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BAPTIZED WITH THE SPIRIT

by
Milton S. Agnew

Upon examination, the heart of the subject, "Baptized with the Spirit," appears to be twofold: Is the fullness of the Spirit an initial or a subsequent experience for the believer? And is the description of this experience limited to the expression of being "baptized with the Spirit"?

Surely the best approach to the subject is the approach made by Jesus Himself. Before *He* ever spoke of the baptism with the Spirit, which John had announced (Matt. 3), and which He Himself, after His resurrection, endorsed (Acts 1), Jesus spoke of the sanctification of the believer (John 17:17) which this baptism was to accomplish. So let us also start there.

John 17:17-19 indicates the heart of Jesus' high-priestly prayer: "Sanctify them through thy truth." Verse 9 indicates that this prayer was not for "the world"-for unbelievers-because they were not ready for sanctification. They needed first to be saved. It was for the men who already were His, whose names already were written in heaven (Luke 10:20), who needed not to be justified, to be saved, but to be sanctified. And that prayer was made not only for the Twelve, but for all believers, of all time: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (John 17-20). Thus, since the benefactors of the prayer were to be believers, and only believers, it was not initial sanctification to which He was referring, for that is accomplished at the time of conversion (see I Cor. 6:9-11). Neither was it only progressive sanctification, for His petition in John 17:17 is recorded in the aorist tense, the tense of a specific act at an identifiable time, known as punctiliar action. This prayer of Christ, furthermore, was saturated with the Holy Spirit, regarding whose coming upon believers Jesus had only hours before carefully expounded in the "paraclete" sayings of John 14-16.

Surely, then, in this prayer Christ was setting the pattern for the plan of atonement in its fullness for all ages-the need for and the provision of a cleansing, empowering experience *following justification*. To this end He was "sanctifying" Himself-not only that He might extend to sinners eternal life through faith (John 3:16), but also that He might *sanctify*, through faith, the church, the believers (Eph. 5:25-27), in an identifiable act (v. 26, aorist tense), and that the church, the believers, should then con-

sistently live a holy, unblamable life (v. 27, present tense of continued action).

Thus Paul was justified in praying for the young but commendable church (1 Thes. 1:6-7; 2:19-20) that God would sanctify *them* wholly-spirit, soul and body-in a precise post-conversion act of grace (1 Thes. 5:23, aorist tense). In like fashion could the Hebrew Christians be exhorted to *become* (aorist tense) partakers of His holiness (Heb. 12:10), and the "scattered strangers," who knew what it was to be "begotten . . . unto a lively hope," be exhorted to *become* holy even "as he which hath called you is holy" (1 Pet. 1:15), since this verb also is expressed in the aorist tense of an identifiable transaction.

Now, as the administrator of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit in the atonement would carry out the plans of the Father (1 Tim. 2:3-4), and the provisions of the Son (1 Tim. 2:5-6). It is He who would bring conviction (John 16:7-11), regeneration (John 3:3-8), justification (1 Cor. 6:11) and adoption (Gal. 4:4-7) to the repentant sinner. It is also He who would expedite this experience of holy living, as planned by God the Father (Eph. 1:4), and purchased by the Son (Eph. 5:25-26; Heb. 13:12). Now, a few days after identifying in His high priestly prayer of John 17 the plan for the sanctification of the believer at the cost of His own life, Jesus disclosed that the Holy Spirit, under the new dispensation, would be available to the believer in a new way as "the promise of the Father" and as the baptism "with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:4-5). The fullness of the Holy Spirit promised by the Father (Luke 11:13; John 7:37-39) was to be the *means* for accomplishing the redemptive blessings of holiness. And this "promise of the Father" was not exclusive, either to the Jewish people or to that generation, but "is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38-39; cf. 1 Thes. 5:24).

If this truth is comprehended, then the relationship of various terms given to the *means*, namely the effusion of the Spirit, can be meaningful. For the means is not always called "baptism with the Spirit." Indeed, it is never so called. The noun "baptism" is never used with the Spirit, only the verb.

Note further that the term "baptized with the Spirit" is used on only four occasions: by John in Matthew 3:11 (cf. Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33); by Jesus in Acts 1:5; by Peter in Acts 11:16; and by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:13. However, the term has numerous synonymous expressions.

For example, there was the initial *filling* of the believer with the Holy Spirit as in Acts 2:4 and 9:17. The personal experience of Spirit-baptism for believers is also termed "come upon" (Acts 1:8; 19:6), "poured on" (2:18), "fell on" (10:44), and "received" (Acts 8:17). This latter term is interesting and meaningful, for Jesus said that the world, the unsaved, the unbelievers "cannot receive" the Comforter (John 14:17; see Acts 19:2, 6). There is a chronological order between becoming a believer and "receiving" the Holy

Spirit, and the second is not an automatic sequence of the first.

Further synonymous expressions for baptized with the Spirit are the phrases "promise of the Father" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4; 2:33, 39), and "the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). So, although the term "baptized with the Spirit" is not frequently used, there are numerous references to it throughout the history of the early church.

In addition, the experience of entire sanctification *activated by the fullness of the Spirit* is of general and abiding interest throughout the New Testament. To miss this relationship established by Jesus and perpetuated by history recorded in Acts and by admonitions in the Epistles, is to miss the heart of the meaning of "baptized with the Holy Spirit."

In summary, the "initial" experience with the Holy Spirit is that of being wooed by the Spirit (Rev. 22:17), justified (I Cor. 6:11), regenerated (John 3:3-8), and adopted (Gal. 4:4-7) by the Spirit. Thus, he who has not *the presence* of the Spirit of Christ is, indeed, "none of his" (Rom. 8:9). But it is one thing to enjoy the presence of, or to possess the Spirit, and another thing to be *filled with*, to be *possessed* by the Spirit. It is one thing to be born of the Spirit, and another to be baptized with the Spirit. This unfortunately has often been confused. It is through this infilling, this reception, this baptism that God performs the cleansing, the entire sanctification for those who already believe in Him (John 17:20). It is not an "initial" experience.

For example, the Corinthians shared with all other believers the honor of being as a church "the temple of God," in that "the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1 Cor. 3:16); and, as individuals in that "your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you" (1 Cor. 6:19). But the temple was not "filled." They were not spiritual, Spirit-filled, but carnal, having envying, strife, divisions.

This thorough cleansing effect of the filling is evident from the very beginning of the new dispensation. Peter, in recalling (Acts 11 and 15) what happened at Caesarea to Cornelius and his household (Acts 10), reports, not the speaking in tongues, but the purification of the hearts of believers, by faith, in the same way the Spirit had acted on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. That this gift of the Holy Spirit came, not as an "initial experience" but after conversion, even though only momentarily afterward for Cornelius, is indicated by the NASB's accurate rendering of the aorist participle in Acts 11:17: "If God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"

It is true that the coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19) is claimed by some to be an "initial experience." However, it is rather convincingly argued by others not to have been an "initial experience," because "disciples" (19:1), when not clearly associated with some person--such as disciples of *John and of the Pharisees* (John 1:35; Mark 2:18)--indicates disciples of Jesus. Furthermore, at least in the margin, NIV is willing to translate the aorist participle of verse 2 in harmony with the KJV, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit *after* you believed?"

The Samaritans of Acts 8, however, surely did not receive the Holy Spirit as an "initial" experience. They "with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke" (v. 6), they "believed" (v.12), they "had received the word of God" (v. 14) and they had been baptized (v. 12), but on them the Holy Spirit had "not yet fallen" (v. 16). Afterward they "received the Holy Ghost" (v. 17).

Then there were "they" who were "all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 4:31). These must have included some of the additional converts recorded in verse 4, of whom there is no previous record of their being filled with the

Spirit. This would then be other than an "initial experience" for them. Further, did the 3,000 converts of the Day of Pentecost actually receive the "gift of the Holy Ghost" (2:38) on that occasion? It is not clearly so stated. Therefore, might not at least some of them also have been receiving the Holy Ghost those several days later (4:31) in an experience which would not have been an "initial experience" of the baptism at the time of their conversion?

It would appear, then, that historical evidence is extensive, but perhaps not conclusive, against the baptism with the Holy Spirit being an "initial experience. "

However, there is also circumstantial evidence. Who would deny that the troubled Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:10-11; 3:1-4) needed such a baptism (2 Cor. 7:1)? The model Thessalonian church was urgently presented to the Lord for such an infilling that would sanctify them wholly (1 Thes. 5:23). As previously noted, the Ephesian church was reminded of the price paid for its sanctification (Eph. 5:25), the Hebrew believers of the provision made for their "partaking of his holiness" (Heb. 12:10; 13:12), the "born again

Christians" of 1 Peter 1:3 of the challenge of becoming holy (1:15)-all manifestly to be implemented by an outpouring of, a reception of, a baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Thus, neither the baptism with the Holy Spirit, nor the spiritual results of this baptism constitute a typical "initial experience" in the New Testament record.

The burden of the evidence, however, that the baptism with the Spirit is not an "initial experience," but a subsequent one for the believer, is established by clear teaching from the Word.

On the negative side is Jesus' statement that the *world* "can not" receive the Comforter (John 14:17). The world is not even aware that He exists. Furthermore, later the same evening Jesus declared that He was *not praying for the world* when He prayed that people be sanctified (John 17:9, 17). Unbelievers are not ready for sanctification. They need to be saved.

On the positive side is Jesus' command to His disciples that they should receive the Holy Spirit (John 20:22). This "receive ye" is an aorist imperative, indicating incisive action of an event, which event proved to be their being baptized with-"suddenly filled" with-the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5; 2:4; cf. Acts 11:16-17). This admonition could not be fulfilled however, until after Jesus was glorified (John 7:39). It is to be noted that the action indicated by "receive" (*lambano*) is normally active and volitional, a deliberate taking. Revelation 22:17 declares: "And whosoever will, *let him take (lambano) the water of life freely.*" On the positive side also is His prayer for His disciples (John 17:6-9), and specifically for believers of all time-"them also which shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20)-that they might become sanctified, made holy (John 17:17). Again an aorist imperative is used, indicating incisive action of an event-an event which materialized for the Eleven at Pentecost, and which may materialize for all believers (v. 20) at their Pentecost. What a penetrating, moving thought for every Christian! Who can fathom its impact? On the positive side again is Peter's assurance to the converts on the day of Pentecost that "the gift of the Holy Ghost," "the promise of the Father," is "unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God should call" (Acts 2:38-39).

H. Orton Wiley says of the Spirit:

. . . there are certain . . . acts or functions of His administrative work which . . . pertain especially to the work of salvation, and may be classified broadly under two general heads-the Holy Spirit as "the Lord and Giver of Life, " and the Holy Spirit as "a sanctifying Presence." To the former belongs the "birth of the Spirit" or the initial experience of salvation; to the latter, the "baptism with the Spirit"-a subsequent work by which the soul is made holy. This is known as entire sanctification ...²

There is evidence that, even in the first-century church, all believers were not Spirit-filled Christians. For it was necessary that a search be made for men "of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" (Acts 6:3). Barnabas later was set apart among believers as being "a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" (11:24). In the early church then there is evidence that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was not common to all, therefore not an "initial experience."

We suggest again that to start where Jesus started, with the experience of sanctification *for believers*, is to certify that the baptism with, the filling with, the "receiving" of the Holy Spirit was not to be an "initial experience," but was available to initiate a *subsequent* work of grace, as planned by God the Father (Eph. 1:4), as purchased by God the Son (Eph. 5:25-26), as administered by God the Holy Spirit (2 Thes. 2:13), in the hearts, not of the "world," but of the believers.

There is one text, however, the fourth occasion of the speaking of the baptism with the Spirit, which raises questions, namely 1 Corinthians 12:13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free- and have been all made to drink of one Spirit."

The first problem is the use of "by" in the KJV, NASB, NIV and some other translations. This is in spite of the fact that *en*, when associated with baptism, is everywhere else universally translated "with" or "in." Thus the usual translation makes water or the Holy Spirit to be the element or *medium* with which one is baptized, either by John the Baptist or by Jesus as the *agent*. This unique translation, "by one Spirit," makes the Spirit the *agent*. He does the baptizing. But it provides no *medium* or element with which the Holy Spirit would baptize, and leaves the statement incomplete, incomprehensible, confusing.

Now, if one is willing to concede the correct translation to be "with" or "in," as does NEB, RV, Weymouth, Goodspeed, and the NASB margin, then the Holy Spirit is the *medium* or element, and Christ is understood to be the *agent* as in all other instances, and the statement is comprehensible and meaningful. Indeed this agrees with Paul's statement in Ephesians 4:4-5, "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism." For, as stated by Ralph Earle: "The only distinctive and utterly unique Christian baptism is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. That cannot be duplicated by any other religion. It is peculiarly Christ's. 'He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'"³ Therefore, we would contend for "baptized *with* the Spirit."

It may well be that the early disciples accepted that this baptism would

be confined to Jewish believers. Indeed, Peter expressed evident surprise when he discovered that the Gentiles were to be included: "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" (Acts 11:16-17, NASB).

With that accepted, it is sometimes said that 1 Corinthians 12:13 marks the baptism with the Holy Spirit as an "initial experience" common to every believer, introducing him into the church. But does not Christ accept into His Church him who *is born* of the Spirit (John 3:6)? Acts 2:47 declares: "And *the Lord* added to the church daily such as should be saved." This is profoundly clear, and simple.

We question then if there is not another, different interpretation to these verses, fully supported by the context. We suggest that 1 Corinthians 12:13 is *not* describing how "all believers" as individuals *become* members of the body of Christ. They, including the Corinthians (1 Cor. 12:27; cf. Acts 18:8), had *become members* of the church upon a statement of faith that they were saved, testified to by water baptism.

Note carefully the composition of the verse. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." This deals, therefore, not with *membership* IN the body but with *unity* WITHIN the body. Verse 12 declares "the body is one," and verse 13, "we were all baptized into one body." The "we all" speaks not of all *individuals*, but of all *classes* of people-"bond or free-of all *nations* of persons-"Jews or Gentiles."

Note the contrast, the distinction, made by means of emphasis in the Greek, between "ye" (v. 27) and "we all" (v. 13). *Ye* are members of the body of Christ. *We*, in addition, have found unity within the body. Thus verse 13 speaks not of "our" initial entry into the body of Christ-that already had been accomplished by the Holy Spirit and faith and been witnessed to by water baptism-but of "our" receiving, irrespective of national origin or status in society, such an additional baptism of the Spirit as to enable "us" to become a harmonious part of a unified, spiritual church, in spite of "our" diverse background and origin. The church, really to be the Church of God, must have harmony, unity, cohesion. And this has already, in Paul's day, proved practical with a great host of believers in his wide ministry.

Hear him testifying to this. Verse 13 states, "For with one Spirit we-whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free-were all baptized into one body [by being unified in holiness], and we were all made to drink into one Spirit [thus becoming Spirit-filled Christians]." (Cf. John 7:37-39.)

Surely this total presentation agrees with Peter's offer: "For the promise [of the gift of the Holy Spirit] is unto you [mainly Jews], and to your children [of succeeding centuries], and to all that are afar off [Gentiles and heathen], even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

There follow in 1 Corinthians 12:14-24, in a long parenthesis leading to verse 25, the details about the unfortunate divisiveness 90 frequently found among the many parts of the body of Christ, and actually displayed in the

unspiritual divisive Corinthian church, and the possibility of unity among the diversified gifts and functions of the members. Verses 13 and 25 are then related one to the other, "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, . . . That there should be no division in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." Again, the purpose of Spirit-baptism here declared is not *entrance INTO*, or *membership IN* the body, but *unity WITHIN* the body. Paul continues, "And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all members rejoice with it" (v. 26, NASB). This is the ideal, the goal, indeed the standard. "Now you [Corinthians] *are* Christ's body, and individually members of it" (v. 27, NASB) by individual faith, attested to by water baptism (Acts 18:8; cf. 2-47). But you are divisive and marked by jealousy and strife (1 Cor. 1:10-11; 3:1-3). Come into this unity, this harmony by being baptized with the Holy Spirit! God longs for, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit, through the baptism with the Holy Spirit, has provided for a harmonious Spirit-filled church (1 Cor. 12:24-25). Accept His provisions!

Charles Carter, in supporting this view, states in his commentary on 1 Corinthians:

In the previous section Paul has emphasized the variety of spiritual gifts. He now emphasizes the unity within that variety. The Corinthian church prided itself in its great variety of gifts. It had little to boast about in its unity. Paul seeks to show that without the unity the multiplication of gifts is meaningless.

The human body serves to illustrate the principle of unity in the body of Christ (v. 12). No member, in itself, constitutes the body. Nor will all the members, unless properly related one to the other in the body, constitute a body. The body is more than the sum of its parts-it is a body-an emergent from the proper relation and harmony of all the parts, even as water is an emergent of H₂O. Water is something more than H₂O. It is water, and if it be reduced to its chemical components, it ceases to be water. The spiritual body, the body of Christ-the Church-is like that. It is only the Church when all the members are harmoniously related and functioning in unison. This is made possible by the living soul of the Church--the Holy Spirit.

The Church *is made a spiritual body through the baptism in the Spirit*. [Italics mine.] Through that glorious baptism Jews and Greeks, slaves and freemen, women and men, wise and simple, rich and poor, are all made one in the body of Christ-each in his respective place and fulfilling his respective function-because each has become a partaker of the spiritual water of life (cf. John 7:37-39).⁴

In the Church today there are divisive, schismatic members-only too many of them. Christ loved that Church and *gave Himself for it* (as well as for the sinful world) "that he might sanctify and cleanse it" (Eph. 5:25-26). The oneness, repeatedly prayed for by Jesus for His Church (John 17:11, 20, 21, 22) will only be achieved when individual Christians are "sanctified" (John 17:17) through the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5).

Is not a true baptism with the Holy Spirit the crying need of the church today?

NOTES

¹Peter (Acts 4:8) and at least some of the disciples (Acts 4:31) and Paul (Acts 13:9) were *again* filled after the initial filling, indicating that, because of extenuating circumstances (Acts 4:7-13, 24-31), because of the expending of spiritual energy (Luke 6:19; 8:46), because of increased capacity, and because in the true sense the Holy Spirit is not contained as in a vessel but is accommodated as by a channel (John 7:38)-for these reasons continual renewals of the Spirit are needed and are provided, even as indicated in Eph. 5:18 where "be filled" is in the present tense of a continual or repeated action. This situation is sometimes termed, "one baptism, but many fillings. "

²Ralph Earle, *The Gospel According to Mark in The Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957), p. 30.

³H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1941), 2:321.

⁴Charles W. Carter, "The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," in *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, ed. Charles W. Carter et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 5:202.

THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION IN THE WRITINGS OF JOHN WESLEY*

by
William M. Arnett

The person and work of the Holy Spirit have a significant role in the theological thought of John Wesley. That role is primarily redemptive, and it is therefore interwoven in Wesley's doctrine of salvation, which was the chief burden of his more than fifty years of evangelism.¹ The two great poles of his doctrine of salvation were justification and sanctification, and the experiential basis of his thought is the soil out of which grew his deep concern with the work of the Holy Spirit.² For Wesley, every doctrine of the Christian faith is centered in the context of vital Christian experience in which the Holy Spirit is a key factor. The Trinitarian basis is apparent, for it was the office of Jesus Christ to reveal the Heavenly Father and thus make possible our salvation by His life and death, and in turn it is the office of the Holy Spirit to reveal the Son to sinful man and administer His atoning work in his soul. Hence, Wesley's theology is Christocentric and the person of Christ is essential to every other doctrine. The administrative role of the Holy Spirit in relation to the work of Christ makes it imperative to have a proper understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in Wesley's thought.

The focus of this investigation is the role of the Holy Spirit in entire sanctification in Wesley's writings. Four related aspects are emphasized: first, the preparatory work of the Holy Spirit antecedent to entire sanctification- second, the preliminary work of the Holy Spirit in entire sanctification- third, the purifying work of the Holy Spirit in entire sanctification, with Wesley's variation in nomenclature; and finally, the witness of the Holy Spirit in entire sanctification.

1. The Preparatory Work of the Holy Spirit Antecedent to Entire Sanctification

There is a vital activity of the Holy Spirit in the life of the unbeliever without which Christian experience would be impossible. In his open letter "To A Roman Catholic" in 1749, Wesley affirmed his belief in the infinite and eternal Spirit of God, equal with the Father and the Son, Who is not only perfectly holy in Himself, but

the immediate cause of all holiness in us; enlightening our understandings, rectifying our wills and affections, renewing our natures, uniting our persons to Christ, assuring us of the adoption of sons, leading us in our actions, purifying and sanctifying our souls and bodies, to a full and eternal enjoyment of God.³

Wesley took his stand with Augustine, Luther, and Calvin in his insistence that man is totally corrupt by nature, and as a consequence is subject to the judgment and wrath of God. But to these somber facts he adds another principle, namely, the free gift of God's grace which he called preventing or prevenient grace, imparted to all men as a first, unconditional benefit of the atonement, not in the sense of regeneration, but as the spirit of awakening and conviction. For Wesley, God's prevenient grace, which goes before salvation, is related to the activity of the Holy Spirit.

For allowing that all the souls of men are dead in sin by *nature*, this excuses none, seeing there is no man that is in a state of mere nature; there is no man, *unless he has quenched the Spirit* [Italics mine], that is wholly void of the grace of God. No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called *natural conscience*. But this is not natural: It is more properly termed, *preventing grace*. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man.⁴

Man must cooperate with God, however, if he is to come to salvation in Jesus Christ. Wesley agrees with Augustine's remark: "He that made us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves."⁵

A primary task of the Holy Spirit is to reveal, testify, and defend the truth as it is in Jesus.⁶ In connection with His primary task, the Spirit performs a two-fold office, first toward the world (John 16:8ff.), and secondly toward believers (John 16:12ff.).⁷ It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convince the world, through the agency of preaching and miracles, of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. The Spirit will convict men particularly of the sin of unbelief, which is "the confluence of all sins."⁸ The law of God is applied by the Holy Spirit to the heart of man and deeply convicts him of his utter sinfulness and helplessness.⁹ The law becomes to us an occasion of wrath, and exposes us to punishment as transgressors.¹⁰ But God gives us the light of the gospel that we might repent,¹¹ and the first step towards entering into the kingdom of grace is "to become as little children-lowly in heart, knowing yourselves utterly ignorant and helpless, and hanging wholly on your Father who is in heaven for a supply of all your wants."¹² Wesley insists that "true repentance is a change from spiritual death to spiritual life, and leads to life everlasting."¹³ There are two kinds, or stages of repentance prior to initial salvation, according to Wesley's interpretation. The first he calls "legal" repentance, which is "a thorough conviction of sin," and the second is "evangelical" repentance, or "a change of heart (and consequently of life) from all sin to all holiness."¹⁴ Discussing the universality of sin and its consequences in his sermon on "The New Birth," Wesley concludes by stating "hence it is, that, being born in sin, we must be 'born again.' Hence every one that is born of a woman must be born of the Spirit of God."¹⁵

From this brief analysis of the preparatory work of the Holy Spirit prior to entire sanctification, it is quite apparent that Wesley's presentation of the gospel was characterized by New Testament realism. In his sermon "On Grieving the Holy Spirit" he stresses that

there can be no point of greater importance to him who knows that it is the Holy Spirit which leads us into all truth and into all holiness, than to consider with what temper of soul we are to entertain his divine presence; so as not either to drive him from us, or to disappoint him of the gracious ends for which his abode with us is designed; which is not the amusement of our understanding, but the conversion and entire sanctification of our hearts and lives.... The title "holy," applied to the Spirit of God, does not only denote that he is holy in his own nature; but that he makes us so; that he is the great fountain of holiness to his Church- the Spirit from whence flows all the grace and virtue, by which the stains of guilt are cleansed, and we are renewed in all holy dispositions, and again bear the image of our Creator.¹⁶

It is interesting to note that this sermon was written in 1733, five years prior to Wesley's heart-warming experience at Aldersgate.

Concerning born-again believers, Wesley expressed the conviction that it is universally allowed that the Holy Spirit, together with the Father and Son, indwells those who believe. The Holy Spirit first inspired, "and still preserves, the life of God in our souls."¹⁷ The internal agency of the Holy Ghost is generally admitted as well, for He leads the believer into all truth and glorifies Christ in his life. The bodies and souls of believers are the temples of the Holy Spirit dwelling in them.¹⁸ In regard to the biblical phrase, "receiving the Holy Ghost," Wesley insisted that this occurs at justification. Writing to Joseph Benson on December 28, 1770, respecting entire sanctification, he exhorted him to confirm the brethren "with all zeal and diligence" in a two-fold manner, first, "in holding fast that whereto they have attained-namely, the remission of all their sins by faith in a bleeding Lord," and secondly, "in expecting a second change, whereby they shall be saved from all sin and perfected in love." Immediately following the second point, Wesley adds this important comment,

If they like to call this "receiving the Holy Ghost," they may: only the phrase in that sense is not scriptural and not quite proper; for they all "received the Holy Ghost" when they were justified. God then "sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying Abba, Father."¹⁹

II. The Preliminary Work of the Holy Spirit in Entire Sanctification

Prior to the actual experience of entire sanctification there is an important ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer to indicate clearly and forcefully the need of sanctifying grace as a second crisis experience following the new birth. Since sanctification is "entire holiness of heart and life,"²⁰ the Holy Spirit is given to convince the followers of Christ of this truth and to enable them to be holy.²¹ Therefore, to despise the Apostle's

commandments to holiness of heart and life is to despise God Himself. The significance of entire sanctification as a definite second work of grace for Wesley is evident in his strong insistence that "a deep conviction of our *demerit*, after we are accepted . . . is absolutely necessary, in order to our seeing the true value of the atoning blood; in order to our feeling that we need this as much, after we are justified, as ever we did before."²² The Holy Spirit seeks to engender "a deep conviction that we are not yet whole; that our hearts are not fully purified; that there is yet in us a 'carnal mind,' which is still in its nature 'enmity against God'; that the whole body of sin remains in our heart, weakened indeed, but not destroyed."²³ In such strong language, Wesley sought to safeguard against a shallow notion of remaining depravity, and further, to produce an earnest expectation of deliverance through the sanctifying grace of God. It is important to note that his conception of sin was more inclusive than "voluntary transgression." Sin was not a material substance or "thing," however, for Wesley expected deliverance from all sin in this life.²⁴ He spoke of the "mischievousness of that opinion" that "we are wholly sanctified when we are justified; that our hearts are then cleansed from all sin."

