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Wesleyan Theological Journal

Volume 27, 1992

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WESLEY AND THE QUESTION OF TRUTH OR SALVATION THROUGH OTHER RELIGIONS*

by Randy L. Maddox

In memoriam: Joseph Mayfield¹

In her 1974 presidential address to this society Mildred Bangs Wynkoop called upon Wesley scholars to develop a truly hermeneutical approach. She argued that the all-too-common practice of using Wesley merely as a scholastic authority (which she termed “Wesley as guru”) should be transformed into an approach that draws upon an historically sensitive reading of Wesley to deal with contemporary issues (a model that she termed “Wesley as mentor”).² A few years later Albert Outler issued much the same plea in his address to the 1982 Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies. He suggested as a slogan for contemporary Wesleyan theologians: “Back to Wesley and his sources, and then forward-with his sense of heritage and openness to the future as one of our models.”³

My interest in and study of Wesley’s theology owes much to these two forebears, and I have tried to follow their methodological advice in my own explorations of a contemporary Wesleyan theology. To the degree that I have been successful, I have found it to be a very fruitful approach. In hopes of illustrating this fruitfulness, I have chosen to devote this study to a correlation of Wesley and a contemporary issue.

The issue that I have selected to consider concerns the implications of the Christian confession of Jesus as Lord and Savior for understand-

ing the status of other world religions: Does this confession exclude the possibility of any truth in other religions? Does it restrict salvation to Christians alone? What are its implications for the motives and methods of cross-cultural evangelization? Anyone familiar with contemporary Christian theology knows that questions such as these are prominent in the discussion. That is one of my reasons for choosing this topic. The other major reason is that I believe that Wesley offers a distinctive contribution to this discussion, particularly to those in the Evangelical arena who typically claim him as one of their own.⁴

I. CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN DEBATE CONCERNING OTHER RELIGIONS It is a severe understatement to say that there is a lack of consensus in current discussion of Christianity's relation to other religions. In an influential recent survey Paul Knitter distinguished four major contrasting positions.⁵ At one end of his spectrum is the Conservative Evangelical Model which defends the exclusive normative status of Christianity against all challenges. A slight modification of this is the Mainline Protestant Model which allows for some revelation of God in other religions but restricts its effect such that salvation is only possible in Christianity. Still further along the spectrum is the Catholic Model, drawing on post-Vatican II. It allows that God may work salvifically through other religions, but always in conformity with the norm of Christ's revelation. Finally, Knitter identifies (and argues for) a Theocentric Model, which limits the normativeness of Christ to the Christian religion—assuming that other religions constitute authentic, independent avenues of salvation.

The Theocentric Model of Christianity's relation to other religions has found support beyond Knitter, most notably in the writings of John Hick.⁶ At the same time, its radical relativism has troubled many in mainstream Christianity, sparking sophisticated attempts to reaffirm Christ's universal normativeness without denying that truth is found in other religions.⁷ The negative response to the proposals of Hick and Knitter has been even greater among Evangelical missiologists and theologians.⁸ Significantly, the issue that has emerged as central in this Evangelical discussion is the fate of those who are never exposed to the Christian message.⁹ It would appear that this specific issue pierces to the most fundamental convictions of one's understanding of God (a point we will return to in our reading of Wesley).

We in the Wesleyan traditions, of all people, surely recognize that several considerations come into play when deciding issues like those

involved in the current debate over the relationship of Christianity to other religions. For example, there should be: 1) exegetical consideration of the relevant portions of *Scripture*; 2) phenomenological consideration of the claimed similarities, differences, and benefits that humans *experience* in the various world religions; and 3) rigorous philosophical analysis of the clarity and cogency of the arguments present (i.e., the contribution of *reason*). Such considerations are amply represented in recent publications on our topic. By contrast, there is another level of consideration that has received less attention than it warrants—that of *tradition*. What lessons about the possible positions on our topic, and the implications of these positions, can we glean from the wisdom of previous Christian reflection and life? That is the question which we hope to put to Wesley.

The very notion of turning to an eighteenth century figure with this question might seem senseless. If one judged by the standard selections of readings on Christianity and other religions, little of interest or help was written on our topic prior to the twentieth century!¹⁰ However, while it must be admitted that previous centuries of Christian theology did not possess as detailed or sympathetic a knowledge of the breadth of world religions as ours, this does not mean that the relevant issues were not dealt with in more limited contexts. More importantly, it does not mean that there was a uniform attitude toward these issues through the prior history of the Church.

Indeed, the initial broader historical work that has been done suggests that Christian interaction with and evaluation of other religions has gone through three major phases.¹¹ During the first three centuries of Christian history there was significant interchange with Greco-Roman mythology and philosophy, including some positive readings (particularly by Greek theologians) of certain philosophers as defenders of the Divine Truth definitively revealed in Christ.¹² Scattered examples of such positive interaction carry over into the seventh century, until—with the emergence and military spread of Islam—they are largely supplanted by conflict and controversy. Commercial and other contacts with the Islamic world and points further East began to increase significantly again in the sixteenth century. The exposure to other religions gained through these contacts helped to rekindle a diversity in theological evaluations of the availability of some knowledge of God apart from the definitive revelation of Christ.

This brief historical summary provides initial warrant for suggesting that Wesley might have something to offer us concerning the issue of

Christianity's relation to other religions. On the one hand, he had a particular fondness for many of the early Greek theologians who had championed a more positive evaluation of "pagan" wisdom.¹³ On the other hand, he was an early beneficiary of the increasing interest in other religions. To develop this latter point, it might be helpful to delineate Wesley's actual knowledge of and attitudes toward other religions, within his historical context.

II. EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH KNOWLEDGE OF AND ATTITUDES TO OTHER RELIGIONS Our consideration of Wesley in this regard is benefited greatly by David Pailin's recent survey of attitudes to other religions in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England.¹⁴ Pailin traces the growing awareness and comparative treatment of religions in England beginning with Herbert of Cherbury's *De Religione Gentilium* (1645). He shows that most eighteenth-century treatments had little reliable information on religions other than Islam, ancient Judaism, and (to a lesser extent) contemporary Judaism. As a result, most comparative studies identified only four major religions: Christianity, Judaism, Mohametanism (Islam), and Paganism.

