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JOHN WESLEY AND THE BIBLE

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(Dr. Arnett's Presidential address delivered to the

Third Annual Meeting of the Wesleyan Theological Society)

It has been observed that the watershed of present-day theology remains one's attitude toward the Bible as the ultimate and final authority for faith and practice.¹ Whether or not we agree with this observation, it must be admitted that many of our difficulties and divisions arise out of basic attitudes or views toward the Holy Scriptures. "The doctrinal problem which, above all others, demands resolution in the modern church is that of the authority of Holy Scripture," writes John Warwick Montgomery. "All other issues of belief today pale before this issue, and indeed root in it."² In a similar vein, J. Marcellus Kik concludes that "ecumenism will never in a thousand and one years achieve the goal of Christian unity until it settles the question of authority."³ The centrality of this issue cannot be evaded by those who take seriously the claims of the Christian faith.

Our attention is being focused on an important facet of this basic issue in the panel on "Biblical Inerrancy" at this third annual meeting of the Wesleyan Theological Society. It is germane to our interests as a theological society to call attention to John Wesley's attitude toward the Bible. This Society bears his name, and as perhaps its most important spiritual progenitor, there are wholesome elements in his approach to, and use of; the Bible that can well be emulated. To some of these vital elements, attention is here invited.

I. John Wesley Approached the Bible with Humility

Wesley's attitude was utterly devoid of the air of intellectual snobbery or of the arrogance of self-sufficiency. He never forgot his human creatureliness and the fact that he was a member of a fallen race. He was soberly impressed by life's gravity as well as life's brevity—the fact that he was "a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air," enroute to an "unchangeable eternity." As Wesley faced these serious factors, his indispensable book was the Bible. His inmost thoughts were expressed in the memorable introduction to his collected Sermons:

To candid and reasonable men I am not afraid to lay open what have been

the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God; just hovering over the great gulf; till a few moments hence I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing—the way to heaven, how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach me the way, for this very end He came from heaven; He hath written it down in a book. O give me that Book! At any price, give me the Book of God. I have it; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri*!⁴

Although Wesley was one of the best trained and best read men of his time, he bowed in creaturely reverence before a God-breathed Book, a Book that forthrightly tells man whence he came, and offers him light upon whither he goes. In the "Preface" to the Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament he revealed his earnest concern in these words:

Would to God that all the party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgot, and that we might all agree to sit down together, as humble, loving disciples, at the feet of our common Master, to hear His word, to imbibe His Spirit and to transcribe His life in our own!⁵

II. It Is Evident That John Wesley Studied the Bible Diligently

In a letter dated May 14, 1765, Wesley informed one of his correspondents (John Newton) that it was "in 1730 I began to be homo unius libri, to study (comparatively) no book but the Bible."⁶ James R. Joy called Wesley a "man of a thousand books and a Book," and rightly so, for Wesley once estimated roughly that he had read 600 volumes, and we know that he was author or editor of some 400 publications.⁷ But the one Book that he exalted above all others was the Bible. He had few superiors in general scholarship and knowledge, but the focal point of all his learning was the Bible. At Oxford he was proficient in Greek, and developed such an acquaintance with the New Testament that "when a friend halted in quoting a verse of the English text, Wesley would come to the rescue by quoting the original Greek."⁸

His knowledge of the Old Testament is equally amazing. Commenting upon the motto which Wesley chose for the Fourth Extract of the Journal, Nehemiah Curnock observes that "it is some indication, if not evidence, of Wesley's absolute familiarity with the Bible that he should have found so perfect a motto for the title page: 'When I had waited!' a reference to Job 32:16."⁹

The section deals with Wesley's relation to Moravianism, and on ac-

count of the importance, as well as delicacy of the subject, he was careful to be certain of his action, as well as his writing. Therefore he waited three years before sending the material to

Press—from 1741 to 1744—and chose Job 32:16, 17, 21, 22 for the title page.¹⁰ Such familiarity with the Word of God was the result of careful training and painstaking effort. In 1727, at the age of 24, Wesley was spending several hours every day in the reading of the Scriptures in the original tongues.¹¹ He said he had "examined minutely every word of the New Testament in the original Greek."¹²

III. Wesley Regarded the Bible As Authority

His three criteria of truth were Scripture, Reason, and Experience. There were times when Wesley varied the order, but always the Scripture was first and basic. "The Scriptures are the touchstone whereby Christians examine all, real and supposed, revelations. In all cases, they appeal 'to the law and to the testimony,' and try every spirit thereby."¹³ In his criticism of Hutcheson's "Essay on the Passion" Wesley said he knew "both from Scripture, reason, and experience that his picture of man is not drawn from life."¹⁴ While reason is not to be discredited or despised, it has limitations and must be the handmaid of faith, the servant of revelation.¹⁵ Experience, for Wesley, whether of contemporaries or of the ancients, was allowed to clarify and confirm Scripture, but never to supersede it.¹⁶

Wesley believed in the full inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. In the "Preface" to his Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament, he expresses a high view of inspiration.

And the language of His messengers also, is exact in the highest degree: for the words which were given them accurately answered the impression made upon their minds: and hence Luther says, 'Divinity is nothing but a grammar of the language of the Holy Ghost.'¹⁷

In one of his sermons he admonishes the hearer (and reader) to "prove thy own self by the infallible word of God."¹⁸ All Scripture is equally inspired and therefore authoritative. "If there be any mistakes in the Bible, there may as well be a thousand. If there be one falsehood in that book, it did not come from the God of truth."¹⁹ He chided those who took exception to the views presented by the Scripture, and regarded their "mending" as a most serious offense.

It would be excusable if these menders of the Bible would offer their hypoth-

eses modestly. But one cannot excuse them when they not only obtrude their novel scheme with the utmost confidence, but even ridicule that Scriptural one which always was, and is now held by men of the greatest learning and piety in the world. Hereby they promote the cause of infidelity more effectually than either Hume or Voltaire.²⁰

In his tract, "Popery Calmly Considered," Wesley's final instruction for knowing the sense of any Scripture "from the sense of the Church" is that

"in all cases, the Church is to be judged by the Scripture, not the Scripture by the Church. And Scripture is the best expounder of Scripture. The best way, therefore, to understand it, is carefully to compare Scripture with Scripture, and thereby learn the true meaning of it."²¹

IV. Wesley Appropriated and Expounded the Bible Redemptively

He saw clearly that the central focus of the Bible is the person of Jesus Christ and His redeeming work. "We could not rejoice that there is a God," writes Wesley in his comment upon I Timothy 2:5, "were there not a Mediator also; one who stands between God and man, to reconcile man to God, and to transact the whole affair of our salvation."²² As one who considered that he was divinely called to minister to the common man, he wrote his Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament "chiefly for plain, unlettered men, who understand only their mother-tongue, and yet reverence and love the Word of God, and have a desire to save their souls."²³

He was a man who was constantly questing for souls. In his advice to the helpers in the Societies, and in his exhortation to the Methodist preachers of America, he said they had one thing to do and that was to save souls. In his expository sermons on the Sermon on the Mount, Wesley the evangelist emerges again and again as he calls people to faith in Christ and to a life of "inward and outward holiness." He preached his last sermon only eight days before his death on March 2, 1791, on the text, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isa. 55: 6). Curnock, editor of Wesley's famous Journal writes: "It is easy to see that the fire of love and zeal burnt brighter and brighter to the end, and the end matched and crowned the whole course of his ministry."²⁴ It was the evangelistic movement introduced by the Wesleys that did more for social uplift in England than all other factors combined, and provided the spiritual impetus of a whole age of reform. The philosophy of the world is that "new conditions will make new men," but the gospel emphasis is that "new men will make new conditions," and Wesley, while con-

cerned about all of man's needs, kept in focus that his primary task was the making of new men.

V. Wesley Applied the Bible With Practicality

Wesley was, in a large measure, an apostle to the common man, and therefore sought to eliminate the elaborate, the elegant, and the oratorical. As he expressed in his "Preface" to the Standard Sermons, "I design plain truth for plain people: therefore, of set purpose, I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations: from all perplexed and intricate reasonings; and, as far as possible, from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original text."²⁵ To Alexander Coates he wrote:

Practical religion is your point; therefore keep to this: repentance toward faith in Christ, holiness of heart and life, a growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, the continual need of His atoning blood, a constant confidence in Him, and all these every moment to our life's end.²⁶

As a servant of God's Word, Wesley manifested a remarkable catholicity of spirit and breadth of view, displaying a readiness to cooperate with all sincere and earnest Christians. That this was a subject of vital importance to Wesley can be seen from the fact that he included two sermons or addresses devoted to the topic in his Standard Sermons. One was entitled "A Caution Against Bigotry,"²⁷ the other, "Catholic Spirit."²⁸

VI. Wesley Used the Bible Devotionally

Patterns were early set in Wesley's life, and he followed them to the end of his earthly pilgrimage. Where available, the entries in his private diary are synchronized with his published Journal, and the references to Scriptures used devotionally are multitudinous. In the "Preface" to the Explanatory Notes Upon the Old Testament, Wesley summarized a procedure for using the Bible most effectively, which involved its use in a devotional manner. His constructive suggestions, which undoubtedly reflect elements in his own personal practice, are:

First, set apart some time, if possible, every morning and evening to read the Scripture.

Second, read a chapter out of the Old and one out of the New Testament, if possible. If that cannot be done, read one chapter, or part of one.

Third, read the Scripture with the single purpose of knowing the whole will of God, and with a fixed determination to do that will.

Fourth, in order to know the will of God, there should be a constant eye to

the analogy of faith: the connection and harmony there is between those grand, fundamental doctrines-original sin, justification by faith, the new birth, inward and outward holiness.

Fifth, serious and earnest prayer should be made before approaching the oracles of God, seeing that "Scripture can only be understood through the same Spirit whereby it was given." Prayer should be offered at the close in order that what is read might be written upon the heart.

Sixth, there should be periods of self-examination during the reading of the Scripture, with both heart and life being scrutinized. And whatever light is given "should be used to the uttermost, and that immediately. Let there be no delay. Whatever you resolve, begin to execute the first moment you can. So shall you find this word to be indeed the power of God unto present and eternal salvation."²⁹

Such were some of Wesley's emphases with regard to the Bible. To his fellow-workers he wrote: "We are called to propagate Bible religion through the land-that is faith working by love, holy tempers and holy lives."³⁰ On June 5, 1766, he wrote, "My ground is the Bible. Yea, I am a Bible-bigot. I follow it in all things, both great and small."³¹ Again: "I try every church and every doctrine by the Bible. This is the word by which we are to be judged in that day."³²

Thus, in this brief survey, we have noted that John Wesley, the progenitor of this society, approached the Bible with humility, studied the Bible diligently, regarded the Bible as authority, appropriated and expounded the Bible redemptively, applied the Bible with practicality, and used the Bible devotionally. May these worthy elements characterize all who love and serve the Saviour in the tradition of men of "the strangely warmed heart!"

Documentations

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³J. Marcellus Kik, *Ecumenism and the Evangelical* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1958), pp. 136, 137.

⁴*The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* (London: John Mason, 1829), Thomas Jackson, editor, V:ii,iii. Further references will be listed as *Works*.

⁵John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (London: The Epworth Press, 1950), p. 8.

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¹²*John Wesley's New Testament*, p. x.

¹³*Letters*, II: 117

¹⁴*Journal*, V: 492, 495.

¹⁵*Works*, VI: 360.

¹⁶*Wesley's Standard Sermons*, Edward H. Sugden, ed. (Nashville: Lamar & Barton, Agents, n.d.), II : 352.

¹⁷*Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, p. 9.

¹⁸Sermon CXXIX, "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes," *Works*, VII: 399.

¹⁹*Journal*, VI: 117.

²⁰*Journal*, V: 523.

²¹*Works*, X: 142.

²²*Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, p. 775.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 6

²⁴*Journal*. VIII: 128.

²⁵*Wesley's Standard Sermons*, I: 30.

²⁶*Letters*, IV: 159.

²⁷*Wesley's Standard Sermons*, II: 104, 125.

²⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 126-146.

²⁹John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the Old Testament* (Bristol: William Pine, 1765), I : ix.

³⁰*Letters*, VI: 291.

³¹*Journal*, V: 169.

³²*Letters*, III: 172.

BURNING ISSUES IN THE LIFE OF SANCTITY

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The Biblical call to personal sanctity is one which places before us a tremendous obligation to seek out, and to embody in practical living, the implications of the emphasis upon Christian holiness for the conduct of the believer as he takes his place in the life of the world. The fine values which have historically marked the lives of the best of the saints are of little value as museum pieces; only as they find expression in the activities of our common life are they significant in a day in which such emphasis is laid (and rightly so!) upon the projection of the Christian Evangel into the life of the world.

It goes without saying that ethics does not stand detached as an emphasis in the message of Christian Sanctity. That is, ethical living is by no means thought to issue naturally (as, for example, from self-knowledge, as Socrates taught), nor to be derived from the simple analysis of some such abstraction as the 'natural right' or the 'rational good'. The life which is pleasing to God issues solely from an inner spiritual state in which double-ness of purpose, and chaos of motivation, have been set at rest.

One is reminded at this point of the dictum of Soren Kierkegaard, "Purity of heart is to will one thing." While this is obviously not complete as a definition, yet it does point to the real heart of the matter, that the sanctified life is one which results when inner chaos has been resolved, and which springs from a heart free "to will with Him one will." This is the heart of the message of Christian holiness: and without this strong core, no emphasis upon the external expression of any supposed 'ideal of sanctity' can be sound.

It is projected here to take for granted that this central core of teaching is compatible with the general thrust of God's Revelation, and that what is said with respect to the ethical ideal rests upon the broad basis of the reality of the experience known as Entire Sanctification, this being understood in terms of the elimination from the regenerate heart of all that is morally unsound, and the enthronement of Christ, who is the life in the citadel of the personality. It is a commonplace (but what an important commonplace!) that there is no genuine sanctity apart from the in-

stallation in the Christian heart of Him who said, "and for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified . . ." (John 17:19).

I

Descending from this high theological ground, into the arena in which our life must be lived, it is indicated, I believe, that we note briefly the type or form of ethical theory which is implied in the emphasis of the movement fostering Christian Sanctity. It should be noted that there is seldom an explicit statement made by ministers of the Full Covenant at this point; certain things are, however, implicit. These may be sharpened by reference to the broader base upon which ethical teaching has historically been made to rest.

In the broadest sense, ethical theories are divisible into two types, the subjectivistic and the objectivistic. Among the most noteworthy of the subjectivistic are these: the individualistic, hedonistic and the sociohedonistic or utilitarian. These have for a common denominator one thing: either pleasure or the absence of pain is made to constitute the ethical objective. Such a form of ethical theory is, of course, ambiguous, since the very term 'pleasure' is a slippery one, resting upon such variables as the personal capacity for enjoyment, and upon personal or cultural idiosyncrasies. Hedonistic ethics has historically led, almost universally, to a narrow definition of pleasure in terms of sensory pleasure; it is but a short step to sensuality.

The major forms of the objectivistic are these: the rationalistic, the metaphysical, and the revelational. The rationalistic ethic rests upon the premise that the Good is the Rational, and that the Rational is the Right. It assumes, further, that human reason possesses a competence, not only to recognize the Good inerringly, but also to sway the personality in such a manner as to secure righteousness in day-by-day practice. This has the evident weakness of failing to take into account the degree to which human reason has been affected adversely by the Fall. It is difficult to defend the view that men unfailingly (or even usually) do as a matter of course that which they know to be right.

The metaphysical type of ethic assumes that the principles of Right and Good are embedded in the universe, and that the cosmos will support only what is good, while it will unerringly designate evil for what it is, and render certain punishment for it. This takes for granted, too, that man can properly and adequately read the moral cipher of the universe-an

assumption which is difficult to support by an appeal to human moral history.

The most daring form of ethical theory is the Revelational. It projects for human thought and human acceptance the proposition that the Good and the Right are grounded, not merely in the structures of the cosmos, but in the will of a holy and sovereign God, who, grasping fully and completely our needy and limited predicament, has taken the initiative in disclosing to mankind, in definitive and final fashion, the major lines and the central drive of that Will. To some this view seems an insult to man's intelligence; some hold that it indicts him unreasonably of moral weakness and downright moral perversity. To others, it is the gracious answer to a need which has been felt by sensitive persons from the dawn of human recorded history.