It is true, we are then delivered, as was observed before, from the dominion of outward sin; and, at the same time, the power of inward sin is so broken, that we need no longer follow, or be led by it: but it is by no means true, that inward sin is then totally destroyed; that the root of pride, self-will, anger, love of the world, is then taken out of the heart; or that the carnal mind, and the heart bent to backsliding, are entirely extirpated.²⁵

A timely warning along these lines for those in the present day who share the Wesleyan-Arminian heritage is sounded in a perceptive, scholarly discussion by Merne A. Harris and Richard S. Taylor on "The Dual Nature of Sin," particularly in regard to those "who know secular psychology better than they know the Bible and Christian theology."²⁶

III. The Purifying Work of the Holy Spirit in Entire Sanctification

Wesley uses the word "purify" as well as other terms or phrases to signify the sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit in a definite second work of grace. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to sanctify.²⁷ Wesley used the term "inspiration" or "perceptible inspiration" for the general ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian. He defines "inspiration" as the "inward assistance of the Holy Ghost which 'helps our infirmities, enlightens our understanding, rectifies our will, comforts, purifies, and sanctifies us.'²⁸

Just as Wesley had received help from the Moravians in regard to the true nature of justifying faith, there is evidence that he also received illumination concerning the experiential reality of a pure heart. While he was with the Moravians at Herrnhut, Wesley records in his *Journal* for August 8, 1738, that he had the blessing of hearing Christian David preach four times.

Thrice he described the state of those who are "weak in faith," who are justified, but have not yet a new, clean heart; who have received forgiveness through the blood of Christ, but have not

received the constant indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This state he explained once from, "Blessed are the poor in spirit- for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" when he showed at large, from various Scriptures, that many are children of God and heirs of the promises, long before their hearts are softened by holy "mourning;" . . . before they are "pure in heart," from all self-will and sin. . ."²⁹

Approximately two years after his visit to Herrnhut, there is an interesting entry in his *Journal* regarding a sermon he preached at the Foundery on June 24, 1740, in which he used the text, "Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward" (Heb. 10:35). His message was directed to those "who have known and felt your sins forgiven."

Your finding sin remaining in you still is no proof that you are not a believer. Sin does remain in one that is justified, though it has not dominion over him. For he has not a clean heart at first, neither are "all things" as yet "become new." But fear not though you have an evil heart. Yet a little while, and you shall be endued with power from on high, whereby you may "purify yourselves, even as He is pure"; and be "holy, as He which hath called you is holy."³⁰

"You shall be endued with power from on high" in the quotation, which Wesley addressed to believers, is obviously a reference to the promise of Jesus recorded in Luke 24:49, thus clearly indicating that Wesley connects the coming of the Holy Spirit as He came at Pentecost with the purifying of the hearts of believers.

Commenting on John 7:38 in his sermon on "Christian Perfection," Wesley observes that at that time in Jesus' earthly ministry "the Holy Ghost was not yet given in his sanctifying graces, as he was after Jesus was glorified. " Later, however, "when the day of Pentecost was fully come, then first it was, that they who 'waited for the promise of the Father' were made more than conquerors over sin by the Holy Ghost given unto them."³¹ Also commenting on Matthew 3:11, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," Wesley states that "He shall fill you with the Holy Ghost, inflaming your hearts with that fire of love which many waters cannot quench. And this was done, even with a visible appearance as of fire, on the day of Pentecost."³²

For Wesley the word "sprinkle" in Ezekiel 36:25 ("Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you")

signifies both the blood of Christ sprinkled upon their conscience, to take away their guilt, as the water of purification was sprinkled, to take away their ceremonial uncleanness and the grace of the spirit sprinkle en [sic] the whole soul, to purify it from all corrupt inclinations and dispositions.³³

"From all your uncleanness" in verse 29 of the same chapter means for Wesley "salvation from all uncleanness including justification, entire sanctification, and meetness for glory."³⁴

Wesley used a variety of terms in his discussions concerning entire

sanctification, including pneumatological phrases or terms.³⁵ Writing to Walter Churchey in 1771, he stated that "entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is neither more nor less than pure love; love expelling sin, and governing both the heart and life of a child of God. The Refiner's fire purges out all that is contrary to love..."³⁶ Obviously, he used the two terms, entire sanctification and Christian perfection synonymously, and it is incorrect to interpret the latter term merely as a process in Wesley's thinking.³⁷ Crisis and process are never divorced in Wesley's conception of entire sanctification or Christian perfection, but he did expect a crisis with the process, whether one or the other term was used.³⁸ As the word "crisis" implies, Wesley stressed the instantaneousness of entire sanctification. He made a significant observation in a letter to Sarah Rutter on December 5, 1789, approximately fifteen months before his death: "Gradual sanctification may increase from the time you was [sic] justified; but full deliverance from sin, I believe, is always instantaneous-at least, I never yet knew an exception."³⁹

Another set of terms was used by Wesley when he considered "St. John's three-fold distinction of Christian believers: little children, young men, and fathers. All of these had received the Holy Ghost- but only the fathers were perfected in love."⁴⁰ Writing to Joseph Benson in 1771, he observed that "*a babe* in Christ (of whom I know thousands) has the witness *sometimes*. A young man (in St. John's sense) has it continually. I believe one that is *perfected in love*, or *filled with the Holy Ghost*, may be properly termed a *father*. This we must press both babes and young men to aspire after-yea, to expect. And why not now"?⁴¹ Here the expressions "perfected in love" and "filled with the Holy Ghost" are used synonymously, while "a babe in Christ" or "little children," "a young man," and "father," suggest experiential or maturation stages or levels in the Christian life.

In distinguishing justification and sanctification, Wesley wrote "the one implies, what God does for us through His Son; the other, what He works in us by His Spirit."⁴² It is apparent, however, that Wesley did not conceive the work of the Son and that of the Holy Spirit as mutually exclusive, as this quotation might suggest, but intimately related. What Christ made possible through His atoning work, the Holy Spirit makes actual in the lives of believers. As Wesley suggests in his commentary on Hebrews 2:10, "it is His (Christ's) atonement, and His Spirit carrying on 'the work of faith with power' in our hearts, that alone can sanctify us."⁴³

The petition of our Lord for His disciples in John 17:17 ("Sanctify them") is a prayer to "consecrate them, by the anointing of Thy Spirit, to their office, and perfect them in holiness by means of Thy Word."⁴⁴ For those who are heavy-laden with the guilt and power of sin, it is Christ alone who can freely give "rest from the guilt of sin by justification, and from the power of sin by sanctification."⁴⁵ And it is the Holy Spirit Who takes the things of Christ and reveals them to believers (John 16:14). The blood of Christ "cleanseth us from all sin," according to the Apostle John, and Wesley says this means "both original and actual, taking away all the guilt and all the power."⁴⁶ Wesley insisted that "faith is the condition and the only condition, of sanctification, exactly as it is of justification."⁴⁷

In Wesley's commentary on Acts 8:15 and Acts 19:2 in his *Explanatory*

Notes Upon the New Testament, a clear distinction is made between the miraculous or supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit and "His sanctifying graces." The term "receive the Holy Ghost" is used in both passages of Scripture, and Wesley's comments show that he interpreted this phrase as referring to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸

There is an interesting observation to be made in regard to Wesley's understanding of "receiving the Holy Spirit." He employs the term or idea in various aspects of Christian experience, including the time or conditions prior to justification, as well as in regeneration and entire sanctification. For example, in his treatise, "A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," Wesley states that "the author of faith and salvation is God alone." Furthermore,

There is no more of power than of merit in man; but as all merit is in the Son of God, in what He has done and suffered for us, so all power is in the Spirit of God. And therefore every man in order to believe unto salvation, must receive the Holy Ghost.⁴⁹

Obviously Wesley is speaking of man's need prior to actual justification. The reception of the Holy Spirit is necessary for a soul to be brought into a justified relationship. Also, we have already noted in his letter to Joseph Benson in 1770 he expresses the view that all believers "received the Holy Ghost" when they were justified. Similarly, in his comment on Romans 8:9 where the Apostle says that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," Wesley's frank note is "He is not a member of Christ; not a Christian; not in a state of salvation. A plain, express declaration, which admits of no exception."⁵⁰ We have also observed that the expression "receive the Holy Ghost" in Acts 8:15 and Acts 19:2 is interpreted by Wesley as a reference to the Spirit's sanctifying work. Perhaps there is a clue to his varied usages of this term in his comment on Romans 8:15 in which Paul speaks of "the spirit of bondage" and "the spirit of adoption."

The spirit of bondage here seems directly to mean, those operations of the Holy Spirit, by which the soul, on its first conviction, feels itself in bondage to sin, to the world, to Satan, and obnoxious to the wrath of God. This, therefore, and the *Spirit of adoption* are one and the same Spirit, only manifesting itself in various operations, according to the various circumstances of the person.⁵¹

Thus, for Wesley, the various operations of the Holy Spirit, while including conviction, faith, and regeneration, must also lead to and culminate in entire sanctification.⁵²

There is also evidence in Wesley's writings that there is a dual usage of the phrase, "baptized with the Holy Spirit." His note on Acts 1:5, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," is: "And so are all true believers, to the end of the world."⁵³ There is a strong intimation in his sermon, "Of the Church," however, that the term, "baptism of the Holy Ghost," is used to indicate the meeting of spiritual needs on different levels. "One baptism" in Ephesians 4:6 should not be interpreted in a figurative sense, according to Wesley, "as if it referred to that baptism of the Holy Ghost which the Apostles received at the day of Pentecost, and which, in a lower degree, is

given to all believers."⁵⁴ Wesley does not elaborate on this distinction. Obviously, the case is not air-tight that he always used the expression, "baptized with the Holy Ghost," solely in reference to conversion and justifying grace.

There are four expressions in regard to the Holy Spirit in Wesley's discussion of Cornelius and his household: "baptism of the Spirit," "received the Holy Ghost," "gift of the Holy Ghost," and "baptized with

The Holy Ghost." These expressions are found in his commentary on Acts 10:47, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost?"

He does not say, they have THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT; therefore they do not need baptism with water: but just the contrary; if they have received the Spirit, then baptize them with water.

How easily is this question decided, if we will take the word of God for our judge! Either men have RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST, or not. If they have not, "Repent," saith God, "and be baptized, and ye shall receive the GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST." If they have, if they are already BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, then *who can forbid water?*⁵⁵ (Caps mine.)

Concerning Cornelius and his household, Herbert McGonigle states that "Wesley held that they were already justified" prior to the encounter with Peter and his message at Caesarea (Acts 10).⁵⁶ Presumably McGonigle bases this on the expression regarding God's gracious favor in Acts 10:35, "Is accepted of him," and Wesley's commentary thereon.

Is accepted of him--Through Christ, though he knows Him not. The assertion is express, and admits of no exception. He is in the favour of God, whether enjoying his written word and ordinances or not. Nevertheless the addition of these is an unspeakable blessing to those who were before, in some measure, accepted: otherwise, God would never have sent an angel from heaven to direct Cornelius to St. Peter.⁵⁷

Perhaps the statement, "He is in the favour of God," is tantamount to justification, though Wesley does not use the word "justified" in his comments. An interesting observation relates to Wesley's earlier comment on

Acts 10:4 concerning the prayers and alms of Cornelius. Wesley declares that "it is certain, in the Christian sense, Cornelius was then an unbeliever. He had not then faith in Christ."⁵⁸ It is apparent that there is some tension in Wesley's comments concerning Cornelius. Further, if McGonigle is correct in stating that for Wesley, Cornelius and his household were "already justified," it poses the question, does God justify a man while he is still an unbeliever?--(in view of Wesley's note on Acts 10:4). Or could it be that Wesley held that Cornelius was saved under Old Testament light, even though he was not yet a believer in Jesus prior to Peter's ministry? In his comment on Acts 10:1 concerning "a certain man in Caesarea named Cornelius," Wesley calls attention to the fact that Philip has been in Caesarea previously (Acts 8:40), "so that the doctrine of salvation by faith in Jesus was not unknown there."⁵⁹ Presumably, that message had not yet reached Cornelius, according to Wesley, as his comment on Acts 10:4 implies.

In a sermon preached at Oxford University in 1744 entitled "Scriptural Christianity," Wesley expressed the view that every Christian should be Spirit-filled, and the intimation is that anyone who is not Spirit-filled is not a Christian. The text for the sermon is Acts 4:31, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."⁶⁰

There is a similar emphasis in his sermon on "The First Fruits of the Spirit." Those who "are in Christ Jesus" are "filled with faith and with the Holy Ghost."⁶¹ Later in the sermon Wesley points out that these "children of God" still have "the corruption of nature," or "inward sin," remaining in them.⁶² The problem is, of course, how a Christian can be filled with the Holy Spirit and yet have "inward sin" remaining. Presumably, for Wesley, they were not entirely sanctified.

We have already observed his threefold distinction of Christian believers: a babe in Christ, young men, and fathers, but in that context Wesley says only fathers are perfected in love, or filled with the Holy Spirit. In the two sermons just cited, all Christians should be Spirit-filled without distinction. Obviously, there is a lack of clarity at these points. In another context Wesley insists that it is impossible to be filled with love, or perfected in love, and still have inward sin. His very brief definition of entire sanctification or Christian perfection is that it is "love excluding sin."⁶³ Ostensibly, the Holy Spirit is the Divine Agent Who fills the Christian's heart with love. Again, in the two sermons already mentioned, a Christian can be "filled with the Holy Spirit," yet inward sin remains. Sin cannot remain, however, if the believer is filled with love. It is apparent there is tension in these views.

The sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit is likewise an emphasis in the hymns of the Wesleys. The following verses are representative of this element in Wesleyan hymnology.

Thy sanctifying Spirit pour
To quench my thirst and wash me clean,
Now, Father, let the gracious shower
Descend, and make me pure from sin.

* * * *

Within me Thy good Spirit place,
Spirit of health, and love, and power;
Plant in me Thy victorious grace,
And sin shall never enter more.⁶⁴

* * * *

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit,
Into every troubled breast,
Let us all in Thee inherit,
Let us find that second rest:

Take away our power of sinning,
Alpha and Omega be
End of faith as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.⁶⁵

* * * *

Come then, and dwell in me
Spirit of power within
And bring the glorious liberty
From sorrow, fear, and sin:
The seed of sin's disease,
Spirit of health, remove,
Spirit of finish'd holiness,
Spirit of perfect love.⁶⁶

* * * *

Spirit of Faith, come down,
Reveal the things of God,
And make to us the Godhead known
And witness with the blood:
'Tis Thine the blood to apply,
And give us eyes to see
Who did for every sinner die
Hath surely died for me.

Inspire the living faith,
(Which whosoe'er receives
The witness in himself he hath,
And consciously believes;)
The faith that conquers all,
And doth the mountain move,
And saves who'er on Jesus call,
And perfects them in love.⁶⁷

These many references from the writings of John Wesley give ample testimony to the fact that the purifying work of the Holy Spirit's ministry is conspicuously involved in the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification as a definite second work of grace.

IV. The Witness of the Holy Spirit in Entire Sanctification

Wesley regarded "the witness of the Spirit," or Divine assurance, to be "the main doctrine of the Methodists" and "the very foundation of Christianity."⁶⁸ The witness of the Spirit is twofold in nature regarding salvation: first, there is an inner impression of assurance called a direct witness, and secondly, there is the testimony of a changed life which constitutes the indirect witness.⁶⁹

In a similar manner, Wesley insisted that there is a Divine assurance to the reality of entire sanctification. In "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection" (1777) he quotes from an earlier treatise, "Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection" (1761).

Q. 16. But how do you know, that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption?

A. I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. "Hereby know we that we are of God," in either sense, "by the Spirit that he hath given us."

We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit....

Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first; (as neither is that of justification;) neither is it afterward always the same, but, like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and as steady as the former.⁷⁰

Wesley urged those who had experienced entire sanctification to testify discreetly to it. Writing concerning this gracious experience, he advised:

Now, certainly, if God has given you this light, He did not intend that you should hide it under a bushel.... Everyone ought to declare what God has done for his soul, and that with all simplicity.... One reason why those who are saved from sin should freely declare it to believers is because nothing is a stronger incitement to them to seek after the same blessing. And we ought by every possible means to press every serious believer to forget the things which are behind and with all earnestness to go on to perfection.⁷¹

There is a biblical precedent, of course, for Wesley's encouragement to Christian testimony concerning the experience of a pure heart, or entire sanctification. Peter does so in Acts 15:8, 9, testifying that on a certain day, God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, purified his heart, with an accompanying Divine assurance that it was so. Wesley bore his own discreet and indirect testimony to a personal "Pentecost" in an entry in his *Journal* for October 28, 1762.

Many years ago my brother frequently said, "Your day of Pentecost is not fully come; but I doubt it will: And you will then hear of persons sanctified, as frequently as you do now of persons justified." *Any unprejudiced reader may observe, that it has now fully come.* [Italics mine.] And accordingly we did hear of persons sanctified, in London, and most other parts of England, and in Dublin, and many other parts of Ireland, as frequently as of persons justified, although instances of the latter were far more frequent than they had been for twenty years before.⁷²

In another entry on October 29, 1762, regarding his belief in instantaneous sanctification, he declared "I have known and taught it (and so has my brother, as our writings show) above these twenty years."⁷³ In his significant sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," he recorded a strong, indirect witness: "I have continually testified in private and in public, that we are sanctified as well as justified by faith."⁷⁴

Conclusion

A result of the extensive research for this paper is, first of all, the conclusion that there is a plenitude of references in the writings of John Wesley in which the ministry of the Holy Spirit is associated with his discussion of entire sanctification and Christian perfection. Of necessity, the evidence presented has had to be selective, not exhaustive. The weight of evidence calls into question W. E. Sangster's criticism that Wesley did not "link

the doctrine (i.e. Christian perfection or entire sanctification) enough (as Paul does) with . . . the Holy Spirit."⁷⁵ Sangster's helpful analysis of Wesley's teaching concerning perfection is centered primarily in the famous treatise, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection." His criticism is not made in a guarded fashion, however, as being confined only to the "Plain Account" which covers eighty pages in Wesley's *Works*.⁷⁶ There are other significant writings of Wesley that bear upon this subject, and especially his sermons, "On Sin in Believers," "The Repentance of Believers," and "The Scripture Way of Salvation."⁷⁷ Important insights can be gleaned from Wesley's other writings as well.⁷⁸

Another conclusion relates to Wesley's use of pneumatological nomenclature in regard to entire sanctification. Although he maintained that he had been consistent in his belief about the doctrine,⁷⁹ there are some areas of tension, perhaps ambiguity, in regard to his application of pneumatological phrases, such as "receiving the Holy Spirit," "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," and "filled with the Holy Spirit." Various references from his scattered writings indicate that Wesley had not worked out fully every facet of his teaching on the Holy Spirit. In spite of some "loose ends" theologically, the judgment of Bishop William R. Cannon, a foremost Wesleyan scholar is noteworthy.

So far as I have been able to determine, in the entire range of historical theology, there has never been a more orderly, well-arranged, and consistent theologian than John Wesley. Others have been more profound than he. He has lacked the encyclopaedic breadth of Aquinas and Calvin. The range of his explorations was limited. But given what he tried to accomplish theologically, no one, so far as I can tell, essayed his task more clear-headedly or brought off his work more consistently than did the Founder of Methodism.⁸⁰

It is only fair to remember that Wesley was primarily an evangelist, and that his theological doctrines were in the service of his evangelism. His itinerant ministry across many years was exceedingly demanding. Once his evangelistic ministry began in the late 1730's, the opportunities for leisured scholarship were virtually gone. A writer in an American horseman magazine has conjectured that John Wesley may have spent more time on horseback than any man in history—an estimated 175,000 miles, equivalent to seven times around the world.⁸¹ When we view the abundance of his travels to spread the gospel, the wonder is that Wesley found time to write anything at all, and when a survey is made of his extensive writings (roughly 18,000 pages, plus!), an equal wonder is that he found time to itinerate.

It has been left to Wesley's posterity to work out in greater detail some areas of the Wesleyan theological structure. Where there has been fidelity to Holy Scripture, these efforts have complemented and supplemented Wesley's valuable insights, without altering in any way the doctrinal standards that he specified for Methodism.⁸²

A final conclusion relates to Wesley's vision for a universal penetration of the message of scriptural holiness through evangelistic zeal and the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit. He regarded this biblical truth to be a

special heritage entrusted by God to the people called Methodists.⁸³ The thrust of the doctrine was not sectarian or provincial, however, but truly Christian and universal, as expressed in one of Wesley's prayers.

May all the inhabitants of the earth do Thy will as willingly as the holy angels! May these do it continually even as they, without any interruption of their willing service; yea, and perfectly as they! Mayest Thou, Spirit of grace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make them perfect in every good work to do Thy will, and work in them all that is well-pleasing in Thy sight!⁸⁴

In concluding this study of the role of the Holy Spirit in entire sanctification as understood by John Wesley, it is appropriate to call attention to "The Findings" of the first Institute of Methodist Theological Studies which was held at Lincoln College, Oxford in July, 1959. A segment of "The Findings" expressed both gratitude for Methodism's founder and challenge to those who would "serve the present age, their calling to fulfill."

Is not the task of Methodists to perform with the Scriptures in the twentieth century a task like that which John Wesley performed in the eighteenth century? Our sense of indebtedness for the biblical insights of Wesley is profound, and we believe these insights will long continue to be relevant. Does not loyalty to this great contribution of the Wesleys require us now to go further and perform in the twentieth century a like task of bringing the world under the judgment of the Word of God? Is it not the proper work of the Holy Spirit in every generation to make Christ and His commands contemporary?⁸⁵

If we are to fulfill our Christian responsibility in this generation, working with God for the transformation of men and society, we need desperately both the purity and power of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying grace, as demonstrated so forcefully and successfully in the life and ministry of John Wesley.

NOTES

¹Cf. William R. Cannon, "Salvation in the Theology of John Wesley," *Methodist History*, IX (October, 1970), 3. Cf. Lycurgus M. Starkey, Jr. *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (New York: Abingdom Press, 1962), 33f., 45f.

²John Wesley, "The Scripture Way of Salvation." Sermon L. in *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, Edward H. Sugden, ed. (Nashville: Lamer & Barton, Agents, Publishing House M. E. Church, South, n.d.), 2:445f. Hereafter referred to as *Sermons*. Cf. Starkey, op. cit., 15.

³*The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley*, A. M., John Telford, ed. (London: The Epworth Press, 1931), 3:9. Hereafter referred to as *Letters*.

⁴*The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, A. M., Thomas Jackson, ed. (London: John Magon, 1829), 6:512. Sermon LXXXV, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation." Hereafter referred to as *Works*.

⁵*Ibid*, 513.

⁶John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (London:

The Epworth Press, 1950), 366. Note on John 14:17. Hereafter referred to as *N. T. Notes*.

⁷*Ibid*, 371. Note on John 16:8.

⁸*Ibid* Note on John 16:9.

⁹*Ibid*, 685. Note on Galatians 2:19.

¹⁰*Ibid*, 534. Note on Romans 4:15.

¹¹*Ibid*, 245. Note on Luke 11:33.

¹²*Ibid*, 87-88. Note on Matthew 18:3.

¹³*Ibid*, 438. Note on Acts 11:28.

¹⁴*Ibid*, 23. Note on Matthew 3:8.

¹⁵*Sermons*, 2:231. Sermon XXXIX.

¹⁶*Works*, 7:485-86. Sermon CXXXVIII.

¹⁷*N. T. Notes*, 623. Note on 1 Cor. 12:13.

¹⁸*Ibid*, 366. Note on John 14:17.

¹⁹*Letters*, 5:215.

²⁰*N. T. Notes*, 759. Note on 1 Thes. 4:3.

²¹*Ibid* Note on 1 Thes. 4:8.

²²*Sermons*, 2:396. Sermon XLVII, "The Repentance of Believers."

²³*Ibid*, 395.

²⁴Cf. George Allen Turner, *The More Excellent Way* (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1952), 249, 236, 247, and the important footnote (74) on 266.

²⁵*Sermons*, 2:394-95. Sermon XLVII, "The Repentance of Believers."

²⁶*The Word and the Doctrine*, Kenneth S. Geiger, compiler (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1965), 89ff., especially 115-17.

²⁷*Letters*, 4:380.

²⁸*Ibid*, 39.

²⁹*The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley*, A. M., Nehemiah Curnock, ed. (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1909), 2:25. Hereafter referred to as *Journal*.

³⁰*Ibid*, 359.

³¹*Sermons*, 2:162. Sermon XXXV.

³²*N. T. Notes*, 24.

³³John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the Old Testament* (London: William Pine, 1765). 3:2385.

³⁴*Ibid*, 2386.

³⁵E. g., Roy S. Nicholson lists twenty-three terms used by Wesley. See Nicholson's article, "John Wesley's Personal Experience of Christian Perfection," *The Asbury Seminary*, VI (January, 1952), 74-75.

³⁶*Letters*, 5:223.

- ³⁷*A Compend of Wesley's Theology*, Robert W. Burtner and Robert E. Chiles, eds. (Nashville: Abingdom Press, 1954), 139, 195.
- ³⁸Cf. A. Skevington Wood, *The Burning Heart--John Wesley, Evangelist* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 267, 269.
- ³⁹*Letters*, 8:1so.
- ⁴⁰*Ibid*, 6:146.
- ⁴¹*Ibid*, 5:229.
- ⁴²*Sermons*, 1 119. Sermon V, "Justification by Faith."
- ⁴³*N. T. Notes*, 815.
- ⁴⁴*Ibid*, 376.
- ⁴⁵*Ibid*, 61. Note on Matthew 11:28.
- ⁴⁶*Ibid*, 904. Note on 1 John 1:7. Cf. 801, note on Titus 2:14, "*That he might redeem us-Miserable bondslaves, as well from the power and the very being, as from the guilt, of all our sins.*"
- ⁴⁷*Sermons*, 2:453. Sermon L, "The Scripture Way of Salvation."
- ⁴⁸*N. T. Notes*, 425, 471.
- ⁴⁹*Works*, 8:49.
- ⁵⁰*N T. Notes*, 547.
- ⁵¹*Ibid*, 548.
- ⁵²See the helpful discussion by Leslie D. Wilcox, *Be Ye Holy* (Cincinnati: The Revivalist Press, 1965), 281f.
- ⁵³*N T. Notes*, 393
- ⁵⁴*Works*, 6:395. Sermon LXXIV.
- ⁵⁵*N T. Notes*, 436.
- ⁵⁶See McGonigle's helpful discussion, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, VIII (Spring 1973), 61ff.
- ⁵⁷*N T. Notes*, 435.
- ⁵⁸*Ibid*, 432.
- ⁵⁹*Ibid*, 431.
- ⁶⁰*Sermons*, 1:92ff., especially 104-06, 110. Sermon IV.
- ⁶¹*Works*, 5:88-89. Sermon VIII.
- ⁶²*Ibid*, 91.
- ⁶³*Letters*, 5:223; *Works*, 12:416.
- ⁶⁴*Sermons*, 2:175-76. Sermon XXXV, "Christian Perfection."
- ⁶⁵*The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, G. Osborn, ed. (London: Wegleyan Methodist Conference Office, 1869), 4:219.
- ⁶⁶*Ibid*, 13:45.