This four-fold classification was specifically characteristic of those discussions of other religions with which we have some reason to assume that Wesley was familiar—writings by Isaac Barrow, Richard Baxter, and Edward Brerewood.¹⁵ If our assumption about Wesley's reading is accurate, it is not surprising that Wesley also tended to organize religions in these categories.¹⁶

Thus, Judaism was always included in any survey that Wesley made of religions. We hasten to add, however, that Wesley (like his contemporaries) demonstrated limited interest in or knowledge of contemporary Judaism. Instead, most of his uses of the category "Jew" were historical or theological in intent designating either a preliminary dispensation of God's grace and revelation that Christ brought to completion, or a person who obeys God out of fear rather than out of love.¹⁷ When Wesley did describe contemporary Judaism, he tended to echo the negative evaluations that Pailin has shown were common in his time.¹⁸ And yet, at least in his later years, he refused to condemn Jews summarily, arguing that Christians should leave their fate in the hands of God.¹⁹

In general, Islam received more focused (and, if possible, more distorted and hostile) treatment than Judaism in Christian evaluations from the thirteenth century on.²⁰ Two factors account for much of this situa-

tion: the military clashes between the two faiths, and the ironic apologetic method which transformed many of the arguments used to defend the superiority of Christianity over Judaism into comparisons of Islam versus Christianity! The reactionary evaluations of Islam continued into Wesley's immediate context.²¹ This being the case, it is hardly surprising that he would include a recital of the "barbarities" of Islamic practices and the "absurdities" of the Quran in his collation of empirical evidence for the reality of human depravity.²² Nor is it unexpected that he would react so negatively to the attempt of Henri de Boulainvillier to present Islam to the West as a desirable alternative to "Papism" and Christianity in general.²³ Just how negative (and misinformed) Wesley's general impression of Islam was is best seen in his judgment that "Mohamets" hardly differ from "heathens" in their lack of revelation, religious sensitivity, and moral concern.²⁴ Precisely because of this negative evaluation, however, it is striking that Wesley's late sermons should: 1) forbid a summary damnation of Muslims, 2) praise the sincerity of their response to the limited revelation they have received (in explicit contrast to the English Deists!), and 3) argue that we have great reason to hope that some Muslims have indeed come into experience of true religion through their sensitivity to God's inward voice.²⁵ For Wesley, of course, such "true religion" would qualify one for eternal salvation!

Wesley's final category of religions was the heathens or pagans. This was an inclusive category for all who lacked exposure to God's unique revelation offered to Israel and in Christ. We have already noted that Wesley at times was inclined to place Islam in this category. He consistently included three other identifiable groups among the heathen. The first of these groups includes the Greco-Roman philosophical and religious traditions with which early Christianity interacted. Wesley's comments on this group reflect the tension of the early Church on the one hand he praised signs of true piety and virtue among some philosophers, on the other hand he stressed their limitations and denounced much of their popular mythology and religious practice.²⁶

A second identifiable group of heathen in Wesley's considerations encompassed the tribal religions of Africa and North America. Most of his comments on this group focus on Native Americans because he had some direct experience with them. In his university years Wesley picked up a romantic conception of the "noble savage" as possessing a moral and religious clarity free from the distorting sophistications and ambitions of advanced culture. His actual encounters with Native Americans soon dis-

abused him of this fanciful image.²⁷ His immediate reaction was quite strong—he reclassified their religion as demonic.²⁸ Over time a nuanced tension emerged in his comments on such “native religions.” When responding to romantic or deistic commendations of natural religion he critiqued the supposed religious and moral purity of native groups.²⁹ When he turned his attention to the supposed moral superiority of English culture, however, he often used comparisons with the morality and humanity of native cultures to conclude that it would be preferable to “convert the English into honest heathens.”³⁰ His most biting comments came when he criticized supposed “Christians,” specifically for how they had mistreated and enslaved these native peoples.³¹

A third possible group of heathens was constituted by the more developed religions of India and China. There was very little information about Buddhism available in Britain before the nineteenth century.³² Likewise, the few accounts of China that were available to Wesley dealt only in broad strokes with Chinese culture and were not very reliable even on these topics, as he realized.³³ By contrast, there were relatively more treatments of Hinduism published in Britain in the latter half of the eighteenth century.³⁴ However, these publications also tended to be unreliable, mixing elements of Buddhism and Zoroastrianism indiscriminately with Hindu teaching. Wesley’s reflections on the one such publication about which we have any evidence that he read illustrates well such confusions.³⁵ Actually, we have more evidence of Wesley’s reading accounts of the British colonial impact on India. Here again his sympathies came to lie with the native population, as he became convinced that it was the so-called Christians who were really acting like heathens!³⁶

The final point that we would make concerning this is that, later, Wesley again held out a significant hope that many of the heathen, in all of their variety, might have found a saving relationship with God by responding to the light that they had received!³⁷

III. WESLEY ON TRUTH AND SALVATION THROUGH OTHER RELIGIONS

On reflection, the point that emerges most dramatically from the preceding survey of Wesley’s comments on other religions is not the obvious limitations and distortions of his knowledge. It is the element of positive evaluation that is evident, especially in his later thought.

This element is particularly striking when viewed against his context. Having surveyed the attitudes to other religions in Wesley’s setting, David

Pailin concluded that there were five major motivations for invoking consideration of other religions in theological debates of the time: 1) as a further means of attacking other Christian groups-by showing resemblances to heathens; 2) to distinguish Christian evidence of its truth claims from that of other religions (particularly Islam); 3) to show that there were no credible rivals to Christianity among world religions; 4) to enhance the readers' appreciation of the merits of Christianity and promote their devotion to it; and 5) to gather evidence for or against currently debated notions, particularly that of "general revelation."³⁸ One can find traces of each of these agendas in Wesley's various comments on other religions. However, his dominant concern appears to focus increasingly on the latter issue of the reality and implications of a generally-available revelation of God.³⁹ If we are to gain a more systematic understanding of his view of other religions, we would do well to start with this topic.

A. The Gracious Character of All Revelation There has been an ongoing debate in Wesley scholarship over whether Wesley believed that human beings could have knowledge of God apart from God's definitive revelation in Jesus Christ. We would suggest that this debate results more from an inappropriate framing of the question than from ambiguities in Wesley. The debate has typically been framed in terms of whether Wesley affirmed a "natural revelation" or a "natural theology."⁴⁰ Behind such designations is the assumption that any universal knowledge of God available through consideration of the world and human life would necessarily be "natural" knowledge *rather than* "gracious" knowledge.

It is not surprising that the question is frequently framed this way, because the polarization of "nature" and "grace" has increasingly characterized Western theology, becoming definitive of much of Protestantism.⁴¹ Thus, when Wesley is read in a Protestant paradigm (as is most common), he is forced toward one or the other of opposing alternatives: either he is assumed to affirm that humans can have some knowledge of God apart from grace, or he is read to deny the existence of any significant knowledge outside of definitive Christian revelation.