It need not be labored that the Holiness Movement has leaned heavily upon this latter form of ethical theory. Out of its orientation in a tradition which held a high view of the origin and authority of the Holy Scriptures, it logically recognized (and does today recognize) the moral man-date as being part of the very core of revealed truth. Further, just as the heart of the message of Christian Sanctity is that the Divine Spirit, in the work of entire sanctification, does invade the life, sweep away carnal self-centeredness and twisted egocentricity, so also this theological emphasis carries with it the profound assertion that the Holy Spirit simplifies the motivation of the life, bringing all of the currents of the redeemed personality into a harmonious flowing in the direction of God's good Will.

There is a word which suggests itself wherever the application of a general ethical system (such as the Revelational, of which we have just spoken) to the general and concrete in human conduct is attempted. It is the word 'casuistry,' which suggests what 'is generally known as the 'case ethic'. Casuistry connotes the practice or procedure by which one seeks to deal with cases of conscience, and by which one seeks to resolve questions of right and wrong by the application of ethical principles to concrete situations. Now, the term 'casuistry' has fallen upon evil times: unprincipled practices have set upon it, beaten it, and left it half-dead along the road.

There are two groups who have taken seriously the matter of erecting a strategy of conduct upon the basis of a systematic application of ethical principles to life's complex and varied situations. I refer to the Pharisees and the Jesuits-group admittedly far apart in general emphasis, but one

in their desire to apply divinely-revealed principles minutely and according to rule.

Reversing these in time sequence, we note the 'manner in which the Jesuit-type of casuistry has been employed. Seeking to produce, in the period at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern era, a 'Christian society,' it sought to reduce the requirements for being a Christian to a minimum; thus the Jesuit casuistry came to permit everything which was not expressly and specifically forbidden. Growing out of quite different historical circumstances, the Pharisees sought to do two things: first, to modify the seeming brashnesses of the Mosaic Law in a day in which Judaism was forced more and more onto the world-stage; and second, to protect Judaism against the encroachments of a lax Hellenism. Pharisaism (which, please be reminded, began as something of a Jewish 'Holiness Movement') degenerated into a traditionalism which split hairs, as the New Testament indicates, and which erred at the point of an undiscriminating' directness in its ethical pronouncements. This led, ultimately, to an ingrown and gone-to-seed type of casuistry, in which, essentially, *everything which was not specifically permitted was forbidden.*

The bearing of this upon the ethic of the Holiness Movement is quite easy to see. As newer social currents impinged upon the lives of devout men and women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (i.e., the forces of industrialization), they tended to react defensively as they saw their value-systems threatened. It is not unfair to say that in this defensive reaction, there was a strong temptation in the direction of the type of casuistry which characterized the Pharisees. Let it be said at once and in their defense, that within the trend toward the movement for 'Christian Sanctity', there came a trend which emphasized a wholesome discipline of character. It was assumed, correctly we are sure, that the embodiment of the inner purity of heart in the outward conduct must be assisted and guided by discipline of the personal life. It was this to which the Quaker poet, Whittier referred in his lines,

'And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy Peace."

Again, such an admirable form of Christian administration as the class meeting had for its purpose the cultivation of the disciplined and self-marshaled life.

There was a temptation, to be sure, to administer discipline along the

lines of an inadequate casuistry. Given the constant impinging of practices which seemed to be clearly worldly, due to pressure from the society outside, it was understandable that sensitive Christian leaders should seek to lay down lines which should serve as safeguards to the younger and less mature among their fellowship.

It requires little historical knowledge to help us recall that offering the 'easy answer' has upon occasion tempted the ethical thinker within the Holiness Movement. This temptation was frequently implemented by the evident presence of abuses or factors or elements which may have been morally neutral or innocent in themselves. For example, the use of musical instruments did lead to twofold snares for Christian persons: outside the church they were inseparably connected with the social dance, which nearly all sensitive Christians regarded as an evil. Within the church, the simple question of the choice of an organist frequently led to dissension within the body of believers. The rather natural defensive reaction was to deprecate the use of any musical instruments in the church, in some cases to ban their use entirely, and in some cases to extend the prohibition to the homes of Christians.

Honesty demands also that we recognize that at times the casuistry of the Holiness Movement has tended to be little more than a conservative reaction to social and technological change. Each new social form, and each major new invention, has tended to set off a rash of negative mandates. In too many cases, however, those who spearheaded the resistance to this-or-that new invention (and we forego to mention any of these) found later that the clock cannot be turned back easily, and that it is impossible to 'uninvent' anything. The usual history of those who reacted to new inventions in terms of 'never,' or 'no child of mine,' has been that later they became less vehement in their position, finally became muted in their opposition, and frequently they eventually adopted the new device in question.

Much that has been said to this point has had to do with the temptations which have confronted members of the leadership in the circles of the Holiness Movement, especially those whose ministry offered wide opportunity for the making of public statements of a casuistic nature. The discussion would be incomplete without some positive guidelines for the application of a Christian casuistry. We would propose the following in this connection:

1. There is demanded a careful discrimination at the point of what is-

sues are abidingly crucial, and which are transitory.

2. Any true casuistry must recognize the ambiguous nature of human relationships, and the provisional (*temporary*) nature of many concrete situations to which we must speak.

3. The real problem in casuistry, as an applied discipline, is that of making the transition from *love* (which is the core of the life of sanctity) to justice.

4. The technological dynamics of our civilization are such that there is increasing need for moral and ethical living, as opposed to mere living according to received patterns and traditions.

5. The progressive elaboration of an ethic for those who will live "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12) will demand certain very definitely *informed* attitudes upon the part of those who undertake it.

II

It is time to note some of the living issues which confront the one who will embody the life of sanctity in our time. Realism demands that the life devoted to godliness be lived within the context of responsible participation in our world, with all of its ambiguities and its hard-nose problems. These problems are legion, and many of them are inescapable. The "sensitive saint" (and can there be any other kind?) dare not sweep under the rug the disturbing fact that for over a century since the Civil War, multitudes have been *being saved*, and many also sanctified wholly, in wide areas of our society in which nevertheless systematic efforts continue to be made to exclude from adequate participation in public life over eleven percent of our population upon the basis of skin color. Not only so: but those professing Christian grace (some at a very high level) continue to justify racial discrimination, or more hypocritically, to practice it in the name of "good business."

The so-called 'sexual revolution' promises a continuing confrontation between accepted practice and the sensitive Christian conscience. Medical research—and how much we owe to this—progresses apace; and within five years potential parents will face the free choice, whether or not to permit a pregnancy to continue to full term. Do-it-yourself measures for the "harmless" termination of pregnancy (and we doubt whether this can ever be without some serious damage, whether to the body or to the psyche) are not far away, and your children must live in a world which

will be highly permissive at this point. The sensitive Christian must grapple with this problem.

The author professes to "have no final answer here, but inclines to believe that no creative solution can be found until at least two factors be given full recognition: first, that the prevention of conception is qualitatively different from the termination of a pregnancy, however early; and second, that society has as heavy a stake in setting safeguards around the life of the unborn as it has in protecting the lives of its visible citizens. It would seem that while the artificial regulation of conception (by medically approved means) is increasingly recognized by realistic and sensitive Christians as permissible, the arbitrary termination of a pregnancy already begun (except possibly a pregnancy occasioned by violent assault or incestuous relationship, or clearly jeopardizing the health of the prospective mother) is to be reprehended. This issue will call for some hardheaded discussion and Spirit-guided decision in the days ahead.

The problem of sexual deviation seems to mushroom, possibly in part as a result of the "James Bond (007) Mentality," and (more probably) due to the loss of the image of masculinity among many males. A 'world affirming' Church-ism seems to be working hand-in-glove with a sentimental scholarship to assure us that homosexuality is no more a fault than being left-handed. National and state legislation seems likely to follow this wrongly-personalistic trend. The Christian conscience must be increasingly concerned, at the very minimum, with protecting the insecure and immature in our society (some of whom may be pushed either way—i.e., into normality or into deviation) from the hardcore and congenital deviate.

Advocates of the doctrine and life of Scriptural Sanctity have been slow to articulate the problem posed by our innate humanness in the light of our Lord's words in the Sermon on the Mount which shift the locus of adulterous or fornicative irregularity from the overt act to the leering look. Admittedly our human structures are such that our Lord's words impose a heavy (sometimes a punishing) load upon the male half of our race which is responsible for the initiating of the sex act. This is not always understood by either men or women.

Our elder and saintly brethren who distinguished themselves by their preaching upon dress (usually that of the ladies) do not deserve our scorn, for they attempted, in however limited a fashion, to grapple with this

problem a generation ago. We are called to a more fundamental dealing with this question. Minimal to this must be: 1) a recognition of the wrong-headed role of the fashion industry in this regard; and 2) a fuller appreciation of the fact that we are in a world which (as Pitirim Sorokin is quoted as saying) subjects the average man to several sexual stimuli every waking hour, and that it is not what enters the eye, or what rises from our humanness to meet it, but the basic attitude with which our inner nature, gripped by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, deals with the stimulative-data that is decisive for our sanctity. We will, it seems, live for a long time in an aphrodisiac world; and it will be no simple task to 'walk in white' in the midst of its tar buckets and smudge-pots.

The man or woman who seeks to live the life of sanctity must recognize the problem posed by affluence in our society. We can no longer afford the luxury of such oversimplifications as are encased in such expressions as, "After all, property and money are mere things." In reality, property is an institution, belonging ultimately to God, and is in 'no case held unconditionally by man. Haggai reminds us that His are the silver and gold (Hag. 2:8), while the Psalmist remarks that He possesses "the cattle on a thousand hills" (Ps. 50:10). Not only so, but man derives property and wealth from the people, as well as from a Divine hand. Thus all property is derived from sources and is acquired under conditions which the owner has not himself created.

We never get beyond the need for correctives to a steel-tipped sense of ownership, and need constant reminder that the selfish use of property is under God's judgment—whether it be by state or by individual, whether by sinner or saint. The Christian may well find that a certain amount of ownership contributes to a sense of dignity and a feeling of security; but no person can in this life get beyond the potential peril of judging a man's life in terms of "the abundance of that which he possesses."

The Christian striving for practical sanctity must come to grips with the problems involved in family life. The family is increasingly jeopardized by the growing prevalence of extra-marital sex relations, and of perversion of all kinds, this latter being the more grievous as deviation fails to be regarded as such, and/or is defended as part of the norm. The Christian must recognize that the problem of the right relation between man and woman not only lies at the very heart of society and civilization, but touches very intimately the holy life.

We grant that the home is sometimes made the scapegoat for the ills of

our society. In reality social conditions themselves have contributed largely to the decadence of the home. But we maintain that the Christian home should and can surmount its environment and serve as a standard and judge for all that surrounds it. Be it remembered that no institution, even the home, can hope to survive if it makes a final adjustment to society.

Marriage is shored up by the seventh commandment. This "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exod. 20:14), and the words, "What . . . God hath joined together let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6), are not the pronouncements of an oriental despot, but are words written deeply into the nature of man. The home is designed to be the creative channel for the expression of the sex urge. This Pauline declaration is not a low view if we take into account the ability of sex within marriage to lift, ennoble and enrich human life. But this can never be unless the Christian give full recognition to the unitive or henotic role of the sex relation, set superbly in the words, "the two shall become one flesh" (Mark 10:8, NAS).

Such a view will highlight the corrosive effects of extra-marital intimacy, and lift into prominence the superficiality of the exotic 'love talk' of the societal dropouts, currently called hippies or flower-people. It is by no means astonishing that many of the Haight-Ashbury group of San Francisco are going home to recover from hepatitis, impetigo, and venereal disease. The normal and God-given relation of intimacy between man and wife exacts a fearful toll when exercised with the irresponsibility which all extra-marital use implies.

Not only must the responsible saint recognize this in the abstract; but he or she is under heavy obligation to project, in reasoned and structured and non-squeamish manner, to the young the high legitimacy of sexual intimacy within marriage, and the destructive and erosive character of extra-marital sex. It is the measured judgment of this author that the people of the Holiness Movement are still seeking a constructive and creative sexual ethic.

The picture is by no means entirely dark and forbidding. Many have cherished the example of parents who, however limited their resources with respect to overt education at this point, flaunted before us as children their lifelong fidelity to each other. And how deeply we are indebted to those who showed us, somewhere along the way of life that purely physical intimate relations are no substitute for those more comprehensive relations between man and woman (including physical intimacy) which grow

out of a love-related union, or who dangled before us the charm and challenge of the "special song" which resounds in the heart of the truly married.

Finally, the sensitive Christian lives in tension between two moralities: 1) the "morality of perfection's challenge"; and 2) the "morality of my public responsibility." The "morality of perfection's challenge" is absolute, yet open toward persons—since it demands forgiveness on a vast scale toward those whose offense is merely personal. The "morality of my public responsibility" is incomplete, pragmatic, but closed, in the sense that at times it demands conclusive and firm judgments. In this connection, we must guard against two dangers: 1) that of reading off God's will too easily; and 2) the sentimentalization of our public obligation. We must live with this tension, for it is only if we make full and complete peace with the world that it will vanish—and this price is too high!

Light is cast upon this problem by a letter written by the parents and kin of a young Korean lad, In Ho Oh. Parts of the letter are as follows:

Pusan, Korea (1958)

Director, Philadelphia Red Cross

Dear Sir:

We, the parents of In Ho Oh, on behalf of our whole family, deeply appreciate the expressions of sympathy you have extended to us at this time. In Ho had almost finished the preparation needed for the achievement of his ambition, which was to serve his people and nation as a Christian statesman . . .

When we heard of his death, we could not believe the news was true but now we find that it is an undeniable fact that In Ho has been killed by a gang of . . . boys whose souls were not saved and in whom human nature is paralyzed. We are sad now, not only because of In Ho's unachieved future, but also because of the unsaved souls and paralyzed human nature of the murderers.

. . . It is our hope that we may somehow be instrumental in the salvation of the souls, and in giving life to the human nature of the murderers. Our family has met together and we have decided to petition that the most generous treatment possible within the laws of your government be given to those who committed this criminal action . . .

In order to give evidence of our sincere hope contained in this petition our whole family has decided to save money to start a fund to be used for the religious, educational, vocational and social guidance of the boys when they are released . . .

About the burial of the physical body of him who has been sacrificed; we hope that you could spare a piece of land in your country and bury it there, for your land, too, is homeland for Christians . . . We hope in this way to

make his tomb a monument which will call attention of people to this came. We think this is a way to give life to the dead, and to the murderers, and to keep you and us closer in Christian love and fellowship.

We are not familiar with your customs and you may find something hard to understand in what we are trying to say and do. Please interpret our hope and idea with Christian spirit and in the light of democratic principles. We have dared to express our hope with a spirit received from the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who died for our sins.

May God bless you, your people, and particularly the boys who killed our son and kinsman.

Signed by the father and mother of In Ho Oh, also two uncles, two aunts, five sisters, two brothers and nine cousins. (Printed by permission from Christianity and Crisis, July 21, 1958)

Here we have it in combination: the "Morality of Perfection's Challenge" in the free forgiveness, the plea for minimum sentence, and the offer of rehabilitative help for the killers; and the "Morality of Public Responsibility" which recognized that the demands of public justice must be met and the conditions for public order sustained. And who can deny that the spirit of perfect love, and its concomitant of humility, underlie this letter?

III

In the light of the issues raised in this study, one asks, is there a sufficiency for these things? Ponder the promise, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him" and St. Paul's private assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee." For, dear Friends, our dark world needs lights, needs them desperately!

We have a message—it is, we are persuaded, as changeless as God Himself. But it has little worth as a museum piece. The God of Peace, the universe's Holy Sovereign, has been in the business of building saints for a long time saints who could live adequately in their times. We are persuaded that He stands available, with full resources in hand, to build in our demanding age a type of strong, clear-thinking and fearless saint, fully saved and adequately equipped to weather creatively the growing ferocity of the moral storm of even this day, and who will be, when the tempest is over, standing majestic and unbent and unscarred against the eternal sky.

FACING OBJECTIONS RAISED AGAINST BIBLICAL INERRANCY

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I. Introduction

A study of the history of the church reveals that the Bible has often been an object of attack. Formerly, Scriptures were feared because they were believed to be the Word of God; hence the enemy concentrated on prohibiting their reproduction, dissemination and perusal. Now the strategy is more subtle and distressingly deadly. The current goal is to destroy the belief that the Scriptures are God's Word. When men become convinced that the Bible is but a human book, a record of man's religious strivings and evolution, its authority will be gone. Once sufficient doubt is cast upon the Bible as a body of objective truth, it will cease to be either an instrument of faith or a standard of practice. It can be cherished as literature, adorning our tables and filling our libraries; yet it will be no more authoritative than Aesop's Fables, nor more relevant than the Analects of Confucius.

