Holiness Association and, quite uniformly, the view of Wesleyan-Arminians everywhere.

Therefore, the Bible provides an authoritarian basis for the doctrine of holiness. Careful exegesis under the leadership of the Holy Spirit will not only communicate with the prophetic voice of "thus saith the Lord," so much needed in our day, but will contribute a dynamic force to the message of full salvation and deliverance from both the penalty and power of sin.

The Word of God is designed, by its divine author, and as used by the Holy Spirit, not only to communicate knowledge, but as an active agent in accomplishing man's redemption. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Ps. 119:9). "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Cod" (Rom. 10:17).

We are all acutely aware of the attacks being made upon the Bible as a book of authority, divinely inspired. This warfare is not new. One of the greatest evidences that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God is the fact that it has withstood its enemies across the centuries; and it is our faith that it will continue to do so. The Bible needs not to be defended as much as it needs to be declared. This is true with respect to the Bible doctrine of holiness.

In this study an attempt will be made to present the biblical basis for the doctrine of holiness by setting forth the following propositions:

(1) The doctrine of holiness is based upon the Bible presentation of (a) the holiness of God the Father, (b) the holiness of Christ, the Redeemer, and (c) the holiness of the Spirit, the divine agent in the communication of the divine nature to man.

(2) The doctrine of holiness is given perspective and purpose by the Bible's presentation of man's need.

(3) The doctrine of holiness is predicated upon the completeness and adequacy of Christ's atoning work as set forth in the Bible.

(4) The doctrine of holiness is made practical by the ethical requirements of the Bible.

(5) The doctrine of holiness as taught in the Bible is a projection of full salvation which includes the initial crisis experiences of saving grace, the growth or progressive aspects of the holy life, the perfection of the believer in love, a daily walk which glorifies God, preparation for the Lord's return, and the final restoration of the lost image, which includes bodily perfection through the resurrection.

It will also be our purpose in concluding this paper to attempt an exegesis of this great Bible doctrine with special reference to the writings of the Apostle Paul.

## **I. The Holiness of God**

The doctrine of holiness is based upon the Bible presentation of the holiness of God: of God the Father; of Christ the Redeemer; and of the Spirit, the divine Agent in the communication of the divine nature to man.

James F. Gregory begins his chapter entitled, "The Holiness of God," contained in the book, *Further Insights Into Holiness*, in the following manner, "Divine revelation begins with the concept, 'In the beginning God.' In this manner we must approach all Christian doctrine. If we would understand the holiness of man, we must learn what the Bible says about the holiness of God." (1)

From the very beginning God progressively revealed His holiness to man, as man was capable of understanding that holiness. The grandeur of the creation has given to men of all ages, notwithstanding the effects of the curse because of sin, a sense of awe (cf. Ps. 69). This is a step in developing the concept of the holiness of the Creator, and it accounts for the rise of the multiplied religious superstitions all over the world as man has sought peace with a force greater in power and purity than himself.

Before we examine a number of Scriptures which set forth the holiness of God, let us be reminded that holiness is not essentially power as expressed in the creation and other works of God; it is essentially a moral purity. Wiley states, "Holiness as it relates to the Father, expresses the perfection of moral excellence which in Him exists unoriginated and underived." (2) It is not only a principle of divine action, but it is incumbent upon His creatures. It is important that we take careful note of the Bible teaching which relates the holiness of God to man. Again Wiley says, "It is evident that holiness is not only the inward character of God as perfect goodness but consistency with this character as a standard for His own activity; and further, it is a requirement for His morally responsible creatures." (3)

The Scripture passages we now examine not only set forth the holiness of God, but also the truth of the impartibility of that holiness to man. This fact is of great significance to the Bible doctrine of holiness.

"For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves

with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44, 45).

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, ye shall be holy: for' I the Lord your God am holy" (Levi 19:1, 2).

"And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine" (Lev. 20:26).

From the record of Isaiah's vision in chapter 6 of his prophecy the following suggestive statements are gleaned: "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up . . . the seraphims . . . cried one unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory . . . then said I, woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the coming, the Lord of hosts... then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand . . . and he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and their iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (Isa. 6:1b-7).

Psalm 99:9 is another passage which relates the nature of God to appropriate response on the part of man. "Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy."