By contrast with later Western theology, many early Greek theologians avoided such polarization. They made no absolute separation between "general" and "Christian" revelation. They saw *both* as based in God's grace, with God's revelation in Christ establishing and completing divine revelation in creation.⁴²

Wesley's convictions about revelation appear to be more in line with such early Greek perspectives than with late Western theology. He too came to affirm that there is a basic knowledge of God universally available to those who have not heard of Christ, while insisting that this knowledge is itself an expression of God's gracious activity epitomized in the revelation of Christ.⁴³

To be sure, Wesley achieved this result in a different manner than was typical of early Greek theologians. They usually assumed that there was a continuing (weakened) influence of the grace of *creation* even after the Fall. Through his distinctive wedding of total depravity with universal Prevenient Grace, Wesley grounded the knowledge of God available to those who have not heard of Christ in an initial expression of the grace of *restoration*.⁴⁴

In other words, Wesley was convinced that no one had access to God apart from the gracious restoration of divine self-revelation. However, he also believed that this revelation was available in a continuum of progressively more definitive expressions, beginning with a basic knowledge that was universally available and reaching definitive expression in Christ.⁴⁵

B. Initial Universal Revelation

In keeping with his empiricist epistemological commitments, Wesley denied that humans have an innate idea of God stamped on their souls. All knowledge of God must come either through inference from God's works or by direct sensation through our "spiritual senses."⁴⁶ For initial *universally-available* knowledge about God, the major source that Wesley consistently identified was inference from God's creation.⁴⁷ Beyond this constant, his precise convictions about the content and effectiveness of God's universal beginning self-revelation fluctuated somewhat. This fluctuation was not arbitrary, but illustrates a pattern many scholars view as characteristic of a broader integrative development in Wesley's theological convictions, a pattern distinguished by three main periods: the "early Wesley" (1733-38), the "middle Wesley" (65-1738-) and the "late Wesley" (1765-91).⁴⁸

As we noted previously, the early Wesley romanticized the situation of native peoples. He assumed that they were innocent, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God. He even claimed that one of his main reasons for undertaking the mission to Georgia was to present his understanding of the gospel to the Native Americans, for they would immediately discern if his doctrines were authentic or not!⁴⁹ We also saw

that his actual encounters with Native Americans failed to live up to such unrealistic expectations, leading to an initial reaction of characterizing all religion of those who have no revelation of Christ as demonic.

Wesley's disillusionment in Georgia coincided with his heightened appreciation for the Protestant emphasis on distinctively Christian grace. As a result, the period shortly following 1738 evidenced his most negative evaluations of initial universal revelation. He did not deny it, but he saw it as nearly empty. Consideration of God's creation might convince us of God's *existence*, but it could tell us nothing of God's *nature*.⁵⁰

As time passed, Wesley's estimation of the contribution of universal revelation appears to have increased. In 1748 we find him suggesting that God's basic attributes of omnipresence, omnipotence, and wisdom can be deduced from creation.⁵¹ By 1754 he included at least a vague awareness of the general lines of good and evil in the knowledge universally available.⁵²

This is not to say that Wesley now considered this initial universal revelation to be self-sufficient. Indeed, in 1757 he wrote a lengthy polemic against Bishop John Taylor's "deistic" claim that heathens have sufficient knowledge and power to know God and obey God's will. Given the occasional nature of this piece, it is not surprising that it one-sidedly emphasized the limitations of universal revelation. However, even here Wesley did not deny that some knowledge was available to all, only that it was not effective in producing virtuous (i.e., holy) lives.⁵³

By the 1780s Wesley had nuanced even this assumption. He now claimed that initial universal revelation enabled people to infer not only that there was a powerful, wise, just, and merciful Creator, but also that there would be a future state of punishment or reward for present actions. More importantly, he suggested that God may have taught some heathens all the essentials of true religion (i.e., holiness) by an "inward voice."⁵⁴ That is, he raised the possibility that Prevenient Grace might involve more than simply strengthening our human faculties and testifying to us through creation. It might also provide actual overtures to our "spiritual senses"!⁵⁵ With provisions such as this, some people would surely pursue virtuous lives, and the late Wesley appeared willing to acknowledge some attainment. However, he was quick to add that such cases would be less pure and far less common than in the Christian dispensation. Moreover, he was convinced that these persons would not have the *assurance* that is available to Christians through the Spirit.⁵⁶

C. The Uniqueness of Definitive Christian Revelation

Wesley's acknowledgment of and understanding of the initial universal revelation of God would have been largely acceptable to the emerging deistic temper of his day. That is, until he raised the suggestion of direct spiritual sensation! Here lies the crucial parting of the roads for Wesley and Deism (in both its rationalist and empiricist forms). Deists limited all credible revelation to that either grounded in or conformable with general human knowledge. Wesley, by contrast, assumed that the most definitive and important knowledge of God was not universally available, nor derived by mere inference. It must be obtained directly from God.⁵⁷

Obviously, Wesley believed that this definitive revelation of God took place in Christ and is found in Scripture. What might not be so obvious are the major distinctive elements of the Christian world view which he assumed could be known only through this revelation. He ultimately reduced these to two: the free forgiveness of God evident in Christ and the renewing power of God present in the Holy Spirit.⁵⁸ On reflection, these two are inherently interrelated. One of Wesley's most fundamental convictions was that authentic Christian life flows out of love, and that genuine human love can only exist in *response* to an awareness of God's pardoning love to us. It is in Christ's atoning work that the Divine pardoning love is clearly assured to humanity and it is through the witness of the Spirit that this love is "shed abroad in our hearts," empowering our loving response.⁵⁹ Herein lies the rationale for Wesley's assumption, noted earlier, that Christians have available a greater potential of recovering holiness of life than do those with only initial revelation.

D. The Possibility of Extra-Christian Salvation?

This brings us, of course, to the perennial Christian perplexity about how God will deal with those who are never exposed to definitive Christian revelation. It must be noted at the outset that Wesley rejected one possible solution to this problem that has had advocates throughout the history of the Church—namely, the claim that God might provide another chance after death for those who do not receive the full revelation in this life, so that they might be made aware of it and respond (positively or negatively). He specifically rejected the Roman Catholic notion of limbo for "Patriarchs and other good men."⁶⁰ He even opposed the idea that Christ descended into Hell between His death and resurrection!⁶¹ In both cases his primary concern seems to have been to avoid any weakening of the importance of responding to the gospel in this life. ⁶²

Then how does Wesley believe that God will deal with the unevangelized? Will they be “saved”? Given his understanding of salvation as recovered holiness (not merely forgiveness), this issue had two dimensions for Wesley. At its most abstract level, it was simply the question whether those who lack definitive Christian revelation will be summarily excluded from eternal blessing. At a more concrete level it was the question whether such persons can or must develop at least a degree of holiness in this life, which is the Christian foretaste and condition of final salvation (for Wesley).

Wesley’s answer to the first question is fairly clear and apparently consistent throughout his life. His conviction of the unfailing justice and universal love of God made it impossible for him to believe that people who lacked knowledge of Christ through no fault of their own (i.e., invincible ignorance) would be automatically excluded from heaven.⁶³ Accordingly, he repeatedly prefaced claims about the qualifications for eternal salvation with an exemption from consideration of those who received only initial revelation. He argued that Scripture gave no authority for anyone to make definitive claims about them. Their fate must be left to the mercy of God, who is the God of heathens as well as of Christians.⁶⁴ This conviction took its most formal expression when he deleted the Anglican Article XVIII (“Of Obtaining Eternal Salvation Only by the Name of Christ”) from the Articles of Religion that he sent to the American Methodists.⁶⁵

At times, Wesley ventured beyond this mere refusal to condemn those who had available only initial universal revelation. When he did so, the second dimension of the issue—the connection of present salvation (holiness, in some degree) to future salvation came into play. Given his assumption that God’s self-revelation in Christ and the Spirit empowered humans to recover a level of holiness unattainable through initial revelation, Wesley’s unique dilemma was why God allowed some to be born in areas where the development of requisite holiness was not possible (he rejected the suggestion that it was punishment for pre-existent disobedience).⁶⁶ This situation struck at the heart of Wesley’s theological concern, because a God of truly “responsible grace” could neither summarily condemn such people for lacking holiness nor indiscriminately affirm them all (i.e., universalism), thereby denying them the freedom to refuse divine grace.⁶⁷

The late Wesley (with his more positive estimate of initial revelation) turned to another solution for this problem that had recommended

itself to many Christians before him: God will judge the heathens with some discrimination after all; not directly in terms of their appropriation or rejection of Christ, but in terms of how they respond to the gracious revelation (light) that they do receive.⁶⁸ This assumes, of course, that some degree of true spirituality or holiness can emerge in response to God's gracious initial revelation—a possibility that the late Wesley was willing to admit.⁶⁹ To be sure, this holiness may fall short of Christian standards for final salvation, but the lack would be supplied by divine indulgence.⁷⁰

IV. CONCLUSIONS

We have covered a wide and varying terrain in this study. What general conclusions might we draw to round it off?