⁶⁷Burtner and Chiles, *op. cit.*, 1040-5.

⁶⁸*Letters*, 2:64.

⁶⁹See *Sermons*, Discourse I "The Witness of the Spirit," in 1:199ff. Discourse II "The Witness of the Spirit," 2:341ff.; and "The Witness of Our Own Spirit," 1:219ff.

⁷⁰*Works* 11:420.

⁷¹*Letters*, 5:6.

⁷²*Journal*, 4:532.

⁷³*Ibid*, 536.

⁷⁴*Sermons*, 2:453. Sermon L.

⁷⁵W. E. Sangster, *The Path to Perfection* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943), 44.

⁷⁶*Works*, 6:366-446.

⁷⁷*Sermons*, 2:360ff.; 379ff.; 442ff.

⁷⁸Research areas are: *Works*, 14 vols.; *Journal*, 8 vols.; *Letters*, 8 vols.; *Explanatory Notes Upon the Old Testament*, 3 vols.; and *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*. Grand total: 18,173 pages, though there is some duplication. The total does not include the Osborn edition of *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, 13 vols., his *Christian Library*, 50 vols. nor his *A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation. or a Compendium of Natural Philosophy*, 5 vols.

⁷⁹*Works*, 11:373.

⁸⁰Cannon, *op. cit.*, 3.

⁸¹Victor D. Sutch, "A Man Who Valued a Good Horse," *The Western Horseman*, September 1966, 72, 88.

⁸²The specified doctrinal standards are: (1) *The Standard Sermons*, (2) *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, and in addition for American Methodism, (3) *The Twenty-five Articles of Religion*.

⁸³*Letters*, 8:238.

⁸⁴*N. T. Notes*, 38. Prayer comment on Matthew 6:10.

⁸⁵*The London Quarterly & Holborn Review*, XXVIII (July 1959), 163.

**SPIRIT-BAPTISM THE MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION:
A RESPONSE TO THE LYON VIEW**

by
J. Kenneth Grider

One paper presented at the 1978 WTS meeting, and published in the first of the two 1979 issues of the Society's *Journal*, is the one by Dr. Robert Lyon, on "Baptism and Spirit-Baptism in the New Testament."

Lyon, in this paper, has presented a scholarly study of what I consider a topic of considerable importance: whether Spirit-baptism is associated with conversion, or with entire sanctification. His conclusion, based particularly on a study of Acts, is that Spirit-baptism is associated with conversion. In this kind of conclusion he is in essential agreement with James D. G. Dunn.¹ His view is also close to that of John Wesley himself, in distinction from what has been, until very recently at least, almost the universally-held view of Holiness Movement's mentors.

I myself respect Lyon's scholarship. I also believe that he is entirely within his privilege, to espouse the position he does, in a meeting of the Wesleyan Theological Society. Aside from the fact that this is a learned, investigative society, its sponsoring organization, the Christian Holiness Association (unlike some of the holiness denominations such as the Church of the Nazarene) does not, in its doctrinal statement, officially teach that Spirit-baptism is what effects entire sanctification.

At the same time I myself am quite persuaded, by the evidence, in the other direction. I quite believe that Spirit-baptism is associated with the second work of grace—entire sanctification. My basis is not simply historical: it is not simply that I believe that Holiness Movement writers are to be given a greater respect than we are to give John Wesley. My bottom-line basis for this understanding is that this is what I consider Scripture to teach—even the very texts which Lyon uses as support for his view which associates Spirit-baptism with conversion.

In responding to his article, I do not mean to imply, in any way, that I am as proficient an exegete as he is—a New Testament professor, whereas I am only a theologian. Yet I feel I ought to respond, and I will do so principally (but not exclusively) by reference to the same Scripture passages used by him. I will in the main follow the order which Lyon does, which is

the order found in acts itself—except that I will treat the account of Pentecost itself as the last major point. This is in part because Lyon somewhat qualifies his view at this point. In part, it is also because matters are involved that are more ramified and that require us to consider more wide-ranged biblical passages.

I. The Samaritan Experience

Lyon says that when the Samaritans "received" the Holy Spirit, after Peter and John had gone to them, it was "...the culmination of their conversion." While he admits that this is "... be all accounts the stickiest of all" the Acts narratives, he finally says, "One thing, however, is quite certain, viz., that when... they 'received' the Holy Spirit, it was their first experience of the spirit and cannot be counted as a second experience." He means that it can not be counted as a second means of grace, as usually conceived in the Holiness Movement. He says that their receiving the Holy Spirit was "... the incorporation of the Samaritans into the body" of Christ. That is, it was their conversion.²

James Dunn, in the book referred to earlier, takes the same kind of view, that receiving the Spirit was an aspect of their conversion, and speaks of the Acts 8 account as a "riddle". And, as I've mentioned, Lyons calls it the "stickiest" of the Acts narratives. Dunn and Lyon need to say these things because the Samaritans' receiving the Holy Spirit seems to be so obviously subsequent to their conversion.

As I see the matter, the revival of Samaria, described in acts 8: 1-25, might be a Gibraltar-like support of the view that receiving, or being baptized with, the Holy Spirit (terms which Lyon shows are used interchangeably in Acts³), is an experience subsequent to conversion.

In Acts 8, Luke tells us that Phillip, who has just been ordained as a deacon to do a menial kind of service, so that the Twelve could have more time to preach (Acts 6:1-6), "... went down to the city of Samaria and *began* proclaiming Christ to them" (Acts 8:5, NASB unless otherwise stated). He had just been set aside, with six others, to be a waiter, to "serve tables" (Acts 6:2), but he is one early Christian who does quite more than he is assigned to do. Times are tough, because Christians are being persecuted in all-out, programmed assault, and they scatter out from Jerusalem. Times like that have often elicited the really committed services from Christ's people, and it was so far this "full of Spirit" (Acts 6:3) deacon. Phillip was popular as a preacher, for "... the multitudes with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Phillip,..."(Acts 8:6). People were being held physically, and helped in other ways as well.

Many people believed on Christ—meaning, it seems to me, that they were converted. Then they received water baptism. We read, "But when they believed Phillip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike" (Acts 8:12). Luke tells us further:

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For he had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Then they *began* laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17).

As clearly as words can make it, then, it seems to me, in the way that systematic theology itself tends to make things clear, they earlier believe, and were baptized in water in the name of Christ; and quite later, after the apostles had arrived, they received the Holy Spirit—"For He had not yet fallen upon any of them." Lyon's view that this is the culmination of their conversion would require several things. It would require that the word "believe" is not sufficient for conversion, since the Samaritans had believed; and yet that is all that is necessary for being saved, according to what Paul told the Philippian jailer (see Acts 16:31). The Lyon view would also have them receiving what we call believer water baptism before their conversion had been culminated. The view might also imply some sort of gradualness in conversion itself, if people had believed on Christ, and been baptized in water, but were not as yet converted. It might even imply that conversion is more difficult to attain or to obtain than perhaps it is.

II. Paul's Conversion

Again, Lyon says that the culmination of Paul's conversion occurred when he was filled with the Holy Spirit. He says that ". . . the visit of Ananias to Paul represents the culmination of the latter's conversion, at which time he is filled with the Spirit, that is, he received the Spirit."⁴ In this view, Lyon is in agreement with James Dunn, who does not believe in any second work of grace. Lyon is also, as he shows, in agreement with John Wesley—who, of course, does believe in a second work of grace.⁵

On several bases, I myself understand that Paul was converted earlier, and that being filled with the Spirit was subsequent to his justification.

A. Something Revolutionary Happened Earlier

Let me begin by suggesting that, at least, something revolutionary happened out there on the Damascus road, three days before Ananias was sent to Paul—then called Saul of course. It was so revolutionary that Paul got turned about-face—from Christianity's main persecutor, to one whom his great enemy, Christ, is now commissioning to be His representative.

There were also outward manifestations that were congruent with what I'm suggesting was this revolutionary change. We read that ". . . suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him" (Acts 9:3). Paul ". . . fell to the ground . . ." (Acts 9:4). The risen Christ, whom Paul had never seen in the flesh, appeared to him in a most miraculous fashion and held conversation with him.

If Lyon is correct, that no conversion happened out there, along the road, a massive amount of Christian comment, over a nineteen-century period, is quite incorrect. Many of us have thought, all along, that this man Paul is an example of the truly revolutionized person, one who was indeed born again (from above), and recommissioned. And where have we usually thought of it as having happened? Not at Straight Street at Judas' house in Damascus, as Lyon says. We've said it happened on the Damascus road. We've been fond of saying that people need a "Damascus road" experience.

In widely-used Christian usage, within the Holiness Movement and outside of it, "a Damascus road experience" is a conversion.

B. Christ Calls Paul, Out There

This zealous Pharisee, who breathes out threatenings, who holds letters authorizing him to hunt out Christians at faraway Damascus and bring them to Jerusalem, bound, for trial, out on that road is called to preach Christ. His call doesn't happen after Ananias gets there, but has already happened as Ananias is being sent, for the Lord said to Ananias: "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel" (Acts 9:15). If it is said, as Lyon would have to, that he was called before he was converted, or at an early stage in the process of his conversion that culminated with his becoming Spirit-filled, I point out that he is not only an "instrument," but that he is "chosen"-a "chosen instrument" (Acts 9:15). The word for "chosen" is *ekloges*, and it is pretty salvific. It is used of the remnant who enjoy God's grace in Romans 11:5-7.

C. Paul Calls Christ "Lord"

Paul twice calls Christ *kurie*, "Lord" (Acts 9:5; 22:8, 10). I would grant Lyon the leeway to say of the Acts 9:5 and 22:8 instance that Paul might have, at that early moment in the conversion, used *kurie* as simply a way of addressing an authority figure. After all, Paul is asking who He is, so it might well be that, there, Christ is not addressed as his sovereign. Paul asks, "Who art Thou, Lord?"

But in the other instance, out there on the roadside, when Paul calls Christ *kurie*, "Lord," as it is reported in Acts 22:10, we have something different. Paul is still on the roadside, but the initial shock is over, and he is not asking who this is, but has submitted already to this "Lord." So he asks, "What shall I do, Lord?" Interestingly, the form in which it appears in both places is identical to the form used by the "full-fledged Christian," Ananias, who in Acts 9:10, in full obedience, says: "Behold, *here am I*, Lord."

D. Ananias Calls Paul "Brother"

Still more significant as supportive of my view that Paul was converted on the roadside, is that, as Ananias approaches Paul, he calls him "Brother." We read, "And Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus . . . has sent me . . .'" (Acts 9:17). Dunn's suggestion that this is only a use of "brother" to suggest Jewish kinship is too much. Lyon mentions Ananias' form of address.⁶ But to Dunn and Lyon it cannot mean that Paul is already a Christian, so it has to be robbed of what I think of as its evangelical beauty. On the basis that Paul is already a Christian, Ananias is telling Paul, at the outset, that he considers him to be a fellow Christian believer.

Paul needed to hear of that kind of acceptance, too, because he has been the chief mogul on the opposite side.

E. Ananias Goes for a Different Purpose

If Ananias had gone to Paul in order to help him to become converted,

to be justified, to believe, to become a Christian, why do the accounts not tell us anything of that sort? It tells us the opposite, as I see the matter, as that Paul is called a brother, probably a Christian brother. Ananias says that Christ "...has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:17). Actually, we are only told that Paul received his sight, and not that he was indeed filled with the Spirit as well.

But later we read that Paul was "filled," for it is said that "Saul, . . . filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze upon him [Elymas]" (Acts 13:9).

F. His Baptism Symbolizes Regeneration

Those such as Dunn and Lyon, who say that Paul was converted when he was filled with the Spirit, feel that they have strong support for their view in Acts 22:16 where Ananias says to him: "'And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'" Lyon says that "... this is conversion language:..."⁷

As I interpret it, however, this "brother" Christian is to be baptized in water, not in order that such might wash away his sins (for water baptism itself does not do that), but in order that, by water baptism, he might symbolize the washing away of his sins that has already occurred. By water baptism, also, as a believer, he would be openly, by an extremely ritual act, witnessing to all and sundry that he was a Christian. If those who view it otherwise counter by saying that their view hardly needs an interpretation, whereas my view does, I admit that they have a certain point, here. But they must do a bit of interpreting, also, because they themselves in many cases do not believe that the water baptism itself is what washes away sins; and yet, in its most literal sense, that is what the passage implies.

While Lyon includes "calling on the name of the Lord," here, as part of the "conversion language" of this passage, I myself do not view it in that way. The word for "calling" is *epikalesamenos*, a participle, from *kaleo*, to call, which may also be translated simply as "invoking." It is from the same word that *epikaloumenon* is from in Acts 7:59, where Stephen's "calling" upon God at the time of his stoning cannot be a prayer for his conversion, but is simply an invoking of God for His help.

III. The Case of Cornelius

Still further, Lyon understands that Cornelius was not converted until the Holy Spirit "fell" upon him and the others (Acts 11:15). He shows that the three verbs used to describe what happened to Cornelius, "fall upon," "pour out," and "receive," are equivalent expressions, and that the latter two of them ". . . were used earlier of the Pentecost event." I agree, of course, with this. What I do not agree with is his view that these expressions describe "conversion." Lyon goes on to say of this and other evidence: "This clearly equates the experience of Cornelius with what occurred at Pentecost. And it was most certainly the conversion of Cornelius and his incorporation into the body of Christ. Only an extremely tendentious exegesis could avoid that last conclusion. It is the account of a beginning, not a second blessing."⁸

In the Holiness Movement, many exegetes and theologians have understood that Cornelius was not converted prior to Peter's visit to him; but that he soon was justified, and then, soon received the Spirit in a second

work of grace. One problem with this view, as I see the matter, is that the account does not seem to tell us that two works of grace occurred under Peter's help-but only that one special grace (the second work) was bestowed upon him.

I myself view Cornelius as a justified person, prior to Peter's ministry to him. If I were prudent, I would give, here, only the strong evidence for this interpretation. I believe, however, that the evidence which only somewhat strengthens the case is integral to the whole of the evidence. I will therefore include it with the other, and will expect anyone debating with me to include in his response an evaluation of what I indicate is the weightier evidence.

A. Cornelius Is Devout

For one thing, Cornelius is said in Acts 10:2 to have been "*eusebes*," which means "reverent, pious, devout, religious." Another way of translating this word is "godly." It is the same word that is used in 2 Peter 2:9 for "the godly" whom "the Lord knows how to rescue . . . from temptation." They are the opposite from "the unrighteous" (2 Pet. 2:9). It is a cognate of this word, *eusebeia*, that is used for the "godliness" of Paul and other Christians where Paul urges Timothy to pray for "all who are in authority" (1 Tim. 2:2), so that "we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness. . ." (1 Tim. 2:2). This latter form of the word also appears in 1 Timothy 4:8 as what will put a person in good stead for the life to come, because Paul says that this ". . . godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come." In an adverbial form, *eusebos*, it appears of anyone who is decidedly "in Christ Jesus," where Paul writes: "And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12). So, while a form of the word appears in 1 Timothy 5:4 in reference to the practice of "piety" toward one's family, and while it is used in Acts 17:23 of the "worship" of people toward "an unknown God," I feel that its use, of Cornelius, is corroborative of my view that he is a Christian believer-albeit, without very much correct understanding.

It is interesting that no one questions Ananias' being a true Christian, who was to Paul what Peter was to Cornelius-one sent of God to help. Ananias is called a "disciple" in Acts 9:10, a *mathetes*, which is the singular of the same word used to describe the people found by Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:2), who, according to Lyon" and Dunn and others, were not Christians. More than that, and specifically to our point here, another special description of Ananias is that, like Cornelius, he was "devout" (Acts 22:12).

The word for "devout" is *eulabes*, slightly different from *eusebes*, used of Cornelius in Acts 10:2. But if anything, there is less that is distinctively Christian in the uses of *eulabes* than in the uses of *eusebes*. It happens, too, that Cornelius' being devout is not qualified. He is simply "a devout man" (Acts 10:2). Ananias' devotedness is qualified, and the qualification is not added in order to say that he was a devout Christian, or something of that sort. He is said to be ". . . a man who was devout by the standard of the Law" (Acts 22:12).

Another interesting but not very theologically important matter is that there is another parallel between Cornelius, whose justification so many

people question, and Ananias (whose justification no one questions). And in this parallel, Cornelius has at least a quantitative edge on Christ's servant, Ananias. Both men are said to have been spoken well of by Jews. But Ananias is only said to have had the good will of the Jews at Damascus, whereas Cornelius is said to have had the good will of the whole Jewish nation. Of Ananias it is said that he was ". . . well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there" (Acts 22:12). Of Cornelius, Luke says that he was ". . . a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, . . ." (Acts 10:22).

B. Cornelius Is Righteous

When Cornelius is called "righteous" in Acts 10:22, as in NASB, from the regular word for "righteous" or "just," *dikaios*, we have an exceedingly strong suggestion that he is a Christian believer. It is a cognate of *dikaiosisune*, the regular word for "justification" in the New Testament. This very word, with the definite article, *ho dikaios*, the Just One, or the Righteous One is even one of the distinctive titles of Christ in this same book, Acts, at 3:14; 7:52; and 22:14. It is one of the New Testament's special words for what God Himself is, "just," and for what He makes us into by "faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

C. Other Factors that Figure

1. Cornelius "feared God with all his household" (Acts 10:2) which means that he revered God and saw to it that his family and helpers did also.

2. He "gave many alms to the *Jewish* people" (Acts 10:2), which would of course not constitute him a believer, but is a pretty good quality of a believer's life.

3. He "prayed to God continually" (Acts 10:2), which in importance approximates his being devout and righteous, as corroborative, it seems to me. For, since the Holy Spirit is the one who would have been inclining him to pray and guiding him in what supplications to make, he would have surely asked for and received forgiveness if he was praying "continually."

4. He was wide open to God's will in his life, as is evidenced by his sending for Peter and by his implied willingness to do whatever the Apostle suggested.

5. His prayers for another matter had already been answered, for Peter said to him, "Your prayer has been heard" (Acts 10:31).

6. God gives him a special "vision," and the visit and ministry of an "angel" (Acts 10:3-7).

7. What is much more theologically significant as an indicator of his justification is that Peter seems to understand that Cornelius had already received forgiveness. That is what Peter seems to assure Cornelius of, just before the Spirit falls on this Italian that so many people think is not saved. Peter surely would be including Cornelius, and giving him assurance of his acceptance with God, when he says to him: "Of Him [Christ] all the prophets bear witness that through His name every one who believes in Him has received forgiveness of sins" (Acts 10:43).

8. Further, Cornelius has already been "cleansed" by God, and has already been made holy (evidently, the way one is, in justification), because

the reference is both to "unclean" animals and to Cornelius, as he was when Peter first learned about him, when Luke tells us: "But a voice from heaven answered a second time, 'What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy'" (Acts 11:9). Peter could hardly get this through his thickened prejudices, so it had to be repeated "three times" (Acts 11:10).

9. And importantly, if he is not already forgiven of his sins, justified, what is wrong, here, with our gracious God? Why is this man not justified, with all his seeking of and openness toward God? And if God is not willing that any should perish, but that everyone will come to repentance, why would He be holding this repentant seeker off from justifying grace? For those interpreters who must have the death and resurrection of Christ already in the past, for justification to happen, those redemption events are now already in the past. No one comes to God except that the Spirit draws him. So, here, we would have the Holy Spirit drawing this man to turn to God, but we would have a God who is holding him off from justification because the man needs a bit of instruction. What I believe is that God graciously offers the justification, and that He then works toward our enlightenment.

I myself was so poorly instructed, after I was converted and sanctified wholly and called to ministry that, in a jail, where I was put for riding a freight train, in depression days, on my way to a Nazarene college, I started reading the Bible through, reading about the first fifth of the Old Testament and I made full plans to build an altar and make sacrifices as I noted that God's people were doing back there.

What is the minimum of intellectual understanding that is necessary before one can become a Christian? I tend to think it is so minimal that we should forget about what it would need to be. Is it one one-thousandth of what I now understand, as a professional theologian? My own experience proves to me that it cannot be anything like that much that is necessary. If a person is "righteous," as Scripture says Cornelius was, that in itself is plenty, for me, for understanding that he is justified. Indeed, that is precisely what the word means.

D. The Aorist Participle in 11:17

Lyon says of the Acts 10, 11 and 15 references to Cornelius, which would include what is said in Acts 11:17: "Everything in these narratives requires our understanding the conversion of Cornelius as the occasion for his first experience of the Spirit. Upon hearing and receiving the word, he was baptized, according to promise, in the Spirit."¹⁰

Interestingly, while Dunn and others make much of Acts 11:17 as suggesting that the "gift" received by Cornelius is his Pentecost, and that it happened for him and for Peter and the others when they believed, Lyon does not specifically use the reference to believing, in this verse, to support his case. In this verse there is an aorist participle; and when the verse is used to support the Lyon type of view, the aoristic character of the participle, *pisteusantes*, is usually not given what I would call a due regard.

Let us note some of the translations of Acts 11:17. The King James Version reads, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he *did* unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?" Likewise the RSV reads, "If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, . . ." the NIV New Testament was similar, using "when": "So if God gave them the same gift

as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, . . ."; but the NIV revision of 1978, instead of "when we believed," somewhat less prejudicially translates it "who believed." But the NASB, often quite careful to follow the Greek, translates it in the way aorist participles are normally to be rendered: in such a way that Pentecost happened after the 120 had believed, and in such a way that the Spirit's falling upon Cornelius was after he had believed. The NASB reads, "If God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"

I myself agree with the rather recently published *God, Man, and Salvation*, which points out that this aorist participle indicates that their believing was prior to their being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Its authors write, in a footnote:

The RSV, NIV, and NEB are singularly unfortunate in ignoring the time sequence implied in the Greek of Acts 11:17. Their rendering seems to give credence to the position of Frederick Dale Bruner (*A Theology of the Holy Spirit*. p. 195) that in this verse we have evidence "that the apostles considered Pentecost to be the . . . date of their conversion."¹¹

One supposes that a given interpreter's basic theology often intrudes itself, as here; and that if the interpreter does not believe that Spirit-baptism is subsequent to justification, but if an aorist participle suggests this kind of distinction, he conveniently suggests that in the passage in question the aorist participle happens to be the much more rare coincidental aorist, in which the participle expresses action which takes place at the same time as that of the main verb.

E. The Reference to Repentance

Again, while Lyon does not refer to what seems on the surface to be a reference to the Spirit's falling upon Cornelius as the time of his repentance, and therefore of his conversion, I feel I need to mention this matter. Dunn and others feel that, here, they have a gargantuan support for this kind of view. I myself would agree that it is one of the most possibly feasible of the supports. And yet I do not at all believe that the account should be read as though it teaches Spirit-baptism conversion.

In Acts 11:18 we read, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance *that leads* to life. " This is not an observation that is made on the spot and at the time of Cornelius' baptism with the Spirit. We are now back in Jerusalem, some time after Cornelius' receiving of the Spirit, and Peter is on the carpet about participating in gospel work among Gentiles. They are not speaking specifically about Cornelius' being baptized with the Spirit. They get after Peter because he shared Christ with the "uncircumcised" (Acts 11:3). Also, because he "ate with them" (Acts 11:3). Peter recounted the whole thing to these duly "circumcised" (Acts 11:2) folk, and it is not easy for this to seep through their thickened prejudices even as it hadn't been easy in Peter's own case. They are not so much worried about a

second work of grace being extended to Gentiles. They are heated up over the gospel going to these uncircumcised people in its initial form. If they could grant them the privilege of conversion, they wouldn't have any problem about their getting in on the brand new thing of a personal Pentecost. They are therefore not talking about Cornelius' baptism with the Spirit but, more basically, about the gospel of God's forgiving grace going to a Gentile, when they question the whole matter. That was what they are thinking about, therefore, when they "quieted down" (Acts 11:18), and when they finally got around to saying: "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance *that leads to life*" (Acts 11:18).

F. The Reference to His Being Saved

Another matter which Lyon does not refer to, but which others often make much of as supportive of the type of view Lyon takes, is the interpretation whereby the word "saved" in Acts 11:14 is equated with converted. According to this interpretation, the angel tells Cornelius that Peter will tell him things by which he will become a Christian. The angel says, "Send to Joppa, and have Simon . . . brought here; and he shall speak words to you by which you will be saved, . . ." (Acts 11:13b-14). Yet, whereas cognates of *sodzo*, for "saved," are found as equivalents of conversion (as in Mark 16:16 [poor manuscript evidence here]; Acts 2:21 and 16:31; Rom. 5:10 and 10:13), they are also used more widely as synonyms of redemption. In one such passage, Matthew 10:22, we read, ". . . it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved" (see also Matt. 24:13; Mark 13:13). One of several others is where Paul writes, "If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer 1099; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire" (1 Cor. 3:15).

Before leaving the Cornelius references, perhaps I should comment on some of the other supports which Lyon gives for his interpretation. He refers to Peter's saying, ". . . as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as *He did* upon us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15); and he comments: "Again, note the last clause." Earlier, he had commented, about this: "It is the account of a beginning, not a second blessing."¹² I would of course agree that Pentecost was some sort of "beginning." But I do not view it as a beginning which was the conversion of the apostles and others. As I interpret this, it was in part the beginning of the church (since I view it as founded on the Day of Pentecost). It was also the beginning of that dispensation of grace prophesied by Ezekiel (chapter 36), Jeremiah (chapter 31), and Joel (chapter 2), in which the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon God's people in a most special way. Further, and similarly, it was the beginning, for Peter and the others, of the experience of the second work of grace wrought by Jesus' baptism of believers with the Holy Spirit.