Let us examine yet another passage. "There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee; neither is there any rock like our God. Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let no arrogancy come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him are actions weighed" (I Sam. 2:2, 3).

The holiness of God as taught in the Bible is not something abstract, in that it is unrelated to God's creatures. While man will always have a sense of awe and wonder as he gets a glimpse of the holiness of his Maker and Redeemer, he may become a partaker of the divine nature. The Christian, purified and made holy, will passionately pray for more holiness.

It is essential to the Bible doctrine of holiness that Christ, the Redeemer, should also be holy. Holiness may be experienced by the sinner only through a holy Savior. The efficacy of Christ's atoning work is based upon the miracle of the incarnation which made possible a holy sacrifice as a "lamb without blemish." The Savior was God, and holy. He proceeded from God and, while becoming a man, lost none of His holiness. Such keystone passages as John 1:1-5 must ever be kept in sharp focus.

Clearly presenting the holiness of Christ are the following passages: "And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just" (Acts 3:13,14).

Any consideration of the holiness of Christ must certainly include the vivid description of John the revelator in Revelation, chapter 1.

As was true with the holiness of God the Father, the purity and righteousness of Christ the Son is impartible to man. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature . . . For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (I Cor. 5:17, 21).

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. . . For they [fathers] for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he [Christ] for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:7,10).

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature" (I Pet. 1:4). The Holy Spirit, the divine agent in the communication of the divine nature to man, is also holy. His name, the Holy Spirit, speaks not only of His holiness as a person, but also indicates His office and work to make men holy. The giving of divine names to the Holy Spirit, ascribing divine attributes and works to Him, and the trinitarian phrases, "Father, Son and Holy Spirit," all attest His deity.

The relation of the Holy Spirit to man, and His specific mission in the world to minister to men, is a well-known truth in evangelical circles. Jesus gave promise of, and prepared His disciples for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Both Jew and Gentile experienced the purification of their hearts when the Holy Spirit was given unto them. The role of the Spirit in the church, and in the maturation of the Christian, was a favorite topic of the apostles. Wiley states significantly: "Holiness as it relates to the Spirit is holiness imparted or made accessible to men." (4) This divine objective and possibility by grace is a distinctive of the holiness message.

## **II. Man's Need**

The doctrine of holiness is given perspective and purpose by the Bible's presentation of man's need.

The story of sin is adequately told in the Bible. All of human history and the present world-scene attest the fact of sin and the resultant extensive total depravity of the human race.

If our doctrine of sin is unscriptural our entire theological system will lack cohesion and purpose. Christ's redemptive purpose was to "destroy the works of the devil" (I John 3:8). Certainly man's total need is included in the provision of His death and shed blood.

The Bible teaches the dual nature of sin, and its double cure. Sin as an act requires forgiveness, which is obtainable through repentance

and faith. Sin in nature, which is inherited, requires cleansing, which is available through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In making this simple distinction between sins and sin we need to remind ourselves that sin which remains in the nature of a regenerate believer is enmity against God, and the toleration of this sin or depravity, and the rejection of God's provision for cleansing and deliverance from it, does constitute an act of the will, and hence becomes a sin for which we are morally accountable to God.

David knew the dual nature of sin, and clearly delineated this concept in his prayer, as recorded in Psalm 51. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me" (Ps. 51:1-3).

A New Testament passage which relates forgiveness for sins and cleansing from sin is I John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The dual nature of sin is taught in chapters 5, 6 and 7 of Romans. That justification is associated with forgiveness of sins and the absolving of guilt is without question. In Romans 6 it is clear that "the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin." In Romans 7 an individual testifies to "sin dwelling in him."

The answer to man's sin, both in deed and in nature, is the blood of Christ. The blood covers the guilt and cleanses the pollution of the heart. There is both pardon and purity provided in Christ's atonement. The Holy Spirit administers the blood of atonement to-day, as He did on the day of Pentecost, and as He has done in all the ages past. The glorious and glad message of holiness is found everywhere throughout the Bible, and it is especially expressed in Hebrews 13:12: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."

### **III. Christ's Atoning Work**

The doctrine of holiness is predicated upon the Bible's setting forth of the completeness and adequacy of Christ's atoning work.