Our first conclusion is fairly simple and should have been sufficiently demonstrated by now: there is a stronger suggestion than has usually been recognized in Wesley's mature thought that *some* of those who have never heard of Christ may experience a degree of God's present saving power and enter into God's eternal saving Presence.⁷¹

Of course while such salvation would be apart from explicit acquaintance with Christ, Wesley would always maintain that it too was "through Christ," since any human response to God is possible only because of the universal Prevenient Grace of God, which is rooted in the atoning work of Christ.⁷² Likewise, Wesley was certainly not advocating universal salvation; like all Divine grace, Prevenient Grace is "responsible," empowering but not overriding human accountability.⁷³

It is also important to note that Wesley would not see this possibility of salvation among the heathen as in any way lessening the urgency of their evangelization, much less suggesting that they are better left without the added responsibility for definitive Christian revelation.⁷⁴ For Wesley the good news of God's pardoning love manifest in Christ does not add extra *content* to the task of obedience, it brings a renewing *power* for the life of obedience.

One thing that remains unclear is how Wesley would respond to persons of other religious faiths who are presented with the message of Christ and choose to remain in their original community. The most likely community with which he would have experienced this firsthand was Judaism, and he showed some ambivalence: sometimes condemning their "hardness of heart," sometimes arguing that we should leave them in God's hands. One gets the sense that he cannot imagine the message of

Christ being placed aside, *if* it has been presented truly-e.g., not drowned out by the contradictory lives of the Christian community that bears the message.

From what we have seen about Wesley's estimation of the situation of the heathen, one might also draw some conclusions about appropriate means of evangelization. In particular, Mark Royster seems correct in his claim that Wesley's doctrine of Prevenient Grace supports a positive valuation of the agenda of inculturating or contextualizing the Gospel in evangelism and missions.⁷⁵ If God is already graciously at work in a beginning sense in one's existing cultural setting, then conversion to Christianity need not require a comprehensive rejection of this culture. Rather, one would begin the demanding perennial task of cultural discernment, in light of the definitive revelation of Christ.

The final conclusion that I would note is the most general, and the one that I find most relevant for the current Christian debate over the nature and status of other religions. Particularly in Evangelical circles, suggestions of some truth existing in other religions, or of some possibility of salvation among those who have never heard of Christ, are typically charged with a lack of appreciation for the indispensable role of divine grace in salvation.⁷⁶ But this cannot be said of Wesley. He quite clearly grounds all salvation in God's grace. If he differs from other theologians who would rule out any possibility of salvation among the heathen, it is not in the *need* for grace, but in the *nature* of God's grace.⁷⁷ In other words, the convictions that lead Wesley to suggest that a truly loving and just God would judge the heathen in terms of their response to the light of initial universal revelation are the same convictions that had led him earlier to reject unconditional predestination.⁷⁸

NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS

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|--------------------------|---|
| <i>John Wesley</i> | <i>John Wesley</i> . Ed. Albert C. Outler. A Library of Protestant Thought Series. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964. |
| <i>Journal</i> (Curnock) | <i>The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.</i> 8 vols. Ed. Nehemiah Curnock. London: Epworth, 1909-16. |
| <i>Letters</i> (Telford) | <i>The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.</i> 8 vols. Ed. John Telford. London: Epworth, 1931 |

<i>NT Notes</i>	<i>Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament.</i> 2 vols. London: Bowyer, 1755
<i>Survey</i>	<i>A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation, or A Compendium of Natural Philosophy.</i> 5 volumes. 5th edition. London: Maxwell & Wilson, 1809.
<i>Works</i>	The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley. Editor in Chief, Frank Baker. Nashville: Abingdon, 1954ff. (Volumes 7, 11, 25, and 26 appeared as the <i>Oxford Edition of The Works of John Wesley</i> . Oxford: Clarendon, 1975-83).
<i>Works (Jackson)</i>	<i>The Works of John Wesley.</i> 14 vols. 3rd ed. Ed. Thomas Jackson. London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872.

¹This essay is dedicated to the memory of Joseph Mayfield (1911-1991), my first mentor in the craft of teaching and a model of scholarship placed in service to the Church.

²Wynkoop, "John Wesley-Mentor or Guru?" *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 10 (1975): 5-14.

³Outler, "A New Future for 'Wesley Studies': An Agenda for 'Phase III,'" in *The Future of the Methodist Theological Traditions*, ed. M. Douglas Meeks (Nashville: Abingdon, 1985), pp.34-52; reprinted in: *The Wesleyan Theological Heritage: Essays of Albert D. Outler*, eds. T. C. Oden & L. R. Longden (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), pp.126-42.

⁴In one recent evangelical consideration of this issue Wesley is only mentioned in passing as an alternative to the more typical Reformed evangelical perspective-William V. Crockett and James Sigountos, eds., *Through No Fault of Their Own? The Fate of Those Who Have Never Heard* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), p.259. He received more sympathetic and extended notice in John E. Sanders, *No Other Name: An Investigation into the Destiny of the Unevangelized* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), pp.249-51. A detailed study of his stance may help his alternative view to be considered even more seriously.

⁵Knitter, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1985).

⁶See especially Hick, *God Has Many Faces* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982). Note also the collection of essays in John Hick & Paul Knitter, eds., *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987).

7Particularly to be recommended are: Gavin D'Costa, *Theology and Religious Pluralism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Gavin D'Costa, ed., *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1990); 5. Mark Heim, *Is Christ the Only Way?* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1985); and several essays in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 24.1(1987)1-52.

8Cf. Ralph R. Covell, "The Christian Gospel and World Religions: How Much Have American Evangelicals Changed?" *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 15 (1991): 12-17; and Harold Netland, *Dissonant Voices: Religious Pluralism and the Question of Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991).