In times of doctrinal crisis, God has raised up men with incisive minds and consecrated hearts to point up the specious arguments which were being used, and to point out the way of truth. Such men are needed again.

Prominent terms in the current controversy over Scriptures are words such as "revelation," "inspiration," "infallibility," and "inerrancy." Perhaps some definition is advisable. God has employed three stages in making divine truth known to man. Two of them were in the past; the other is a continuing present.

The first stage involved the impartation of truth. God revealed Himself, His will, and His provision to men whom He had chosen for that purpose. Having received the word of truth, they proclaimed it. The initial act of imparting divine truth to man is "revelation."

The second stage involved the preservation of the revelation which had been received. The Apostle Peter appears to have had the latter in mind when he announced that he would endeavor to make it possible that, to use his words, "ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance" (II Pet. 1:15). That is to say, he intended to record for posterity the divine truth which God had given him. "Prophecy of scripture," he said, "came not . . . by the will of man: but holy men of

God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The act of "moving" (bearing along), that is to say the act of stimulating and superintending the minds of those men who had been the recipients of divine truth, as they wrote the things which they had received, is known as "inspiration."

The third stage also involves the work of the Holy Spirit. When He opens the mind and heart of the reader and illumines the printed page, a secondary revelation is experienced. In order that the unique quality of the primary revelation may be preserved, however, this secondary revelation might better be designated "illumination."

Some pros and cons of the claims that Scriptures are free from error will be discussed presently in this paper. This freedom from error is known as "inerrancy." "Biblical inerrancy" is a term that means that the Bible, at least in its autographs, contains no error.

Some apply this claim of inerrancy only to the doctrines of the Bible which relate to man's life and salvation. Others believe that it also extends to biblical references to science and history.

The word "infallible" is sometimes used in speaking of the absence of error in Scriptures. In this sense the word becomes synonymous with the word inerrancy. Infallibility is a strong word, however, that many prefer to employ only when speaking about God.

Now let us consider the basis for the doctrine of biblical inerrancy.

II. The Doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy

A. The Scriptural Position

The doctrine of biblical inerrancy arises, in the first place, from the logical premise that the infallible God of Truth would not and could not direct His human instruments to write anything that is false, even in its minutest details. Calvinists especially emphasize this point. The doctrine also arises from the teachings of Scriptures themselves. Let us look at some of those biblical declarations which seem to support this position.

In the passage in II Peter mentioned above, (1:21), the Apostle makes it clear that the prophets of Old Testament times did not speak according to the dictates of their own reason ("not . . . by the will of man"). Rather, they spoke what God caused them to say ("as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"). This statement seems to make invalid the argument that the prophets, because they were men, produced errant writings. The

logic of this observation could, but need not, lead to the dictation theory of inspiration. It appears, however, that the Apostle is discussing only "prophecy" of Scripture (v. 20): "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." A further look at the context reveals, moreover, that he is discussing in particular one aspect of prophecy: foretelling, not forthtelling.

That which was proclaimed by God's prophets and apostles, however, is also described as God's word. Paul makes that quite clear, at least with respect to his own utterances, when he declares that the word which the Thessalonian church heard him preach was God's word, not his (II Thess. 2:13). Jesus upheld this same principle when He said to the Twelve, "He that heareth you heareth me" (Luke 10:16).

The Apostle Peter certainly considered Paul's writings to be the very Word of God. Speaking of them in his second epistle (3:15-16), he calls them Scripture ("as they do the other scriptures"). He indicates that Paul wrote with divine wisdom ("according to the wisdom given to him"). He also states that to twist Paul's writings is to lose one's soul ("which they wrest . . . unto their own destruction"). This last is a claim that one would hardly dare to make for errant or mere human writings.

The Apostle John speaks with no less confidence concerning the veracity of that which he had written in the fourth Gospel: "This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things [he says]; and we know that his testimony is true" (John 22:24).

On one occasion when Paul quoted both from the Pentateuch and from the Gospels he stated that he was quoting from Scriptures (I Tim. 5:18; cf. Deut. 25:4; Matt. 10:10; Luke 10:7). Thus in effect he called the Gospels "Scripture."

When the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers to Old Testament passages, be they from the Law, the Prophets, or the Writings, he almost invariably puts the words into the mouth of God (Heb. 1:5; cf. Ps. 2:7; II Sam. 7:14; Heb. 1:6; cf. Deut. 32:43, LXX; Heb. 1:7; cf. Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:8; cf. Ps. 45:6,7; Heb. 1:9; cf. Isa. 61:1; Heb. 1:13; cf. Ps. 110:1; etc.). Jesus goes so far at this point as to imply that a mere comment made by Moses – or was it Adam?—and recorded in the Bible is God speaking (Matt. 19:5; cf. Gen. 2:24). In another setting, Jesus repeats a short Old Testament statement which focuses attention upon one Old Testament word ("I said, Ye are gods"), and, in that context, declares that "the

scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).

The above are but a few of the many biblical witnesses to the inerrancy of Scriptures.

B. The Church's Position on Biblical Inerrancy

Until modern times, the church has steadfastly acknowledged the doctrine of scriptural inerrancy—a fact of considerable importance. Whether one quotes from the Westminster Catechism, or Calvin, or Wesley, or Clarke, or Hodge, or Pope, or Strong, or Wiley, the doctrine is essentially the same. Let John Wesley, in one of his comments on Scripture, speak for them all:

Every part thereof is worthy of God; and all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess . . . The language of His messengers, also, is exact in the highest degree: for the words which were given them accurately answered to the impressions made upon their minds.¹

Commenting on II Timothy 3:16, Wesley writes: "The Spirit of God not only once inspired those who wrote it [Scriptures], but . . . supernaturally assists those that read it with earnest prayer."²

Neo-orthodoxy characteristically emphasizes the element of "encounter" in its approach to Scriptures. It defines the Bible as a word of man which may or may not become, for the reader, the Word of God. If and when God reveals to a given man some truth through the Scriptures, that portion of the Bible becomes the Word of God for him. Hence neo-orthodoxy holds that the Bible as such is not the Word of God; it simply contains the Word of God; At moments of "encounter" the errant writings of the Bible become the media through which God speaks.

This view of the Bible tends to be subjective, allowing those who hold it to deny the validity of those passages through which they themselves happen not to have had an "encounter." Thus Karl Barth finds no apparent difficulty in denying the existence of a personal devil, even though the activities of such a being are often described in the Bible; and even Barth himself admits the practical inescapableness of the devil's activities.

The neo-orthodox approach to Scriptures destroys them as an objective standard of truth and authority. It tends to leave every man to do that which is right in his own eyes. To the degree that the authority of the Scriptures is weakened, its high standard of ethical requirement disappears. This results in sin's blackness being neutralized. Confession of sin

consequently ceases to be heard, and "Thus saith the Lord" no longer is proclaimed from the pulpit. Instead, strange forms of doctrinal error are heard.³ A denial of the objective authority of Scriptures opens the floodgates, allowing paganism, impurity, and pandemonium to inundate society.

The school of thought headed by the late James Orr of Britain is an attempt to mediate between the older conservative position, held in more recent times by men like Hodge and Warfield, and the liberal position which is generally held by critical scholars. Orr maintains that the goal of inspiration is to communicate life and knowledge, and he draws support for his position from such Scriptures as II Timothy 3:1 6b and Psalm 19:7-11.⁴ In other words, since Jesus Christ and salvation are the heart of Scriptures, the doctrine of biblical inerrancy need concern itself only with those things in the Bible which relate directly to them.

In answer to Orr, the present writer suggests that a proper position on inerrancy must also take into account those biblical views presented earlier in this paper.

On the other hand, adherents to the traditional position would do, well to distinguish more clearly between the thing asserted in Scriptures and the thing signified. For example, to what extent does poetry in the Bible communicate truth? Also, one must ask to what extent inspiration applies to the utterances of men like Job's comforters? Or in what sense is the Book of Ecclesiastes inspired?

Traditional orthodoxy should take the initiative in acknowledging the problems which critical scholars have raised, and not fight as men with their backs to the wall. Otherwise, inquiring minds may by-pass them because they seem to be burying their heads in the sand.

III. Objections to Biblical Inerrancy

The present writer must confess that Scriptures present a number of problems which, as yet, he has found difficult to reconcile with a strict doctrine of plenary, verbal inerrancy. The limits of this paper allow for but a few examples.

A frequent objection to biblical inerrancy is raised because parallel accounts of events recorded in the Bible sometimes vary. Take, for example, the inscription on the cross. Clearly, there was but one inscription there, written in three languages, yet every Gospel writer states it dif-

ferently. Matthew's account reads, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews"; Mark's says, "The King of the Jews"; Luke puts it, "This is the King of the Jews"; while John writes, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." A combination of the four statements, "This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews," probably was what the inscription said, which makes each writer accurate as far as he goes; nevertheless, none of them, evidently, records the inscription exactly as it was written. If one of them did, obviously the other three did not. The present writer is still seeking a completely satisfying solution to this problem.

The problem often is raised too, about the angels at Jesus' tomb. Matthew and Mark mention but one angel, while Luke speaks of two. Mark says he was sitting, while Luke has them standing. In response to this apparent discrepancy, one might say that Matthew and Mark chose to mention only one of the angels while Luke mentions both; but it is more difficult to account for the differences of position stated by the gospel writers. Conceivably both may be correct, witnesses having viewed the angel(s) in successive positions.

Or take Esau's wives. In Genesis 26:34; 28:9 they are said to have been Judith, the daughter of Beon the Hittite; Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; and Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael. Yet in Genesis 36:1-3 where his three wives are mentioned (one would suppose them to be the same three), the names are different. In the latter passage, the names of Judith and Mahalath do not appear at all, while the names of Adah and Aholibamah are introduced. The father of Bashemath is said to be Ishmael instead of Elon the Hittite, and there is an Anah whose name did not appear in the first listings. Incidentally, Anah's father is said to have been Zibeon, a Hivite.

It is possible that some of these wives and their fathers had more than one name. It is possible, too, that the Hittites and Hivites, or at least a given family among them, were so closely related that their names are used interchangeably. These answers, however, are mere theories which need substantiation.

Take a more serious critical problem. From the data presented earlier in this paper, evidence is strong that Jesus and the apostles adhered to biblical inerrancy. Yet when they quoted Scriptures they quoted from the Septuagint (LXX), which was the Jewish Bible of the first century A. D. The problem arises when it is remembered that the LXX was a translation, and anyone familiar with languages knows that a word-for-

word translation is impossible. Furthermore, many of the nuances of the original are lost in translation. If it be maintained that the LXX was inerrant in an absolute literary sense, it must be asked if the Hebrew manuscript from which it was taken was also inerrant. It is obvious to one who takes a given passage which Jesus and the apostles may cite, and compares it with the Hebrew, be it the Massoretic text, the Samaritan text, or the text of Qumran, that the Hebrew and the LXX do not always say exactly the same thing. Because of that fact, English readers of such quotes become perplexed when they look them up in the Old Testament. Which, then, was the inerrant manuscript? To claim absolute inerrancy only for the autographs still leaves unexplained how Jesus and New Testament writers could claim inerrancy for the LXX from which they quoted.

Also, it sometimes appears that a New Testament writer applies an Old Testament passage entirely out of context. Matthew's use of Isaiah 9:1-2 (Matt. 4:12-16) will illustrate. Of course it might be said that the same Spirit who inspired the words at the beginning, making them fit the context in which the prophet used them, could have inspired the gospel writer to give them an application which fits his context. The superintending Spirit is not subject to human rules of hermeneutics.

IV. Conclusions

Since the battle over biblical inerrancy involves serious problems with which sincere seekers after truth on both sides are occupied, its significance cannot be dismissed lightly. But even more important is the magnitude of the results of the outcome of the issue. To renounce the doctrine of biblical inerrancy is to strip Scriptures of their status as an objective standard of divine truth. Since Christ and His apostles claimed complete inerrancy for the Scriptures, to renounce the doctrine is to cast serious doubts upon the Bible's statements about God, the world, the nature and duty of man, the way of salvation, and man's destiny. Although to accept the doctrine of biblical inerrancy, at this point at least, is to do so in the face of serious critical problems, the alternative to doing so is in effect to destroy Christianity itself.

The vital factor in choosing between the alternatives is not complete understanding of the supports that bridge the chasms along the way of faith, but a complete trust in the Person who is the object of faith. If His position is not dependable, then He is neither a safe Guide nor a safe Object.

The problem of biblical inerrancy reminds one of the question which evidently plagued the Twelve at one point in their training. Jesus had just announced that only those who ate His flesh and drank His blood could have eternal life (cf. John 6 :48f.). At this, most of the crowd, including former disciples, lost faith in Him and looked elsewhere for truth. The Twelve appear to have been perplexed, too. Jesus, sensing their problem, did not, as many of us would have done, hasten to explain exactly what He had meant. Instead, He simply asked, "Will ye also go away?" Peter, the spokesman for the Twelve, responded at once, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure . . .

That is it! Acceptance of the inspiration and inerrancy of the Word of God rests, in the final analysis, on the foundation of faith. Not blind, naive acceptance of the unreasonable, but a faith that is reasonable because of the character of Him in whom it is placed. Because Jesus put His stamp of approval so categorically upon the inerrancy of Scriptures, one must either accept His point of view on the matter or discredit Him as a teacher of truth. That we dare not do.

A significant sidelight to the dilemma of the Twelve is that later Jesus' meaning, when He was speaking of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, was made clear to them. But faith, in their case, preceded complete understanding.

So it is with the difficult doctrine of biblical inerrancy. The errant tribunal of human reason, lacking as it does much pertinent data, declares that at least some utterances of Scripture must be broken; nevertheless, with a strong faith in the living Word and in the rightness of Jesus' view of Scriptures, one can leave full understanding of critical problems until later. Happily, the science of archeology and other disciplines have already answered a significant number of the questions which critical scholars have raised. It is reasonable to believe that the rest of the problems will be solved in due time.

In the meantime, it is imperative that the Bible be considered both as an objective statement of truth and as a medium through which the Holy Spirit can bring the reader into a direct encounter with God. To approach Scriptures as objective truth prepares the mind and heart for the subjective experience. Not to approach them thus raises a barrier which the Spirit must overcome before He can be heard, if indeed He succeeds in

being heard at all. Failure to approach Scriptures as the objective standard of divine truth conditions the reader to hear the voice of fallible reason or of carnal desire, voices which the individual may even mistake for the voice of Deity. How can one "try the spirits whether they be of God" unless there be an objective standard by which to try them? The holy Scriptures are that standard, that body of writings which our Lord and His apostles pronounced inerrant.

Documentations

¹John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament* (London: Epworth Press, 1941), p. 9.

²*Ibid.*, p. 794.

³Thomas Altizer is reputed to have told Paul Tillich on the night of the latter's death that his God-is-dead doctrine was the theology to which he had arrived by following Tillich's teachings to their logical conclusion.

⁴Cf. Donald Walhout, *Interpreting Religion* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 348, 349.

THEOLOGY AND BIBLICAL INERRANCY

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Theology begins with an idea of God or with an awareness of God. Christian theology finds its meaning in the Christ who makes God known in redemption to man who needs a Saviour. Scriptures are the means used by the self-revealing God to communicate His redemptive concern and activity in an objective and verifiable way to His creatures.

I. Inerrant Scriptures Implied In A High View of God

The ability and concern of the Deity will determine the quality of the Word of God. If God is not able or not disposed to give an adequate disclosure of Himself in terms understandable to man, the so-called Scriptures can never rise above human, fallible recording of the history of man or, at most, the imaginations of men about what God may be like or what His attitude may be toward man. A finite God would, at best, produce a limited and faulty Scripture. Or a God who did not love with an everlasting love would give an inadequate Scripture to unworthy and sinful man if he concerned Himself at all with the human needs.

Therefore, the idea of an inerrant Bible derives immediately from the idea of an infinite and loving God who, having used every other means of self-revelation, spoke at last

by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:2, 3 KJV).