Full salvation as a theological term expresses a Bible precept. It presents an adequate remedy for sin, and in scope includes deliverance from the guilt, power, and ultimately the presence of sin. Christ's atoning work makes reconciliation possible, but also includes the final redemption of the body. This complete salvation is for time and eternity.

*Entire sanctification* is another term which applies to fullness of redemption. It is for this that Paul prays in I Thessalonians 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our



Lord Jesus Christ." The Amplified Bible gives this rendering of the foregoing passage: "And may the God of peace Himself sanctify you through and through that is, separate you from profane things, make you pure and wholly consecrated to God and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved sound and complete and found blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah." It is evident that entire sanctification can be experienced in this life, and that following this experience it is possible to live a life of holiness and complete devotion to God.

Any detailed presentation of the Bible teaching on justification and regeneration is beyond the limits of this study. It is indeed a wonder-full experience of grace which effects in the repenting and Christ-receiving sinner the miracle of the new birth (spiritual resurrection) and imparts the blessing of forgiveness. Ephesians 2:1 and 1:7 are significant Bible references: "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins . . . In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace."

Entire sanctification is a direct reference to the purifying work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. It is effected by the baptism with the Spirit subsequent to regeneration, and not only cleanses, but also empowers for service. Once again attention is directed to the experience of both Jews and Gentiles in the early church who experienced the "purifying of their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8, 9).

All of this is possible because of the efficacy of Christ's blood and His perfect sacrifice. His death, resurrection, and present high priestly ministry at the right hand of the Father in heaven make holiness of heart and the living of a holy life possible (see Rom. 5:1,11; 6:4-13; Col. 2:13; 3:1-4; Heb. 13:20, 21).

#### **IV. Ethical Content of the Bible**

The doctrine of holiness is made practical by the ethical content of the Bible.

Christian experience is never an end in itself. Christ's concern was not only that the Holy Spirit should come, but that those filled with the Spirit might do "the greater works." While priority is given to being, Jesus had much to say about doing. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). The fruit of the Spirit is evidence of the Spirit-filled life. Fruit is not only beautiful, but useful. In the Epistles of Romans and Ephesians, which we shall examine briefly later, there is a great amount of ethical content. Romans, chapters 12-16, might well be called the ethical division of the book. In Ephesians we are exhorted to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called," and to "walk in love" (Eph. 4:1; 5:2).

Perhaps at this point mention should be made of the body, the members of which are to become "instruments of righteousness"

(Rom. 6:13). The body is to be consecrated as a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (Rom. 12:1). We are responsible for the use of our own bodies, and for what we do with our bodies and minds with respect to others.

The Bible deals with social ethics. The Ten Commandments are still in effect. A right relationship with God is coupled with a right relationship with our fellowmen. The law of love, which is the fulfilling of the whole law, includes loving God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves.

Much could be said about the witness of the holy life. It is evident that with all our witnessing and evangelizing we need to give greater care to the consistency of our walk. We should emulate Paul in his ability to write to the Thessalonians, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe" (I Thess. 2:10).

Fruit is natural, but there is also the pruning and the purging if there is to be much fruit. Let us not ignore the disciplines of the holy life.

## **V. A Projection of Full Salvation**

The doctrine of holiness as taught in the Bible is a projection of full salvation, which includes the initial experiences of grace, the growth or progressive aspects of the holy life, the perfection of the believer in love, a daily walk which glorifies God, preparation for the Lord's return, and the final restoration of the lost image, which includes bodily perfection through the resurrection.

This rather involved summary statement is justified on the basis of the conviction that we need to communicate a well-rounded message. If we are Bible preachers and teachers we will be less likely to lose perspective, and thus emphasize certain phases of the Christian life at the expense of other equally important truths and applications. The fact that the Word of God takes man from his lost estate and elevates him to the position where he may "sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," and that in the future ages Christ will "shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us" (Eph. 2:6, 7) is indicative of its genius.

We have already treated the initial experiences of grace, and have taken note of the fact that there is growth in grace after one is saved and sanctified. Christian perfection, or the perfection of love, is another subject which deserves careful study. Mention has been made of the ethical implications of holiness. The Bible does relate the work of the Holy Spirit to the church, and the preparation of the church, as the bride of Christ, for the Lord's return.