Lyon also says that no New Testament book other than Acts "offers evidence" regarding "receiving" and "being baptized with" the Spirit--but I believe other New Testament books to give evidence related to this matter. He says that ". . . there is no difference in Acts (and no other book offers evidence) between 'receiving the Spirit' and 'being baptized with the Spirit' . . ."¹³ I agree with him on the interchangeability of these expressions. Yet I feel that other New Testament books give much evidence suggesting that,

before our Pentecost, we receive the Holy Spirit in the way one receives him at conversion. John 3:5 refers to being "born" of "the Spirit," and I view that as a receiving of the Spirit in a certain way prior to receiving Him in baptismal fullness.

John's Gospel also portrays Jesus as saying to His disciples that the "Spirit of truth" was "with" them, but would be "in" them. Jesus there says: "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, . . . the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive [in baptismal fullness, because, as I see it, they are not born-again believers], because it does not behold Him or know Him, *but* you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you" (John 14:16-17).

Romans 8:9 also relates to this matter, as I see it. Paul there says, "But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ [who proceeds eternally from Christ], he does not belong to Him." This means to me what it has meant to many holiness interpreters: that if we are believers we have received the Spirit by being born of the Spirit; and that it is always persons who have already received him in that way who are possible candidates for receiving him in the second work of grace when believers are baptized with the Spirit.

Another New Testament book which I view as containing what relates clearly to this matter is Galatians. Paul here shows that the converted person is indwelt by the Spirit at the same time that he is indwelt by the flesh-that is, original sin. Paul writes, "For the flesh [carnality, original sin] sets its desire against the Spirit [who evidently indwells a believer], and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please" (Gal. 5:17). Indwelling a born-again person, the Holy Spirit opposes the flesh, original sin, which also indwells such a person. I view this as depicting the justified state. I note, also, that Paul is soon saying, "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5:24). I interpret him as saying, here, that when a Christian most truly belongs to Christ, having consecrated himself fully, and having received by faith what the Gospels and Acts refer to as Spirit-baptism, the flesh, original sin, is crucified.

I also view Romans 5:1-5 as relating to this matter. There, after referring to being "justified by faith," Paul speaks of our being "also" admitted or introduced "by faith" into "this grace in which we stand"-that is, the establishing grace of entire sanctification received by Spirit-baptism. I view this second grace as what happens by Spirit-baptism because he says that ". . . the love of God has been poured out [twice in Acts 2 pouring is the figure] within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us [at the first Pentecost, surely, for some; and at later "pentecosts" for Paul and others]." I know that the "also" and the "by faith" in verse 2 are not in some of the old manuscripts, but NASB includes them both, and, with their inclusion, the passage becomes a clearer two-works-of-grace statement than it is otherwise.

Besides all these, Ephesians 1:13 relates clearly to the matter of the Spirit-baptism being for persons who have earlier become believers. There Paul writes, "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise." With this NASB rendering, which gives due

regard especially to the aorist participle *pisteusantes*, we see that people listened to the gospel; that they later believed, becoming justified; and that still later they were sealed with (signifying full approval, ownership) the Holy Spirit promised by Joel (2:28), by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:11, etc.), and by Jesus (Acts 1:4-8).

IV. Experience of the Ephesians

Lyon understands, also, that the Ephesians were converted when, under Paul's help, "the Holy Spirit came on them" (Acts 19:6). In what seems to be particularly a reference to what he calls the sticky matter of Acts 8, he says, "Here again we have problems." This is because he must admit, and does, that they were already called "disciples" and that they had already "believed." But on his theory, one is not converted until he has "received" the Holy Spirit; so, since they had not had that happen to them as yet, he writes, "While certainly not free of ambiguities what we seem to have here is an account of the conversion of some disciples of John the Baptist (or of a similar 'preparation type movement') who had been prepared [earlier] for the gospel."¹⁴

I myself view this in the way the Holiness Movement has almost universally interpreted it: that the Ephesians were converted persons who received a second work of grace under Paul's help. Acts 19:1-7 is not quite as incontestably "two-works-of-grace" as Acts 8:1-25 is, but it is almost as clearly so. It describes Paul's finding, at Ephesus, certain baptized disciples who had not as yet received the Holy Spirit, and they then received the Spirit.

On several bases, the Holy Spirit's coming upon them was subsequent to their conversion.

A. Paul Calls Them Disciples

Paul calls them *mathetais*, disciples," a customary word for Christian believers. If it meant that they were disciples of anyone else, and not of Christ, that specific would have been mentioned.

B. They Had Already Believed

Paul asked the Ephesian disciples, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (Acts 19:2). Again, we have an aorist participle *pisteusantes*, "Having believed" (or, "when believing"). On the basis of what is customary with an aorist participle, that the action it expresses takes place prior in time to the action of the main verb of a sentence, this would read "Having believed, did you receive the Holy Spirit?" Or "After you believed, did you receive Him?" The King James Version translated so as to show this kind of meaning in the aorist participle when it rendered: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" The KJV's Calvinistic translators were not particularly friendly to two-works-of-grace doctrine. For example, we have an aorist participle in Ephesians 5:26; and, instead of showing the two works of grace which it suggests, as do the RSV NASB, NIV, etc., the KJV just says "sanctify and cleanse" (instead of ". . . that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her . . ."). Yet at Acts 19:2 the KJV renders properly, as I see it, and it shows that the believing is prior to receiving the Holy Spirit in this special Pentecostal way. Whether or not

one renders the passage in the way the aorist participle warrants, the two-works-of-grace meaning is present. For, after all, they have believed, and they told Paul they had not even heard about the Holy Spirit. They said, in answer to his question, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit" (Acts 19:2).

C. They Were Called Brethren

Also, it is the believers at Ephesus who are called "brethren" in Acts 18:27, where we read that "the brethren encouraged him [Apollos]." It does not take much acquaintance with the New Testament to know that "brethren" is frequently its way of saying "Christians"-even if the "sistern" do seem to be left out as not important, according to the first century's culture.

D. They Had Been Water-Baptized

Many interpreters, including Lyon, understand that Paul re-baptized these people with water. While my interpretation in no way hinges on this matter, I understand that Paul did not re-baptize them. If he did, it would be, from my knowledge, the only instance in the New Testament of the rebaptism in water of anyone. Moreover, Luke's account, to me, does not suggest that Paul re-baptized them. After the believers told Paul they had been baptized by John the Baptist, Paul explains to them that that was good. He says, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus" (Acts 19:4). John, then, had made it clear that they were to turn from sin in "repentance" and to "believe in . . . Jesus." No one was ever baptized in the name of the whole Trinity, as Acts describes numerous water baptisms: they were always in the name of Jesus, as John's baptisms had been, since the early church did not begin, until after Matthew's Gospel had been written (see Matt. 28:19-20), to baptize in the name of the whole Trinity. Paul did not view this as an inadequate baptism. I think he is referring to John's original baptism of them when he says, "And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5). Paul's words do not end with verse 4 but with verse 5. After all, there is no change, in the person spoken of, from John to Paul. That happens in the next verse where we read, "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, . . ." (Acts 19:6).

So, as I see the matter, these Ephesians were disciples, believers, already baptized with water, in whom there was fulfilled, belatedly, after Pentecost itself, John the Baptist's prophecy when he said, "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mark 1:8; see also all the other Gospels).

I view the account of what happened at Ephesus, therefore, as a second work of grace. It was a time when persons who had been helped by the Holy Spirit to become converted without knowing just how they had been helped), received or were baptized with the Holy Spirit as a second definite work of grace.

V. Pentecost Was A Second Grace

Lyon suggests rather early in his paper that "Peter promised to his

hearers [at Pentecost] the very same experience which they had seen occur in the original outpouring."¹⁵ Lyon argues this way especially on the basis of Peter's saying, "Repent, and be baptized . . . and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). In my view, however, Peter is clearly talking in terms of what we in the Holiness Movement mean by two works of grace, one subsequent to the other. Following NASB (as I'm doing throughout), and including the theologically important words which Lyon leaves out, Peter says, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Here, they were to "repent." Later-it would have to be later, if thousands were to be baptized in water-they were baptized with water. This is expressly said to be "for the forgiveness of your sins"-which means, as I see it, that the water baptism, subsequent to their repentance, was to assert in symbol that their sins were forgiven. That is, it was to symbolize and assert their justification, their conversion. Finally, after the NASB's semi-colon (realizing that all such is supplied, and is not in the Greek), Peter says, "and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." This, as I see it, would be subsequent to their repentance; and also subsequent to their water baptism. This might not be quite as clear as systematically theological language is capable of making it; yet, as I see it, it is quite clearly and emphatically what might be described as an exhortation to what I would call both works of grace, one subsequent to the other.

Even so, Lyon makes a certain qualification, late in his paper, as he treats Acts 2 and the first Pentecost-after (as I have done) he has treated the Samaritans, Paul, Cornelius, and the Ephesians. He says, "One thing must certainly be said: The disciples were believers before Pentecost." He adds, "As believers, they have come into contact with the Spirit, but-and here I suggest a novel term-only 'by proxy'-that is, by virtue of the Spirit in Jesus whose ministry is everywhere viewed as a ministry in the Spirit. So, by virtue of His presence the Spirit is present to them, . . ."¹⁶

As I myself view the matter, this kind of qualification does not change the matter materially. The disciples themselves, prior to Pentecost, have not themselves been born of the Spirit, he says-although he calls them "believers." Thinking of Acts more or less as a whole, he says, "The baptism in the Spirit, far from being the second experience and an experience subsequent to receiving the Spirit or being born of the Spirit, stands scripturally at the heart of conversion."¹⁷

Since Lyon believes that the disciples, before Pentecost, only had experience of the Spirit by proxy (because the Spirit was in Jesus); and because he does not believe that the disciples were born of the Spirit (regenerated); let me discuss the evidence, with some specificity, for the view that they were justified, born again, converted, prior to Pentecost.

A. The Romans 4 Evidence

For one thing, Paul makes it clear in Romans 4 that justification occurred a long time prior to Pentecost. Paul says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness" (Rom. 4:3 NIV New Testament). And Paul is here quoting Genesis 15:6, which, therefore, also states that Abraham was justified or righteous. Paul does not seem to know anything about the dispensationalism which separates the pre-

Pentecost people from justification by faith, because he uses Abraham as an illustration of how one still is justified, after Pentecost. Paul says, "So then, he [Abraham] is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them" (Rom. 4:11

NIV New Testament). These two separated dispensations had not been invented as yet by the exegetes and theologians, and Paul is saying that circumcision does not matter very much, but that to have faith is what is crucial. Therefore he continues the thought quoted above by saying, "And he [Abraham] is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised" (Rom. 4:12 NIV New Testament). Paul sees no chasm between Abraham's time and those post-Pentecostal times. He is saying that in all times people have been justified, and that it has been by faith, and not by observing "works" (Rom. 4:4) nor by observing the "Law" (Rom. 4:15).

Paul knows, of course, that, when he was writing the Roman epistle people were to "believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom. 4:24 NIV New Testament). But his point was that Abraham and his readers were all justified by faith and not by works.

As I see it, it is elementary that people were justified before Pentecost. I would not even seek to establish such an obvious matter, except that respectable Reformed theologians, and now, some respectable Wesleyan theologians, teach what tends to deny such obvious biblical instructions.

B. Even Hebrews Teaches This

Since I am forced to show what is obvious, let me mention that this is also the teaching we have in Hebrews. That book admittedly states that, "The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming-not the realities themselves" (Heb. 10:1 NIV New Testament). It states that "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Heb. 10:4 NIV New Testament). It states that Christ made a once-for-all sacrifice of himself to "cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14 NIV New Testament). Yet with all its contrasting of the two covenants, the two means of atonement, and all that, even this book does not seem to me to be saying that people were not justified by faith under the old covenant. Hebrews 11 says that "by faith" one after another of the Old Testament personages, from Abel to Abraham to Moses and others "gained what was promised" (11:33 NIV) for those times, and pleased God. It states that "the world was not worthy of them" (11:38 NIV). It says that many "were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection" (11:35 NIV New Testament)-so that evidently they will fare all right at the time of the Rapture.

These people did not have the Christ revelation, and knew only that a better day was promised. But as I see it, they were justified, and they really did live by faith. The law itself was only a "shadow" and not the "reality"; but that does not mean that their justified relationship to God was only a shadow and not a reality. It was as real as our justification is, and they "were all commended for their faith" (Heb. 11:39 NIV New Testament).

My point here is that if they were justified, and since they-including

Abraham-were justified, we may assume that the Apostles could be, before Pentecost.

C. John's Gospel Is Importantly Corroborative

People enjoyed what happens at the first work of grace prior to Pentecost, surely, according to many passages in the Gospel of John.

This Gospel was written long after Pentecost, so certain observations John makes, as he is writing, do not apply to the pre-Pentecostal time. Thus when John says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name" (1:12 NASB), we have a post-Pentecost observation.

Excluding such, however, there is much, in John's Gospel, which suggests that people enjoyed what we mean by the first work of grace prior to Pentecost. And much of this has to do with the period prior to the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

Significant, as I see it, is Jesus' urging upon Nicodemus the new birth in chapter 3. Jesus says to him, "I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (v. 3). After Nicodemus shows that he does not understand being born again, Jesus explains: "I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (v. 5). And He adds, "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again' " (v. 7). Jesus does not tell him that he must wait, with this matter of being born again, until after Pentecost, or until after His death and resurrection. He even seems to chide Nicodemus for not being born again right then, because He says: "And you do not receive our witness" (v. 11).

It is well known, also, that this Gospel speaks much about eternal life, which is surely another name for conversion, or the first work of grace. And people already possess eternal Life. Jesus says, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life" (3:36). It is received when one "believes," which is one of the New Testament's ways of saying what one does in order to receive forgiveness or justification. It is a verbal, the counterpart to the noun "faith"-so often given by the Apostle Paul as what obtains justification (see Rom. 5:1 e.g.).

Soon Jesus tells His "disciples" (John 4:31), which, actually, is also a word used for those who have believed, that the "fields" right at the time "are white for harvest" (4:35), without waiting for the Crucifixion or Pentecost. And He uses the present tense in saying, "Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for Life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together" (4:36). And right after this reference to "life eternal" (three verses later), John speaks again about persons who "believed." He says, "And from that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him" (4:39). They did so because a Samaritan woman, who had asked Christ for the water that would spring up to "eternal life" (vv. 14-15), had drunk of it, and had witnessed to them. What are we talking about, here, if this is not regeneration, the new birth, conversion?

And how could regeneration be more clearly suggested than when Jesus later says, using the present tense, "For this is the will of my Father, that every one who beholds the Son, and believes in Him, may have eternal life: and I Myself will raise him up on the last day" (6:40). Then Jesus adds, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life" (6:47).

We also have in chapter 9 the man healed of blindness who believes and begins to worship Jesus. "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" Jesus asks him (v. 35). After he asks who that is and Jesus says, "He is the one who is talking with you" (v. 37), he says, "Lord, I believe" (v. 38). And John adds: "And he worshipped Him" (v. 38).

In chapter 15, the disciples are the branches of the vine, and this, too suggests their new birth, their first work of grace. Jesus says to them "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you" (v. 3). And he says, "I am the vine, you are the branches" (v. 5). His only special concern is that they "abide" in him. The phrase "abide in me" appears five times in vv. 4-10.

In chapter 17, we have Christ's extended prayer for His disciples, and again, they seem to be persons in the first work of grace. He can say that they are "Mine" (v. 10), and that "I have been glorified in them" (v. 10). He wants the Father to "keep them" (v. 11), not to regenerate them. They are persons whom the Father has "given" to Christ (v. 11), and Christ had "guarded them" (v.12). The "world has hated them, because they are not of the world" (v. 14). This, even as Christ was not "of the world" (v. 14). They had believed, because He says, "I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word" (v. 20). When He prays, "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth" (v. 17), I think it is a prayer that is answered at Pentecost. The word for "sanctify" is in the aorist tense, which would suggest the kind of punctiliar event that Pentecost was, being the time when they received a "baptism"-a baptism with the Holy Spirit. This is probably a use of "sanctify" as "make holy," in the sense of cleansing them, and this would fit the "and fire" of the Matthew 3:11-12 reference to the coming Pentecost: and the Acts 15:8-9 description of Pentecost as a time when the peoples' hearts were "purified."

One more suggestion in John that regeneration could occur prior to Pentecost has to do with Thomas' confession. That apostle, most prone to doubt Christ's resurrection, comes around to a profound confidence in it and in Christ. Before anyone else had ever referred to Christ as fully divine, as *theos*, God, Thomas says, "My Lord and my God" (20:28). Surely this is a confession of a believer in the full sense. It is even made after the Resurrection, and in part because of Christ's resurrection.

D. The Synoptics Are Supportive

Besides John, the Synoptic Gospels, surely, teach that the first work of grace is possible before Pentecost. People receive the forgiveness of sins; they repent and believe; their lives become different and commissioned.

As I myself understand the matter, the people who repented and were baptized under John the Baptist's preaching received the new birth-what we in Wesleyanism mean by the first work of grace. John called for repentance, a basic change of mind through which a person begins to build his Life according to a different blueprint. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2), he told all and sundry. He did not want lipservice without their hearts in it, either, so he told them to ". . . bring forth fruit in keeping with *your* repentance" (3:8). He wasn't mealy-mouthed, preaching a gospel of "sweetness and light," but called sinners a "brood of vipers" (3:7). And we read that, with all the stringency of his demands, ". . . they

were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins" (3:6). He made it clear, too, that it was Jesus he was proclaiming. Actually, in a sense, he told them he was offering a first step in redemption baptizing them in water, and that Jesus Himself, later, would offer a further stage in redemption, baptizing people with the Holy Spirit. Thus John the Baptist says in 3:11-12

As for me, I baptize you in water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not *even* fit to remove His sandals; He Himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

It is more than a "half-way covenant" gospel, also, that Jesus Himself preaches. Its demand, also, is for repentance. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17), He preached, even as John the Baptist did. It was a gospel, too, to net you sundry kinds of happiness, as He told "the multitudes" in what we call the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1-11). People who accept this repentance are already called "salt," and they are already "the light of the world" (5:13-14), glorifying the Father by "good works" (5:16). Jesus gives them instructions, as insiders, who are to "love" their "enemies" (5:44), as He says, "in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven" (5:45).

A person can already receive God's forgiveness, and that is one of the ways the New Testament has of talking about the first work of grace. Jesus says, "For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions" (Matt. 6:14-15).

Much more similar data is in the Synoptics, but I must not continue with this argument. If this is not sufficient to support the view I am espousing, it might be because a respected presupposition (I admit to my own) is not allowing the data to apply to the matter.

VI. Conversion as "Truly Sanctifying"

Besides these responses to Dr. Robert Lyon's views on the Acts accounts of what happened to the Samaritans, to Cornelius, to Paul, to the Ephesians, and to the disciples at the first Pentecost, I would make a few observations about the view of conversion with which his paper closes.¹⁸ Basically, as I read his paper, I feel that he makes so much of conversion that there is little need for a subsequent experience of entire sanctification. Whereas some holiness interpreters have tended to make too little of conversion, I feel that he makes too much of it. Not only is the converted person already baptized with the Holy Spirit; as I read him, the converted person is already sanctified in a pretty complete sense.

For one thing, he calls conversion ". . . a truly sanctifying experience."¹⁹ I myself understand that at conversion there is an initial sanctification through which the propensity to sin which we acquire through our acts of sin is cleansed away (see Tit. 3:5; Eph. 5:25-27). Yet I read Lyon as saying much more than this. His word "truly" is surely similar to "entire" or

"full" or "wholly" which holiness people have often used of the second work of grace.

And he seems to mean, by conversion, something close to what many of us have meant by entire sanctification, in several things he says. For example, he says, "This is what I mean when I speak of conversion as a truly sanctifying experience. And it is this type of conquest of sin at conversion which suggests the reality of a subsequent perfection in love."²⁰ If one is "truly" sanctified at conversion, and has already received that which suggests "the reality of a subsequent perfection in love," it would seem that the subsequent perfection in love would not need a crisis experience of cleansing from Adamic sin in order to its realization, but only a gradual development. His next words are, "The great hurdle is overcome in new birth."²¹ He is soon saying that in conversion "the 'body of sin' is destroyed"²²--whereas many of us interpret this as the state or condition of original sin, and we understand that the destruction of it occurs at entire sanctification. He further says that conversion ". . . removes all the past and establishes an alternative to Adam,"²³ which sounds to me as though he is vaguely referring to Adamic sin, or original sin, and is saying that it is removed at conversion. And he seems to be saying that the commands to converted persons have to do with "holy living," which is emphasized in all theological orientations. These commands do not seem to be urgings to receive a crisis experience of cleansing from original sin for he writes, "These, in turn, are further reinforced by various Pauline and Johannine themes in which the indicative descriptions of the basic experience of being apprehended by Christ are the bases for all-encompassing commands to holy living."²⁴ Soon he is saying, again, what seems to preclude the need for a crisis cleansing from original sin: "The powerful and purging Word of God [at conversion] is engrafted and he [the converted person] is being transformed from one degree of glory to another (II Cor. 3:18)."²⁵

Within the past two years I have read hundreds of holiness books, for writing a 453-page manuscript on the doctrine of entire sanctification and for teaching the required course on the subject at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Lyon's interpretation of Scripture, as I am sure he himself realizes, is different from that found in an immense amount of literature produced in the past by the Holiness Movement. I personally believe the Scriptures do not sustain such an interpretation.

NOTES

¹James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*. (Naperville, Ill.: Allenson, 1970).

²Robert W. Lyon, "Baptism and Spirit-Baptism in the New Testament," in *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Spring 1979, 18-19.

³Ibid., 18. ⁴Ibid., 19.

⁵John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, comment on Acts 9:9.

⁶*Op. Cit*, 19. ⁷Ibid. ⁸Ibid., 19-20.

⁹Ibid., 20. ¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹W. T. Purkiser, Richard S. Taylor, and Willard H. Taylor, *God, Man*

and Salvation (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1977), p. 499, n.28.

¹²Lyon, op. cit., 20. ¹³Ibid. ¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., 18. ¹⁶Ibid., 21. ¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., 21-24. ¹⁹Ibid., 21. ²⁰Ibid., 23.

²¹Ibid. ²²Ibid., 24. ²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid 23. ²⁵Ibid., 24.

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EXEGETICAL-THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

by

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In recent times the association of entire sanctification with the baptism with the Holy Spirit for some Wesleyan-Arminian evangelicals has become problematic if not explicitly denied. One easily suspects that the charismatic adoption of the "baptism language" may be a major factor in this growing uneasiness, yet there is no reason why a ruthless probing of the exegetical foundations should not be had. The primary issue before us in this paper is thus not the theology of entire sanctification. On that point Wesleyan-Arminians are generally agreed. However, it should be said that the relationship of entire sanctification to circumcision of heart has a significant bearing on the relationship of Pentecostal language to entire sanctification, and it is apparent that some Wesleyan scholars equate circumcision of heart with conversion-initiation. Thus the doctrine of entire sanctification is also a part of the concern of this paper, but the primary issue is: Is entire sanctification effected through the infilling of the Holy Spirit?

James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*,¹ has duly received considerable attention among Wesleyan-Arminians, at least so it seems to me in my conversations with my colleagues, students, and others. Dunn's scholarly exegetical-theological treatise is pivotal. One can hardly discuss this doctrine without reference to the issues raised by Dunn, an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland and lecturer in New Testament at the University of Nottingham.

What I propose to do in this essay is to capitalize on his exegetical-theological conclusions either as support for what I perceive to be the truth in this matter, or as an opportunity to take an opposing point of view. This dialogical approach will serve two functions. It will make it unnecessary for me to spend time reproducing those findings in his work with which I so thoroughly agree. It will also help to get the areas of disagreement and conflict out into the open where they belong if theological formulation is to be better stated and exegetically based.

Areas of General Agreement

Let us first focus attention upon those areas of exegetical-theological agreement.

(1) Pentecost was a unique and unrepeatable event in *salvation history*, for the Holy Spirit in an unprecedented way became operative in the world through the Church.²

(2) Pentecost marked the new era of divine grace. To be sure, this does not mean that the regenerating grace of God was inoperative before the day of Pentecost, but in regard to the history of salvation, only on the day of Pentecost when the gift of the Spirit was given did the grace of God become operative in a unique way.³

(3) The Pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy of the last days in which "God's holy spirit" would be "purgative and refining for those who had repented."⁴ For Wesley, entire sanctification is the purifying of the believer's heart from sin whereby he is enabled to love God with all his heart. For Dunn, it would *appear* from his exegetical work that such an experience is what the New Testament expects to be normative.⁵ Presumably Dunn does not really think this ideal can be actualized, but rather, he most likely interprets this biblical demand for perfect love in accord with Calvin's imputation theory. At any rate, Dunn shows exegetical that it is the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit who purifies the heart.