The Old Testament is not just a faulty human record of God's revelation to man. The communication is so intrinsically involved in the revelation itself that one must say that the Word is that revelation. God spoke (Heb. 1:1). And by their own constantly repeated insistence, the Old Testament writings are the Word of the Lord. That Word does not simply report concerning truth. As Jesus said to the Father, "Thy word is truth" (John 17 :17). It is truth as the Old Testament revelation. It is truth as the Old Testament predictions of the coming of Christ. It is truth in its total contents, which support the whole theme of redemptive revelation. It is all truth. "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass

from the law till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:18, KJV). While Jesus does not use the late Latin word "inerrant," He goes beyond the term to its strictest possible application to the Old Testament. The Word of God cannot fail in the least degree.

II. Inerrant Scriptures Implied In The Authority Of Jesus Christ

Then out of the advent, person, and work of Jesus flows the New Testament. The Redeemer, redemption history, and the apostolic witness flow into one. The result is the New Testament. As the Old Testament (the words about the coming Jesus) had to be infallibly fulfilled, so these words of Jesus will not pass away (Matt. 24:35). They are the revelation of ultimate and absolute truth, and thus more sure than the heavens and the earth which belong to the realm of changing phenomena. The New Testament is also the voice of the living God, deriving its existence and authority from the living Christ.

Thus, biblical inerrancy derives from theology. The infinite God and His well-beloved Son alone account for the Scriptures. And their Word is inerrant.

III. Conversely, Inerrant Scriptures Reveal God And Christ

The converse is also true. Our knowledge of God and of His Christ derives from the Scriptures. Modern man would be groping in pagan darkness but for the revelation of God in the Written Word. If this is not an inerrant Word, there is no certain knowledge only another tantalizing mythology or human philosophy.

Yes, the circularity of the argument is evident. God is the source of the inerrant Scriptures and the Scriptures are the source of our knowledge of God. And who can tell, even in the current Christian community, which dawns first in the child's consciousness – the basic, inevitable awareness of God or the relevance of the Scriptural witness to God?

IV. Inter-locking *A Prioris*

Nor does it matter. Man's approach to either God or the Scriptures is in the realm of the *a priori*. Only by faith can one be certain of the true God or of the truthfulness of the testimony of His Word. If one is sure of either, he has no reason to doubt the other. Conversely, if one disbelieves one, he can find no solid ground for accepting the other. We have here

not one *a priori* fact and one or two inferences but two or three interlocking *a priori*s. Accept any one and the others become reasonable inferences. But it matters little with which you start. None is proved by "scientific" demonstration. Nor does it need to be. Each has its certainty in faith.

Begin with an infinite, loving God and it is reasonable that He would reveal Himself explicitly in the Redeemer and universalize that revelation in an utterly reliable set of documents. Begin with Jesus Christ and He will reveal the Father, of whom He is the express image. He will also imbed this revelation in a totally relevant and authoritative form accessible to all men. Or begin with the inerrant Scriptures and there is no room to doubt the infinite, loving God or His well-pleasing Son. We stand together—not as rival alternatives but as interlocking aspects of one progressive revelation, addressed primarily to faith. The approach is *a priori*-not *a posteriori*. "Through faith we understand" (Heb. 11:2), and without faith it is impossible either to approach God or to please Him (Heb. 11:6).

V. Importance Of Biblical Inerrancy To Theology

If an inerrant Bible is related to a high view of God and to the authority of Jesus Christ, both as a direct implication of them and as our source of knowledge concerning them, who could deny the importance of biblical inerrancy to Christian theology? To deny or ignore biblical inerrancy would be to pull out the keystone and let the whole structure of theology collapse. Certainty could not survive in any area of doctrine. Man would be left to the subjectivity of his own opinions. The following ten propositions, together with the brief commentary on them, underscore the crucial importance of biblical inerrancy to Christian theology.

A. *Scripture is the primary source of Christian theology.* In Protestantism at least this is the one point on which more agree than on any other. All attribute their certainty to a sure Word of God. There was a time, of course, when the New Testament did not hold this place, simply because it was not yet written. Even then Jesus and the apostles used the Old Testament constantly to proclaim and to prove the great truths that were held sacred as from God Himself. Jesus introduced some of His most radical teachings by the twofold affirmation that He came not to destroy but to fulfill the Old Testament, and that no part of the Old Testament, however tiny, would fall short of fulfillment (Matt. 5:17, 18).

When Jesus was defending His life against the charge of blasphemy involved in claiming to be the Son of God, the common ground between Jesus and the Jews was the confidence of all that "the scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). Thus Paul said with confidence that all Scripture, God-breathed as it is, can be used with profit for doctrine. Jesus Himself was not content, as the risen Lord, to proclaim the great truths about Himself in His own words. He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures in the light of His declarations (Luke 24:44-48).

Following the example of Jesus and the apostles, the early church taught as authoritative only what the Scriptures said, as enlarged, of course, to contain the New Testament fulfillment. This has been the hallmark of a live and orthodox church through the centuries. As Wesley quotes Luther, "Divinity is nothing but a grammar of the language of the Holy Ghost."¹ The most significant exception to this approach, the Roman Church, did not so much set aside the Scriptures as add to them a tradition which they claimed to have preserved from apostolic times. Only the boldest deviant movements have dared to forego the claim of a biblical theology. And their lack has generally led to disaster or obscurity.

B. Scripture is the norm for distinguishing between truth and error, orthodoxy and heresy. Jesus told the crafty Sadducees that the source of their error was in "not knowing the scriptures." Lacking at this point, they failed in the practical consideration: neither did they know "the power of God" (Matt. 22:29). The same norm of truth as opposed to error is everywhere implicit and often explicit throughout the Scriptures. And the only effective appeal through the centuries by which the Church has been called back to truth, life, or purity has been a challenge to return to the Scriptures. No lasting reformation or spiritual revival has found its norm elsewhere. This is the basic weakness of the more recent movements of Barth, Bultmann, and Tillich. Other powers may bring change, but only the Scripture really reproves and corrects (II Tim. 3:16).

C. Scripture gives Christian theology its unique authority and authenticity. Christian theology, unlike other systems, has not only a content and a norm, but also an authority from which a valid call may issue for a return to the truth and to the old paths. Because of a Scripture that claims to be inerrant, it is possible to believe that a consistency can exist among the various elements of revelation that extend over many centuries, that are mediated through a variety of men, that are communicated in at least

three different languages, that occur in a variety of cultures, and that appeared under a variety of governments—good and bad.

The principle of consistency is the authority of truth—the utterance of the Living God. God's commandments, promises, predictions, and mighty works show an amazing self-consistency that steers a perfect path through the maze of man's sin, confusion, and rebellion. No other religion has the benefit of such authentic control as the inerrant Scriptures. Thus no other religion is in a position to develop a theology of such authority and authenticity as is possessed by a truly biblical theology. It is Scripture that gives valid form and preservation to the divine revelation.

D. The authority of Christian theology is based on the assumption of the utter reliability of the Scriptures. Christianity is a preaching religion. Its beliefs are not opinions to be discussed in forums but truths to be proclaimed. On these truths rest the destiny of the hearer, the individual happiness and effectiveness of the person, and the good of society. The preacher cannot afford to be wrong in his proclamation. His source must be reliable. The whole Bible, all Scripture, must be God-breathed and hence profitable in the variety of uses that grow out of its proclamation. If at any point the Bible is not reliable, it is no stronger than its weakest link. Scripture would then break under the pressure of real life.

John Wesley compressed life's problems to one. He said, "I want to know one thing, the way to heaven." The answer is likewise reduced to one. "God himself has condescended to teach me the way." The way is in one document. "He hath written it down in a book." So Wesley became a "man of one book." He said, "O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me."²

This certainty concerning the reliability and effectiveness of the Scriptures is the mark of a truly Christian theology. Revelation cannot be separated from the God who gave it. God reveals Himself in Scripture. Augustine puts into the mouth of God the words, "Indeed, O man, what My Scripture says, I say."³ This conviction of the utter reliability of the Scriptures is the foundation-stone of theology.

E. This reliability is normally conceived in terms of inerrancy and infallibility. Examples hardly need to be given. Exceptions within the Church are mostly related to the modern attacks on the Scriptures by the same rationalistic biblical criticism that claims to make the Scriptures more un-

derstandable. Wesley's view is typical of the normal approach to the Scriptures when he cries, "Every part thereof is worthy of God; and all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess."⁴ And again when he says, "Nay, if there be any mistakes in the Bible there may as well be a thousand. If there be one falsehood in that book it did not come from the God of truth."⁵ Who can doubt that this thorough confidence in the inerrancy of the Scriptures was a vital factor in the effectiveness of Wesley in his contribution to the great Evangelical Revival?

Luther says in the same vein, "I have learned to ascribe the honor of infallibility only to those books that are accepted as canonical. I am profoundly convinced that none of these writers has erred."⁶ Anglican documents agree. In *The Homilies* we read that the Scriptures as a body were "written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost" and are thus "the Word of the living God," "his infallible Word."⁷ The same idea pervades all parts of the New Testament, the Church Fathers, and the significant Christian works through the centuries, in words appropriate to the times.

F. *The authority of Jesus Christ is at stake.* This proposition applies in at least three ways. The veracity of Jesus' teaching is at stake. No one ever spoke more strongly than He about the detailed reliability of the Scriptures. God would not let one tiniest bit fail of fulfillment (Matt. 5:18). "The scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). Wesley comments: "That is, nothing which is written therein can be censured or rejected."⁸ Jesus knew, believed, studied, expounded, venerated, obeyed, and fulfilled the Scripture. This amounts to complete endorsement of the Scriptures by both precept and example. If He points us unwaveringly to the written Word as a firm foundation of our faith and hope, His veracity is at stake in the decision that is to be made about the complete reliability of the Word. If He fails us here, we are betrayed.

The authority of Jesus is at stake in another way. If the Scriptures are not reliable in detail, we know very little about the Jesus who lived in Palestine. Virtually all that we know of Him is recorded in the Bible. If even part of the record is unreliable, we have no stick to measure what we can trust and what we cannot. There would be no stopping point short of Bultmann's conclusion that we know little or nothing for sure of the historical Jesus.⁹ All would be colored by prejudiced reporting or would be under the shadow of uncertainty. He who takes away my Bible takes away my Lord, and "I know not where they have laid Him" (John 20:13).

In still a third way the authority of Jesus is involved. In a peculiar sense the New Testament is His book. He chose and commissioned the apostles. He gave them the power of proxy. Whoever received the apostle was actually so treating the Master (Matt. 10:40). As witnesses to Christ, and as Spirit-filled interpreters for Christ, they conveyed to the apostolic church the gospel which was given to them. As the apostles passed on the tradition which was given to them by the Lord, they believed that their Spirit inspired witness was Christ Himself speaking. Note Ephesians 4:21, where Paul says the Ephesians heard Christ and were taught by Him.

To Paul it made no difference whether the tradition was taught by word or by epistle. The communication and the obligation were the same. (See II Thess. 2:15.) If the Spirit inspired, apostolic witness to Christ, namely the books of the New Testament, cannot be accepted as infallibly true, it is not the apostle that is discredited; it is the Lord Himself. The authority of Jesus is at stake in the question of the inerrancy of the New Testament.

G. The validity of redemption is likewise at stake. If, as Jesus Himself repeatedly declared, in harmony with the whole Old and New Testaments, the purpose of Jesus' coming was as a vicarious Redeemer, the history and authority called into question are redemption history and redemption authority. If the inerrant facticity of the biblical accounts cannot be trusted implicitly, which parts can or cannot be so trusted? Must I choose subjectively, according to my own inclination or philosophic background? Should I posit the source of redemption history in the truth of God or in the Gnostic mythology? If there is no sure Word of God that settles the issue straight across the board, I may, with Bultmann, find the idea of one person's dying for another as abhorrent to naturalism as is the idea of a fully inspired and inerrant Scripture. But in that case I would find myself a lost sinner without redemption.

H. Doubt or denial of inerrancy is historically accompanied by doubt or denial of other basic doctrines, widespread unbelief, a sick church, and vigorous and triumphant anti-Christian movements. Until recent times such doubt had little standing in the Church. It is a modern peculiarity that atheists and agnostics claim to be Christians, and that Christians claim to be atheists and agnostics. Those who have an inerrant Bible have not found their God dead. He is very much alive. One wonders if the compromise on the Bible is not the wedge that opened the door for the massive unbelief that

is sweeping over so much of the Church today. One wonders further if professed Christians can really find a resting place short of complete apostasy on the one hand or a return to a fully authoritative Word of God on the other. Currents run swiftly nowadays. One may not have long to wait for the answer.

I. *Doubt or denial of inerrancy logically destroys the basis of Christian theology.* If the doctrine of God, the person of Jesus Christ, and the fact of redemption could not survive with certainty the loss of inerrancy, what logical expectation is there of preserving any vital doctrine of Christian theology on the basis of an errant Scripture? To labor the point would be to insult one's intelligence.

J. *The hope of Christian theology is in an inerrant Scripture.* The answer is clear. Not only is inerrancy important to Christian theology; it is essential. The decision of this generation on inerrancy may determine the future of Christian theology for a long time to come, if Jesus carries.

Documentations

¹John Wesley, "Preface", *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (London: The Epworth Press, reprinted 1941), p. 9.

²John Wesley, "Preface", *Sermons* (3rd American ed), I, 6.

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⁴John Wesley, "Preface", *Explanatory Notes*, p. 9.

⁵John Wesley, *Journal*, VI, 117.

⁶Martin Luther, "Defense Against the Ill-tempered Judgment of Eck", *D. Martin Luthers Werke* (Weimar: Hermann Bohlaus Nachfolger, 1897), 2, 618; cited by John W. Montgomery, *Crisis in Lutheran Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 68.

⁷"An Information for them which take offence at certain places of the Holy Scripture", *The Homilies*, ed. G. E. Corrie, Cambridge, 1850, pp. 370, 378, 383; quoted by J.I. Packer, *God Speaks to Man*, Westminster Press, 1965, p. 21.

⁸John Wesley, *Notes*, 1.c.

⁹Rudolph Bultmann, *Form Criticism* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Torch-book, 1962), pp. 20-23.

JOHN FLETCHER'S METHODOLOGY IN THE ANTINOMIAN CONTROVERSY OF 1770-76

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For over two centuries, the name of John Wesley has been highly honored. He is the acknowledged leader of the Evangelical Revival and is credited with founding the Methodist Church and giving to it a distinctive theology. Many other deserving tributes could be paid this man. Without detracting from Wesley's accomplishments, it needs to be remembered that he had some very able assistants who made helpful contributions to his success. Today's evangelistic association is not wholly a twentieth century phenomenon.

Admittedly, the team which John Wesley headed was small when measured by today's standards. Ernst Sommer points out that by 1765 it was recognized that at the head of Methodism was a "troika" or, as he calls it, a triumvirate, John and Charles Wesley and John Fletcher. Luke Tyerman, the biographer of early Methodism, writes:

John Wesley traveled, formed societies, and governed them. Charles Wesley composed unequalled hymns for the Methodists to sing; and John Fletcher, a native of Calvinian Switzerland explained, elaborated and defended the doctrines they heartily believed.¹

Unfortunately, this third man on Wesley's team is a veritable stranger to many Wesleyan theologians, and this unfamiliarity with John Fletcher in contemporary Wesleyan circles is regrettable.

Those historians who have not overlooked the significance of the mutual efforts of those associated with John Wesley describe Fletcher as the "earliest and fullest expositor and interpreter in English of the Remonstrant Theology of Arminius; whose works remain the storehouse of its treasures and the armoury of its defense."² Another claims that the theology of the Methodist movement was the theology of John Fletcher of Madeley.³ Abel Stevens, one of the leading historians of Methodism, has written of Fletcher's Checks: "They have been more influential in the denomination than Wesley's own controversial writings on the subject. They have influenced, indirectly through Methodism, the subsequent tone of theological thought in much of the Protestant world."⁴ Some writers have seen fit to call Fletcher "the theologian of Methodism" or "the chief theologian of the Wesleyans."⁵

Wesley, who was always judicious in the giving of praise, readily acknowledges his indebtedness to John Fletcher. Wesley enjoined: "Let all our preachers carefully read over ours and Mr. Fletcher's tracts."⁶ The esteem with which Wesley held Fletcher was such that on two different occasions, once in 1773 and again in 1776, Wesley tried to persuade Fletcher to become his successor.