9The typically negative Evangelical evaluation of the unevangelized is amply represented in Crockett and Sigountos, *Through No Fault of Their Own?*. For some cautiously more positive evaluations, see esp. Norman Anderson, *Christianity and World Religions: The Challenge of Pluralism* (Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1984), pp.137-175; *Christianity and Other Faiths: An Evangelical Contribution to our Multi-Faith Society* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1983), pp.22-4; Peter Cotterell, "The Unevangelized: An Olive Branch From the Opposition," *International Review of Mission* 78 (1988): 131-5; Millard Erickson, "Hope for Those Who Haven't Heard? Yes, But. . .," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 11 (April 1975):122-26; and Evert D. Osburn, "Those Who Have Never Heard: Have They No Hope?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32 (1989):367-72. The strongest current evangelical voices for the *possibility* of salvation among the unevangelized are surely John Sanders (*No Other Name*) and Clark H. Pinnock. "The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions," in *Christian Faith and Practice in the Modern World*, eds. Mark Noll and David Wells (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), pp.152-68; "Toward an Evangelical Theology of Religion," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33 (1990): 359-68; "Acts 4:12-No Other Name Under Heaven," in Crockett and Sigountos, *Through No Fault of Their Own?*, pp.107-15; and *A Wideness in God's Mercy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992).

10Cf. Gwen C. Thomas, ed., *Attitudes Toward Other Religions: Some Christian Interpretations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969; reprint, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986); and John Hick and Brian Hebblethwaite, eds., *Christianity and Other Religions: Selected Readings* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980). The only selections that Thomas includes

from prior to the twentieth century are by Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648) and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1769-1834). Hick and Hebblethwaite begin with one of the last pieces of Ernst Troeltsch (1923).

11See esp. Gerhard Rosenkranz, *Der christliche Glaube angesichts der Weltreligionen* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1967); and Anastasios Giannoulatos (Yannoulatos), *Various Christian Approaches to Other Religions: A Historical Outline* (Athens: Poreuthenetes, 1971). On early writers-particularly Greek, see Richard P. C. Hanson, "The Christian Attitude to Pagan Religions," in *Studies in Christian Antiquity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985), pp.144-229; Chrys Saldanha, *Divine Pedagogy: A Patristic view of Non-Christian Religions* (Rome: Editrice Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, 1984); and James Sigountos, "Did Early Christians Believe Pagan Religions Could Save?" in Crockett and Sigountos, *Through No Fault of Their Own?*, pp.229-41.

12As Hanson and Sigountos point out, the positive evaluations were not of polytheistic Greco-Roman religions, but of monotheistic philosophical critiques of the former. Such appeals were useful to the early Christian apologists in answering popular attacks on the "atheism" of Christianity. At the same time, the apologists often hastened to suggest that the pagan philosophers had "borrowed" their ideas from Moses! Given the historical impossibility of this suggestion, later persons (like Wesley) who also discerned elements of Christian truth in these philosophers developed further an alternative explanation-general revelation.

13On this general point, see Randy L. Maddox "John Wesley and Eastern Orthodoxy: Influences, Convergences, and Differences," *Asbury Theological Journal* 45.2 (1990):29-53.

14Pailin, *Attitudes to Other Religions: Comparative Religion in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). For a somewhat related study, see Peter Harrison, "Religion" and the Religions in the English Enlightenment (Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1990). Harrison's agenda is to trace the emergence of a truly "secular" study of religion in seventeenth-century England.

15Wesley was familiar with at least some of Barrow's sermons (*cf.* Letter to "John Smith" [30 Dec. 1745], § 11, *Works*, 26:180). In these sermons can be found this four-fold distinction: see *The Works of Isaac Barrow* (New York: John Riker, 1845), 2:316-44, 591-6. Richard Baxter is

frequently quoted by Wesley, thus he may have known the section in Baxter's *The Reasons of the Christian Religion* (abstracted in Pailin, *Other Religions*, pp.154-7) which invokes this four-fold division. Finally, Wesley frequently referred to Edward Brerewood's *Enquiries Touching the Diversity of Languages and Religions through the Chief Parts of the World* (London, 1614) which made such a distinction in its Preface. For a few references to Brerewood, see Sermon 63, "The General Spread of the Gospel," §1, *Works*, 2:485; Sermon 122, "Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity," §3, *Works*, 4:87; The Doctrine of Original Sin, Pt. 1, §11.1, *Works* (Jackson), 9:208; and *Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Gloucester* (26 Nov. 1762), §11.9, *Works*, 11:508.

16The best example is Sermon 106, "On Faith," *Works*, 3:492-501.

17E.g., Sermon 106, "On Faith," §1.5, *Works*, 3:495; and *Minutes* (13 May 1746), Q. 11, *John Wesley*, p.157.

18See the negative descriptions in *A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, Pt. II, §1.3-19 & §111.13-14, *Works*, 11:204-13, 261-3 (note however that he also gives a negative description of contemporary Christians in §11, for his theme is the fallen nature of all England). Cf. Pailin, *Other Religions*, pp.63-80.

19Sermon 106 (1788), "On Faith," §1.6, *Works*, 3:495.

20 Cf. Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1960).

21Cf. Pailin, *Other Religions*, pp.81-104. See also the representative extract from Isaac Barrow on pp.202-4.

22The Doctrine of Original Sin, Pt. I, §11.6, *Works* (Jackson), 9:215-16.

23The book in question is Henri de Boulainvillier's *The Life of Mahomet* (trans. from the French; London, 1731). Wesley disparaged this work by comparison to one by Humphrey Prideaux (*The True Nature of Imposture Fully Displayed in the Life of Mahomet* [London, 1697]) which had defended the superiority of Christianity, in *Journal* (23 Nov. 1767), *Journal* (Curnock) ,5:242-3. Extracts of Boulainvillier and Prideaux can be found in Pailin, *Other Religions*.

24Cf. Sermon 63, "The General Spread of the Gospel," §3, *Works*, 2:486; and Sermon 106, "On Faith," §1.3, *Works*, 3:494.

25See Sermon 130 (1790), “On Living Without God,” §14, *Works*, 4:174; and Sermon 106 (1788), “On Faith,” §1.3-4, *Works*, 3:494-5 (while perhaps not focusing on Islam, this passage uses a Muslim as an example!). Wesley’s positive comments on Islam are noted (with some surprise) in Thomas E. Brigden, “The Wesleys and Islam,” *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* 8 (1912):91-5.

26Compare (in chronological order): *Journal* (11 Oct. 1745), *Works*,20:95; *Journal* (12 Aug. 1748), *Works*, 20:238; *NT Notes*, Acts 17:28-30; *The Doctrine of Original Sin*, Pt. I, §1.12, *Works* (Jackson), 9:202; *Journal* (12 Sept. 1776), *Journal* (Curnock), 6:128; *Journal* (25 June 1778), *Journal* (Curnock), 6:202; Sermon 70, “The Case of Reason Impartially Considered,” §11.6, *Works*, 2:596; and Sermon 83, “On Patience,” §3, *Works*, 3:171.

27Compare his Letter to John Burton (10 Oct. 1735), *Works*, 25:439; with his interview of some Chickasaw Indians published in a Letter to Editor of *Gentleman’s Magazine* (20 July 1736), *Works*, 25:464-6 (reprinted in *Journal* [20 July 1736J , *Works*, 18:165-7).