I Thessalonians, chapter 4 is an example of this latter truth. This chapter begins with several pointed statements concerning the Christian's sanctification. It is the will of God (v.3). God has not called

us unto uncleanness but unto holiness (v.7). This wonderful portion of God's Word closes with clear teaching concerning the Lord's return. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him . . . For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:13-17). The Lord's return is spoken of in I John 3:3 as the purifying hope of the Christian.

The Bible doctrine of holiness requires that all the consequences of sin and the curse must be dealt with. Christian perfection, which does not now include the perfection of the body and of performance, is the threshold of total perfection. "When we shall see him, we shall be like him" (I John 3:2). "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21).

In conclusion, a simplified form of exegesis will be presented.

Quite often I am engaged in conversation by those who have sincere questions concerning the scriptural basis for the holiness message. On such occasions I take delight in sharing a series of parallelisms which are found in the book, *Exploring Our Christian Faith*, which is edited by W. T. Purkiser. They follow without reading the supporting Bible references:

(1) Both justification and sanctification are expressions of divine love (John 3:16 and Eph. 5:25-27).

(2) Both justification and sanctification are subjects of God's will for man (I Tim. 2:3, 4 and Heb. 10:10 and I Thess. 4:3).

(3) Both justification and sanctification are accomplished through the Word (I Pet. 1:23 and John 17:17).

(4) Both justification and sanctification are wrought in the heart by the effective power of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5 and II Thess. 2:13).

(5) Both justification and sanctification are provided by the atonement of Christ on the cross of Calvary (Rom. 5:9 and Heb. 13:12).

(6) Both justification and sanctification are expressions of the grace of God, and not the achievements of human effort (Eph. 2:8, 9 and Titus 2:11-14).

(7) Both justification and sanctification are brought to the individual's heart in response to faith (Rom. 5:1 and Acts 15:8, 9). (5)

The holiness message is not based upon a few isolated proof texts.

Scripture does not need to be taken out of context in order to build a foundation for the Wesleyan-Arminian theology. This great truth can be preached expositively from several great books of the Bible. I would like to use Romans and Ephesians, and I hope by a quick review of these two great epistles, to identify the holiness message.

In Romans, chapters 1-3, we are told the story of sin. Among other things, we learn that man is a sinner because he is sinful. "There is none righteous, no not one" (3:10). "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (3:23).

Chapter 4 presents the crucified and risen Christ (vv. 24, 25). Let us remember that the Holy Spirit does not work independently. He is in the world to "glorify Christ" and to "take the things of Christ and show them unto us." The holiness message, if it is biblically based, must be a Christ-centered message. The Spirit can do nothing for us apart from the work of Christ. He administers the provisions of the finished work of Christ.

Romans, chapter 4, presents the great subject of faith. We are reminded that Abraham was justified by faith, and had the witness of his justification before he was circumcised. I like to think of this section as the bridge building chapter: the bridge which spans the great gulf which separates man from God is Christ (vv. 24, 25). We must exercise faith, and trust ourselves to the adequacy of the bridge to bring us to God and effect deliverance from sin's penalty and power.

The fifth chapter of Romans is well known as the justification chapter. The first verse reads, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." In listing the numerous blessings of the justified, it presents initial salvation as the greatest experience man can have in this life. Once justified, man has access to the grace of God. He also has the Holy Spirit, according to verse 5, and experiences the joy of hope (v.2), and the deeper, fuller joy of sharing in the full atonement (v.11). We need not minimize the first work of grace to make room for a second crisis experience.

Chapter 6 raises the standard for holy living, which is incumbent upon all Christians. We cannot ignore such clear statements as are found in verse 6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Sin is not to reign in our mortal bodies. In fact, we are expected to live so holily that the members of our body will become instruments of righteousness unto God (v. 13). This pattern and pace for holy living is not consistent with the prevalent view that the best we can hope for as Christians in this life is to sin in word, thought and deed every day.

Chapter 7 is not easy to interpret, nor is the man of chapter 7 easily identified. We cannot accept the view that this man with the problem of the divided will, as described in verses 15-24, is a normal, regenerate Christian, and that this is the best we can hope for as long

as we are in the body.

Two other views come nearer the truth. Some sincerely believe that this man is regenerate, but as yet unsanctified. Let us acknowledge that this description of the divided will, and of vassilation, is characteristic of the unsanctified heart. However, the view of Adam Clark and Daniel Steele, and most Wesleyan scholars today, that Paul here presents a description of himself as an awakened legalist, an unregenerated man in whose mind are deep desires for a better life, is no doubt the correct view.