The following reasons partially explain the scant attention paid to Fletcher today: the general theological pauperism in Wesleyan circles; Fletcher's Works are not readily available; few students understand the historical context in which he wrote and, unfortunately, Fletcher's name bears a stigma because it is associated with controversy. A failure to understand Fletcher's methodology poses an additional hindrance. The purpose of this paper is to make some contribution to our understanding at this point.

John Fletcher's significant contribution to Wesleyan-Arminian theology came about as a result of his participation in the Antinomian controversy. As the Evangelical Revival progressed, it soon became apparent that there were two branches simultaneously developing, one Calvinistic, the other Arminian. In 1770 at the twenty-seventh annual conference of preachers, the following statement was made by Wesley: "We have leaned too much toward Calvinism."⁷

This statement caused what was smoldering to burst into the open flame of the Antinomian controversy. Lady Huntingdon was greatly offended by the minutes of the 1770 Conference and believed that the fundamental truths of the gospel were put in jeopardy by them. Walter Shirley, Henry Venn, Richard and Roland Hill and others aligned themselves with Lady Huntingdon. Until 1770, John Fletcher had been much admired by Lady Huntingdon; so much so, in fact, that she had made him president of Trevecca College which she had founded in 1768. Now, because of their theological differences, Fletcher found it necessary to resign the presidency of this college.

It was after this breach in fellowship that Fletcher took up his ready pen and began to write his memorable Checks to Antinomianism. Not only did he write out of a sense of "duty towards God," and towards his "honored father in Christ, Mr. Wesley, and his misunderstood minutes,"⁸ but because of a deep-seated concern for the welfare of the revival. He stated his chief reason for publishing his first Check thus:

It appears if I am not mistaken that we stand now as much in need of a reformation from antinomianism as our ancestors did of a reformation from popery. People, it seems, may now be 'in Christ' without being 'new creatures,' without casting 'old things' away. They may be God's children without God's image; and 'born of the Spirit' without the fruits of the Spirit.⁹

Thus it was that Fletcher was firmly convinced that in evangelical Christianity you could not separate the faith of a Christian from the fruitage of a Christian life. Fletcher, like Wesley, was supremely interested in practical Christianity.¹⁰

Before we consider the methods Fletcher employed in the Antinomian controversy, it must be understood that his methodology was not in any way conditioned by blind partisanship, or by an element of surprise at what was developing in the Methodist Societies. He was not baffled by the sudden emergence of what might be falsely called a "new heresy". You cannot detect any frustration on his part as to what the solution must be. Fletcher did not consider controversy to be a necessarily evil thing. His position was that "controversy, though not desirable in itself, yet, properly managed, has a hundred times rescued truth, groaning under the lash of triumphant error."¹¹

Though emotions ran rampant at times, Fletcher retained his poise and always manifested a tender spirit. He submitted his First Check to Wesley before it was published so that all "tart" expressions might be removed from it. Wesley recorded his evaluation of Fletcher's Checks with these words:

One knows not which to admire most—the purity of the language, the strength and clearness of the argument, or the mildness and sweetness of the spirit that breathes throughout the whole.¹²

Throughout the controversy, Fletcher demonstrated that he was a man of both sobriety and piety.

Fletcher's methodology in the Antinomian controversy was based upon a careful historical analysis of the problem. He was aware that from the very beginnings of the Christian era, Antinomianism has always been a threat to the practical fulfillment of the Christian life as instituted by the New Covenant of Grace. Admittedly, the relationship between the moral law and the law of grace is not readily evident. Immanuel Kant expressed this relationship in terms of a mystery by saying: "Two things fill the mind with ever increasing wonder and awe, the more often and the more intensely the mind of thought is drawn to them: the starry heavens above

me and the moral law within me."

In an attempt to meet the ethical demands of the New Testament, some of the early Christians turned to mysticism, asceticism, or to any one of a great number of heresies.¹³ By way of example, the Marcionites taught "that the God preached by the Law and the Prophets, was not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one was known, the other unknown; the one righteous, and the other good."¹⁴ William James writes: "The heretics who went before the Reformation are lavishly accused by church writers of antinomian practices."¹⁵

It is an accepted fact that by the sixteenth century the predominant emphasis in the church was upon a "work righteousness." Luther's reaction against this form of salvation supposedly achieved by means of meritorious works precipitated the Reformation. Just as the pendulum has the tendency to swing in the opposite direction, so Luther came dangerously close to an exclusive emphasis upon "faith." At first he found difficulty in reconciling the emphasis of Paul with that of James, and at this stage he preferred the teachings of Paul because he did not yet fully understand either Paul or James.¹⁶ It must be remembered that as Luther recoiled from the theological errors of his day, his emotions temporarily blinded him to an understanding of how the emphasis of Paul and James could be reconciled.

More basic to the problem, however, was Luther's proclivity to Augustinianism in which he had been so thoroughly schooled. Not wanting to detract from Luther's courageous performance in the Reformation, John Fletcher ventures to say,

He was so busy in opposing the pope of Rome, his indulgences, Latin masses, and other monastic fooleries, that he did not find time to oppose the Augustinian fooleries of fatalism, Manichean necessity, lawless grace, and free wrath.¹⁷

In this period of turmoil, the humanism of Desiderius Erasmus with its emphasis upon free will failed to be of any help to Luther because it erred on the side of Pelagianism.

Thus an ancient conflict of the early fifth century is renewed. Pelagius, a British monk, gave great prominence to the ability of man to save himself. St. Augustine was his chief assailant and fought the Pelagian heresy with an emphasis upon the free grace of God. In this justifiable controversy, it was Fletcher's judgment that Augustine's view of grace was not wholly orthodox, especially where it gave rise to predestination.¹⁸

Thus Augustine's corrective emphasis came short of achieving the equilibrium of the gospel in describing the God-man relationship.

When Calvin arrived on the Reformation scene, he likewise failed to find a mediating position with regard to the "holy doctrines of grace, and the gracious doctrines of justice."¹⁹ His Augustinian teachings continued to aggravate the controversy in which

Luther and Erasmus had been the chief disputants. The first reformer to balance the "Gospel ., axioms was, according to the viewpoint of John Fletcher, the English reformer Thomas Cranmer who had written these lines:

All men be monished and chiefly preachers, that, in this high matter, they, looking on both sides (i.e. looking both to the doctrines of grace and the doctrines of justice), so attemper and moderate themselves, that neither they so preach the grace of God (with heated Augustine), that they take away thereby free-will, nor on the other side so extol free-will (with heated Pelagius), that injury be done to the grace of God.²⁰

Because of the Augustinian sentiments in Reformation circles on the continent, the Roman Catholics in launching the counter-reformation soft-pedaled their veneration for Augustine to the extent that following the Council of Trent they became decidedly more Pelagian. Thus both branches of Western Christendom were driven "still farther from the line of Scripture moderation."²¹ According to Fletcher, the unpleasant result was:

That in the popish countries, those who stood up for faith and distinguishing free grace began to be called heretics, Lutherans, and Solifidians: while, in Protestant countries, those who had the courage to maintain the doctrines of justice, good works, and unnecessitated obedience, were branded as Papists, merit mongers, and heretics.²²

In his review of history, Fletcher pointed to the seventeenth century saying that Arminianism within Protestantism and Jansenism within Roman Catholicism were both movements whose intention was to check the excesses to which these respective branches of Christendom were addicted. The Synod of Dort (1618-1619) condemned Arminius for his leadership in a reaction aimed at scholastic Calvinism's failure to recognize fully the significance of human responsibility. Cornelius Jansen's attempt to bring into focus the Augustinian concept of grace especially within the Society of Jesus came to be known as Jansenism. Although both movements were officially condemned, all was not lost, however, for as Fletcher observes, "truth shall stand, be it ever so much opposed by either partial Protestants or partial papists."²³

Fletcher believed that the problem of antinomianism in early Methodism was quite properly analogous to a similar problem which confronted the Presbyterians in the seventeenth century. It is for this reason that Fletcher's Works are replete with references to the works of the more moderate Puritan or Non-Conformist divines (e.g., Richard Baxter, Matthew Henry, John Flavel, Daniel Williams, Philip Doddridge). He also quotes from Bishop Lancelot Andrewes who represents the so-called Arminians of the Caroline divines.

Thus it was Fletcher's conclusion that the great central problems of theology change far less in matter and substance than in form and temper as they appear in history's successive ages. These problems dress themselves up in a new garb and outwardly they appear to be transformed. In more recent times, an English scholar verifies Fletcher's conclusion by saying:

Under the new names of Rationalism and Romanticism, we recognize the old antagonisms of free-will and predestination which at one era bore the names of Pelagianism and Augustinianism, and, at another, Arminianism and Calvinism.²⁴

Fletcher's incisive study of history convinced him that Antinomianism became a threat to sound evangelical doctrine whenever the polarity between divine sovereignty and human responsibility was neutralized. To avoid this subtle pitfall, he believed that responsible theologians must bring themselves to an acceptance of the paradox.

In most cases, the Christian scholar's background in Aristotelian logic is a serious handicap in any understanding of the paradox. The natural temptation is to want to relieve the tension. David Shipley observes that the usual method is to take one truth and explain it "in terms of the other so that the dialectical tension is lost or lessened sufficiently to make possible popular uncritical perversion."²⁵ Thus it is with ease that the theologian can put an irreconcilable opposition between two equal truths to the end that he cancels them both out.

After a careful historical analysis of theological movements in the Christian church, Fletcher develops in the Antinomian controversy a methodology which accepts the reality of the paradox. Gertrude Huehns categorically states that "research has repeatedly pointed out that one of the main reasons for the victory of Christianity over other competing sacrificial mythologies was its paradoxicality."²⁶

Accepting the element of paradox and recognizing the difficulty of making clear-cut distinctives between opposition and complementarity, Fletcher proceeds to develop a methodology which has been called the "via media", or "the middle way." In his words he called it, "the harmonious opposition of the Scriptures." In more recent times this method has been called "dialectical."²⁷

Fletcher's methodology undoubtedly grew out of his peculiar conception of the nature of Truth, which he maintained is an organic unity. "Truth," he says, "is confined within her firm bounds; nay, there is a middle line equally distant from all extremes; on that line she stands, and to miss her, you need only step over it to the right hand or to the left."²⁸

During the course of the Antinomian controversy, Fletcher's dialectical methodology became the hermeneutical principle which he used in the exegesis of Scripture. When he was confronted with seeming contradictions in the Scriptures and differences of interpretation among individual Christians and theological groups, this was the method by which he sought a reconciliation. For example he cites Romans 4:5 and 5:1 which indicate that man is justified by faith. It is equally as important that the mind be confronted with John 6:27 which is a command of Jesus Christ to "labor [ergazesthe, literally, 'work'] for the meat that endureth to everlasting life."²⁹

Any proof-text method not balanced by this dialectical methodology was thought by Fletcher to be potentially dangerous. To him this would be "wresting the Scriptures to one's own destruction" (I Pet. 3:6).

Fletcher's methodology gave him some keen insights into the Antinomian problem. He was able to appraise the current situation by saying, "Once we were in immediate danger of splitting upon 'works without faith': Now we are threatened with destruction from 'faith without works'."³⁰ He accounts for the fact that Antinomianism had again raised its ugly head because of Calvinism's one-sided emphasis upon Christ as the dispenser of grace and thus its preoccupation with only 'the first Gospel axiom,' or justification by faith in the day of salvation. In contradistinction the rigid Arminian position imprisoned Christ within the context of the law and thus it was preoccupied with the "second Gospel axiom," a second justification by works. Fletcher insisted that both gospel axioms were complementary and must be held together theologically, and in practice by emphasizing Christ in all of His offices. Thus Fletcher wrote:

If I may compare the Gospel Truth to the child contended for in the days of Solomon, both parties, while they divide, inadvertently destroy it. We, like the true mother, are for no division. Standing upon the middle Scriptural line, we embrace and hold first both Gospel axioms. With the Calvinists, we give God in Christ all the glory of our salvation; and, with the moralists, we take care not to give him in Adam any of the share in our damnation.³¹

Fletcher's doctrine of a "second justification by works" must be understood as the means by which he sought to reawaken the Antinomians and to encourage believers to pursue a life of holiness. His explanation of the doctrine is that initial justification or conversion is by faith alone; justification at the day of judgment will be only by the works of faith. His prayer was that the "merciful Keeper of Israel" would save from both extremes by a living faith, legally productive of all good works, or by good works, evangelically springing from a living faith."³²

The current interest in ecumenicity is calling for a reappraisal of Fletcher's methodology. Because he was a mediating theologian, it is believed that he has something significant to offer to our contemporary situation. If this interest reflects a genuine quest for truth, then these words from Fletcher's pen are worthy of careful study:

Mankind are prone to run into extremes. The world is full of men who always overdo or underdo. Few people ever find the line of moderation, the golden mean; and of those who do, few stay long upon it. One blast or another of vain doctrine soon drives them east or west from the meridian of pure truth.³³

If this evaluation of mankind's tendencies appears to be too pessimistic, it is only fair to Fletcher to add that he would balance this "pessimism of nature" with an "optimism of grace."³⁴

Because Antinomianism is one of the very real problems in our contemporary society, Fletcher's Checks to Antinomianism are taking on a new relevancy. Churchmen of the twentieth century need to avail themselves of whatever they can find of value in Fletcher's methodology.

There is a small minority of people in our modern society who is concerned about our Antinomian problem and is sounding an alarm. Robert E. Fitch, professor of Christian ethics at the Pacific School of Religion, is one of them, and he writes a description of the widespread erosion of authority. He says:

Of course, I have in mind primarily moral authority . . . The erosion of this authority has taken place partly under allegedly democratic and egalitar-

ian theories that we're all equal and nobody's any better than anybody else, partly under the impact of relativistic teachings in history, anthropology and philosophy that say everything is relative to the culture and there's no objective standard of right and wrong, truth and falsehood.³⁵

So widespread is this lawlessness that it respects neither the "radical right" nor the "existential left." Fitch continues:

Any number of 'liberals' and 'radicals' believe passionately in this same proposition . . . This inordinate love of liberty apart from law, apart from social structure and order, which is not the classical pattern of liberty in either England or America. So you have a kind of individualistic, egoistic liberty, that destroys self.³⁶

It is believed that the cause of today's widespread Antinomianism can be laid at the door of existentialism. L. Harold De Wolf suggests this when he writes:

Much existentialist thought moves on the very edge of antinomianism, that is, the repudiation of all moral law as related to salvation. Kierkegaard's depreciation of consistency and his doctrine that God commands the unethical and irrational, and Tillich's defining of justification as 'acceptance of acceptance', without specifying the need of repentance, tend to lessen the moral earnestness of Christian faith.³⁷

Someone has expressed the plight of today's Christians in the following line:

"How free we seem, how fettered fast we lie."³⁸

Today's brand of Antinomianism must be recognized for what it is. Responsible leadership in the tradition of Wesley and Fletcher must guide the church today between the twin rocks of licentious lawlessness and Pharisaic legalism.

Documentations

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THE BOOKS IN JOHN WESLEY'S LIFE

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Diverse avenues of research have been stimulated by the life and thought of John Wesley, the eighteenth-century founder of Methodism. In addition to the voluminous writing which has been done on Wesley and the origins of Methodism as well as the various aspects of his theology, Wesley has been studied as an educator,¹ literary figure,² social reformer,³ rhetorician,⁴ rationalist,⁵ empiricist,⁶ and as a man deeply interested in science and medical practice.⁷ Since Wesley's life spanned almost the entire century from 1703 to 1791, he is a fruitful resource for the study of many aspects of eighteenth century English life.

It is rather surprising, therefore, that Wesley's bookmanship has not received a full-length study. This aspect of Wesley has been discussed briefly in a few biographies and more precisely in three journal articles (George Jackson, "John Wesley as a Bookman," *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, 160 (July 1935), pp.294-305 and James R. Joy, "Wesley: Man of a Thousand Books and a Book," *Religion in Life*, (8) (Winter 1939), pp. 71-84, and Frank Baker, "A Study of John Wesley's Readings," *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, 168 (April and July 1943), pp.140-145 and pp. 234-242). However, no comprehensive bibliographic study has been done on Wesley's reading. Frank Baker has done more work in this area than any other scholar, but he has no plans for publishing.⁸

Although Wesley referred to himself as "homo unius libri," and William Arnett's dissertation⁹ thoroughly explicates and substantiates this claim, Wesley was, without doubt, a man of many books. Throughout his life, he was an avid reader with broad interests. His Oxford diaries (1725-1734) and his journal (1735-1790) are filled with constant reference to books which he read and his brief or lengthy appraisals of them. It was his regular habit to read while riding horseback, and later in life when he did more of his traveling by carriage, he placed a book shelf in the carriage so that he might occupy his time in reading. His letters, spanning from 1721 to 1791, contain frequent references to his book reading. Thus these sources-diaries, journal, and letters-reveal that Wesley read in virtually all fields of human inquiry.