(4) The Pentecostal gift is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promise of the new law written on the heart whereby one loves God with all his heart, soul, and mind. Dunn writes:

Among the specific promises of the Father for the messianic time and the new covenant the parallel between Ezek. 36.27 and Jer. 31.33 is particularly noticeable: both promise ability to keep the law, the law written in the heart (the enabling factor in Jeremiah) being precisely equivalent to the gift of the Spirit (the enabling factor in Ezekiel). In a new covenant theology, therefore, the Spirit is to be seen as the agent of the new covenant and its supreme blessing—the one who will write the law in their hearts, the one we may say who is the law written in their hearts.⁶

(5) The Pentecostal gift is the agent of spiritual circumcision of the heart which "is a total stripping away of the body of flesh (=the body of sin [Rom. 6:6]=the body of death [Rom. 7:24])."⁷ Dunn further writes:

Spiritual circumcision also is the work of the Spirit and the gift of the Spirit. The circumcision which matters is the circumcision of the heart effected by the Spirit (Rom. 2.28f.). We are the circumcision, because we have been circumcised by the Spirit, and having thus received the Spirit, we worship by the Spirit of God (Phil. 3.3)... The gift of the spirit is therefore to be equated with the circumcision of the heart (cf. Deut. 30.6 with Jer. 31.33 and Ezek. 36.26f.).⁸

I also endorse this association of the "cir-

cumcision of the heart" with the "baptism in the Spirit."⁹ It should also be noted that Wesley equated "circumcision of the heart" with entire sanctification: "January 1, 1733, I preached the sermon on the Circumcision of the Heart, which contains all that I now teach concerning salvation from all sin, and loving God with an undivided heart.... This was then, as it is now, my idea of perfection."¹⁰ It is also significant that Wesley appeals to these same passages (Deut. 30:6; Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:26f.) as texts to support his doctrine of Christian perfection.¹¹

(6) The Pentecostal gift is the agent of sanctification, for it is the Holy Spirit who sanctifies.¹² In particular, Dunn shows that the cleansing of the heart of the 120 believers on the day of Pentecost was effected by the baptism with the Holy Spirit.¹³ It should be noted that Dunn (as a Reformed scholar) would most likely interpret this "cleansing" in relative terms in so far as the believer's *actual* cleansing is concerned, although he would allow that "cleansing" would be "entire" in so far as the believer's *ideal* standing in Christ is concerned. For Wesley, cleansing from all sin can be effected in the heart of the believer in this life. He quotes I John 1:9 as a text to differentiate between the two works of grace: Forgiveness of sins relates to justification, whereas "a perfect Christian" is one who is "cleansed from all

unrighteousness" and thus "freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers."¹⁴ He also quotes Charles Wesley's hymn, "The Promise of Sanctification," to designate what he means by Christian perfection. The following verse is particularly enlightening:

Thy sanctifying Spirit pour
To quench my thirst and wash me clean:
Now, Father, let the gracious shower
Descend, and make me pure from sin.¹⁵

(7) The gift of the Spirit is not the same as the manifestations and gifts of the Spirit.¹⁶

(8) The baptism with the Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; Acts 11:15-16), the reception (*lambanein*) of the Spirit (John 7:39; 14:17; 20:22; Acts 1:8; 2:38; 8:15,17,19; 10:47; 19:2), the Spirit "falling upon" (*epipiptein*) (Acts 8:16, 10:44, 11:15), the Spirit "coming upon" (*epelthontos*) (Acts 1:8; 19:6), "filled with the Spirit" (Acts 2:4; 9:17) are equivalent phrases *in these particular* passages to denote the reality of Pentecost either in reference to the day of Pentecost or to subsequent occasions similar to the day of Pentecost.¹⁷ Other instances of being "filled with Spirit" in the Book of Acts (Acts 4:8, 31) probably are to be interpreted as typical of the Old Testament prophetic type of "fullness of the Spirit" whereby the prophet is enabled to *speak* the Word of God, rather than indicating the ethical type of "fullness of the Spirit" which marked the arrival of the New Covenant.

(9) Dunn points out that in the case of the disciples their regeneration preceded their baptism in the Spirit. He also points that there were two distinct events in the life of Jesus which have soteriological significance. One event was His identification with sinful men in which He was baptized with water, representing man's need for repentance.¹⁸ The other distinct event was His baptism in the Spirit in which He was the first to enter the new covenant.¹⁹ In both cases, the significance of these two events for Dunn is that it marks the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant.

Hence, "what Jordan was to Jesus, Pentecost was to the disciples. As Jesus entered the new age and covenant by being baptized in the Spirit at Jordan, so the disciples followed him in like manner at Pentecost."²⁰ Since the disciples' baptism with the Spirit is acknowledged to be subsequent to their regeneration, one wonders why Dunn does not try to argue that they were not really converted until Pentecost in accord with his exegesis of the Samaritans and Ephesians (Acts 8 and 19). His concession in regard to the disciples' time-lapse between their regeneration and baptism with the Spirit seems to annul his exegesis of the other instances in the Book of Acts.

The One Area of Disagreement

Up to this point, the areas of general agreement with Dunn have been noted, especially his equation of Pentecostal language with circumcision of heart and loving God with all the heart. The substantive difference which this writer has with Dunn's position is his disallowance of two definitive works of grace.

Dunn's emphasis that salvation is a "single complex event"²¹ is indisputable. On the other hand, his insistence that no longer is there a "chronological disjointedness" in which conversion and the baptism with the Spirit are separated in time, since we have now entered the Pentecostal era in which the two events form "a chronological unity," is not so certain as he assumes.²² His reasoning is as follows. The apostles were regenerated before Pentecost, but this does not justify "taking the apostles' experience as *the* or *a possible* pattern for experience today."²³ Why? Because "the disciples' experience was determined by the process of salvation-history." He further says: "With Pentecost the transition phase comes to an end; the old stage of salvation-history was wholly past and the new stage wholly in operation. Henceforth entry into the blessings of the new dispensation is immediate, whereas for the apostles it was 'staggered.'"²⁴ To be sure, he admits that the Gospel of "John certainly shows that it may not be possible to equate Spirit-baptism with regeneration, *but only in the case of the apostles.*"²⁵ Henceforth, "he who believes receives the Spirit in his cleansing, regenerating, baptismal power, bringing the forgiveness and life of the new dispensation."²⁶

Though Dunn is certainly right to stress the single complex event of salvation in the life of the individual believer, there is no reason why he should insist upon its "chronological unity." It seems to me justifiable to say that there are two coordinate moments in the single complex event of salvation and that there may be a time-lapse between these two distinct, but coordinate moments of conversion and the Spirit's baptism. Nor is it necessary to think of these distinct but coordinate moments as a "chronological disjointedness," for these moments are genuinely continuous though temporally distinct.

One of the things that I have liked so much about the theological concept of salvation history (a theological term widely used in contemporary theology) is its dynamic understanding of time. Salvation history is a continuous, albeit flexible and fluctuating line, running from creation to the eschaton (Cullmann). A number of unique events have occurred on this time-line at the center of which is the Christ-event. At no point however is

any one event discontinuous with what is in the past or in the future. The present embraces the past and is moving forward by the pressure of the future. The past is never merely past and the present is never merely present, for the present which becomes past has its truth in God who is the power of the unbounded future (Pannenberg). Hence, the depth of one's spiritual life is determined by the orientation of his own personal history of salvation to the broader scope of salvation history.

This concept of salvation history surely allows for a more dynamic understanding of time than a strict dispensationalist idea of biblical history with its mechanical dissection of history into static periods of time. One of the implications of a theology of salvation history is that some may not be enjoying the full blessing of the new covenant. Their own personal history of salvation may be stalled at some particular point on the time-line of salvation history. Simply living in the Pentecostal, new covenant age of salvation history does not *ipso facto* mean all people are universally and unilaterally Spirit-filled Christians. Nor does it mean that when one becomes a Christian he is fully introduced into the full blessing of the new covenant, even though the emphasis especially in Paul's writing is rightly that the norm of the Christian life is the holy life evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit. Yet, many Christians have a personal history of salvation which is in a very real but qualified sense pre-Pentecostal. Some have a personal history of salvation which is pre-Christian, or pre-Mosaic, or pre-Abrahamic! C. S. Lewis in his autobiography (*Surprised by Joy*) tells of the time when he gave in and "admitted God was God," yet his conversion to theism was not a conversion to Christ which came later.

It seems to me that Dunn's soteriological monism freezes up the working of the Spirit. Does not the Spirit deal with each person according to his own personal salvation history? On some occasions the Spirit's baptism may come at conversion (Acts 2:37-38; Acts 10). On other occasions, the Spirit's baptism may follow conversion. The cases of the Samaritans (Acts 8), Paul (Acts 9), and the Ephesians (Acts 19) seem to overrule Dunn's contention that the "staggered" experience of the disciples cannot be normative for today, if the "plain and obvious sense" of these Pentecostal passages is allowed to speak for itself.

(1) The Samaritans' experience in Acts 8 would seem to suggest a time-lapse between conversion and the Spirit's baptism. Dunn's attempt to explain this away by suggesting that the Samaritans only gave intellectual assent (*episteusan toi Philippoi*) to Philip's preaching is not convincing. Acts 8:14 says the Samaritans had "received the Word of God," a parallel to Acts 2:41 where it is said of those converted by Peter's Pentecostal sermon that they "received his word." To receive the Word of God is to experience the reality of God, for God is his Word. When Peter and John later came to Samaria, they "received the Holy Spirit" subsequent to their having "received the word of God" through Philip. Hence Dunn's failure to observe the two parallel terms, "received the word of God" and "received the Holy Spirit," is a fatal oversight in his exegesis.²⁷ Further, that Simon Magus "believed" and "baptized" even though Peter observed his lack of true repentance is hardly evidence that the rest of the Samaritan "believers" were still "in the bond of iniquity."

(2) Dunn's exegesis of Acts 19:1-2 seems unnatural. His argument that

the word "disciples" does not mean true Christian disciples because of the indefinite pronoun, *tinas mathetas*, is a non sequitur.²⁸ On another occasion, Luke refers to Ananias as a "certain disciple" [cf. *tis mathetes en Damaskoi* (Acts 9:10) with *eis Epheson . . . tinas mathetas* (Acts 19:1)]. Are we thus to conclude that the use of the indefinite pronoun suggests that Ananias was less than truly Christian?

This case of the Ephesians is a parallel to that of Apollos who only knew John's baptism though he had been "instructed in the way of the Lord" (Acts 18:25) and been "taught *accurately* the things concerning Jesus." F. F. Bruce points out the connection between Apollos and the Ephesians in this way:

When Luke uses the term "disciples" without qualification, as he does of these men, he elsewhere means disciples of Jesus; and Paul appears to have recognized them as Christian believers since he asks them if they received the Holy Spirit when they believed. Luke does not bring them into direct relation with Apollos, to whom he has devoted the preceding paragraph (probably he derived this incident and the Apollos episode from two different sources), but since Apollos also is said to have known "only the baptism of John," for all his accurate knowledge of the story of Jesus (18:25), it is natural to conclude that they had learned of the Christian way along a similar line of transmission, deviating from that acknowledged by both Luke and Paul. However, when Paul realized the defective character of these disciples' faith and practice, he gave them further instruction and "they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus"-the only instance of rebaptism in the New Testament. . . . It may be that the Ephesian disciples had received John's baptism more recently, when the age of the Spirit had already been inaugurated, in which case John's baptism might have been thought to be no longer valid.²⁹

Because these two passages stand in such close juxtaposition and because "they learned of the Christian way along a similar line of transmission" (Bruce), it seems to admit of supposition that Apollos was a pre-

Pentecostal" convert. Note the following progression of thought:

- (1) Apollos "was an eloquent man, *well versed (dunatos)* in the Scriptures" (v. 24).
- (2) "He had been *instructed (katechemenos--catechism, instruction, not a piecemeal and rumored knowledge)* in the way of the Lord" (v. 25).
- (3) "*taught accurately (akribos)* the things concerning Jesus" (this emphasis upon his accurate knowledge of Jesus could hardly have been stressed if he failed to understand the central confession of the gospel that "Jesus is Lord." If his "catechism" had been other than "Jesus is Lord" it would have been an "inaccurate" knowledge).
- (4) Priscilla and Aquila "expounded to him the way of God *more accurately (akribesteron)* (v.26). They did not change his understanding of who Jesus was; rather, they added to his incomplete knowledge. It only seems natural to suppose that Apollos (like the Ephesians) was a Christian disciple, but had not been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

(5) "he powerfully (not merely *well versed*, but now with added fervor and unction, vehemently, *eutonos*) confuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus" (v. 28).

Though Dunn calls into question the authentic nature of the Ephesians' (and by implication Apollos') contact with Christianity, he does admit that "we may not simply dub them 'disciples of John the Baptist' " since the "use of *mathetai* requires some connection with Christianity, and presumably Paul must have had some reason for addressing them as *hoi pisteusantes*."³⁰

(6) Saul's encounter with the risen Lord on the way to Damascus seems to imply that he was really converted. To suggest he really was not converted until his arrival three days later in Damascus seems to be a case of special pleading.³¹ Dunn fails to remember that Paul's encounter with the Lord was not without its preparation. He well knew the meaning of the gospel with its "blasphemous" claim that Jesus is Lord. Most forcefully was this message spoken by Stephen. To say, as Dunn does, that Saul, "a dazed and shocked man," could not have been brought into "full Christian commitment all in a matter of seconds"³² ignores his previous contact with the gospel. Consenting to the death of Stephen, Saul heard his last words: "*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit . . . Lord, do not hold this sin against them*" (Acts 7:59-60). With Saul's exposure to Stephen's message and martyrdom and with his vision of the naked presence of God in Jesus Christ on the road, it is impossible to think of him confusing who God was in that moment and simply speaking to Him as "Sir," though *kurie* in other contexts of course may be so translated (cf. John 12:21).

Saul's question, "Who are you, Lord?" was hardly a question in the sense of seeking factual information. It was more like a confession admitting Jesus was Lord. Only Jesus as Lord can reveal Himself to be such. Despite his rabbinic learning and adherence to the Law, Saul had now come to admit that he could not work his way to God; he could not discover through his own human efforts and reasoning the knowledge of God. And now, on the road, he comes to see that the knowledge of God is revealed through Christ and Christ alone. "Who are you, Lord?" The question is the answer. The Lord is whom He reveals Himself to be: "I am Jesus." When Paul came to Damascus, Ananias did not have to give him theological instruction; he only needed to administer the sacrament of baptism, symbolizing the washing away of his sins (Acts 22:16; cf. 26:12-21).

To be sure, Paul became "blind." Was this physical blindness symbolic of spiritual blindness? Was his groping about illustrative of his spiritual imbalance? Or was it not rather the result of his having seen the glory of God which engulfs and overwhelms? God's presence is like a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29). To come up against the stark reality of God so suddenly is to be struck down in fear and trembling. When Isaiah "saw the Lord" the shock was great: the foundations of the threshold shook, the house was filled with smoke, he could see nothing but the Lord high and lifted up, and he cried out "woe is me." Smoke may have blinded his eyes to everything else in the Temple, but he nonetheless "saw the Lord." This all-consuming experience of the divine is expressed by Abraham Heschel this way:

God to the Biblical man is a Being whose manifestation is more

than flesh and blood can bear. One cannot see Him, one cannot hear Him and remain alive (Exodus 33:20; Deuteronomy 4:33). "A dread, a great darkness" fell upon Abraham (Genesis 15:12). To perceive Him is to be crushed by His majesty.... When aflame with His presence, the world is consumed.³³

Saul may not have been able to see anything with his physical eyes because of the all-consuming presence of the Lord, but his spiritual sight was clear: He saw the Lord. "Have I not seen (*heoraka*) Jesus our Lord?" he tells the Corinthians. "Am I not an apostle?" (I Cor. 8:1). *Horao* is the word Jesus often used in speaking of His pre-existent state with His Father. He bears witness to what He had seen *horao* when He was with His Father in glory.³⁴ *Horao* thus suggests an existential reality; it is personal knowledge which is the most intimate knowledge that one can ever have. By contrast *theoreo* denotes "deliberate contemplation."³⁵ *Theoreo* is more theoretical, less personal. *Blepo* stresses "outward" and physical sight.³⁶ Saul was thus without sight (*blepon*). The men with him heard a voice, but saw (*theoreo*, spectator knowledge) no one. Saul saw (*horao*, personal knowledge) the Lord Jesus (I Cor. 9:1). (Cf. Gal. 1:16--*apokalupsai ton huion autou en emoi*).

The aorist passive of *horao* is *ophthe* (appeared) which is used particularly in reference to the appearances of the risen Lord to the apostles and others (cf. I Cor. 15:5-6, and especially verse 7 where Paul says "he appeared also to me"). It is significant that Ananias says in vs. 17: "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who *appeared* to you" (*ophtheis*, which stresses a personal knowledge of the risen Lord.). G. G. Findlay says: "*Iesous . . . heoraka . . .* is a unique expression with Paul" which denotes

. . . that actual beholding of the human and glorified Redeemer; from this dated both his faith and his mission . . . The visible and glorious man who then appeared, then declared Himself as "Jesus"; from that instant Saul knew that he had seen the crucified Jesus risen and reigning.... Personal knowledge of the Lord and a "word from His mouth" (Acts xxii. 14) were necessary to constitute an Apostle in the primary sense.³⁷

Further, to suggest "Brother Saul" means Ananias greeted Saul as a "fellow Jew" rather than a Christian brother³⁸ seems to go against the obvious sense of the text, for Ananias greeted Saul as one who had a personal knowledge (*horao*) of the Lord Jesus (Acts 9:17). Bengel shows that in *this* context Ananias called Saul a brother "by the old Jewish tie of connection, and by the new tie of Christianity."³⁹

An Excursus on Wesley

Dunn has rightly pointed out that John Wesley held the view that Saul was not converted until his arrival in Damascus.⁴⁰ In Acts 9:9 where it is said that Saul for three days was blind, Wesley comments in his *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament*: "So long he seems to have been in the pangs of the new birth." In another context, Wesley specifically says Paul did not have a "sudden conversion" on the road to Damascus; rather, the Lord worked gradually in Paul's soul until Ananias' ministry brought him into a state of conversion.⁴¹

In contrast to Wesley, it should be noted that even Bengel whose *Gnomon Wesley's Explanatory Notes* are in large part based on identifies Saul's conversion as being on the road to Damascus.⁴² John Calvin dates Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus when he "is suddenly changed into a new man"; he is "a new man framed by the Spirit of God."⁴³ *The Interpreter's Bible* calls his conversion sudden, whereas it was Ananias who "was the interpreter of the experience."⁴⁴ Other references which clearly date Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus include: *International Critical Commentary*, 32:178; *The Expositor's Bible*, 2:48; *The Interpreter's Dictionary*, K-Q, 684; *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 9:682; *The Anchor Bible, Acts of the Apostles*, p. 81; *The Pulpit Commentary*, 18:283; J. Rawson Lumby, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 192; Willi Marxsen, "The Resurrection of Jesus as a Historical and Theological Problem," *The Significance of the Message of the Resurrection for Faith in Jesus Christ*, ed. C. F. D. Moule, p. 24. In my searching through the Asbury Seminary Library reference shelves on critical exegetical studies, I did not find a single scholar who supported Dunn's and Wesley's interpretation of Saul's conversion, though there may well be. Perhaps Dunn only quoted Wesley at this point since he finds little support elsewhere! At least one wonders why Wesley, whose exegesis is not highly appreciated by the Reformed tradition, should have been quoted by Dunn.

Does this mean that John Wesley did not relate the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit to entire sanctification as a second definite work of grace subsequent to regeneration? Is the "baptism with the Spirit-entire sanctification" relationship typical only of John Wesley's colleagues (John Fletcher, Adam Clarke, Charles Wesley) and not of himself? The answer is that Wesley did not in a systematic way address himself to this issue.

In a letter to Joseph Benson (March 9, 1771), Wesley cautions against "Mr. Fletcher's late discovery" (presumably a reference to Fletcher's identification of "receiving the Spirit" with sanctification). It is significant that Wesley's objections in this letter were mostly pragmatic, not exegetical: "The Methodists in general could not bear this. It would create huge debate and confusion."⁴⁵

Yet, one week later in another letter to Benson, Wesley specifically equates "perfected in love" with "filled with the Holy Ghost."⁴⁶ Perhaps Wesley was assuming a distinction between "receiving the Spirit" and being "filled with the Spirit," whereas Fletcher did not.

Hence, in one of his letters, Wesley cautions against speaking of Christian perfection in terms of "receiving the Spirit" since it is also true that all Christians have the Spirit: "If they like to call this 'receiving the Holy Ghost,' they may: only the phrase in that sense is not scriptural and not quite proper; for they all 'received the Holy Ghost' when they were justified."⁴⁷

On the other hand, there are instances where Wesley tacitly related the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit to Christian perfection. In a letter to John

Fletcher, Wesley speaks of *fathers* (cf. I John 2:12-14) whose *Pentecost* had *fully come* in contrast to young men and "babes in Christ."⁴⁸

In another letter to Joseph Benson, Wesley supports Christian perfection with Old Testament passages which relate to the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit. Wesley writes: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you.' 'I will circumcise thy heart' (from all sin)."⁴⁹

In yet another place Wesley relates sanctification to the baptism with the Holy Spirit:

Many years ago my brother frequently said, "Your day of Pentecost is not fully come; but I doubt not it will: and you will then hear of persons sanctified, as frequently as you do now of persons justified." Any unprejudiced reader may observe, that it was now fully come. And accordingly we did hear of persons sanctified, in London, and most other parts of England, and in Dublin, and other parts of Ireland as frequently as of persons justified.⁵⁰

In his *Explanatory Notes*, Wesley specifically relates the "receiving of the Holy Spirit" by the Samaritans in Acts 8 and by the Ephesians in Acts 19 to the "sanctifying graces" which for Wesley refers to the fruit of the Spirit, the essence of which is perfect love.⁵¹

Four summary comments can be made in this regard: (1) Wesley did not systematically develop a doctrine of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. (2) His remarks about any possible identification of the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" with "entire sanctification" are few and inconclusive. (3) On occasion he does in a tacit manner bring the baptism with the Spirit into close identity with the doctrine of entire sanctification. Specifically, his equation of entire sanctification and circumcision of the heart would necessarily commit him to this equation, for Deuteronomy 30:6 (along with Jer. 31:31-32 and Ezek. 36:26f.) has its fulfillment on the Day of Pentecost. (4) It seems only reasonable for John Fletcher to relate the doctrine of Christian perfection to the baptism with the Holy Spirit because Wesley linked circumcision of the heart and entire sanctification. Hence, John Fletcher made explicit what was implicit in John Wesley. Fletcher writes: "This good old Gospel is far more clearly set forth in Mr. Wesley's sermon, called 'Scriptural Christianity,' and in his 'Hymns for Whitsunday,' which I earnestly recommend, as, pointing out the 'one thing needful' for all carnal professors."⁵² Fletcher particularly calls attention⁵³ to the following passage in Wesley's sermon, on what it means to be filled with the Spirit ("Scriptural Christianity"):

It was, therefore, for a more excellent purpose than this, that "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." It was, to give them . . . the mind which was in Christ, those holy fruits of the Spirit, which whosoever hath not, is none of His; to fill them with "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness" (Gal. V. 22-24) . . . to enable them to crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts.⁵⁴

In this respect, the association of entire sanctification with Pentecostal language could be shown to be erroneous *only if* Wesley's equation of circumcision of heart and perfect love were erroneous. However, in view of their equation in Deuteronomy 30:6, this does not seem to be a viable position *unless* one holds to the imputation theory of Calvin which is the probable position of Dunn, in which case every believer is altogether "holy in Christ" at conversion and only partially holy in actuality so long as one is still living in this fallen world.

Concluding Remarks

Dunn has rightly shown throughout his work that the emphasis in Paul's writing is always upon the full blessing of the new covenant. Likewise, writing from the Roman Catholic viewpoint, O'Shea of the Catholic University in distinguishing between baptism (conversion-initiation) and confirmation ("receiving the Spirit") writes: "The New Testament writers spoke of the effects of the redemption as a whole, without distinguishing too much (or perhaps enough) the role of each of these rites in the scheme of things."⁵⁵ Also Karl Rahner points out that Paul is not concerned with how the ascent to Christian perfection is achieved, but only that we are to be perfect as Christ is.⁵⁶ Paul talks of nothing less than the adequacy of God's grace to destroy all sin and to impart Christ's righteousness and holiness to the believer. Likewise, Rudolf Bultmann shows that Paul's concern is not primarily with the forgiveness of sins; rather, Paul's concern is freedom from sin.⁵⁷ Dunn's conclusion of what it means to be a Christian is: "That man is a Christian who has received the gift of the Holy Spirit by committing himself to the risen Jesus as Lord, and who lives accordingly."⁵⁸ Also, Wesley says that "every real Christian" is perfect in love and free from sin.⁵⁹

What Dunn has set forth is truly the Pauline ideal. But is the ideal realized in the moment of conversion? Is the new covenant which liberates from all inward sin the experience of every born-again Christian? Is the new convert truly circumcised in heart? Has he a perfect love? Does he actually possess the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ?

One thing is quite certain. If Dunn's exegetical-theological conclusions are defensible in regard to his soteriological monism, then most people whom we call "new converts" really are not even converted, for the Pauline ideal of the Christian life is scarcely realized so quickly at the initial step of faith. Perhaps Dunn would theologically allow for a progressive realization of the full blessing of the new covenant, though his *exegetical* consideration implies "full" salvation is experienced at "conversion-initiation."

Further, if Dunn's analysis of the baptism with the Spirit is correct, then Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification is wrong. Dunn insists that circumcision of heart, purity of heart, the fullness of the blessing of the new covenant are realized in the moment of conversion (i.e., for him, at the Spirit's baptism), but Wesley insists that circumcision of the heart which he defines as "the being so 'renewed in the spirit of our mind,' as to be 'perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.'"⁶⁰ is subsequent to conversion-initiation.

To be sure, there is only one Christian life, not two, and its ideal is a life free from sin. The sad fact of the matter is that far too many "Christians"

are not enjoying the full blessing of the new covenant. They have life, but not the abundant life of a heart purified by love. The ideal Christian is one of whom it can be said that, "God's love has been poured (*ekkechutai*, Pentecostal language-Acts 2:18; 10:45) into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given (*dothentos*, Pentecostal language, Acts 5:32; 8:18; 11:17; 15:8) to us" (Rom. 5:5).