28E.g., *Journal* (9 July 1737), *Works*, 18:185; and *Journal* (2 Dec.1737), §§23-8, *Works*, 18:202-4. Cf. Ralph Randolph, “John Wesley and the American Indian: A Study in Disillusionment,” *Methodist History* 10.3 (1972): 3-11.

29E.g., Sermon 38, “A Caution Against Bigotry,” §1.9, *Works*, 2:67; Sermon 63, “The General Spread of the Gospel,” §2, *Works*, 2:486; *Journal* (18 Jan. 1773), *Journal* (Curnock), 5:497; and “Thoughts on a Late Publication,” *Works* (Jackson), 13:411 - 13.

30E.g., Sermon 28, “Sermon on the Mount VIII,” §9, *Works*, 1:616-7; and *Journal* (8 Feb. 1753), *Works*, 20:445.

31See his *Thoughts Upon Slavery*, esp. §IV.8, *Works* (Jackson),11:59-79. Some hint of the same point in connection with Native Americans can be found in Sermon 69, “The Imperfection of Human Knowledge,” §11.6, *Works*, 2:580.

32Cf. Philip C. Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

33Cf. Thomas Brigden, “Wesley’s References to China and the Chinese,” *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* 9 (1914): 130-3.

34Cf. Peter James Marshall, *The British Discovery of Hinduism in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: University Press, 1970).

35See his Letter to the Editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post* (28 Nov.1774), *Letters* (Telford), 6:118-23. Wesley remarks here on a book by a Mr. H- that was "an exact translation of the Koran of Indostan, of the Shastali of Bramah" (I have not yet determined the exact book in question). For some other examples of these typical confusions, see Pailin, *Other Religions*, pp. 48ff.

36Wesley's impressions are based on his reading of William Bolts, *Considerations of Indian Affairs*, 3 vols. (London, 1772-5). See his various reflections in *Journal* (23 Feb. 1776), *Journal* (Curnock), 6:97; *Journal* (13 Nov. 1776), *Journal* (Curnock), 6:131; Sermon 61, "The Mystery of Iniquity," §29-33, *Works*, 2:465-8; and Sermon 69, "The Imperfection of Human Knowledge, §11.4, *Works*, 2:578-9.

37Sermon 106 (1788), "On Faith," §1.4, *Works*, 3:494.

38Pailin, *Other Religions*, p.13.

39Pailin would agree that this is Wesley's focus, though he notes mainly the negative dimensions of Wesley's comments on general revelation (cf. *Other Religions*, pp.33-35). We hope to show that there was a much stronger positive role than Pailin recognizes.

40For strong denials of any "natural theology" in Wesley, see Harald Lindstrom, *Wesley and Sanctification* (Stockholm: Nya Bokförlags Aktiebolaget, 1946), p.47; Collin Williams, *John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1960), pp.31 , 42; and Kenneth Collins, "Wesley's Platonic Conception of the Moral Law," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 21(1986): 116-28, 118. For counterarguments that there is indeed at least an implicit "natural theology" in Wesley, see H. D. McDonald, *Ideas of Revelation* (London: Macmillan, 1959), p.253; Yoshio Noro, "Wesley's Theological Epistemology," *The Cliff Review* 28 (1971):59-76; and Melvin Hendricks, "John Wesley and Natural Theology," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 18.2 (1983):7-17.

41For an articulation (and defense) of this Protestant polarization, see Bruce Demarest, *General Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982). Actually, Calvin gives more place to general revelation than Demarest admits, though later Calvinism downplayed this.

42Cf. Saldanha, *Divine Pedagogy*, esp. pp.97-8, 151ff.

43The best evidence of Wesley's difference from typical Western theology here is his abstract of Peter Browne's *The Procedure, Extent, and*

Limits of Human Understanding. When Browne made a distinction between knowledge that we have by our own faculties through the light of nature and that additional knowledge communicated from God, Wesley added a footnote that all “light of nature” so-called flows from Preventing Grace; Survey, 5:185.

44For more detailed discussion of this point, see Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley’s Practical Theology*. Nashville, Tenn.: Kingswood Books, 1994, chapter three.

45See especially Sermon 106, “On Faith,” §§2-3, *Works*, 3:492-3. Here Wesley appropriates John Fletcher’s delineation of four *dispensations* of the grace of God, distinguished by their progressively greater degrees of revelation.

46The empiricist nature of Wesley’s epistemology and the role of the “spiritual senses” in knowledge of God has been carefully studied in Rex Matthews, “Religion and Reason Joined: A Study in the Theology of John Wesley,” (Harvard University Th.D. thesis, 1986).

47E.g., Sermon 69, “The Imperfection of Human Knowledge,” §1.4, *Works*, 2:571.

48For more on this, see Maddox, *John Wesley*, esp. chapter two.

49See Letter to John Burton (10 Oct. 1735), *Works*, 25:439.

50E.g., *A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, Pt. II (1745), §111.21, *Works*, 11:268.

51Sermon 10, “Sermon on the Mount VI,” §111.7, *Works*, 1:581.

52*NT Notes*, John 1:9, Rom. 1:17-19.

53The document in question is *The Doctrine of Original Sin*, *Works* (Jackson), 9:191-464. On this point, note especially Pt. I, §11.2-5 (pp.209-15); and Pt. II, §11.6 (p.267). See also the homiletical distillation of this work in Sermon 44, “Original Sin,” esp. §11.2-3, *Works*, 2:177.

54Sermon 106, “On Faith,” §1.4, *Works*, 3:494. He had earlier (1754 suggested this possibility for the “wise men” mentioned in Matthew and certain Old Testament figures, *NT Notes*, Matthew 2:1.

55See the discussion of the aspects of Prevenient Grace in Maddox *John Wesley*, chapter seven.

56 On these claims, see Sermon 70, “The Case of Reason Impartial” Considered,” §11.6 (on Socrates: virtue but lack of hope), *Works*, 2:596;

and Sermon 119, “Walking by Sight and Walking by Faith,” §8-10, *Works*, 4:51-2; and “Thoughts on a Late Publication,” §3, *Works* (Jackson), 13:412.

57Note the methodological claim in his introduction (§24) to the compendium on natural philosophy: “concerning God and Spirits... we can neither depend on Reason nor Experiment. Whatsoever [we] know, or can know concerning them, must be drawn from the oracles of God,” *Survey*, 1:8 (also in *Works* [Jackson], 13:487).

58Sermon 85, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” §§ 1-2, *Works*, 3:199-200.

59These points permeate Wesley’s works. For a few examples, see Minutes (13 May 1746), Q. 6, John Wesley, p.160; The Character of a Methodist, § 13, *Works*, 9:39; An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, §61, *Works*, 11:70; A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Pt. I, §1.3-6, *Works*, 11:106-8; Sermon 10, “The Witness of the Spirit I,” *Works*, 1:274; and Sermon 12, “The Witness of Our Spirit,” §15, *Works*, 1:309.

60A *Roman Catechism, with a Reply Thereto*, Q. 25, *Works* (Jackson), 10:100. This work was not original to Wesley, but his reissue endorses it and has specifically referred to it as defining his position, in *Journal* (20 Dec. 1768), *Journal* (Curnock), 5:296.