These sources also contain a wealth of information about Wesley's ad-

vice on reading to the early Methodists, as well as his publishing material for them to read and establishing book rooms for the distribution of literature and promotion of reading.

I. An Outline of Proposed Research

This essay consists of some preliminary observations on the writer's Ph.D. dissertation topic, "John Wesley: the Bookman of Early Methodism," which is being pursued at The University of Michigan. First, the dissertation is dealing with an analysis of Wesley's personal reading as he recorded it in his diaries, journal, and letters and to a lesser extent in other sources. The purpose will be to identify titles which Wesley read and to give some description of them, to determine more precisely the categories in which he read, to systematize the material and to organize it by subject and also chronologically, and to examine his comments on various titles.

Second, the dissertation proposes to explore Wesley's advice, guidance, and exhortations to the early Methodists concerning the importance of book reading. Wesley was fond of saying, "Reading Christians are knowing Christians." He wrote several letters which deal with the subject of reading, and he also compiled reading lists, especially for the benefit of the Methodist preachers. These letters and reading lists will be examined. Finally, consideration will be given not only to titles which Wesley recommended but also titles which he sought to suppress.

No effort will be made in this dissertation to deal with Wesley's own writings, his literary style, his use of the English language, his editing, or his translating. This project will not cover his involvement with publishing and printing. These aspects will be touched upon only as they relate to his reading. For example, Wesley's editing provides some evidence of his tastes in reading, but a lengthy treatment of Wesley's role as editor and publisher is not relevant to the purpose of this study. Besides, this work has already been ably completed by Thomas Walter Herbert's *John Wesley as Author and Editor*. No effort will be made to present a historical bibliography of Wesley's publications since this already exists in Richard Green's¹⁰ and Frank Baker's¹¹ works. Frank Baker is also working on a bibliography of the extant copies which remain from Wesley's personal library, and no attempt will be made to venture into this area. This study will focus most singularly upon Wesley's personal reading and secondarily upon his reading advice and guidance to others.

The underlying concept for this dissertation is not new. It is simply that we do not fully understand a man until we know something about what he has read. A man's reading, among other factors, influences his contribution to society. Specifically, with Wesley, this dissertation hopes to discover, in some measure, how Wesley's reading parallels important events, changes, and transitions in his life and to discover, if possible, some general insights into how his reading informed his social and theological views, as well as how these views are reflected in the reading guidance which he gave to his followers. Although this task of interpretation is exceedingly difficult, and entire dissertations have been devoted to the influence of given individuals upon Wesley, it is hoped that in this study, following in the bibliographer's tradition of a broad and universal sweep of a man's reading, some general, but not detailed, conclusions may be reached about the impact of Wesley's reading upon his life.

II. Wesley's Reading

Evidence of the careful attention with which Wesley read is quite obvious throughout his Journal. He frequently summarizes the essential content or thesis of a book. If his opinion on a subject has been altered after reading a given book, he usually notes his change of mind. He fully interacted with the authors which he read and often engaged in critical examination. He was greatly distressed, for example, to read in Sketches of the History of Man a statement that Negro children turn black on the ninth day after birth. His dislike for Rousseau and his contempt for Swendenbourg are apparent. On the other hand, he has great admiration for Marcus Aurelius, Pascal, Milton, and Matthew Prior.

Although Wesley has his fair share of literary prejudices, his reading tastes were also shaped by rather definite canons of judgment. In regard to literary style, he values grammatical correctness, clarity of language, and above all brevity. He rejects verbosity, obscurity, and an ornate style of writing in favor of simple concise expression. He was especially offended by the verbose style of Robertson's History of Charles V and suggested that the substance of it could be reduced to a half of a sheet of paper.

Beyond literary style, Wesley's major canon of judgment was the moral content of a publication. Sometimes the moralistic measure produced a distortion of his critical evaluation. No style of writing, however good, was acceptable if an author trespassed upon traditional Christian morality. Thus he admired the wit of Lord Chesterfield, but otherwise, Wesley

viewed him as lacking in virtue as any heathen. He admired Homer as a great narrator and respected the certain measure of piety which he observed in Homer's poetry, but he notes improprieties in Homer. As Wesley records in his *Journal* for August 12, 1748:

In riding to Newcastle I finished the Iliad of Homer. What an amazing genius has this man! To write with such strength of thought and beauty of expression when he had none to go before him! And what a vein of piety runs through his whole work, in spite of his pagan prejudices. Yet one cannot but observe such improprieties intermixed, as are shocking to the last degree.¹²

Wesley also had harsh words for Machiavelli and Voltaire on moral grounds.

Wesley's literary tastes were also shaped by his rationalistic commitments, and following his Georgia experience, he became increasingly suspicious of mysticism. This helps one to understand his criticism of Luther's commentary on Galatians and his rejection of Swendenbourg.

Now let us move from these general considerations of literary style to a survey of Wesley's reading during the major segments of his life.

During the Oxford years, Wesley acquired a taste for reading which he was to maintain throughout his life. His reading during these years was dominated by religion and classics. Also there is poetry, considerable drama, and some philosophy and science. Much of his correspondence with his mother during his days at Oxford concerned his reading. It is quite apparent that the two of them carried on an intriguing dialogue over books. One of his earliest letters, November 1, 1724, discusses *Cheyne's Book of Health and Long Life* which championed exercise and temperance. Another book by Cheyne, *Natural Method of Curing Diseases*, which Wesley records in his *Journal* for March 12, 1742, had an important influence upon his interests in practical medicine throughout the rest of his career.

Aside from the *Scriptures* and the *Book of Common Prayer*, there were four major molders of Wesley's mind during these critical days at Oxford: Thomas a Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, William Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life and his Christian Perfection*, and Henry Scougal's *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*. These books made a lasting impression on Wesley.

His Oxford reading reflected tendencies toward ritualism and asceticism, and these characteristics are also present during the voyage and Georgia

reading. During the Georgia period, there are references to over one hundred books which Wesley read. He took a considerable library with him to America, and when he was ready to leave, he found it necessary to post a notice asking friends to return books which they had borrowed from him.

The period of 1733 to 1738 was characterized by devotional reading, culminating at Aldersgate with the public reading of Luther's preface to Romans at which time he experienced his evangelical conversion. Gradually the heavy devotional reading gave way to a return to more general literature, and after 1747, references to books on botany, biology, history, classics, medicine, and travel become more frequent.

Outside of religion, Wesley's chief reading interest, or diversion, was the natural sciences, or natural philosophy as it was called in Wesley's day. He was familiar with titles on medicine, astronomy, geology, physics, and biology. For Wesley, there was no conflict between religion and science. For him, science was the unfolding of God's creative purpose in the world. He was acquainted with such works as Bacon's *Ten Centuries of Experiment*, Priestly's work on *Electricity*, and Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*. Wesley's warm sentiments toward Burnet were interpreted as somewhat heretical by a few of his followers. Burnet championed the view that the earth arose out of chaos.

Wesley showed a great deal of openness toward scientific discoveries. Several entries in his *Journal* reveal his fascination with biology. One of these was recorded on July 21, 1758. He states:

I met with a tract which utterly confounded all my philosophy: I had long believed that all microscopic animals were generated like all other animals by parents of the same species. But Mr. Needham makes it highly probable that they constitute a peculiar class of animals, differing from all others in this, that they neither are generated or generate nor subsist by food in the ordinary way.¹³

Second to his interest in science was his interest in history, and particularly English history. Two notable aspects of his interest in British history may be traced to a couple of books which he read: William Tytler's *An Historical and Critical Inquiry into the Evidence Commonly Advanced Against Mary, Queen of Scotland* which he noted in his *Journal* on April 29, 1768, and Horace Walpole's *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of Richard the Third*, which he discussed in his *Journal* on June 17, 1769, as follows:

I finished *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of Richard the Third*. What an amazing monster, both in body and mind, have our historians and poets

painted him! And yet I think Mr. Walpole makes it more clear than one could expect at this distance of time (1) that he was not only not remarkably deformed, but on the contrary, remarkably handsome; (2) that his queen, whom he entirely loved, died a natural death; (3) that his nephew, Edward the Fifth, did so too, there being no shadow of proof to the contrary; (4) that his other nephew, Richard, was the very person whom Henry the Seventh murdered, after constraining him to call himself Perkin Warbeck; (5) that the death of his brother, the Duke of Clarence, was the sole act, not of him, but Edward the Fourth; (6) that he had no hand at all in the murder of Henry the Sixth, any more than of his son; and, lastly, that he was clear of all blame as to the execution of Lord Hastings, as well as of Rivers, Grey, and Vaughan.¹⁴

Wesley was persuaded by these authors that a vindication of Mary and Richard was in order and consequently in his own *Concise History of England* he seeks to establish their innocence, and in so doing, he anticipated the work of modern historians.

Wesley read hundreds of authors in English literature, but two prominent names of his time are noticeably missing—Fielding and Richardson. These omissions reflect his distaste for fiction. Reading novels was a waste of time as far as Wesley was concerned, and as he suggested in his letter of August 18, 1784, to Mary Bishop, histories should be preferred to novels. Wesley was fond of Milton, championed Matthew Prior as his favorite poet, Shakespeare as his favorite dramatist, and to the surprise of many, praised Young's *Night Thoughts*.

Although Wesley preached against the corruption of the theatre, he recognized the value of drama and several plays evoked his admiration. On December 14, 1768, he wrote in his *Journal* concerning a performance of Terence's *Adelphi*:

An entertainment not unworthy of a Christian! O how do these heathen shame us! Their very comedies contain both excellent sense, the liveliest pictures of men and manners, and so fine strokes of genuine morality, as are seldom found in the writings of Christians.¹⁵

Concerning one of Thomson's tragedies, *Edward and Eleanora*, he wrote on October 14, 1772, in his *Journal*:

I was agreeably surprised. The sentiments are just and noble; the diction strong, smooth, and elegant; and the plot conducted with the utmost art, and wrought off in a most surprising manner. It is quite his masterpiece, and I really think might vie with any modern performance of the kind.¹⁶

The last publication which Wesley records as having read throws considerable light upon his human and spiritual sensitivity. Six days before

his death on February 24, 1791, he wrote to William Wilberforce regarding the abolition of slavery. Wesley had been tremendously moved by a "tract written by a poor African"¹⁷ as he puts it in his last diary. The publication was written by Gustavus Vasa, a slave, and is powerful evidence of the influence of the printed page upon Wesley, and because of it, Wesley's last letter was one of protest about the most pressing social problem of his age.

Reading was a thing for any time and any place with Wesley. He read at the Lincoln College Library and at the Bodleian. He had small collections for his personal use at London, Bristol, and Newcastle. But much of his reading was done away from home, library, or a friend's house. He used his odd moments for reading, and he read while walking and while riding horseback. In his *Journal* entry for March 21, 1770, he gives the secret of his success at reading on horseback.

Nearly thirty years ago, I was thinking, 'How is it that no horse ever stumbles while I am reading?' (History, poetry, and philosophy, I commonly read on horseback, having other employment at other times.) No account can possibly be given but this: because then I throw the reins on his neck. I then set myself to observe; and I aver that, in riding above a hundred thousand miles, I scarce ever remember any horse (except two, that would fall head over heels any way) to fall, or make a considerable stumble, while I rode with a slack rein. To fancy, therefore, that a tight rein prevents stumbling is a capital blunder. I have repeated the trial more frequently than most men in the kingdom can do. A slack rein will prevent stumbling, if anything will. But in some horses nothing can.¹⁸

After a bad fall from his horse on December 18, 1765, he came to rely increasingly upon vehicles. In the summer of 1766, a Miss Lewen gave him a chaise and a pair of horses. It was an attractive yellow carriage, and as one would expect, it was equipped with a bookcase.

Wesley often read with his pen in hand—summarizing and abridging books or "collecting a book" as he termed it. He also frequently used oral reading as a method of evangelism and for pastoral care and Christian nurture.

III. Wesley's Role as a Reader-Advisor

Wesley assumed a definite role as a reader-advisor to the early Methodists. John Telford has suggested that no man in the eighteenth century "did so much to create a taste for good reading and to supply it with books at the lowest prices"¹⁹ as did John Wesley. In a sermon written in 1780, Wesley remarks concerning his promotion of reading:

Two and forty years ago, having a desire to furnish poor people with cheaper, shorter, and plainer books than I had seen, I wrote many small tracts, generally a penny apiece, and afterwards several larger. Some of these had such a sale as I never thought of and by this means, I unawares became rich.²⁰

Wesley deliberately provided useful literature that was cheap in cost and aimed at lifting the educational and spiritual life of the eighteenth century English masses. He established book rooms to promote reading and declared that "the work of grace would die out in one generation if the Methodists were not a reading people."²¹

Wesley's reading was purposeful, and his guidance to Methodist readers was likewise obedient to a disciplined purpose. His personal reading and his reading advice to others was guided by a threefold purpose: (1) to spread Scriptural holiness, (2) to educate the Methodists, (3) to nurture and protect the Methodists from harmful books.

Wesley practiced three methods of discouraging the Methodists from reading certain books. His most common method was to publish a note against the title in his *Journal* which became for all practical purposes the "Methodist Index." He also published tracts, pamphlets, or books in reply. Or as more often happened, he simply published a censored version of the title leaving out all objectionable content.

IV. Summary

In conclusion, one may safely say that few, if any, eighteenth century Englishmen were better read men than John Wesley. His reading tastes were catholic in scope, yet disciplined and purposeful. He seized on the most important points of any book he read, and his warmed heart did not mean a dulled mind. Rather he was an alert and critical reader. He was contemporary and yet mindful of the books of the ages. He did not despise wisdom, and through him books and reading reached the English masses as they never had before.

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THE COMMUNION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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I. Introduction

The Holy Spirit was the solution to the key problems of the early church, both practical and theological, not an added difficulty for faith to hurdle. Everything the Holy Spirit is and does contributes understanding and meaningful communication relative to divine revelation and to every step in the progress of redemption in the practical lives of men. He is the solution to the problem of personality in God and man. He sheds light on the Trinity. His work preserves theology from abstraction and salvation from becoming discrete from the most intimate details of daily life. Without Him rationalism or mysticism prevails in theology and life. With Him divine revelation remains dynamic and relevant, and God is dynamic and man is a rational creature.

A doctrine of the Holy Spirit is too often regarded as speculative, or as abstract and hence good only for sentimental and pious readers.

"One ought to honor the Holy Spirit," it is said. And when the verbal honor is accorded the doctrine is hung up among other holy relics to be forgotten because it is "so impractical" and even dangerous. It is dangerous, it is said, because it deals with subjective things which can be disruptive to right thinking and life. The Holy Spirit is objectified by identifying Him with the words of Scripture. He is imprisoned in a book. Or He is given a sort of extra-personal character, as a power that pushes men's wills into line against their own objection.

But of all the doctrines of the church we believe that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the least abstract and impractical. It is precisely the Holy Spirit that makes all Christian doctrine practical and relative to life. This is because the Holy Spirit personalizes all Christian truth. The Holy Spirit explains the trinity rather than obscures the meaning of it. The Holy Spirit personalizes the historical Christ and universalizes Him. He pulls together all the tag ends of truth and right into one consistent whole. His name is fellowship and His nature, communion. Nothing is less abstract. Philosophically, He is ultimate Truth; religiously, He is moral purity and wholeness; theologically, He is the universal spirit; and to a Christian He is spiritual life and continuity. Theology is itself abstract

without the Holy Spirit who cannot be separated from the whole of existence and will not permit Himself to be so abstracted.

We shall develop our thesis along three lines; (1) The Holy Spirit and the nature of personality, (2) the relation of Jesus to the Holy Spirit, and (3) the relation of the Holy Spirit to humanity.