NOTES

- ¹James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism With the Holy Spirit* (SCM Press Ltd., 1970).
²Ibid, pp. 53-54. ³Ibid, pp. 52ff. ⁴Ibid. p. 13.
⁵*Standard Sermons of John Wesley*, ed. Edward Sugden (London: Epworth Press, 1956), 2:173.
⁶Dunn, pp. 47-48.
⁷Ibid., p. 153.
⁸Ibid., p. 156.
⁹Ibid., pp. 146, 156.
¹⁰*Standard Sermons of John Wesley*, 1:265.
¹¹Ibid., 2:173. ¹²Dunn, pp. 106, 120, 163, 164.
¹³Ibid., pp. 81-82.
¹⁴*Standard Sermons of John Wesley*, 2:173.
¹⁵Ibid., 2:175.
¹⁶Dunn, p. 56.
¹⁷cf. Dunn, pp. 56ff.
¹⁸Ibid., p. 36.
¹⁹Ibid., p. 32.
²⁰Ibid., p. 40.
²¹Ibid p 37
²²Ibid p. 182.
²³Ibid., p. 181.
²⁴Ibid., p. 182.
²⁵Ibid
²⁶Ibid
²⁷Ibid p 65.
²⁸Ibid., p. 84.
²⁹F. F. Bruce, "The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles," *Interpretation* (27:2, April 1973), p. 176.
³⁰Dunn, p. 84.
³¹Ibid., p. 76
³²Ibid p 74
³³*God in Search of Man* (New York: Harper, 1955), p. 191.
³⁴*A Greek-English Lexicon*, trans. Arndt and Gingrich, p. 581.
³⁵*Vincent Word Studies*, 2:66.
³⁶Ibid.
³⁷*The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed., W. Robertson Nicoll, 2:845.
³⁸Dunn, p. 74.
³⁹*Gnomon of the New Testament*, p. 596.
⁴⁰Dunn, p. 77.
⁴¹*Works of John Wesley* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 9:93.
⁴²*Gnomon of the New Testament*, p. 596.
⁴³*Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949), p. 372.
⁴⁴*The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press. 1954), 9:118, 123.

- ⁴⁵*The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley*, ed. John Telford (London: Epworth, 1931), 5:228.
- ⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 229.
- ⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 215.
- ⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 6:221; cf. *Standard Sermons*, 2:169.
- ⁴⁹*Letters*, 5:214.
- ⁵⁰*Works*, 3:116.
- ⁵¹Cf. *Works*, 6:10, 16-17.
- ⁵²*Checks to Antinomianism* (New York: Hunt and Eaton, 1889, 1:591. Epworth, 1931), 5:228.
- ⁵³*Ibid.*, 1:593.
- ⁵⁴*Standard Sermons*, pp. 93-94.
- ⁵⁵William J. O'Shea, *Sacraments of Initiation* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 62.
- ⁵⁶*Theological Investigation*, trans. Karl and Beniface Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1967), 3:5.
- ⁵⁷*Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1951), 1:287.
- ⁵⁸Dunn, p. 229.
- ⁵⁹*Works*, 6:17.
- ⁶⁰*Standard Sermons*, 1 :268.

WESLEYAN THEOLOGY AND THE USE OF MODELS

by
Alden Aiken

In a world that is very much aware of the importance of communication, we who hold to the Wesleyan position on Christian holiness should be concerned about how we can best "tell it like it is" regarding holiness. We would do well to give careful attention to the relationship between the spiritual realities of which we speak and the words used to indicate those realities.

It has often been pointed out that the New Testament is written in Koine Greek, "the language of the masses." What has that to do with what goes on in the holiness pulpit? Lots! Lots if you are aware of the fact that language is made up of individual words, words that so often come out of purely empirical experience. The writers use the ordinary language of the people to communicate truth about what happens in man's heart and life as he is touched by the grace of God. That means that ordinary words like *destroy* and *death* are used to speak of what happens to the sin nature as man is deeply affected by the grace of God.

Turner argues for the use of substantive terms in explicating Wesleyan theology. He says, "Concrete terms and pictorial language are widely used in Scripture with no impairment to effective communication . . ." I would suggest that the spiritual meaning of those words will come through clearly and without misunderstanding only as we carefully articulate the way in which those words are used. I am suggesting that we see those words as models.

Ian Ramsey (1915-1972, Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion at Oxford and Bishop of Durham) suggests the use of models in speaking to the non-Christian the truth of the gospel. My reading in Ramsey and in John Wesley led me to see that the philosopher/theologian of the twentieth century and the revivalist/theologian of the eighteenth century have something in common in the way in which they use words to communicate spiritual reality.

The idea of speaking of the sin nature as a "thing" is often given extremely rough treatment by Wesleyans. It rather seems to me that about the only time that idea is not "kicked" is when it is thought to be dead. Not so with Wesley! How could anyone ever suggest that Wesley speaks of the sin nature as a thing? It is my thesis that, after trying to stomp the idea to

death over and over, we must deal with the fact that Wesley does indeed speak of the sin nature in that way. Back to that later.

Ramsey and Models

My purpose in this paper is to show how Ramsey's thought may help us to clarify some thinking about the Wesleyan concept of holiness, and to suggest that the use of models will help us to communicate our ideas on the abundant life to other Christians.

A major thesis of Ramsey is that in order to speak meaningfully of God we must use words that have an empirical base, words that are associated with the bare facts of human existence.

My own interest in Ramsey's thought was aroused as I read of his concept of models and qualifiers. He wants us to realize that when we speak of God we are using models. He says that the model is close in meaning to metaphor. The models are not descriptive miniatures; they are not picture enlargements. He does say that between the model and the phenomena there is a "similarity-with-a-difference" and that indeed "generates insight."² That "difference" is very important to Ramsey.

Ramsey says that language about God "eludes direct statement."³ He maintains that when we talk about God we must not use language that is "descriptive through and through."⁴ I see some dangers in Ramsey's position and I maintain that we must hold to the conviction that our concepts regarding spiritual truth are reliable. But we must also admit, because mystery is involved, that we do not speak in the same way of the workings of God in the human heart that we speak in when we refer to empirical reality. When we speak of what God does in the hearts of persons, we do not speak with the same sort of directness with which we speak when we say, "The cat is on the mat."

With me at first that was "rubbing the cat the wrong way. " I had been exposed to Francis Schaeffer with his strong insistence upon the reliability of propositional truth. And I had been brought up in the Church and was taught to sing

Many things may seem obscure,
But of one thing I am *sure!* . . .

I have no question about my relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. But through contact with Ramsey, I have learned to look differently at the language we use when we speak of God and the issues in our lives that are related to Him. Ramsey is really telling us that when we speak of spiritual realities such as being *saved* or being *sanctified* we do not speak with the same kind of directness that is there when we say, "The cat is on the mat." For me, that does not shake faith in the certainty of spiritual propositions; but it is a recognition of the fact that when we speak of spiritual realities we must use words that come out of human existence as it could be without direct reference to God. Words like *cleansed* and *destroyed* reflect a spiritual reality but they have their base in empirical experience.

It is Ramsey's position that the model will "never talk with complete intelligibility about what is ultimately mysterious."⁵ I do not agree entirely with Ramsey, but what is important to this study is that no one model can

ever reflect a full understanding of a spiritual experience. He puts it this way--"A model by its very character will never give us the full story."⁶

One example of Ramsey's use of models and qualifiers is to be seen in the way in which he speaks of God as *Heavenly Father*. *Father* is the model and *heavenly* is the qualifier. When we use the word *father* as a model we are saying in effect, "There is something about God that is something like an earthly *father*." He is not exactly like an earthly *father* so we must qualify the model with the word *heavenly*. He suggests also that we qualify models with the use of other models in some cases. We also speak of God as

Judge, King, etc. Then we spread the models out before our minds and with them qualifying one another we have a significant disclosure regarding the nature of God.⁷

Ramsey also discusses the atonement in terms of models. He sees *redemption* as a model. He makes this incisive comment:

Of all models, this one [*redemption*] . . . has certainly generated some of the most unedifying discussions. To whom was the *ransom* paid? Who have we been *redeemed* from? . . . The waters have become deeper as cosmological speculations flourished. Unabated excursions were made into primitive anthropology.⁸

The way in which *redemption* has sometimes been understood in the Church, is in Ramsey's opinion, an example of the failure to see that when we talk about spiritual realities we are not using language that is "descriptive through and through."

I see a very important distinction between what is called symbolical use of language to speak of God and Ramsey's use of models. I am not suggesting that we may speak only symbolically of God or of the workings of God. It is my understanding that symbolical language leaves us in the position where we in fact forsake the concept of meaningful propositional truth. It is my observation that when we are speaking symbolically of God we must at some point deny the symbol or speak incorrectly of God. But we need never abandon the model.⁹ For this reason I see the model-qualifier method, rather than the use of symbol, as a reliable way of speaking of God.

We may speak reliably and preach with authority with this understanding of the use of words. So often the words we use to communicate spiritual truth have their base in empirical experience. We do well to recognize that fact and to see that the words are models and that used with the proper qualifiers they may lead to significant disclosures.

The Bible and the Use of Models

In any approach to truth and meaning it is appropriate that we very soon deal with the question as to whether that approach is consistent with truth and meaning as it is set out in the Bible. I want to deal with a few passages from the New Testament and will attempt to show that in those passages models are used.

A few years ago I had what was to me an interesting conversation with a Lutheran pastor friend. He insisted that since the New Testament promises us that by faith in Christ we become God's sons that we are always God's sons. I must be, he earnestly contended, the son of my (earthly) father regardless of what notorious or despicable thing I may do. I tried to

tell my friend that sonship is only one of the ways in which the New Testament speaks of the relationship to God that I enter into by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish that I had known about models. The model concept clarifies what I was trying to say. Of the relationship to God that I enter into by faith in Christ, *son* is a model (Romans 8:14-15) and *servant* is another (John 12:26). If we think of sonship and servanthood as more than models then the two ideas clash. A *son* is not a *servant*. There is a very different relationship between a man and his *son* and a man and his *servant*. We are not at times the *sons* of God and at other times his *servants*. But we are indeed in a grace relationship to God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. One model of that relationship is *son* and another is *servant*. If we see the se as more than models, then the ideas clash and we end up with what is indeed "unedifying discourse."

Speaking of sons and servants, one is reminded of a rather well-known statement of Wesley. He records, "I had even then [while a missionary in Georgia and before] the faith of a servant, though not that of a son."¹⁰ As he looks back, he is convinced that his faith was not all that it should have been and yet he does not make an outright denial of having been converted. Curnock says that Wesley later comes back to this entry and writes (in relationship to his conversion), "I am not sure of this."¹¹ With my understanding of models I hold that all the way along we must have both the faith of a *servant* and the faith of a *son*. Both are models.

The Lord Jesus says, "No longer do I call you slaves; . . . but I have called you friends" (John 15:15).¹² He proceeds (in verse 20) to tell them to *go on* thinking of themselves as his slaves, "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' . . . they will also." The inference is clear that the *friend* of Jesus is also the *slave* of Jesus. Both of those models give meaningful insight into the relationship to God that is mine by faith.

We may properly say that our relationship to God is something like that between a *son* and an earthly father-not exactly (the model never presenting the full story) but something like that (the model indicating a similarity-with-a-difference). Or we may say that our relationship to Him is something like that of a *servant* to a master, not exactly but like that. And there are other models such as *friend*, and considered together they qualify one another and they give us a reliable representation of our relationship with God in Christ.

John Wesley and the Models Idea

Of course it would be anachronistic to say that John Wesley is Ramseyan in the use of models. It is my thesis that Wesley has an understanding of the Scripture and of communication that enables him to use, at various points in setting out doctrine, the kind of thinking that Ramsey espouses.

What I attempt here is by no means a comprehensive view of Wesley's thought. I want to touch on some of his writings and I cite what I see to be representative statements. We must not overdo the "early" and "late" Wesley. He says, "I defy any man living to prove that I have contradicted myself at all in any of these writings which I have published from the year 1738 to the year 1788."¹³

I deal here with some words that he uses as he speaks of the second work of grace and some issues related to it and to some of its results.

It is important to see that Wesley is not rigid and hard in his use of theological terms. He can use words as "models." He writes, "I met about thirty persons who had experienced a deep work of God. And whether they be *saved from sin* [italics mine] or no, they are certainly full of faith and love."¹⁴ In several places he makes reference to individuals who believed that they were "*saved from sin*" (italics mine). And he talks about "persons whom I believe to be *saved from sin*" (italics mine).¹⁵ These statements suggest to me the "models" kind of thinking. In the first case (mentioned in this paragraph) the satisfactory model is "*full of faith and love*" and in the other the model he uses is "*saved from sin*."

Wesley is not prepared to "argue to the death" in every case that the model *saved from sin* must be used. He sees that as a model. He can use the model at one time and not insist upon it at another. And he doesn't get uptight about it because "a model by its very character will never give us the full story."¹⁶ When you understand that a word or a phrase is not intended to tell the whole story, then you can tentatively drop it without feeling that the bottom has dropped out of your whole theological system. We can learn from Wesley that we do not need to be rigid about the use of words when there are so many models pointing in the same direction.

Now back to this matter of Wesley speaking of the sin nature as a "thing"--reading Wesley with a certain slant, one discovers that he is the "ring leader" of that notorious batch of "thing thinkers." He cites, plainly with favor, the testimony of one Grace Caddy, ". . . I felt the *remains of sin* [all italics in this paragraph mine] in my heart, which I longed to have *taken away*."¹⁷ In the sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," he says that one should not assume "that all sin is *destroyed, root and branch* the moment a

man is justified."¹⁸ Now sin is not only something that *remains* but now it has *root and branch*. Then when we go to his sermon, "The Repentance of Believers," he might appear to be getting into hopelessly deep theological water over his "thing thinking" about the sin nature. Here he not only calls sin the "*inbred monster*" but he gives it a "*face*."¹⁹

E. H. Sugden comments on the paragraph (in the sermon "The Scripture Way of Salvation") in which Wesley makes reference to the moment in which "sin ceases to be" and goes on to say "that the Lord should destroy sin." Sugden comments:

He never quite shook off the fallacious notion that sin is a *thing* which was to be taken out of a man, like a cancer or a rotten tooth; and so in the *Minutes*, 1768 he says "And if sin ceases before death, there must, in the nature of the thing, be an instantaneous change. There must be a last moment wherein it does exist, and a first moment wherein it does not." But sin is not a thing.²⁰

It seems obvious to me, from the above quotes from Wesley, why Sugden would say that. But he is not correct. He is taking Wesley to be using language that is "descriptive through and through." He gets too "articulate" with Wesley's words here and as sure as anything the "unedifying discourse" follows. Wesley's words here should be seen as models.

What I am suggesting is that we must distinguish between the way in which Wesley often speaks (especially in preaching) of the sin nature and the way in which he thinks of the sin nature. That is crucial to understanding him, and anyone who uses the models kind of thinking. Wesley does not see sin as a thing to be removed. He sees it, in his own words, as a "proneness to evil" or a "tendency to self-will."²¹ But how do you communicate the stark and shocking reality of that "proneness" or that "tendency" that is so strong? You use models.

We do well to say, "Yes, Wesley does speak of the sin nature as a thing!" But when he does he is using language in the way that Ramsey advocates. Sin is real and it so profoundly affects persons that to even approximate adequacy in communicating its reality, we must, in one sense do "thing thinking!" We must use words that would suggest "thingness" of the sin nature but realize all the while that we are using models, words indicating a "similarity-with-a-difference." We are human, and for now at least anchored to an empirical world, and models enable us to come to a meaningful disclosure of spiritual realities. And we see too that the grace of God is so effective in dealing with man's deep need, that when it is dealt with, it is something like a *root* being *pulled out* or an evil thing being *destroyed*, so powerful and effective is the grace of God.

According to Wesley, what sort of life is possible when the "monster with the ugly face" *ceases to be*? What can be said of the life that is the result of the second work of grace?

Wesley sees the possibility of a life of *Christian perfection*. In the sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," (and other places as well) he uses *perfection* as the model and *Christian* as the qualifier. In that sermon he carefully sets out the ways in which the Christian is not perfect (having infirmities, etc.). But there is a *perfection* qualified by the word *Christian*. And by *Christian* he means one "that . . . sinneth not."²²

In "A Short History. . .," Wesley says that in Dublin about forty persons enjoyed "the pure love of God." He goes on to say that about the same number received the remission of sins. In just a few pages in "A Short History . . .," I took note of three references in which *love* is the model and *pure* is the qualifier.²³

It is interesting to me that Wesley often uses *salvation* as the model for the life that flows out of the experience of *entire sanctification*. He quotes a letter from Samuel Meggot in which the writer says, "at least twenty persons have found peace with God, and twenty-eight the *great salvation* [italics mine]. This morning one found peace with God and one the second blessing."²⁴ Clearly the *great salvation* grows out of the second blessing. At other times Wesley uses *salvation* as the model and *full* as the qualifier.

Wesley asks at one time why it is that there are so few witnesses to *full salvation*. He gets the answer, "We never expected it to come in a moment, by simple faith, in the very same manner as we received justification."²⁵

Wesley is not out to drive into everyone's head "holiness properly so-called." He even advises one woman that she should "not be careful about this or that name [for the blessing received]. Do not reason one moment what to call it, whether *perfection* [italics mine] or anything else."²⁶ He is able to see that no one word or phrase says it all. There are a number of models that could be used. Each contributes some insight. Together they lead to meaningful disclosure.

Telling it Like it Is

Wesleyans have not always clearly articulated the relationship between the spiritual realities spoken of and the words used to indicate them. I am suggesting that we set forth that relationship in terms of models.

I am not simply trying to make a case for the use of more than one word to express what takes place in the second work of grace. It is not the case that one model tells the story from one point of view and another from another. No one model tells the whole story.

I would suggest some work with a formula:

A (*baptized* with the Holy Spirit)²⁷

B (*cleansed* from sin)

C (*sanctified* wholly)

S (the full articulation of the second work of grace)

First of all I would suggest what we must *not* assume: It is *not* correct to say that

A = S, or that B = S, or that C = S.

And it is *not* correct to say

A + B + C (+ any other number of models) = S.

It *is* correct to say

A is less than S, B is less than S, C is less than S,

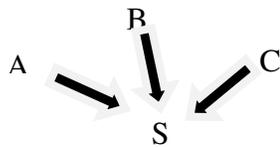
and to say,

A gives meaningful insight into S,

B gives meaningful insight into S,

C gives meaningful insight into S.

We could set it out this way-



(I am saying here that
A "points to" S, etc)

In the formula, I use only A, B, and C; but a number of models could be added. That same sort of work could be done with the models that point to the lived-out life of holiness.

Well, I don't talk like that in the pulpit--I'm just a "plain old country boy preacher." As I pray for the anointing of the Holy Spirit, I preach at one time on the *baptism* with the Holy Spirit and at another time on *cleansing* from sin and at another time on entire *sanctification*. One model gives enough insight to John so that he understands enough of the experience to be hungry for it. Mary may be led to hunger for a deeper relationship with Christ through insight from the *baptism* model. And Sue may need lots of preaching and teaching on various models before the "light comes on." I almost always say, when preaching on one of these subjects, "This is only one way to say what God does in the deeper work of grace."

Ramsey suggests that various models (*redemption*, etc.) enable us to say something meaningful about the atonement. But he cautions, "When we become to any degree articulate in terms of these models the discourse

bristles with difficulties."²⁸ In that statement is a good word for the Wesleyan theologian. We've used the word *destroyed* to describe what happens to the sin nature when one experiences the second work of grace. I see that word as a model and it is true that when we try to stretch the model out too far or when we become too articulate, our discourse "bristles with difficulties." We should see such words as *destroyed*, *cleansed*, *death of* as models to describe the work of God in the *heart* (another model) of the believer as He deals with the sin nature. If we run these models too far down the wrong path we will be faced with the same problem that confronted those who took the *redemption* model too far. The question is asked, "To whom was the *ransom* price paid?" If we fail to see these words as models indicating the way in which the sin nature is dealt with then we can find ourselves in similar difficulty: "If the sin nature was really *destroyed*, then how could the individual ever sin again?" Seeing these words as models we will not become too "articulate" and so will avoid needless theological difficulties.

Even though Wesleyans use more than one word to describe the results of the second work of grace, we must be alert to the fact that no one word or phrase tells the whole story. No word presents a literal account.

I realize at least some of the danger of being misunderstood when suggesting that we are using words that are not literal descriptions of what takes place. Yet we do accept this (I hope) in relation to the atonement. We understand that we are being biblical when we sing with great joy, "Redeemed-how I love to proclaim it!" But we do not hold that God laid so much "cash on the barrelhead" to set us free from that cruel master Satan. The word is a model.

I am *not* suggesting that all biblical words are models. This is no attempt to set out a complete hermeneutic. When we read of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus we are not seeing a model. That is literally what took place. I am calling for a certain view of a number of words that we use in relation to the second work of grace and the life that grows out of that (although I tried to illustrate that view with reference to some other areas also). It is my understanding that the Bible gives us a number of models that, qualifying one another, lead to meaningful insight regarding the abundant *life* possible by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I do not see these models as synonyms. One model may or may not be even close in meaning to another.

The statement of John the Baptist is a good indication of this usage in the New Testament: "I *baptize (baptizo)* you in water.... He Himself will *baptize (baptisei)* you with the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 3:11).²⁹ It is clear that Jesus will not do with the Holy Spirit exactly and literally what John does with water.

When the Lord Jesus is around the table with His followers at that solemn supper, near in time to His death, He will "*dip (bapsas)* the morsel" (John 13:26). The morsel gets affected through and through by the stuff it is dipped into. It is not the whole story, but to be *baptized* with the Holy Spirit is to be affected by the Holy Spirit in a way somewhat like a body is affected by water poured over it or into which it is immersed. Or the spirit of man is affected something like bread is affected by the liquid it is soaked in. Surely that model will give some insight. The word *baptism* understood

as a model has ethical content. It does not simply indicate an experience: The Spirit, being holy, has an influence in the direction of a holy life.

In one familiar reference the Apostle Paul says "Be *filled (plerousthe)* with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). John in another place tells us that Mary takes a pound of very costly spikenard-ointment and anoints the feet of Jesus. The house is "*filled (eplerothe)* with the fragrance of the ointment" (John 12:3). What a way to model the life of holiness! The life that honors the Lord Jesus is the life that is *filled* with the fragrance of the Holy Spirit.

The words we use regarding the relationship between the believer and the Holy Spirit are reliable ones. No one is "descriptive through and through" of the second work of grace or of the resulting life. It is something like being *baptized* or being *filled*. Other models such as *dwell* (Rom. 8:9 and 1 Cor. 3:16) could be used. All give some insight. Together, qualifying one another, they present a reliable account.

Paul prays for the Thessalonians, "May the God of peace Himself *sanctify (hagiasai)* you entirely" (I Thess. 5:23). Jesus says, "For their sakes I *sanctify (hagiazō)* Myself" (John 17:19). Surely what Paul prays for the Thessalonians is not exactly what Jesus does to Himself on our behalf. In both cases models are used. Jesus says that the temple "*sanctifies (hagiasas)* the gold" (Matt. 23:17). The temple sets apart the gold for sacred use. It had to be the very best when presented. No impurities! The entire *sanctification* of the person is something like that-not exactly like that because persons are not like chunks of metal, not even precious metal.

The writer to the Hebrews promises that the blood of Christ (will) "*cleans (katharizei)* from dead works" (Heb. 9:14). A little farther on (9:22) he says that according to the Law one can almost say "all things are *cleansed (katharizetai)* with blood." Surely *cleansed* cannot mean exactly the same thing in both cases. Models!

Matthew tells of an instance where Jesus stretches out His hand to a leper and says, "Be *cleansed (katharisthēti)*" (Matt. 8:3). How can you describe the working of God in the human personality? It is similar to but not exactly like the *cleansing* of a leper. In what way is it similar? In what way is it different? The answers are found only in diligent study of the Word.

Purkiser points out the fact that the soul, the conscience, and the heart are all mentioned as objects of the divine cleansing.³⁰ I suggest that each is a model of the self.

With the realization that we are dealing with models there is not any need to explain why the New Testament teaches that the *mind* is to be *renewed*, the *conscience* is *cleansed*, the "you" is *filled* with the Holy Spirit, the *innermost being* is the "place" from which flow *rivers of living water*. It seems to me that there would be need to explain, were we dealing with exact and literal descriptions, why it is the *mind* that is renewed rather than the *conscience*, etc. And we do not need to get uptight about the Bible's lack of smooth transitions from one type of text to another.³¹

I am not at all suggesting that the etymology of these words be ignored. We just can't be honest with the texts without being aware of the work that has been done regarding the developed meaning of these words. But we should see the development of these words as the development of models.

I recommend *Christian perfection* as one important model and qualifier to point to the life that is lived out of the second work of grace. *Perfection* is a biblical word. Some preaching has claimed more for the word than some of us understand should be claimed. The model is open to misunderstanding (just as is *love* and many other models). But even with that, I see it as a good model—both Christians and non-Christians need to hear clearly the ethical demands of the faith. The model is qualified by the word *Christian* and that should help us to be on our guard against the unbiblical use of the model *perfection*. It is appropriate that *Christian* be the qualifier because it points to the believer's relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. We must give careful attention to that which enables us to make Christ clearly visible in our teaching and preaching.

Just as we are forbidden to make graven images, so we are hindered by this approach from building shrines around certain words. It is incumbent upon us that we be mindful of the vast wealth of models in the Bible, pointing to the second work of grace and the life of holiness.

Concluding Remarks

It has been my thesis that the writers of the New Testament employ a number of models to point to various aspects of our relationship to God and to express the meaning of the workings of God's grace in the lives of persons. I attempted to show that Wesley does this sort of thinking, at certain points at least. And I tried to show that our theologizing would be helped by this approach. It seems to me that in using this approach we are simply being consistent with truth. There are some important practical results that could come out of this study.

This insight, first of all, should have a decided effect upon our preaching. We must keep in mind the fact that "a model by its very character will never give t he full story."³² The holiness preacher must not stay with a group of texts that deal with one or a few models. We should fight the temptation to get so wrapped up in one type of text that we forget others that deal with the *abundant life* in Christ. When we go all-out for one model and neglect the others, then we fail to come to an adequate understanding of what the second work of grace is all about. Difficulties are created by any excessive emphasis upon a very proper model when that leads to the neglect o f others. Various models must be used, in order to bring our listeners to the point where through the Holy Spirit they come to a degree of understanding that could be thought of as a "significant disclosure," and that could be used by the Spirit in order to conviction.

We don't really give the full story even if we preach every Sunday on *entire sanctification*! We need to wrestle with truth while doing careful exegesis on all sorts of texts and come up with sound expository preaching. It is my impression that the Wesleyan movement would benefit from a greater emphasis upon expository preaching.

In a comment on Ramsey, I came across a good word of advice about preaching with this understanding--Barbour says of Ramsey, "He urges us to use as many models as possible; but we are to avoid mixing discourse deriving from different models."³³ How very important that is! When preaching on a text having to do with being *filled* with the Spirit, I must not, without any logical cross-over, go on to discuss the implications

of *entire sanctification*. *Filled* is a model as is *sanctification*: Both point in the same direction but have their own distinct meanings. With this approach the problem is not what to preach on but how to find enough time to mine the truth that is in so many individual texts.