61See the discussion in John Deschner, *Wesley’s Christology: An Interpretation* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1960), pp.51-2.

62f. Sermon 115, “Dives and Lazarus,” §111.1-2, *Works*, 4:16-7.

63E.g., Letter to “John Smith,” (25 June 1746), §2, *Works*, 26:198; and Sermon 55, “On the Trinity,” §18, *Works*, 2:386.

64See especially, *Minutes* (25 June 1744), *John Wesley*, p.137; Sermon 91, “On Charity,” §1.3, *Works*, 3:295-6; Sermon 127, “On the Wedding Garment,” § 17, *Works*, 4:147; and Sermon 130, “On Living Without (iod,” §14, *Works*, 4:174.

65A convenient copy of Article XV ** can be found in Thomas Oden, *Doctrinal Standards in the Wesleyan Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1988), p.118. It had explicitly ruled out salvation based on a response to the “light of nature.”

66The clearest expression of this dilemma is Sermon 91, “On Charity,” §1.3, *Works*, 3:295. For the conjoined denial of a pre-existent cause,

see Sermon 69, “The Imperfection of Human Knowledge,” §111.1-2 *Works*, 2:582-3.

67On the notion of Wesley’s theologically orienting concern of “responsible Grace,” see Maddox, *John Wesley*, esp. chapter four.

68This solution was articulated by many of the early Greek father (cf. Saldanha, *Divine Pedagogy*). It had also been defended by man, Quakers and Anabaptists (against whom Anglican Article XVIII had been framed!). Wesley was aware of the Quaker claim and accepted it; *A Letter to a Parson Lately Joined with the People called Quakers* (10 Feb. 1748 §6, *Letters* (Telford), 2:118. For Wesley’s own appeal to this criterion, se “Large Minutes,” Q. 74, *Works* (Jackson), 8:336; *NT Notes*, Acts 17:2~ and Sermon 91, “*On Charity*,” §1.3, *Works*, 3:296.

69While the middle Wesley acknowledged some light of general revelation, he remained pessimistic about its effectiveness (cf. *NT Noted Romans* 3:14). Perhaps he was echoing the doubts of Richard Baxter expressed in his *More Reasons for the Christian Religion* (see *The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter*, ed. William Orme [London: Dun can, 1830], 21 :569ff). The late Wesley is much more optimistic about the possibility of heathens attaining a measure of true religion (cf. Sermon 106, “On Faith,” §1.4, *Works*, 3:494). Possibly he is influenced by the series of sermons of Isaac Barrow on “The Doctrine of Universal Redemption” (see esp. *Works of Barrow*, 2:85-6, 97), which are most likely the sermons referred to in Letter to “John Smith” (30 Dec. 1745) §11, *Works*, 26:180.

70Cf. *NT Notes*, Acts 10:4.

71Actually, this topic has not been widely discussed by Wesley scholars. For relevant discussions (arranged by increasing affirmation of salvation beyond Christ), see: Manfred Marquardt, *Praxis und Prinzipien de Sozialethik John Wesley*s (Go~ttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), p. 112 ** fn69; Charles Rogers, “The Concept of Prevenient Grace in the Theology of John Wesley,” (Duke University Ph.D. thesis, 1967), pp. 178,-245; Lycurgus Starkey, *The Work of the Holy Spirit: A Study in Wesleyan Theology* (New York: Abingdon, 1962), p.43; Williams, *Wesley’s Theology*, p.45; Ole Borgen, *John Wesley on the Sacraments: A Theological Study* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972), p.126; David Naglee, *From Everlasting to Everlasting: John Wesley on Eternity and Time* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), pp.594-9; and Michael Hurley, “Salvation Today and
Wes-

ley Today,” in *The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition*, ed., K. A. Rowe (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1976), pp.94-116. See also the discussion in David Lowes Watson, *God Does Not Foreclose: The Universal Promise of Salvation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), pp. 101ff.

72Cf. *Minutes* (2 Aug. 1745), Q. 8, *John Wesley*, p.150; and *NT Notes*, Acts 10:35.

73Positions like Wesley’s are often accused of being universalistic by Reformed evangelicals! Cf. Crockett and Sigountos, *Through No Fault of Their Own?*, pp. 24ff.

74Note how frequently this concern comes up in relation to positions like Wesley’s, in Crockett and Sigountos, *Through No Fault of Their Own?*, pp.43, 260.

75Cf. Royster, “John Wesley’s Doctrine of Prevenient Grace in Missiological Perspective” (Asbury Theological Seminary, D.Miss. thesis, 1989). A similar point has been made more briefly in S. Wesley Ariarajah, “Evangelism and Wesley’s Catholicity of Grace” in *Future of Methodist Theological Traditions*, pp.138-48.

76An excellent example is Douglas Moo, “Romans 2: Saved Apart From the Gospel?” in Crockett and Sigountos, *Through No Fault of Their Own?*, pp.137-45.

77This point is recognized by many contributors to Crockett and Sigountos, *Through No Fault of Their Own?*, esp. pp.32, 44, 111.

78Note in this regard that Isaac Barrow’s series of sermons on “The Doctrine of Universal Redemption” dealt with *both* the possibility of salvation among the heathen and his rejection of limited atonement (cf. *Works of Barrow*, 2:85-6, 97, 112). This conjunction is not accidental.

ECONOMIC POLICIES AND JUDICIAL OPPRESSION AS FORMATIVE INFLUENCES ON THE THEOLOGY OF JOHN WESLEY

by, Wesley D. Tracy

Any ecclesiastical entity which can wear the badge “Wesleyan” without mendacity must be both faithful to its evangelical Christian heritage and in redemptive touch with the great human problems which bedevil human society. It is oxymoronic to speak of a Wesleyanism which gathers in conventicles to engage only in “vertical” worship, or atomizes into solitary units of “private piety that clings to Jesus and ignores the human agonies of our world.”¹ It is also true that one has voiced an equally erroneous non-sequitur when he or she describes a Wesleyanism with only bacon and beans and blankets to offer a spiritually starving world. Nor is it enough to note that real Wesleyanism is interested in both theology and *praxis*, faith and works, piety and service, devotion and justice; personal religion and social responsibility. Curiosity and perhaps something more serious call us to explore the ways in which such factors relate to each other in dynamic Wesleyan theology.

The hypothesis to be explored in this essay is this: social and economic conditions claimed a primary role in the shaping of Wesley’s theology. This is to say that Wesley’s theological syntheses and innovations (free grace, Christian perfection, assurance, etc.) were shaped by social needs and necessities as much as they were by scripture, historical theology, or Wesley’s tutors such as Law, Taylor, Scougal, Macarius, a’Kempis, de Renty, Lopez, etc.

While almost every Wesleyan scholar is prudent enough to say that Wesley was to a certain extent a “theologian of experience” or a “product of his times,” these statements are usually made as an aside on the way to making a “more important” point. The social researchers like Bernard Semmel, for example, coach us to linger longer over the social evidence when looking for the sources of Wesley’s theological formulations.