"One of the biggest problems in interpreting Romans 7 is this: Was Paul writing of himself before he became a Christian, or was he describing his own struggles with 'indwelling sin' after he became a Christian? . . . This much is sure: Paul is telling us the way sin behaves, whether in an awakened legalist (as he was for a time, even as John Wesley between 1725 and 1738) or in a 'born-again' soul. Another fact of equal importance is this: the law of God which is holy and good (7:12) is no more able to free the soul from inbred sin than it is able to freely justify the guilty sinner (Rom. 3:19-31). In brief we should learn from Romans 7 that the freedom from sin of which Paul writes in 6:22 is possible through Christ by faith, but it is impossible through human efforts at keeping God's law." (6)

The wonderful progression of the book of Romans takes us now to Romans, chapter 8, which is evidently a description of the Spirit-filled life. If Romans 5 is the chapter on justification, then Romans 8 is the chapter on sanctification.

It is worthy of note that in the first seven chapters Paul mentions the Holy Spirit only once. This mention is in the "justification" chapter, verse 5: "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." However, in chapter 8 the Holy Spirit is mentioned no less than 19 times - 15 times in the first 16 verses.

A simple outline of the chapter, depicting the Spirit-filled life, is suggested as follows:

1. Spiritually directed (v. 1-4)
2. Spiritually minded (v. 5-8)
3. Spiritually quickened (v. 9-13)
4. Spiritually identified (v.14-17)
5. Spiritual anticipation (v. 18-25)
6. Spiritual ministry (v. 26, 27)
7. Spiritual adjustment (v. 28-30)
8. Spiritual victory (v. 31-39)

Perhaps the key verse is 9, which is rendered in Phillip's translation as follows: "But you are not carnal but spiritual if the Spirit of God finds a home within you. You cannot indeed be a Christian at all unless you have something of his Spirit in you. Now if Christ does live within you his presence means that your sinful nature is dead, but your spirit becomes alive because of the righteousness he brings with him." (7)

Is it an over-simplification to state that the sanctified Christian has the Holy Spirit in this "at home" relationship rather than as a mere guest? And does this concept line up with what Jesus said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (John 14:16)?

The Epistle to the Ephesians has become a favorite as a basis for preaching holiness. Two words, ruin and redemption, could well outline the book. In chapter 2, Paul climaxes his review of the past state of the Ephesian Christians by reminding them that they were "by nature the children of wrath." But they had been "saved by grace" and had been made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." There is at least one reference to the Holy Spirit in each of the 6 chapters of the epistle. The most familiar is found in chapter 5, verse 18: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

Both of the crisis experiences of grace are presented in sharp focus. Chapter 2, verse 1, presents the new birth as spiritual resurrection, and one of the greatest passages dealing with forgiveness is found in chapter 1, verse 7. The "after that" of chapter 1, verse 13 clearly indicates that something happened to these Christians after they were saved. The language is plain: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

This New Testament book also deals with the growth aspect of the holy life in chapter 4. After presenting the church universal, the Apostle identifies the various functions of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the "perfecting of the saints." This process is to continue until "we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." While absolute perfection cannot be realized in this life, we can achieve Christian maturity: "That henceforth we be no more children" (4:14).

This process will culminate in the glorification of the church, as described in chapter 5, verses 25-27: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

The present tense in the book of Ephesians is impressive and significant. They were at the time of Paul's writing, saints (1:1). Now, we as they, are in Christ (2:13), and none are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints (2:19). Now we have access to God (2:18). Now the power of God works in us. "Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (3:20).

It was a happy day in my life, after a period of confusion resulting from oft repeated cliches, and so much theoretical preaching which was not Bible based, that the Bible itself began to speak to me and its total message was fully redemptive. The atoning work of Christ was adequate for my deepest need, for both time and eternity. This truth is so vast and so profound that we will always be reaching out to comprehend and appropriate it. This study has touched only the surface. Nothing has been said about the typology of holiness. Such works as A. B. Simpson's two volumes, *The Holy Spirit*, are especially valuable to such a study. I am convinced that the Bible is relevant, and that there is a Biblical basis for the doctrine of holiness.

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