II. The Holy Spirit and Personality

Philosophy has always had trouble with a concept of God. To be God, or the Ultimate Being, uniqueness, singularity, oneness, is demanded by thought. A plurality of Gods simply negates the idea of God. The idea of oneness carried to its logical conclusion

inevitably ends in Something actually impersonal, an Ultimate Mover, or a Universal Mind which lacks moral quality. God may be the Wholly Other of Neo Platonism, or Spinoza's immanent orderliness of the earth as God's body. He may be the All of Christian Science or the developing deity of Alexander's system. He could be a finite God struggling to overcome an internal reluctance, or the universal memory into which all experience is poured and preserved. He could be the elan vital or creativity, or the magnificent but blind power back of the scientist's universe. But philosophical gods fade off into abstractions and lose that peculiar quality necessary to godness which we know as personality. Personality is the despair of the philosopher.

It is difficult to attribute intelligence to the god of philosophy and impossible to make him the locus of moral integrity. Personality requires the concept of rationality and morality but these things cannot have significance outside of community, and since uniqueness cancels out the social contest the problem is insoluble.

Very simply put the problem is this: how can the social dimensions of personality so essential to intelligence and morality be consistent with the singularity of God? The Holy Spirit is the answer to this problem. He changes logic to personality and mechanism to moral freedom.

May it be suggested that the hard core of the problem may arise from our conception of personality? We tend to absolutize our limited ideas and project them into infinity and call our projection "God". Our current ideas of personality then dominate the idea of God and determine orthodoxy. The Biblical idea, says Alan Richardson (*in An Introduction to The Theology of the New Testament*, p. 103ff), is never confused by our modern concept "of distinct personalities, hard and impermeable, each sharply

distinguished from the others." Rather, persons "flow into one another." This never means a loss of identity but an overlapping of mutual concerns so that a man lives in his sons, or he may receive the spirit of another and in some sense be that other man. Our Western individualism tends to create a problem relative to the trinity that is not necessarily in the fact of the tri-personal nature of God. Rather than to try to understand the philosophical formulae, "three subsistences in one substance, or essence" on the basis of our knowledge of personality it is better to let the revelation of the nature of God tell us something about personality.

Personality is congenial to community and may itself be essentially community. H. Orton Wiley makes a major point of the trinal nature of human self-consciousness. (1) We have a self, (2) that knows, and (3) that knows that it knows. This self, then, is capable of intracommunion or "communing with one's self," which makes it possible to make rational decisions, not simply impulsive and irresponsible actions. This self, also, finds its true identity in responsible relationship to other selves. This indicates both an inner and external involvement in a social context that helps us to understand what revelation tells us about God.

The social nature is the first (logical) step away from mechanistic determinism and into moral freedom. It is important to an understanding of the Christian God because precisely at this point a truly personal concept marks the boundary against the blind, causal, deterministic Power of philosophy's god. The Bible never falters in its concept of deity. In Genesis the God of creation meets us after a council session in which the decision, "Let us make," is the verdict. Nor can this be construed as polytheism. That later declaration that "God is love," is simply an elaboration and characterization of the nature of God as a social being. There is one God, says the Bible, but God is a Divine Society.

An illustration may help. If we say that "God loves" apart from the more fundamental thing, "God is love", we run into the danger of making God's godness a causal and mechanistic factor in the universe. A childless couple needed a baby in the home to complete the demands of full community and fellowship. After all too many years a child was adopted and brought into the circle where the undisciplined parental "need" to love something focused on the child and became a destructive thing to all concerned. The unfulfilled urge for parenthood became an indiscriminating demand without moral guards. The child received attention without responsibility for a suitable response to the parents. He was "spoiled"

and later delinquent according to cultural behavior patterns.

On the other hand my grandparents had twelve children. Everything love is was completed and experienced in the family circle. They did not need the unhappy orphan child down the road to complete the inner demands of fellowship. But the orphan needed them. So the happy family opened its arms to the outsider and offered to take it into the fellowship. Acceptance or rejection on the part of the child would not and could not add or subtract anything essential to the love within the home. His response reacts back on himself, either as an enlarged heart or as bitter self-destruction. Perhaps this can suggest something of the meaning of "God is love," and the way He can love men without loss of moral integrity in Himself or in men.

Community is essential to love. Love is the pouring forth of the self into the selves of others. It is mutuality. It is self-identity accepting the identity of others in communion. There is something in the word "togetherness" that helps. It is not one will in domination over other wills, but individual wills, willing to will in harmony. All of this defines personality, and rationality and is the very essence of moral integrity under terms of freedom. In some way these elements are inherent in the Godhead and it is the Holy Spirit that preserves the nature of God from a Tyranny to a Personality. God is not under bondage to the mechanistic and logical necessities of philosophical absolutism but is free and truly moral and in the best sense a Person because of the atmosphere of community contributed by the Holy Spirit.

It must be stressed that the atmosphere in this relationship is a voluntary and deliberate dedication of each to a center of devotion not marred by self-interest or policy or shadowed by the smallest area of inner resistance. It is integrity, and integrity has no meaning in the context of coercion or necessity, nor does it have meaning where there are no alternative choices possible or where there are no other selves with wills to be respected. Holiness in God is defined by this integrity. Holiness cannot inhere in impersonal substance. It is meaningful only in personality where all the responsible elements responsibly will a harmony of purpose. It is not quite true to say that holiness is one of God's attributes. It is more true to say that God is holy and holiness characterizes all the attributes.

It is, then, the Holy Spirit that helps us to understand moral freedom in the relationships of persons. The Holy Spirit is the very epitome of what personality is in its uniqueness as a responsible and rational and moral

entity. He stands squarely in the place where abstract thinking could issue into determinism even in God, and He forces responsible personal identity and the relationship of persons on the basis of principle not necessity. In one way the Holy Spirit shatters formal logic because He is so personal. In another way He guards the moral orderliness of the universe because He is holy and by that is meant, integrity of person, purpose and action. In any case He preserves the Logos from impersonality and insures the moral qualities necessary to personality.

Now, all of this is apropos to the nature of human personality. The creation of other personalities was a free expression of love on the part of the "Divine Society". God said, "Let us make man in our own image." God did not need man, He opened His heart to the kind of person that could enter into and enjoy the kind of love that exists in Himself. He made mankind to need that kind of love—that is what personality means. It is altogether proper to say, we believe, that man was never intended to exist apart from the fellowship of the God-head. In that fellowship was true self-realization. In it was holiness because of the proper relationship to God by the presence of the Holy Spirit. But the very nature of that fellowship and holiness demanded a free and wholly individual choice. Mechanistic necessity arising out of created possibility and inherent need must be individually personalized by responsible choice to come into true ethical holiness. Created holiness had no ethical quality until the inner moral choice was made in the presence of alternatives.

The Holy Spirit, then, not only explains personality in God but also in man. He who permeates the God-head with moral freedom and fellowship, which is the essence of love, also permeates the human spirit, enlightening it by truth and compelling decision on the basis of truth and in the presence of a proper decision sheds the love of God abroad in the human heart (Rom. 5:1). Paul's dictum, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Cor. 3:17), speaks to this point. When a man "turns to the Lord," the Spirit creates the atmosphere of liberty in him, whereby he is changed from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. The alternative is moral blindness. One is the fulfillment of created potential, the other is destruction of the self.

The only normal person, then, is the one in whom the Holy Spirit dwells on the invitation and full cooperation of the self. No man can know himself apart from this indwelling. The apparatus is intact, in fallen man, but the light is out. The will operates but self-destructively. The love

impulse which defines personality becomes lust. To break fellowship with God, forfeits the Holy Spirit and were it not for the grace of God, the integrity of rationality and personality would be lost. Men are no longer persons apart from the Holy Spirit. This is not an assertion about the linear dimension of conscious existence, but about the quality that makes a conscious being a person.

III. The Relation of Jesus to the Holy Spirit

The work of Christ was to end the estrangement between God and man and to make the progress "from glory to glory" again a possibility. Justification could never be enough and forgiveness is but one factor in the total purpose. Man could not reach up and demand reinstatement in the fellowship. Only those in the fellowship could extend the privilege again by taking up the hurt and injustice in themselves and offering forgiveness freely. This reinstatement was not a simple thing. If we are to understand the atonement in a wholly objective sense we will not be able to bring the complex events relative to it and the strong moral teaching in the Scriptures into a significant whole. Easy answers leave too many ragged edges for serious thinking.

The work which atonement (and we use this word in the popular theological sense, not necessarily in the Biblical way; atonement being but one aspect of the work of Christ) had to do with the drawing together of two worlds of persons estranged by sin. This drawing together was not spacial, i.e., God's sustaining, creative presence cannot be withdrawn if men continue to exist. It was the reestablishment of a moral order, a fellowship, a spiritual rapport. This could not be accomplished by a one-sided readjustment either on man's part or on God's side. The thing that had to be done would involve both sides to the core of their beings. Only this can account for Biblical teaching. The hard truth seems to be that God could not, in the nature of the case, force His fellowship upon sinners, by election or by decree or by some subrational "supernatural" work in the soul.

What did happen? God opened His arms to receive sinners, to take them back into fellowship. Fellowship is only by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit cannot bypass moral conditions. He is precisely the essence of moral responsibility and moral integrity. How then could the fellowship of integrity be reestablished with men who were evil? By way of the Second Person of the God-head who could and would assume human nature and a body and who would in this way bring back into the race the

fullness of the Spirit which dwelt in Him without measure. Here was a New. Man heading a New Race of men with a very old principle of belonging—love, moral integrity, fellowship.

John the Baptist foresaw this when he said that Christ would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Jesus saw prayer as ultimately a communion with God by the Holy Spirit (as already indicated by the Lukan passage). He pointed urgently to the day when the disciples would be filled with the Spirit. The "high-priestly" prayer (John 17) though not speaking by name of the Holy Spirit, was a petition in respect of believers for the fellowship, oneness and communion with God that is the thing for which He died and which was only to be experienced as the Holy Spirit was given to men and accepted by them.

Christ assumed the role of priest: In one respect, the priest of death making atonement for the past (under the symbol of Aaron), in another respect, the priest of life (under the symbol of Melchisedec), administering inwardly His power through the Spirit which he gives freely. Christ does not look backward only, but becomes the mediator of the covenant of life. Theologically, this distinguishes between and relates properly justification and sanctification and the continuing life of holiness. The new covenant has meaning at the point of inwardness and spiritual reality. It is Christ who gives the Holy Spirit and who ministers through His indwelling presence.

IV. The Relation of the Holy Spirit to Humanity

All of this shows us that the Holy Spirit is not an accessory to the Christian faith, or a luxury for those with time and talents to spare. The Holy Spirit is not an added factor to normal human existence. He is the hub of the wheel of theology, the key to Christian philosophy, and the moral minimum of human experience. His presence creates and maintains the moral atmosphere in which personality may be free and responsible. The Holy Spirit is the medium of spiritual fellowship with God.

The work of the Holy Spirit is not mystical in the sense of bypassing rational intelligence. His presence does not eclipse sharp self-awareness and self-identity. Moral responsibility is not dulled in a fog of emotion. In His presence human personality is reined up to its highest capacity and stands at attention. He presses ethical demands on the person at the deepest level of rational life. His "enabling" does not weaken character but strengthens it. He keeps men human as they ought to be.

It may be said that at no point in the process of redemption is the Holy Spirit's work essentially different than at any other point. It may require different specific things on the part of the person as he is able to understand better and come into larger spiritual perspectives and as he becomes more mature, but the principle is the same. Hence, as we have noted, in the sanctified life the Scriptural counsel is "grieve not the Holy Spirit by which you are sealed . . .," "quench not the Spirit," and continue to "be filled with the Spirit," counsel that seems appropriate, too, for the sinner. And so it is.

The ultimate sin, the unforgivable sin, is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, not because this sin is different from any other but because in this way the only avenue back to God, provided by the death of Christ is cut off by it. There can be no more forgiveness because the purpose of forgiveness is despised and the Person by whom fellowship is made possible is rejected. This exhausts moral capacity, possibility and experience.

The Holy Spirit sustains at least a three-fold responsibility to men. In the most ultimate sense he makes us persons. This means that (to use a western cattle man's phrase) he "cuts us out of the herd." He forces true individuality. The continuing progress in sanctification proceeds on this deep level of spiritual life. It is not the physical impulses that constantly come up into conscious life that constitute sin. It is the attitude the self takes to them in the light of God's ownership of our lives that describes what sin is. Sanctification is not the changing of impulse from evil to good so that the moral guard may be relaxed which the conscious self contributes to personality. Sanctification is the moral guard reinforced by the Holy Spirit who strengthens the inner man by His presence. Paul prayed, "that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man . . ." (Eph. 3: 16).

Another important phase of the Spirit's work is to establish us in fellowship with God. The first phase describes purity; this phase is holiness. These are not two things but two aspects of one thing. These three words in relation to each other preserve all of them from the error any one of them alone might suggest. Fellowship is very much more than emotional rapport or the surface agreement of shallow friendship. Purity is not an isolation from the concerns of life, some mystical quality of soul which has no real definition. Holiness is not an abstraction unrelated to reality, a mark on the soul or "state" of grace.

The "communion of the Holy Spirit" can only describe a situation (1) in which persons are involved, and (2) persons in proper moral relationship to each other (in this case God and man), (3) in which moral barriers have been removed (this is purity). (4) This situation describes holiness which is basically union with God in the Holy Spirit.

There is a double aspect to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. His coming on the day of Pentecost was a dispensational coming. The loss of the Holy Spirit from the race of men was now corrected. In Jesus the Son conjoined in Himself God and man in human nature. The Spirit, in Jesus, took on human experience and became available to all men. But there was a personal aspect to the Holy Spirit's coming. In fact, it must always, in every way, be personal. And the personal element lies at the moral door of individuals. To receive the Holy Spirit involves the whole of the personality in morally mature responses.

But the significance of the Holy Spirit's role in all of this is precisely that the relationship to God by the Holy Spirit is in moral freedom and responsibility. It is his peculiar function to preserve our contact with God from determinism, to keep holiness ethically structured. The "fellowship of the Holy Spirit" is the moral guard around philosophy, theology, and religious experience.

But there is a corporate aspect to the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and this can no more be disregarded than the personal relationship. The extremely individual leading which is characteristic of the highly moral relationship which the Holy Spirit requires, is for the purpose of the highly responsible interrelatedness which the "fellowship of saints" requires. This corporate unity looks two ways; to the corporate body itself, and to the task to which the "body" is obligated.

Paul's discussion (I Cor. 12) about the fellowship of the church is prefaced by a most significant statement: No one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. This means that if it is the Holy Spirit which leads men out of sin into the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, by Him we are confronted by Christ's Lordship and compelled to decision regarding it and under the Lordship we are made one with a body of believers whose Lord is Christ. No man can put boundaries around the kingdom, no man can determine the conditions of entrance, no Christian man may set up divisions within the kingdom or withhold his fellowship from others on the basis of personal judgment. We enter the Kingdom by the Holy Spirit

and must live within and up to the law of the King which is to love others as ourselves.

A redeemed man is not an end in himself, absorbed in his own holiness, jealous of his own status, critical of his brethren, demanding in regard to his own interests, even spiritual interests. The redeemed man is now a "family man" whose eyes and heart and interests merge with those of the household of faith. We do not say, "my father," but "our father," not "give me bread" but "give us this day our daily bread." The unity we have with Christ is not complete, according to Jesus (John 17), until that unity includes the Father, and together with all those who are in Christ.

But even this corporate fellowship is not the end. In Matthew 10, there is a profound discussion from the lips of Jesus—the call to participate in the full measure of cost to which Jesus was called. The disciple would be identified with the Master, not simply a follower of the Master, so much so that those who received the disciple would receive the Lord (v.40). The identification would extend to misunderstandings, misinterpretations and death. The assurance was that in this identification the Spirit of the Father would be voiced through the disciples. The warning exhortation was the need for faithfulness and integrity even unto death. "Confess me before men, and I will confess you before the Father." This is the cross, without which no man "is fit to be my disciple" (Weymouth) There is no third way between unbelief and discipleship.

The "fellowship of the Holy Spirit" means that the relationship broken by sin is restored, provisionally; that the proviso is a moral revolution in the human heart by the ministry of the Holy Spirit; that every step in the revolution and restoration is in the interest of moral integrity; that it is Christ who is formed within under the Spirit's ministry; that in Christ personal purity is experienced, and corporate unity of spirit is cemented, and the fellowship of His sufferings becomes a basis for the enjoyment of the fellowship in his glory. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not abstract but draws into relevance every thread of Christian theology.