Another potential consequence of this perspective is the improvement of communication with our brothers and sisters of the Keswick position. I've heard persons say, in speaking of another of a different theological position, "Well we're really saying the same thing, they're just using different words." And of others I've heard it said, "They really don't have anything in common with us." Neither statement is true of those who hold to the Keswick position. I suggest that it is proper to say, "When the Keswick theologian is using certain models he/she is indeed saying the same thing." When using other models he/she is not saying the same thing.

In his biography of Duncan Campbell, Woolsey speaks of Campbell's second crisis experience. He writes, "Sometimes he referred to it as the 'baptism of the Holy Ghost' [I wish that he had said 'with' rather than 'of'!], 'the fullness of the Holy Spirit,' or an experience of 'full salvation.'"³⁴

Stephen Olford is a preacher rather than a theologian in a formal sense. It is my view that he accurately represents the Keswick position. I am to some degree familiar with his writings and I believe that when he says (in commenting on Acts 2:4) "God *fills* [italics mine] only the hearts and lives of those who have a receiving faith" that he is meaning by *fills* the same thing that I, as a Wesleyan, mean when I preach about being *filled* with the Spirit.³⁵

We do have our differences on the second work of grace and on the life of holiness, and related theological issues must not be ignored, but we should be very much alert to the fact that their position is in some ways like ours. They use some of the same models that we use. As we discuss with them the idea that we are both using models, sharing some, that discussion should lead to a deeper appreciation of those ideas that we do hold in common and to a greater willingness to discuss more openly the points on which we disagree.

There is another important outcome of this understanding--we are encouraged to celebrate. When we recognize that many models are necessary to express even one result of God's grace in Christ then we get some insight into how amazing that grace really is! With that realization we turn in grateful praise to the Lord Jesus Christ in whom we are made new *creatures*, who *baptizes* with His Holy Spirit, through whom we have the promise of the Spirit who will *dwell*, who suffers that He might *sanctify*, through whom the body of sin is *destroyed*, whose blood *cleanses* from all sin, who has *perfected* those who are *sanctified*.

All honor is His!

NOTES

¹ George Allen Turner, *Christian Holiness* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1977), p. 99.

² Ian Ramsey, *Models and Mystery* (London: University Press, 1964), p.

- ³ Ramsey, "A Logical Exploration of Some Christian Doctrines," *Chicago Theological Seminary Register*, LIII, no. 5 (May 1963), p. 2.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 30.
- ⁶ Ramsey, *Christian Discourse* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 44.
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 38.
- ⁸ Ibid., p. 42.
- ⁹ For example, when we use *height* as a symbol of where God is, we must at some time abandon the symbol or we speak wrongly. And, on the other hand, when we use the model *wise* to speak of God and qualify that model with the word *infinite* (or *infinitely*), we never speak incorrectly of God.
- ¹⁰ *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1909), 1:423. Cited hereafter as *Journal*.
- ¹¹ *Journal*, 1:422, Editor's footnote.
- ¹² This and all quotations from the Bible are from the *New American Standard Bible*.
- ¹³ *Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, ed. John Telford (London: The Epworth Press, 1931), 8:179. Cited hereafter as *Letters*.
- ¹⁴ "A Short History of the People Called Methodists," *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M.*, ed. Thomas Jackson, 3rd ed. (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 13:350. Cited hereafter as *Works*.
- ¹⁵ *Letters*, 8:110.
- ¹⁶ *Christian Discourse*, p. 44.
- ¹⁷ *Works*, 13:364.
- ¹⁸ *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, ed. Edward H. Sugden, 3rd ed. (London: The Epworth Press, 192 1), 2:456. Cited hereafter as *Sermons*.
- ¹⁹ *Sermons*, 2:396.
- ²⁰ *Sermons*, 2:459, Editor's footnote.
- ²¹ *Sermons*, 2:454.
- ²² *Sermons*, 2:158, 163.
- ²³ *Works*, 13:353-55.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, 13:361.
- ²⁵ *Works*, 13:351. In some cases, as in this one, it is not possible to irrefutably distinguish between a model for the second work of grace and a model for the life that issues from that experience.
- ²⁶ *Letters*, 4:183.
- ²⁷ I am aware of some of the current debate in the Wesleyan Theological Society around the question of the relationship between the *baptism* with the Holy Spirit and the second work of grace. It may be that the view of *baptism* as a model could shed some light on that discussion.
- ²⁸ Ramsey, *Christian Discourse*, p. 43.
- ²⁹ Please see footnote 27. Beyond the few words that I deal with here are others that could be seen as models.
- ³⁰ W. T. Purkiser, *Sanctification and Its Synonyms* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1961), p. 47.

³¹It is important to remember the biblical writers' lack of concern about being systematic in their theology. As Wesleyans we've sometimes made some very neat distinctions between the results of the first and second works of grace. It is my impression that, especially with Paul, the emphasis is upon what is accomplished in the life of the believer. The stress is not upon a sharp distinction between the two works of grace. Rather Paul, as J. Harold Greenlee ("The Greek New Testament and the Message of Holiness" in *Further Insights into Holiness* [Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1963], p. 83) says, places his emphasis "upon the facts and the fruit, as well as the necessity, of forgiveness and of holiness rather than upon the mechanics of the experience."

³²Ramsey *Christian Discourse*, p. 44.

³³*Myths, Models and Paradigms* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 63.

³⁴*Duncan Campbell* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), p. 52.

³⁵Stephen Olford, *Heart Cry for Revival* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1974), p. 81.

CULTURAL AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

by
Charles W. Carter

I. Introduction

The Bible is the divinely-inspired, and thus reliable record of God's self-disclosure to man as his Creator, Providential Preserver, and Redeemer. Christian theology, however, is man's attempt to formulate a rational understanding of God's self-disclosure in its multifold aspects in relation to man and the universe. Thus divine revelation *per se* is absolute and infallible, whereas theology is formulated by fallible man and is consequently relative and subject to revision and change. Paul declared that God "is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels*, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves" (2 Cor. 4:6-7 NASB). Here Paul seems to support the position that revelation is divine disclosure, while theology is cast in the mold of human culture and thus relative to culture, in considerable measure.

The focus on this discussion will be upon the relation of culture to theological education.

II. The Meaning of Culture

A. The Relativity of Culture

The noted anthropologist, Robert H. Lowie, says that

. . . in the scientific sense culture does not mean unusual refinement or education but the whole of social tradition. It includes, as the great anthropologist Tylor put it, "capabilities and habits *acquired* by man as a member of society." Culture includes *all* these capabilities and habits in contrast to those numerous traits acquired otherwise, namely, by biological heredity.¹

Thus it is extremely important to distinguish between the divinely-given revelation and man's theological understanding and expression of that revelation. The first is infallible; the second is fallible.

As the culture mold changes, so do the theological expressions, if not the concepts. To this fact the history of theological thought bears eloquent

testimony, from the Patristics through the Scholastics and Reformers to the Modern Neo-Orthodox and even secular theologians. Indeed, there have been those special times of spiritual resurgence when theology has proven itself an effective culture-revolutionizing force that has changed the course of human history, as witnesses the work of the reformers and Wesley in their respective times. But even in such revolutions theology and culture have remained inextricable.

B. The Dynamics of Culture

In the light of Tylor's definition of culture, it becomes evident that the culture of any people is both accidental and superficial, rather than essential or constitutional, and thus subject to change. In this view culture is always potentially, if not actually, dynamic.

History reveals that many cultures which had long remained static suddenly became dynamic under the stimulus of some innovating influence. The awakening of African culture less than a half century ago from its age-long slumber, and its subsequent political, social, and economic revolution, is a notable example of the dynamic potential of a culture. Likewise the radical modification of certain areas of Asian culture under the stimulus of western influence is self-evident. The extensive industrialization of Japan, Taiwan, and many other Asian areas, with their accompanying social changes, are noteworthy examples of this phenomenon. At the Madras World Missionary Conference in 1938, Hendrick Kraemer foresaw and predicted the "fall" of idealistic Asian culture under the impact of western materialistic influences.² However, the most likely potent culture-modifying influence in Asia today, whatever past influences may have been, is neither that of the western missionary personnel, the presence of western military forces, nor scientific materialism *per se*, but the already culturally modified, western-educated, and returned Asia himself. Conversely, the American military personnel returning from long residence in the East are modifying American culture with their acquired Asian culture, and often acquired mixed families.

C. The threefold Aspect of Culture

If theological education is to function effectively in a culture, it is necessary to take account of three important aspects of that culture, namely, its past, present, and possible future.

History reveals that most Asian culture remained relatively static over long periods of the past. Japan's static culture of upward of 250 years before the reopening of that country to the outside world following Perry's visits in 1852 and 1853 is a well-known example. Likewise the phenomenal culture revolution of Japan during little more than three-quarters of a century thereafter, to become a leading world power, is eloquent historical testimony to the dynamic potential of a culture. The recent recognition of mainland China by the U.S.A. is already bearing decisive evidence of radical cultural changes of that long-isolated, colossal country.

However, no people ever completely divest themselves of their cultural heritage. Elements of the past live on into the present, and will be found in the future. There may even be resurgence of the ancient culture, such as the revival of Buddhism in certain areas of Asia, notably in its Soka Gakkai

form in Japan with more than ten million adherents; not to mention the recent revival of medieval witch societies in England and America. Even Mao's abortive "Cultural Revolution" in mainland China witnessed to the difficulty, if not impossibility, of eradicating completely the cultural heritage of a people. The failures of both Russian and Chinese Communism to eliminate the family demonstrate the stubborn persistence of cultural heritage.

The mother tongue of a people illustrates well the persistence of culture. In the mother tongue is enshrined, and through it our expressed, the essential ideas, idioms and ideals of people. Recognizing this fact, Edwin Smith entitled his work of African languages *The Shrine of a People's Soul*. No other language, regardless of its flexibility or versatility, can take the place of a people's mother tongue.

However, due to the paucity of theological literature in most Asian languages, it is presently advantageous, if not imperative, that theological education make large use of Western languages in which adequate theological resource material is presently available. Nor is it likely that any substantial amount of theological literature will be developed in many of the Asian languages until certain vague, mystical linguistic concepts and expressions are clearly defined in harmony with the biblical revelation. Such, for instance, are the Chinese terms *Shang Ti*, *Shen*, and *Tien* for God, and *Tsui* (crime) for sin, over which so much controversy has raged among scholars. A theology is the product of theologians, and Christian theologians require adequate conceptual and linguistic tools with which to think and work.

Furthermore, if theological education attempts to function only in relation to the past and the present cultural context without a view to the possible, and even likely future changes that it will undergo, it may be that today's theological training will ill fit tomorrow's demands. Thus considered, theological education must necessarily function *in process*. It must in this sense be methodologically existential in order to maintain relevance with changing culture. To conform exclusively to the traditional pattern of a culture may serve only to contribute to exclusive, conservative religious nationalism. Conversely, to aim only at the anticipated future cultural pattern in theological education may well eventuate in impractical idealism.

However, to function only in relation to the present cultural context may leave theological education stranded on a dry streambed while the cultural current has flown away into its future form. Thus effective theological education must stand squarely in the present cultural situation while holding with one hand the cultural remnants of the past, and with the other the anticipated cultural pattern of the future. Theological education must be historical, current, and futuristic. But in all of these respects it will of necessity be baptized with the Spirit of the Living God if it is to be effective for Christ and Christianity.

III. The Meaning of Culture for Theological Education

A. The Non-Neutrality of Culture

C. S. Lewis sees culture *per se* as non-neutral.³ It is either good or bad, depending upon its employment. Ethically considered, culture has only

instrumental and never intrinsic value. It is contingent upon persons, much as color is contingent upon the cloth that it dyes. The cloth is essential to the dye, but the color may be changed without changing essentially the cloth. To ascribe intrinsic value to culture is to make it ultimate, and this is idolatry. However, culture may be *a means*, or *an instrument*, to either a good or a bad purpose.

The New Testament obviously takes a rather dim view of culture, assigning to it a distinctly sub-Christian position and role. Jesus regarded culture as sub-Christian in His discourse in the sixth chapter of Matthew, as elsewhere. Paul regarded it as refuse in comparison with true Christianity (Phil. 3:4-8). Paul prized his Roman citizenship for its instrumental value but in comparison he declared that our real and permanent citizenship is spiritual, in heaven (Phil. 3:20). Though of instrumental value, culture is never meritorious, as concerns man's relationship to God.

The New Testament makes clear that God is no respecter of persons-not even of the Jews with their boasted religious culture (Acts 10:34-36). Even the emaciated beggar who died culturally unendowed at the rich man's gate was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:19ff.), while the man who had everything of cultural value descended into hell empty-handed (Luke 12:16-21).

B. Three Levels of Culture

Culture may be seen as having three sub-Christian levels. First, negatively considered, at its lowest level culture may become idolatrous and thus demonic. This happens when it is regarded as having intrinsic value. The affections are then set upon it in idolatrous worship. Paul Tillich rightly brought this charge of idolatry against Nazi Germany when Hitler made the state absolute. The same may be said of any form of totalitarianism, from the Caesars to Mao and Castro. Any institution or item of culture may intentionally or inadvertently be converted to idolatrous worship-an act forbidden by the First Commandment. When so regarded, culture becomes the snare that captures and enslaves men's souls. In this sense culture becomes demonic. Perhaps for this very reason God has allowed the collapse of our boasted Western culture. He is still a jealous God who will not share His glory with another (Deut. 5:9).

Second, positively considered, culture may be used to give pleasure to a people, refine their sensibilities, elevate their standard of living, educate their minds, improve their health, contribute to their general well-being, and advance their temporal civilization. However, though of instrumental value, it is in no sense meritorious before God.

Third, culture may likewise serve as an instrument of value in theological education and its objective of evangelization and Christianization. Gregory is credited with the famous saying that "our use of secular culture was comparable to the action of the Israelites in going down to the Philistines to have their knives sharpened." In order to bring our unconverted fellows to Christ we must understand their culture. As with the early Christians in relation to their pagan neighbors, we must be able to "out-think," "outlive" and "outdie" them. However, this is something quite different from the claims commonly made for culture today. Lewis remarks:

"On the Gregorian view, culture is a weapon; and a weapon is essentially a thing that we lay aside as soon as we safely can."⁴

In conclusion, we may regard culture in relation to theological education as the traditional road that leads to Jerusalem. However, it must be borne in mind that the same road that leads to Jerusalem may also lead the traveler away from Jerusalem. Thus we need to keep our theological objectives in relation to culture clear and distinct.

NOTES

¹Robert H. Lowie, *An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, New and Enlarged Edition (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1940), p. 3.

²Hendrik Kraemer, *The Christian Message in A Non-Christian World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel, rep., 1961).

³C. S. Lewis, "Christianity and Culture," *Christian Reflections*, ed. By Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p. 33.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 17.

HOLY LIVING—THE ADEQUATE ETHIC

By
Laurence K. Mullen

The fundamental crisis of the twentieth century is neither political, nor social, nor economic. It is intellectual; and the primary intellectual problem is neither metaphysical nor ethical: It is epistemological. No attempt to solve the various problems and end the seemingly interminable crises of the twentieth century will be successful unless it is recognized that the justification of knowledge is always the ultimate problem, and that unless this problem is solved no other problem can be.¹

This quotation, taken from "The Trinity Manifesto" (1978), caught my eye as I was preparing to write this paper. I do not intend to debate the pros and cons of the statement. I do wish to challenge the key assertion that the fundamental problem of the twentieth century is epistemological. However critical the problems of epistemology may be. I wish to affirm that the central issue of modern man is not here. Let the words of Arnold Toynbee, in his monumental *A Study of History*, offer an alternative:

The crucial questions confronting Western man are not military, or economic, or even intellectual, but essentially moral and religious...civilization needs a profound moral and spiritual transformation if it is to continue to progress. Our destiny depends upon our response.²

Here then, in the arena of moral decision-making, lies the real crisis of our time. Shall purity and virtue surrender to the obscene? Shall honesty and integrity be replaced by the expedient and the insincere? Shall personal morality be replaced by the double standard? Shall God's absolutes be replaced by human relativism? Shall the standards of the Church be modeled by the behavior of the world? Shall the eternal values of truth, beauty, goodness be replaced by the false, the ugly, and the evil? These issues demand sane consideration and radical response.

The Apostle Peter lays the matter before us in these words:

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved and the elements will melt with fire.³

Twenty years ago the word ethics was reserved for philosophy majors and college catalogs. It was primarily a classroom word. Not so today. The daily paper carries an average of three articles per issue that dealt with the subject of ethics. There are ethics committees and sub-committees in our Federal and State legislatures; there are studies in business ethics; there are endless ethics reports in annual church conferences. Ethics texts and pamphlets are having unprecedented popularity. It's "in" to be looking at the ethical aspects of politics, the Church, research, marriage and the family, sexual behavior, business practices, medicine, communications, athletics, education, and foreign policy. The issues of war, abortion, genetic engineering, cloning, capital punishment, homosexuality, human rights have come to dominate Christian journals as well as secular publications. No scholar, least of all those in the Church, dares to be indifferent to these issues.

The focus of this paper is the relationship between holiness and ethics. How do holy living and ethics come together? The underlying thesis that I wish to affirm is that holy living, made possible to us by the indwelling Spirit, provides the only foundation for an adequate ethics. A reasonable corollary that follows is that all other ethical systems contain an inherent flaw that renders them ineffective and inadequate.

My paper will be developed around three main topics.

I. The Inadequacy of Philosophical Ethics

II. The Nature of Christian Holiness

III. Ethical Dimensions of Holy Living

I. The Inadequacy of Philosophical Ethics

Philosophy was born when man first looked around and asked, "Why?" Why am I here and where am I going? What does existence mean? An inquisitive mind and an insatiable curiosity stimulated him to probe the questions of existence and being, beauty and justice, right and wrong. The ancient Milesians of 600 B. C. bequeathed to Western man their spirit of inquiry and their primitive formulations of philosophical problems. In trying to define the essence of reality these men gave some strange answers. There was fire and water, earth and air, number and atoms, mind and soul. The names of Thales, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Democritus, Pythagoras and Empedocles are all household words to the student of philosophy. While their answers were not always correct, their answers were not insignificant. *How* they thought was more important than *what* they thought!

Their way of thinking--the way of cautious reflection and logical deduction--provided a fertile womb out of which was born classical Greek thought with all its wealth of human insight and dynamic creativity. The fact that early Christian theology was able to utilize the language, the concepts, the forms of Greek philosophical thought bears eloquent testimony to its depth and versatility.

Concern of the Greeks about metaphysics was matched by an equal concern about ethics. How may I find the good life? What is truth? What is justice? How may I save my soul? Not theoretical concern but a personal yearning for truth motivated such questions. Hence Socrates could declare,

"The purpose of life is not to live, but to live well." Plato could declare, "The highest object of knowledge is not to discover facts but to convert the soul." And even Epicurus, the so-called hedonist, could declare, "The goal of life is not physical pleasure but rather peace in the soul and prudence in the mind."

The journey of philosophical ethics, all the way from the ancient Sophists to contemporary Analysts, is both exciting and complex. The many perspectives on man's highest good are beyond examination here, but in order to reflect a sampling of the many alternatives, I shall mention five well-known ethical perspectives. The thesis that I wish to defend is that in all these systems there is an essential moral inadequacy.

A. Plato's Quest for Justice

The genius of Plato does not need to be demonstrated. Alfred North Whitehead has said, "Western thought consists primarily of a series of footnotes to Plato." The comprehensiveness of Plato's system, coupled with the brilliant recording of his ideas in his immortal *Dialogues*, have earned him a deserved place among the greats of moral philosophy.

For Plato, the real world is the world of *ideas*--eternal, transcendent entities that serve as patterns or archetypes for all temporal objects, including man himself. The individual man or the individual rose is but a tangible, temporal form of the eternal concept. Reason in man provides the bridge between the temporal and the eternal orders. For Plato, man's soul is eternal both ways. The soul pre-exists the body and beyond death becomes immortal. During one's lifetime the soul is a prisoner of the body. It is the body that provides the occasion for sin and the consequent disordering of the soul. Whereas in man's pre-existent state his reason was in control, that control was lost when the body provided an outlet for the will and the passions to become perverted.

The goal of life, then, is the recovery of the soul's order and unity, i. e., to once again let reason and intellect become the masters of will and passion. The process is not easy and is necessarily painful. Turning from the shadows of earthly existence, which appeal to the passions, man must direct his mind to the true forms, the eternal verities of truth, beauty, goodness. Here the soul finds its virtues--wisdom for our reason, courage for our will, and temperance for our passions. These virtues create in man a condition that Plato identified as justice. Man now recognizes the ultimate purpose of life as the realization of personal virtue and goodness. In other words, man becomes moral.

Plato saw the individual man as a microcosm of an entire society. The same virtues that make a just man are necessary to make a just state. This can happen only when wisemen, artisans, and warriors unite under the authority of reason to form a true Republic.

B. Aristotle's Notion of Self-Realization

Aristotle was a pupil of Plato but he disagreed radically with his teacher. Aquinas referred to him 1500 years later in his *Summa* simply as "The Philosopher." Dante referred to him as "The Master of those who know." Aristotle's philosophy dominated the thought of the Middle Ages and the period of Scholasticism. Thomas Aquinas, in master-minding a syn-

thesis of Aristotle and Christian faith, gave to Aristotle an honor that few pagans ever achieved, i.e., a permanent role in the on-going process of Christian theology. In answer to Tertullian's question, "Does Jerusalem have anything to do with Athens?" Thomas' answer was a resounding, "Yes."

Whereas Plato looked outward to the transcendent order for the universals that would guide moral behavior, Aristotle looked inward to the innate laws within man himself. Key words for Aristotle were potential, actual, final cause, self-realization, moderation, contemplation. Man begins his life with raw potential that needs development. Goodness is within and needs only the proper conditions for its actualization. Like the acorn that grows to become the oak, when soil and moisture are in right proportion, so the natural man under the proper conditions of education and learning, develops into the moral man. The final end of man is happiness, achieved when the whole man functions under the sovereign control of reason. The "golden mean"--avoidance of excesses and moderation in all things--becomes the criterion for right action.

Contrary to Plato, Aristotle did not believe in the immortality of the soul. Soul and body are entwined as one, no body without soul and no soul without body. The question of immortality became crucial in the Middle Ages when followers of Aristotle sought to baptize him into the Christian faith. Aquinas' deft handling of the issue was to say that Aristotle was not altogether clear on the matter, not being dogmatic either way. Central to Aristotle's thought was man's rationality. To function as he was intended man must think. Vice is ignorance and ignorance is vice. Knowledge and virtue become one. To be like God, said Aristotle, is to think.

C. Kant's Moral Imperative

"Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe--the starry heavens above and the moral law within." The attempt to reconcile these two worlds--one governed by mechanical laws of necessity, the other characterized by freedom and responsibility--was Kant's declared purpose. Kant's genius accomplished what he called a "Copernican Revolution" in philosophy. Previous thinkers had argued that the external world, feeding data into the mind via the senses, shaped the nature and content of human knowledge. Kant reversed this assumption by affirming that it is the mind that shapes the world we experience. The innate forms and categories of the mind determine what the nature of knowledge shall be.

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* stated his epistemology. It was in *The Critique of Practical Reason* that Kant developed his moral philosophy. Kant's fundamental question, What is truly unique about man? is answered by man's innate sense of ought. All men, said Kant, recognize an innate sense of moral obligation, an inner imperative that says to man, "You ought to do your duty." Said Kant, "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good, without qualification, except a good will." This inner sense of moral obligation that impels me to do my duty Kant labeled "the categorical imperative." Here was Kant's foundation for all moral decision-making.

1. Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.

2. Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another always as an end and never as a means only.

3. Act as if you were a legislator in a realm of law.

The focus in the third formulation is on the individual who must consider himself both as the legislator who makes the rules and at the same time the subject who must obey them. That is, only make those rules as king that you as subject would be willing to obey!

The moral postulates, those necessary prerequisites that enable the categorical imperative to function, Kant declared to be *freedom, immortality, and God*. Freedom is necessary in order for man's moral decisions to have moral significance. Immortality is necessary in order that man might achieve the supreme goodness that forever eludes him in this life. And God is necessary in order to account for man's sense of moral obligation.

D. Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics

In 1966 Joseph Fletcher, formerly Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, Cincinnati, Ohio, and later, Professor of Social Ethics, Episcopal Theology School Cambridge, Mass., published his well-known *Situation Ethics* calling his concept the "New Morality." Fletcher contended that his ethics harmonized with the best in Christian tradition.

Ethics, said Fletcher, cannot be put into a system; it can only be situational. Is adultery wrong? "I don't know," says Fletcher; "tell me the situation." Every law must fall eventually under the demands of *agape* love. Truth is particular, never universal. We make truth, we do not discover it. Nothing that is true today needs to be true tomorrow. Truth is existential; it happens only in the moment of decision.

According to Fletcher, all ethical choices fall under one of three possible classes: legalistic, antinomian, situational. The legalist chooses by law alone. The antinomian makes no reference to law at all. Only the situationist responds with meaningful ethical decisions.

Four underlying presuppositions provide a foundation for Fletcher's system:

1. *Pragmatism*: Workability and practical application are the values here. Truth ought to bring good results. All ethical choices must include calculation of consequences. Christian concern, says Fletcher, requires one to measure his actions in terms of ends.

2. *Relativism*. Says Fletcher, "Only love is a constant; everything else is a variable. The shift to relativism carries contemporary Christians away from code ethics, away from stern iron-bound do's and don'ts, away from prescribed conduct and legalistic morality."⁴ Fletcher's concern here is to put an end to so called pious rules and 'regulations and to put man and humanity in their place. Says Fletcher, "This concept of human creatureliness at the very heart of Christian ethics cries relativity in the face of all smug pretensions to truth and righteousness. Christians cannot go on trying to 'lay down the law' theologically, about either creed or code."⁵

3. *Positivism*: This means theological positivism, not logical positivism. Fletcher refers here to the faith propositions that one "posits" as true. "Thus Christian ethics 'posits' faith in God and reasons out what obedience to his commandment to love requires in any situation."⁶

4. *Personalism*: "Situation ethics puts people at the center of concern, not things. Obligation is to persons, not to things; to subjects, not objects.

The legalist is a 'what asker' (What does the law say?); the situationist is a 'who asker' (Who is to be helped?). That is, situationists are personalists."⁷

Fletcher also refers to his system as *agapeic*, *existential*, and *utilitarian*. It is agapeic in that divine love is the supreme criterion for all ethical decisions. It is existential in that truth only exists in the moment of decision. And it is utilitarian in that the good for the many must take precedence over the good for the few.

E. The Non-Ethics of Analytic Philosophy

The current movement of Analytic Philosophy has its roots in the thought of Francis Bacon, David Hume, Auguste Comte, John Stuart Mill, and many others. The essential idea is that the test of cognitive statements is empirical verification. This movement reached a high point in the so-called Vienna Circle, a group of scholars at the University of Vienna in the nineteen-twenties and -thirties which included Ernst Mach, Moritz Schlick, Rudolph Carnap, Herbert Feigl, and Kurt Godel. More recent representatives of this type of thinking would include Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Gilbert Ryle, and G. E. Moore. The essential argument of the movement can be stated in the following syllogism:

All cognitive statements are empirically verifiable.

No ethical (theological, metaphysical) statement is empirically verifiable.

Therefore no ethical (theological, metaphysical) statement is cognitive.

If this syllogism is sound (i.e. both true and valid) it follows that ethics, along with theology and metaphysics, is excluded from meaningful discourse. A. J. Ayer, a key representative of this movement, expressed just this conclusion in his book *Language, Truth, and Logic*. Ayer says:

The exhortations to moral virtue are not propositions at all, but ejaculations or commands which are designed to provoke the reader to action of a certain sort. Accordingly, they do not belong to any branch of philosophy or science.... A strictly philosophical treatise on ethics should therefore make no ethical pronouncements....

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.....

There cannot be such a thing as ethical science, if by ethical science one means the elaboration of a "true" system of morals.⁸

What then is to become of ethics, theology, and metaphysics? The best that can be said is that all pronouncements in these disciplines are subjective, emotive, and non-cognitive-roughly equivalent to saying, "Ouch," or muttering, "So what."

F. Critique

In denying to ethics meaningful or cognitive propositions, Analytic Philosophy must be considered separately from the four previous perspectives. When Analysts deny validity to ethics, one wonders if Analysts themselves have not indulged in declaring ethical propositions that they consider to be meaningful. If the test of a cognitive proposition is empirical verification, as Analysts affirm, then the statements used to refute ethics must also be tested by empirical verification.

While this charge against the non-ethics of Analytic philosophy may seem trivial, there remains a further charge that must be considered serious. That charge concerns the supreme values that men have lived for and have been willing to die for. The price that Analysts must pay in order to achieve logical and scientific certainty is the price of man's finest realities--his faith, hope, and love, his beauty, justice, and freedom, his holiness, peace, and salvation. The bargain is a bad one when we trade what is ultimate and eternal for the empty sentences of logical and scientific certainty.

Specific criticisms for each of the other ethical systems cannot be considered here, though each system has its own unique and fundamental weaknesses. All the systems share common inadequacies that need to be recognized. Three common criticisms are here considered.

1. All the systems assume the innate goodness of man. The tacit assumption is made that man can be his own savior, can somehow make himself good. When Plato illustrated the discovery of the "good" by his famous Allegory of the Cave it was a do-it-yourself project all the way. The prisoner in the allegory leaves the cave of shadows, ascends the escape shaft to sunlight, and experiences the revelation of reality all by his own effort. Man's natural inability to save himself is not once considered. The dream of saving himself by temperance, wisdom, and courage has occupied the imaginations of history's greatest minds. Advocates of such a hope are still with us.

2. Secondly, all the systems assume that knowledge and virtue imply each other. It was inconceivable, said Aristotle, for a wise man to do evil. Education and wisdom lead necessarily to virtue. To know the good is to do the good! St. Paul refuted such a notion in his Roman Epistle when he made the strong point in chapter one that men who knew God refused to keep God in their knowledge, and turned knowingly and deliberately to the practice of sinful acts. While both philosophers and churchmen have dreamed of the day when education would dispense with evil, giving birth to an ordered society and universal peace, the realism of today's broken world shatters such a hope.

3. A third weakness in philosophical ethics is the assumption that an "I ought" implies an "I can." Kant believed that the categorical imperative implied the possibility that one could obey its specific commands. According to Kant, man can obey the commands of the imperative if he will but choose to obey them. No innate inability or disposition keeps him from doing what is right. This optimistic assessment of human nature is supported neither by experience nor by biblical revelation. In contrast to this view, St. Paul contends that a war is on in the soul of man, a war between the law of sin and the law of the spirit, a war that man can never win without the assistance of divine grace. The problem is, said Paul, that even when I know the good and want to do it, I find myself doing the very opposite. Paul's pessimistic picture of the natural man reminds us in no way of the optimistic picture that classical philosophy has sought to paint.

II. The Nature of Christian Holiness

A. Holiness as Normative Christian Experience

The call to Christian holiness is written on every page of sacred scrip-

ture. "Be ye holy, for I am holy" is a divine imperative that accepts no challenge and bears no refutation. Christian holiness proclaims the grand truth that what Satan by sin has destroyed, God by grace can recover. St. Paul's description of the new man in Christ merits our thoughtful attention, for Paul does not leave us with man in sin, struggling, defeated, and forever wrestling, but rather man marvelously delivered, transformed, renewed "in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24b).

Concerning the nature of biblical holiness, two unfortunate notes have been sounded: (1) that the life of holiness is intended for a select few, that somehow the experience of holiness is an option for Christ's followers, that there is a high road and a low road in Christian experience, and one can simply take his pick; (2) that man must be saddled with sin until death provides a final deliverance. The reformers Luther and Calvin, and before them St. Augustine-theological giants though they were-must bear much of the blame for this latter heresy. These men, I believe, failed to grasp the total spiritual significance of divine grace. Luther's words at this point are instructive, and depressive:

Original sin, after regeneration, is like a wound that begins to heal; though it be a wound, yet it is in the course of healing, though it still runs and is sore.

So original sin remains in Christians until they die, yet itself is mortified and continually dying.⁹

Calvin echoed the same note in his *Institutes* when he argued for the necessity of an imputed holiness. Said Calvin:

Since this mortal life is never pure or free from sin, whatever righteousness we might acquire being perpetually corrupted, overpowered, and destroyed by subsequent sins, it would neither be admitted in the sight of God, nor be imputed to us for righteousness.¹⁰

But while the problem is still with us of defining the exact meaning of the sanctified experience in terms of what stays and what goes, i.e., the relationship between our holiness and our humanity, the strong conviction among us here today is that the purifying flame of the Holy Spirit deals adequately with sin-both its outward manifestation and its inward disposition. Such a claim would be pure presumption if it did not rest upon the most clear and unambiguous claims of holy Scripture. Such is our firm conviction!

Richard Watson, the father of Wesleyan theology, affirmed that the grace of entire sanctification is as distinctly marked and as graciously promised in the Holy Scriptures as justification, regeneration, adoption and the witness of the spirit.¹¹ Watson used two primary passages for his biblical support: 1 Thessalonians 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," and 2 Corinthians 7:1, "Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Watson argued that it is an axiom of Christian doctrine that "Without

holiness no man shall see the Lord" and that if we are to "be found of him in peace" we must be found "without spot and blameless."

B. Holiness and Wholeness

If sin implies sickness, then holiness implies health. When St. Paul speaks of our "whole spirit, and soul, and body being preserved blameless," he is taking into account the whole man. Thomas Cook says, "You could not get any better definition of what holy really is than healthy, completely healthy."¹² If Romans 7 pictures a sick man, a man with a war in his soul where two laws are in contention for his allegiance, then Romans 8 pictures a healthy man where "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1). The climax to Paul's study of sin seems to come in Romans 6:21-22 when Paul declares, "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life."

Calvin's notion that original sin must continue with us "that we may not forget ourselves and be filled with pride" cannot be sustained ethically, psychologically, or biblically. A divided heart cannot be a healthy heart! The idea of a little sin to keep us humble is about as convincing as a little cancer to keep us healthy. Surely God had a better plan! That plan, we affirm, includes in its compass the cleansing of our sinful heart and the creation in its place of a pure heart. The essential message of the holiness people is here.

A distinction always needs to be made between purity and maturity. Perhaps more misunderstanding has arisen at this point than at any other that relates to the holiness message. Perfection of heart is not perfection of performance. Wesleyan theology has tried, not always successfully, to make the distinction clear. Wesley affirmed that Christian perfection is compatible with faulty memory, poor judgment, involuntary transgressions, the experience of temptation, and faults of various kinds and colors.

The danger of this theology is that it can so easily be abused. My sins can very easily become mistakes, my irresponsibility can be chalked up to faulty memory, and my offenses to others can be blamed on poor judgment. Wesleyans *do* sin when they try to justify sub-Christian behavior on the basis of ignorance or good intentions.

A more crucial point concerns our need for spiritual growth and development. The healthy soul is a growing soul. Wesleyans in my tradition have focused so much on the crisis experiences of the new birth and entire sanctification that some have never caught on that anything ever happens in the life of the believer beyond those great events. Being "saved and sanctified" have become for some ends in themselves, to be declared in prayer meeting, rather than to be basic spiritual prerequisites for further growth and development. Some of us in the Wesleyan tradition heard very little about this aspect of holiness when we were starting in as young Christians. Holiness began and ended at the altar in a crisis experience. Our emphasis ought to be no less on the crisis, but more so on the growth in grace that God wills in our sanctified lives.

C. Holiness as Christ-Likeness

In all our attempts to define the nature of Christian holiness, nothing expresses the meaning quite so well as Christ-likeness. No theological jargon can add to the essential concepts that are here exemplified in the divine person, the Son of God, Jesus, who was holy and sinless and who commanded us to be followers of Him.

Thomas a Kempis, in his classic *Imitation of Christ*, makes one fundamental point-that Christ-likeness is the beginning and the ending of all religious endeavor. It is good to know that there is one place where all of us can meet on common ground, theological differences and dogmas put aside temporarily; for if Christ is truly in us and we follow him, then we share a common spirit and a common Lord. Said a Kempis, "Let therefore our chief endeavor be to meditate upon the life of Jesus Christ. The doctrine of Christ exceedeth all the doctrines of holy men; and he that hath the spirit, will find therein the hidden manna."¹³

While it may appear much too simplistic to define holiness in terms of Christ-likeness, upon closer examination one finds in Christ's example the highest goals and aspirations of the human spirit. Holiness can do no more than make us like Christ-in compassion, obedience, and love; in submission, self-denial, and service; in forgiveness, devotion and self-sacrifice.

Dr. Daniel Steele, a prince among holiness exponents, observed that the "Son of God" and the "sons of God" share common characteristics. Said Steele:

Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost- the sons of God are born of the Spirit. Jesus was circumcised the eighth day; the real, spiritual seed of Abraham have their circumcision not in the flesh, but in the Spirit....Jesus was baptized with the Holy Spirit; so are all those children of God who tarry in Jerusalem....Jesus had the certificate of His Sonship in the repeated utterance of His Father . . . so does the child of God hear the attestation of his divine adoption . . . Jesus was tempted in all points; so are we. Jesus was crucified; so are all those sons of God who count not the self-life dear unto them. The primal Son of God was buried . . . So does the child of God die unto sin . . . Jesus arose from the dead; the sons of God arise to newness of life. Jesus ascended; so shall we be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Our File-leader has been glorified; so shall we, who have borne the image of the earthly, bear the image of the heavenly. Our elder Brother has sat down on His Father's throne . . . "Unto him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in My throne."¹⁴

D. Holiness as the Spirit's Fullness

The command of Jesus in Luke 24:49 to "tarry in Jerusalem until . . . endued with power" was fulfilled in Acts 2:4 when "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." The poured-out Spirit prophesied by Joel, reaffirmed by Christ, and promised by God the Father, was experienced climactically by the 120 gathered in Jerusalem's upper room. Fearful, doubting, timid followers of Jesus were, in a moment, transformed into fearless, certain and

bold witnesses. What made the difference in these men? The sufficient answer must be found in the energizing flame of the Holy Spirit, described by John the Baptist as a baptism of fire (Matt. 3:11).

H. Orton Wiley quotes Phineas F. Bresee on the subject of Christian holiness. Said Bresee:

Now this baptism with the Holy Ghost . . . is the crowning glory of the work of the soul's salvation. All that ever went before it was preparatory for it. Did prophets speak and write- did sacrifices burn; were offerings made; did martyrs die; did Jesus lay aside the glory; did He teach and pray and stretch out His hands on the cross; did He rise from the dead and ascend into heaven; is He at the right hand of God? It was all preparatory to this baptism. Men are convinced of sin, born again and made new creatures that they may be baptized with the Holy Ghost.¹⁵

Five significant facts relate to the work of the Holy Spirit:

1. This experience is the will of God.
2. This experience is provided for us in the death of Christ.
3. This experience is for believers.
4. This experience is characterized by perfect love.
5. This experience prepares us for further growth in grace.

Maynard James, in a sermon entitled "Recovering the Lost Glory," states three biblical conditions for being filled with the Holy Spirit:¹⁶

1. *Ask*. "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Luke 11:13).
2. *Obey*. "The Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32).
3. *Believe*. "That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3:14).

III. Ethical Dimensions of Holy Living

No one has ever questioned that there are ethical dimensions to the holiness experience. We have always assumed that the relationship was there. But I am reasonably sure that the specifics of that relationship have not always been spelled out in concepts that are sufficiently clear. The thesis that I wish to defend is that the experience of holiness meets the criteria that are demanded of an adequate ethic. We have made the point of exposing the inadequacies of philosophical ethics. It is not difficult to see the flaws and the gaps in naturalism, humanism, and situational ethics. Criticisms there come easily. But what about holiness ethics?

I recall a criticism of the holiness people that came from a former teacher of mine, the late Edgar Sheffield Brightman of Boston University, whose early years in the Methodist Church gave him opportunity to speak from personal experience. Said Brightman to me one day, "The holiness people have a great message. I cannot flaw it. The problem that I have observed across many years is that your people generally do not live the doctrine that you profess." Needless to say, the criticism hurt.

Honesty requires us to admit serious gaps in our holiness ethics. We have not always been sensitive to social justice and human rights. Personal

piety has tended to take precedence over social responsibility. My experience in a white, holiness church in the South of our nation in 1952 revealed to me so much bitterness towards Blacks that my northern conscience, unfamiliar with such attitudes, was smitten with grief and embarrassment. I confess that I had difficulty in reconciling holiness ethics with the blind prejudice that I observed in those days. While that instance of unethical behavior is isolated, and certainly not a general attitude, I want to suggest that other, more subtle and dangerous attitudes, beget the holiness movement.

Obviously we have not been aggressive in seeking equal rights for women and Blacks, in promoting equitable justice for the poor and the handicapped, in challenging entrenched evil in high places, in taking leadership in feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. On many issues we have buried our heads in the sand and not uttered a peep to promote reform in government or Christian justice in society. Few of us want to identify with the prophet Amos in his fearless and blunt condemnation of the social evils of ancient Israel, yet his spirit and courage exemplify the ethical sensitivity that becomes Christian holiness.

In a chapter entitled "Sanctification and Ethics," Dr. Daniel Steele probed the charge of inconsistency among holiness people. Said Steele:

It is time that there was a thorough discussion of the relation of entire sanctification to man's moral nature and habits. On no other point is there so much need of light, as on none other are there more widespread and damaging errors. It is alleged that Christians of the most advanced attainment are not perfectly conscientious, and, moreover, that the doctrine of evangelical perfection itself tends to divorce morality from religion.¹⁷

One charge against us that needs examination is that of exaggeration and overstatement in the claims we make for the holiness experience. When such occurs it is often the case that conscientious people are reluctant to claim the blessing while others, more confident in their seeking, claim too much! Asked Bishop Leslie R. Marston, "Why do good people resist a teaching that Christians may be holy in heart and purpose in this life? Partly because those claiming the experience are sometimes led by enthusiasm into over-statement in testimony or are carried away by rhapsody in preaching."¹⁹

Another problem among us concerns the growing tendency to divorce ethics from holiness. While boasting, perhaps unconsciously of our freedom from antinomianism in the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition, and reading Fletcher's *Checks to Antinomianism* with some degree of smugness, saying "Thank God, we escaped that heresy," we have become victims of an even deeper and more devastating heresy than was challenged by John Fletcher two hundred years ago. The heresy of which I speak concerns the silent, pervasive influence of worldliness that reaches us from every quarter. The manifestations are endless and no one of us dares to point a finger at another and identify the particular form it has taken. Worldliness may knock at our door in the form of an unjustified concern about comfort and security about the good life of ease and pleasure; it may

come in the form of our unprotested acceptance of petty thievery and dishonesty; it may come under the subtle temptation to be successful, first in the office selling contest or at the top of the list in the church statistics column. The success syndrome affects all of us and while there is nothing intrinsically evil about success, the danger of being successful at the price of integrity is ever present. St. Paul warned the Church about being squeezed into the world's mold. Holiness people are not exempt from that admonition. Jesus said, "Beware of the leaven of Herod." I believe Jesus here was alerting us to the insidious influence of a sinful world that has no other end than the destruction of the spirit of holiness.

In conclusion, let me point out three essential characteristics of Christian holiness that confirm its adequacy for practical ethics.

1. Christian holiness offers to each of us the personal guidance of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). Joseph Fletcher has declared that on the point of the Holy Spirit's guidance he prefers to be agnostic. His ethics falters at that critical point. He defines the good abstracts, but makes no provision for how that good-that is, love-is to be determined in particular situations. The Christian has been given the Scriptures and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to direct him in his quest to know the good.

2. Christian holiness deals realistically with the nature of man. It recognizes his sinful nature for what it is, and deals with it efficaciously. Philosophical ethics, on the other hand, has failed consistently at this point. The blanket assumption has always been made that man is basically good that he is naturally capable of altruism, and that no innate condition hinders his quest for virtue, perfection, and peace of mind. An optimistic and idealistic view of man has been the shoal upon which all purely philosophical systems, from Plato to Fletcher, have foundered.

What does Christian holiness offer as an alternative? The answer lies in the adequacy of divine grace to deal radically with the problem of sin. The sanctified heart is a healed heart, a united heart, a heart set free-free to love, to serve, to praise. God, in His infinite wisdom, knew what was in man, and knowing, He acted graciously in Christ to release us from our sinful natures and to re-create us in the image of His Son. Christ's cross signaled the ultimate triumph of God over Satan's kingdom, the Prince of this world was judged, and we share by faith in that mighty victory!

3. Christian holiness brings to us the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit. "Not I . . . but Christ" speaks of an inner dynamic that surpasses all human effort and inclination. Philosophical ethics has not been short on ideals and programs for human betterment. Where then lies the flaw? The answer lies in man's constitutional inability to actualize the very ideals that he strives to realize. Why should I pursue the good of the greatest number? The utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill did not have a good answer. Their grand dreams of equity and justice, in a new world of peace, were shattered by innate selfishness and naked greed. Why should I treat others as ends and not as means? It was obvious to Kant that here was a worthy ideal, but Kant failed to show us how to put that great ideal into practice.

In summary then, it is in the Holy Spirit that we find the uniqueness and the adequacy of Christian holiness ethics. God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, chooses to indwell the hearts of His children-to guide them

into truth, thus enabling them to *know* the good; to purify them from sin, thus enabling them to *will* the good; and to empower them for service, thus enabling them to *do* the good.

NOTES

¹ "The Trinity Manifesto" (1978).

² Quoted by Harold Hopper Titus and Marilyn S. Smith, *Living Issues in Philosophy* (New York: Van Nostrand Co., 1974), pp. 205-06.

³ 2 Peter 3:11-12, RSV.

⁴ Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), p. 45.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 46. ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47. ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁸ A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic* (New York: Dover Publications, 1946), pp. 103, 112.

⁹ Quoted by Hugh Thompson Kerr, *A Compend of Luther's Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1943), p. 87.

¹⁰ Quoted by Hugh Thompson Kerr, *A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1939), p. 114.

¹¹ Richard Watson, *Theological Institutes* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1857), 2:450.

¹² Thomas Cook, *New Testament Holiness* (Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, n. d.), p.8.

¹³ Thomas a Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, Book I, Chapter 1, 1-2.

¹⁴ Daniel Steele, *Milestone Papers* (New York: Easton and Mains, 1876), pp. 21-22.

¹⁵ H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1941), 2:440.

¹⁶ James McGraw, *The Holiness Pulpit* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1957), p. 72.

¹⁷ Daniel Steele, *Milestone Papers*, p. 122.

¹⁸ James McGraw, *The Holiness Pulpit*, p. 45.

CELEBRATING GOD'S CALL AND OUR POTENTIAL

by
John N. Oswalt

I find myself increasingly glad to be identified with Wesleyan-Arminian theology. This is so because the more I study Scripture, the more I am convinced that the theology captures best the great themes of the Bible. In the Bible's pages I find divine sovereignty and human freedom, the demands of law and the offers of grace, imputation and impartation, total depravity and human capacity for response. And when I look for a theology which holds all of these together, lovingly yet joyously, it is that of Arminius and Wesley.

But, perhaps most of all, in the Bible I see a ravishing picture of the beauty of the character of God and of His dream for sharing that character with us. This is what the Bible is about. It is a love story. The story of a tempestuous and stormy affair between a mighty Prince and the smudged servant girl He has chosen. It is about His faithfulness to death and her faithfulness, about His frustration and her fickleness, about the flickering dawning of her love and the infinite patience of her lover, about the beginnings of a faint understanding of what she might be in his love and of His gently disclosing more and more of Himself to her until, at first tentatively, and then with increasing assurance she could surrender herself to His love and come home to herself in His arms, and—yes—He could come home to her heart from which He had been so long barricaded.

It is the sense of this drama which Wesley and his followers have captured so superlatively. Have mistakes been made, especially by Wesley's followers? Of course. Have some unfortunate detours been taken? No doubt. But the fact remains that in this theology the heart of the good news is caught. And that good news is not merely that God isn't mad at us any more, it is also that we do not *have* to keep on doing what made Him mad in the first place. We may live lives like His. That is great news.

It has often been remarked somewhat condescendingly that Wesley was no systematic theologian. I wonder if it is not time we recognized that as one of his strong points. I do not mean to denigrate all systematizing. God has given us rational and logical minds that we might bring order into the diverse data of life. The problem comes when the system overrules the data. I believe it was precisely because Wesley was so deeply involved with

the unsystematic data of life and of the Scripture, that he never came to create a system like Calvin's *Institutes*. And that's not bad. That means there is room in Wesley's thought for some of the paradoxes of God's creation and His Word, which, if honestly dealt with, blow holes in any humanly devised system.

For this reason I grow increasingly uneasy with the style of exegesis which is practiced today by both right and left in theology. It is a positivistic style. As you will remember, Positivism denied any reality to Spirit and exalted physical, material facts. This means that the reality of, for instance brotherly love, which cannot be weighed or measured, was denied and the "reality" of, say, pancreatic secretions was substituted. Positivism was, and is, a classic case of missing the forest for the trees. Now I do not want to deny the reality of pancreatic secretions, or whatever, or the importance of studying those, but I *do* want to deny that that level of being is all there is to reality.

The same kind of thing is done with scriptural exegesis. And the increasingly arid results as seen in scholarly meetings and publications ought to give pause to those of us who have a concern for the spirit of the biblical teaching. I am *not* calling for a return to an uncontrolled spiritualizing or allegorizing or typologizing exegesis. But I am questioning an exegesis which invalidates an evident thrust of the Scripture because that style of exegesis cannot find "scientific" support for it. I suggest this is analogous to that positivism which said that brotherly love did not exist because no "scientific" evidence of it existed. The conclusions were wrong because the method was inadequate. It forced the data to conform to a logical system whose logic was too small to comprehend the complexity of the data. I fear we do the same in some of our exegesis.

To be specific, does the Bible support the doctrine of entire sanctification as a second definite work of grace? Well, what method will you use to determine that? If you demand a concrete statement of that proposition at the beginning or the end of a chain of logic, you will be hard pressed to answer yes. But then so will you have difficulty finding conversion as a first *definite* work of grace. There is a lot of talk about people who have come to believe that Jesus is the Christ and are living different lives, but *very little* about an instantaneous crisis of conversion. Shall we then take the positivist approach and deny that there is such a thing? Absolutely not. For when you take all the teachings relating to the new life in Christ and plot the inferences of each you find them all converging on a point. That point is the crisis moment of faith.

Wesley was a master in the use of this inferential method. In his sermons is very little technical exegesis. But, oh my, his capacity to digest great chunks of Scripture and then to say, "Ah, here is the common element. Here is the central thrust. Here is what they mean!" Did he despise close, careful linguistic exegesis? Absolutely not! But he realized that when he finished the grammatico-historical task, he was not done, he had just started.

Some will say that such a method is hard to control and I will grant that. I will also grant that it does not result in the neatest system with which to beat your enemy over the head. But then, who wants to?

Now what about the concept of sanctification as being somehow com-

pleteable in a moment? First of all, there is the thrust of the entire Old Testament-"You must-you may!--be like me." If the Old Testament is about anything, it is about the unfolding character of the Holy God and the tragedy of a people's inability to do what they knew. Yet in the midst of that failure comes the Divine promise-repeated in so many particulars-"I will make you like myself." And the Old Testament closes on that note, "When, Lord?"

Now the question is whether the New Testament turns a corner and introduces a different motif. Does God in fact *declare* them holy by virtue of a relationship without producing any substantial change in character? This is where Wesley and Luther part company. Wesley could joyfully accept a new standing by grace but he *also* expected a new character by grace. So does the New Testament. Can any read Paul's letters and doubt that he offered his converts-expected of them-a holy character?

But was not the character Paul was talking about achieved in the moment of conversion? Look at his exhortations to a level of life not yet achieved. None is any clearer than that in Colossians: "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you-Put on what is heavenly." He is speaking to Christians. I Thessalonians is similar.

Yes, but what of the instantaneous element? Do not these passages admit of a progressive, never-quite-realized interpretation? But look at his figures and his language. They speak of something done, with continuing and increasing effect to be sure, but nevertheless something done. But beyond this what of the Old Testament promises? They too speak of something done. Are they fulfilled in the New Testament or not? The New Testament says they are. I believe so.

I ask you, is not the whole thrust of the Bible toward a life of holiness--godlikeness? Is it not offered, expected of, us? Is it not to be achieved by grace through faith? Is it not ours through Jesus' atoning death? Then why should we draw back from it?