PSYCHODYNAMICS VERSUS EVANGELICALISM

by

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To put the subject of this paper in clear perspective, psychodynamics is defined as "the systematic study of personality in terms of past and present experience as related to motivation, but especially as represented by the naturalist Sigmund Freud".¹ Evangelicalism is adherence to the authority and teachings of the Christian gospel.

With the increasing emphasis on the functions of guidance and counseling in secular education, there appears to be among clerics a tendency to adapt the secular counseling terminology and procedures to the ministry of pastoral counseling and, in many cases, to the public proclamation of the gospel. Of particular concern to many evangelicals is the usage of Freudian terms and concepts to explain and describe the "dynamics" of Christian experience.

A careful analysis of the concepts underlying psychoanalytic terminology will indicate that in the main they are antipodal to the orthodox Christian and biblical concepts. The inherent danger is that through usage of these terms, without definition, the listener may be led to believe that a consensus has been reached between psychodynamism and evangelicalism. A case in point is observed by means of a critical comparison and contrast of Freud's idea of personality conflict—the struggle of the id, the ego, and the superego—with the scriptural position of St. Paul as reflected in Romans 7, describing mankind's struggle with the inherent principle of sin.

While there appear on the surface to be significant similarities between certain Freudian concepts, especially as they relate to the id and to libidinal impulses (instinctual energies and desires derived from the id-sexual instincts), and Pauline hamartiological principles, significant departures from the scriptural idea in his writings suggest that Freud's earlier observations may have been influenced, at least in part, by theological and biblical concepts, and that psychodynamics may represent a reaction to

inherent weaknesses and inadequacies in the theological and ecclesiastical systems of his era, and a development somewhat concomitant with the rise of nineteenth century German rationalism.

By posing a series of questions, an endeavor will be made to compare and contrast the respective Freudian and Pauline positions. While this methodology and approach may not be of interest to the secular mind, it should be of vital concern to Christian theologians and ministers today. Several questions with their possible solutions call for serious consideration at this juncture.

I. What is the Id?

Freud holds that the id is the impersonality of the mind seen apart from its ego, the true unconscious or deeper part of the mind, the reservoir of instinctive impulses, dominated by the pleasure-principle and blind wishful thinking; i.e., the dynamic equivalent of the descriptive unconscious. Freud sees the sex motivation as the deepest and most fundamental of all the drives—the tap—root drive from which all the other drives of the id spring. He calls the id "a chaos, a caldron of seething excitement."²

In seeming agreement, the prophet Jeremiah states: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9, RSV). In Romans 7, the classic passage relating to Pauline hamartiology, the Apostle states: ". . . I know that nothing good dwells with me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it . . . Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me" (Rom. 7:18, RSV). Earlier in this epistle Paul declared: ". . . the sin in me . . . stimulated all my covetous desires" (Rom. 7:8, Phillips' trans.). In the face of this apparently hopeless situation the near-despairing victim cries out, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7:24, RSV); or, as Phillips graphically renders the passage: "It is an agonizing situation, and who on earth can set me free from the clutches of my own sinful nature?"

Obviously there are, at this point, certain close pragmatic similarities between Freud's id concept as "a chaos, a caldron of seething excitement,"³ and Paul's concept of the "sin which dwells within me" (Rom. 7:18), and produces "in me all kinds of covetousness" (Rom. 7:8, RSV), as far as the actual disposition and function of the two are concerned. Their radical differences are seen in the nature and origins of Freud's id

concept and Paul's indwelling-sin principle. Freud's id-chaos, or "caldron of seething excitement," the true unconscious reservoir of instinctive impulses characterized by a blind dynamic wishfulness, is but a stage in the onward insurgence of blind, unintelligent and undirected animalistic evolutionary force not wholly unlike Arthur Schopenhauer's "world-will" concept, or Friedrich Nietzsche's "will-to-power" notion. The immediate satisfaction of the most insistent and assertive wish-desire at whatever cost to the other desires of the id, or the desires or interests of other ids, characterizes Freud's id concept. This is not unlike John Dewey's pragmatic notion of immediate-goal realization for the various drives without regard to any overall or ultimate goal or goals to direct and correlate the satisfaction-clamor of the various drives. Thus chaotic psychic civil war results within the realm of the subconscious.

On the contrary, Paul's concept of ". . . the sin in me . . . [that] stimulated all my covetous desires" (Rom. 7:8, Phillips), while in function or manifestation closely resembling Freud's id concept, is in origin and nature vastly different from the Freudian concept. In Pauline theology the inner or subconscious chaotic striving of the desires or drives is resultant from a cataclysmic occurrence in the realm of man's moral and spiritual history, which in Christian theology is designated the Fall (Rom. 5:12).

This experience divorced the realm of the basic drives from both their divinely revealed ideals from above and the governing and empowering indwelling Spirit of God. Deprived, through the Fall, of God's indwelling Spirit, and plunged into spiritual and moral darkness through the loss of the divinely revealed synchronizing ideals, the constitutional drives of man's unconscious nature fell to unrestrained and self-destructive conflict. This conflict likewise manifested itself against the selfishly motivated desire-drives of other selves when they strove for gratification in or through the same external objects. How well the Apostle James understood this situation, together with its real causes, when he wrote:

But what about the feuds and struggles that exist among you—where do you suppose they come from? Can't you see that they arise from conflicting passions within yourselves? You crave for something and don't get it; you are murderously jealous of what others have got and which you can't possess yourselves; you struggle and fight with one another . . . you want only to satisfy your own desires . . . do you imagine that this spirit of passionate jealousy is the Spirit he [God] has caused to live in us? No, he [God] gives us grace potent enough to meet this and every other evil spirit, if we are humble enough to receive it (Jas. 4:1-6, Phillips' trans.).

In summary, Freud sees the chaotic id as a stage in man's animalistic evolutionary insurgency from the dark abyss, or primal chaos, of the unknown into an equally indeterminable future. Christianity, as represented by Paul and James, sees this chaotic condition as arising out of man's sinful nature in the realm of the unconscious, and intruding itself into the realm of his conscious being, as the result of the Fall in which God's Spirit was evicted from man's inner-self. With the loss of God's Spirit as his inner equalizing and governing factor pandemonium resulted—what Milton designated "the capital of hell." With Milton, James concurs when he writes of the evilly-motivated tongue: "it represents among our members the world with all its wickedness; it pollutes our whole being; it keeps the wheel of our existence red-hot, and its flames are fed by hell" (Jas. 3:6, NEB). But man's God-given ideals were also lost in the Fall, and thus the insurgent drives were left without any external directives beyond their conflicting immediate hoped-for satisfactions.

Man was created not only in God's personal image, but also to be the habitat of the divine Spirit. Paul asks: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God" (I Cor. 6:9, RSV; cf. 3:16, 17). Again, the Apostle says that it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27, RSV). The Holy Spirit was an essential ingredient of true or authentic manhood, as God had originally designed and constituted man. The Fall resulted initially in man being deprived of this essential ingredient. Thus man lost his authenticity in the Fall. Ever since he has been, without God in his life, unauthentic, or somewhat less than real man.

Since the Christian view of the cause and nature of this chaotic condition is entirely different from the Freudian explanation, the remedy is also necessarily entirely different. Whereas Freudianism advocates self-expressionism, as opposed to repression, for the attainment of a healthy and normal personality, Christianity offers spiritual cleansing and restoration of moral order through forgiveness and the return of the divine Spirit to man's inner being. (See John 14:16-17, 26:15:26; 16:7; cf. Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 15:9; Heb. 9:13.) In answer to the chaotic soul's cry of desperation. . . . who on earth can set me free from the clutches of my own sinful nature?" Paul replies confidently: "I thank God there is a way out through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7:24-25, Phillips' trans.). In like manner James prescribes the Christian remedy when he says:

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from

you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of double mind . . . Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you (Jas. 4:7-10, RSV).

II. What is the Ego-Id Relationship?

Freud observes:

The ego is that part of the id which has been modified by its proximity to the external world and the influences the latter has on it, and which serves the purpose of receiving stimuli and protecting the organism from them, like the cortical layer with which a particle of living substance surrounds itself.⁴

Freud characterizes the ego-id relationship as one wherein the ego represents external reality to the id at the same time it effects a compromise between the blind, chaotic striving of the id and the superior forces of the environment. He holds that if the id were not so protected, it would be destroyed. In stressing the strivings of and between the perverted drives or desires, which are analogous to Freud's principle, and which he characterizes as sin in an individual awakened to righteousness by the law, Paul states:

. . . sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure . . . For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. So it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me! (Rom. 7:1 3b, 15, 17, RSV).

In these comparative quotes, it seems that Freud comes very close to personifying the id in much the same way that Paul identifies a forceful principle that he calls sin. However, there is a vast basic difference between the two concepts. Freud's apparent personification of the id, consisting as it does of man's basic drives that arise out of the unconscious, makes all of its chaotic strivings to belong to the essential human nature. Paul, on the contrary, while apparently personifying the perverted strivings of these essential drives of man's nature as sin, nevertheless makes it clear that not the basic natural drives themselves are sinful, but that they are motivated by an adventitious or extrinsic factor to express themselves in a perverted and thus sinful manner (i.e., a perversion of former righteous elements, which are capable of restoration). Paul says: "I observe an entirely different principle at work in my nature. This is in continual conflict with my conscious attitude, and makes me an unwilling prisoner to the law of sin and death" (Rom. 7:23, Phillips' trans.). It would seem that Paul comes very near to identifying this motivating, dominating and

enslaving personified principle of sin with actual demon possession. The next question that confronts us is, What force, outside of the gospel of Christ, can conquer this raging, powerful personified principle of sin?

III. How Does the Ego Control the Id?

Chaplin and Krawiec state: "The id is a mass of blind instincts, it has no logical organization. Indeed, in it contradictory impulses may exist side by side."⁵ Freud says:

The ego, after observing the external world, searches its own perceptions in order to determine whether traces of internal impulses have crept in and thus destroyed the memory picture. In this way the ego 'dethrones' the pleasure principle which, in the long-run promises greater success.⁶

Here again Pauline theology departs from psychodynamics. Paul recognizes no innate ability within man to deal with this principle. He sees the natural sinful man as an unwilling slave to the personified principle of sin and exclaims, "Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me" (Rom. 7:20, RSV). Another version succinctly renders this Pauline concept as follows: "In a word then, I myself, subject to God's law as a rational being, am yet, in my unspiritual nature, a slave to the law of sin" (Rom. 7 :25b, NEB). Then, as, previously quoted in Romans 7:23; Paul describes the warfare between this indwelling sin principle and unconverted man's moral rationality, with the former finally capturing and enslaving the latter. That Paul does not identify this personified sin-principle with man's natural God-given drives is made clear when he exhorts the divinely delivered man: "Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are . . . under grace" (Rom. 6:13-14, RSV).

In answer to the question, "Who will deliver me from this body of death?" Paul exclaims, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7 :25a, RSV). It is clear at this point that the two systems become antipodal, Freud holding that man has within himself the ability to "pull himself up by his own bootstraps," while Paul points to the sole hope of man as redemptive grace in Jesus Christ. We are now brought to the fourth and final question of this inquiry.

IV. What is the Function of the Superego?

Freud,⁷ like Paul in his letter to the Romans, pictures an almost con-

stant conflict between the id and the superego. He characterizes the superego as the source of man's idealism out of which arises all of the strivings for perfection. In this conflict, the ego must serve as mediator between the id and the superego. Gordon Willard Allport points out that psychoanalysis, according to Freud, aims primarily at the reclamation of the id by the ego.⁸

To understand Sigmund Freud's concept of the superego, it is necessary to consider him in historical context. While his life and work extended over into the twentieth century (1856-1939), he was essentially a product of the extremely naturalistic nineteenth century. Eighteenth century deism, while allowing God personality and special creatorship, had completely divorced the natural order from His control, or even concern. However, by the nineteenth century deism, having accomplished the political purpose for which it was invented by non-theologians, phased out into two essentially naturalistic branches of thought, though these expressed themselves in quite different forms. The one was pantheistic transcendental naturalism, and the other was crass naturalistic materialism.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) may best represent the first type, and Charles Darwin (1809-1882) the second. Of whatever kind, nineteenth century naturalism orphaned man from God and left him with a sense of imperfection or incompleteness. To compensate for his unauthenticity it was necessary for thinking man to resort to one form or another of subjective idealism (or as in Darwin's case, what might be designated materialistic subjectivism) to account for man's, or society's, missing higher-part. Emerson sought it in the "Oversoul"; Charles Darwin thought he had found it in the naturalistic evolutionary notion of the "Survival of the Fittest"; William James (1842-1910) designated it the "More Than Self"; Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900) saw it in the "Superman"; and Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) thought he had discovered it for sure in the "Superego." In our own day, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-), the French naturalistic existentialist, is still seeking for man's completion in the highly subjective concept of the "Authentic-Self." (Perhaps President Johnson envisions it in his "Great Society" concept, if he really understands what he means by the phrase.) Of course the "Manifest Destiny of America" notion, as also the "inevitable perfectibility of man and all things" made heavy contributions to this nineteenth and early twentieth century naturalistic idealism. Freud's identification of the superego with conscience is

understandable when it is considered that his superego is a subjectively created ideal, and conscience and ideals are intrinsically related.

Freud's superego, like the other aforementioned ideals, is subjectively created and projected, and thus it has no intrinsic reality. Since the ego is in itself unauthentic it must depend for its authenticity or reality upon the superego. But the purely subjective or cultural (and hence relative) unreality of the superego is totally incapable of giving any real substance to the ego. Consequently the ego, Freud's supposed mediating personality between the id and the superego, loses its meaning entirely and thus falls back hopelessly into the dark abyss of the confusions and conflicts of the chaotic id.

In contrast to this hopeless Freudian position, Paul develops the redemptive Christian process in Romans 8 thus:

No condemnation now hangs over the head of those who are in Christ Jesus. For the new spiritual principle of life 'in' Christ Jesus lifts me out of the old vicious circle of sin and death. The Law never succeeded in producing righteousness—the failure was always the weakness of human nature. But God has met this by sending his own Son Jesus Christ to live in that human nature which causes the trouble. And, while Christ was actually taking upon himself the sins of men, God condemned that sinful nature. So that we are able to meet the Law's requirements, so long as we are living no longer by the dictates of our sinful nature, but in obedience to the promptings of the Spirit. The carnal attitude sees no further than natural things. But the spiritual attitude reaches out after the things of the spirit. The former attitude means, bluntly, death: the latter means life and inward peace. And this is only to be expected, for the carnal attitude is inevitably opposed to the purpose of God, and neither can nor will follow his laws for living. Men who hold this attitude cannot possibly please God (Rom. 8:1-7, Phillips' trans.).

Thus Christ Jesus, the authentic Godman, is fallen man's one and only True Superego. As opposed to the various subjectively created and projected humanistic superegos, Christ is God incarnate—the Godman—the divinely revealed authentic superego, in a faith relation with whom every man may realize his God intended authentic manhood. To the Athenians Paul declared of Christ, the "Unknown God" to them: "In him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17 :28a, RSV). With Christ as his real personal ideal, and the Holy Spirit as his indwelling, purifying, controlling and enabling Paracletos, believing man, redeemed by the atoning death of the Savior, is assured of an authentic Christian personality (ego) here and hereafter. Little wonder that Paul could say, '...I am not

ashamed of the gospel. I see it as the very power of God working for the salvation of everyone who believes it" (Rom. 1:16, Phillips' trans.).

In conclusion, let it be observed that Paul made it clear that there is one and only one solution to the sin problem—whether it issues from the actual commission of sin or the inherent principle or end of sin—and that is the offering up of the body of Christ. Man, unaided, cannot control the raging passion of sin, but through Christ he may seek and find deliverance through the efficacy of the Savior's death and resurrection. The gospel that Paul preached was a dynamic gospel able to meet the deepest need of man. And for this gospel there is no substitute, psychodynamism notwithstanding. In the words of another: "Only the Christian Evangel can come to grips with the whole Gestalt of man-by-creation, and restore its order and wholeness without sacrifice of its higher constituents."⁹

Documentations

¹Jess Stein, ed., *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Random House, 1966).

²Sigmund Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* J. Strachey, ed. (New York: Norton, Standard Edition, 1965), p. 104.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 106.

⁵J.P. Chaplin and T. S. Krawiec, *Systems and Theories of Psychology* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 411.

⁶op. cit., p. 106.

⁷Ibid., p. 90.

⁸Gordon Willard Allport, *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937), p. 189.

⁹Harold B. Kuhn, Professor of Philosophy of Religion, Asbury Theological Seminary.