In exploring the thesis, I employ both logical and pathetic proofs. I use the term *pathetic*, not in the vernacular sense to mean *pitiable*, but in the sense of *pathos* in Aristotelian rhetoric. *Pathos* is the second element of *inventio* in Aristotle’s quadrilateral: *inventio*, *elecutio*, *dispositio*, and *pronuntiatio*. In classical rhetorical theory, *pathos* is a legitimate element in persuasion when used in balance with its brothers, *logos* and *ethos*. Of course, when used manipulatively or alone it becomes mere sophistry, which Aristotle despised and which I hope to avoid.

I believe that pathetic circumstances powerfully influenced the formulation of Wesley’s theology. His thought was put together in the midst of life situations fraught with *pathos*. Imagine weeping with a man and woman whose house had just been burned down because they held “Methodist” meetings there. Imagine watching five men strangle to death on the gallows in punishment for stealing \$1.50. Imagine watching a starving family pounce like beasts on a loaf of bread, devouring it instantly. Imagine watching graveyard workers throwing a wagon load of corpses - starvation victims - into the cemetery’s “poor hole.” Imagine all this, and try to imagine John Wesley withdrawing from these heart-chilling realities to write an academic, analytical, theoretical chapter on theological anthropology without such scenes influencing his thought. Mere logical analysis cannot, I believe, adequately account for the affective, pathetic influences at work in the formulation of Wesley’s theology. I cannot do this either. My concern for the pathetic proofs render the first two sections of the discourse descriptive rather than analytical.

To explore the hypothesis fully would require encyclopedic treatment which the limitations of time and space - to say nothing of the limitations of the author’s capacity - do not permit. Therefore, the scholar’s favorite device of narrowing the topic to something he or she has been studying recently has hereby invoked. The primary boundaries of this essay are formed by my recent research in 18th-century English newspapers. More particularly, in the newspapers that Wesley himself read I shall look for evidence that economic conditions and judicial oppression exerted seminal influence on his theological innovations.

I. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND POLICIES IN WESLEY'S ENGLAND

When the storm that was the Industrial Revolution howled through the winter of England's soul in the 18th century, it blew humanity into the cities like maple leaves before a November wind. And it left them, like leaves, piled in random heaps. Housing conditions were outrageous. Ten persons per unfurnished room was common. Horse manure polluted the unpaved streets. It was sometimes piled 14 feet high on both sides of the street in London. Diseases like typhoid, smallpox, dysentery, and cholera ravaged almost unchecked. Starvation was a daily reality which stalked the poorest. In the larger cities, the graveyard operators maintained "poor holes" - large common graves left open until the daily flow of corpses of nameless nobodies finally filled them.

Violent crimes were common. Gambling and gin-drinking became the national pastimes. Every sixth building in London was an alehouse. Sports included boxing, bullbaiting, cockfighting, and hangings. For the children there were the streets or the sweatshops. Schools? Only one child in every 25 attended any school of any kind.

Were these conditions real, or were they mere Methodist panegyric to set up the story of their hero, John Wesley, who walked into this setting and lifted the whole nation culturally, economically, and spiritually?

I studied the 18th-century newspapers, particularly those published between 1738 and 1791, looking for accounts of the times not seen through Methodist or Wesleyan eyes. I discovered that most Wesleyan sources had *understated* rather than *overstated* the awful social conditions and fierce judicial oppression in which John Wesley's theology and practice were developed.

For the most part, the newspapers were produced by the well-to-do, for the well-to-do, and in behalf of the well-to-do. Yet the newspapers stand as an incredible self-indictment of the mercantile and noble classes. Their crimes of brutal oppression are there for all history to see. True, the judicial oppression is given casual page-three priority, but there it stands.

Page one of nearly every newspaper was given to international affairs (mostly wars) and to the travels, marriages, and "doings" of royalty.

Page two had more about the activity of the nobility as well as reports from Parliament. Thus, half of the typical four-page paper had to do with the rompings of the high-born and the gentry.

Page three contained other "news." London news was always given priority, even if the paper was published in Cambridge or Norwich. Typical news items included financial reports of the East India company, grain

market prices, bankruptcies, marriages, clergy appointments, theatre reviews, deaths - and always the horse racing and lottery results.

Also squeezed in on page three were almost casual reports of crimes, sentences, and executions.

Page four carried personals, poetry, and assorted advertisements of medicines and books. The personals and the ads found in these papers are intriguing, but since they have little value for the theses of this essay, I reluctantly put them aside. However, I cannot resist including a few book ads promoted under *This Day Published*. In July 1742, this book appeared:

A Brief History of the Principles of Methodists wherein the Rise and Progress, together with the Causes of the Several Variations, Divisions and Present Inconsistencies of this Sect are attempted to be traced out and accounted for by Joseph Tucker, M.A., vicar of All-Saints.²

Another author, William Dowars, wrote this “bestseller”:

Calvinism supported by the Word of God: Or Some of the Sentiments of a True Calvinist laid down, consistent with the infallible creatures of Truth; and humbly presented for the perusal of Mr. John Wesley, his Hearers, and other Arminians. Price: one shilling.³

But let us return to the central concern of this paper. Consider this series of newspaper clippings which cite the desperate poverty the masses. Fielding describes the situation in these words:

The poor are a very great burden and ever a nuisance... there are whole families in want of every necessity of life, oppressed with hunger, cold, nakedness and filth and disease. They starve and freeze and rot among themselves... steal and beg and rob among their betters.⁴

In 1740, the *London Daily Post* observed “such swarms of miserable objects as now fill our streets are shocking to behold... Several have perished in the Street for Want.”⁵ The same year another periodical declared: “Several perished with Cold in the streets and Fields in and around the city (London)... T’would be endless to mention all the Calamities.”⁶ A Norwich paper reported, “We have a great mortality amongst the poor people who die in great numbers of Fluxes and Fevers. One poor man buried eight of his family in a few days. This mortality is owing to the Badness of the Diet which the poor have been obliged to feed on.”⁷ The same month in Edenburg, a whole family starved: “Last

week a man, his wife, and two children were all found dead in their beds.”⁸ One woman gave birth to a child only to “perish with cold after she had been delivered.”⁹ “A poor woman big with child was found ... in Spital Fields Market in a starving condition, and carried to the Roundhouse, where she died an hour later.”¹⁰ “A poor Haymaker dropp’d down dead by St. Anne’s Church, Soho; supposed to have died for Want.”¹¹

In Stamfordham, a poor woman took to the streets with her three children, looking for food. Before she could find a charitable hand, two of her children died of starvation in the streets. The third child “had its arms froze. Mother and child were found the next morning nearly dead.”¹²

From Colne came a report that lack of food and fuel had produced much sickness and death. “The situation of the poor is rendered pitiable... by sickness. There is hardly a house where there is not one sick or one dead.”

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The *Norwich Gazette* reported, “On Saturday last a poor woman and her child about four years old were taken out of the Tower-Ditch drowned. It is said... that she was in great Want, and that she flung the child in first and herself afterwards.”¹⁴

Corroborating reports of such conditions are found in Wesley’s *Journal*. Of the people at Bethnal Green he wrote, “I have not found any such distress, no, not in the prison of Newgate. One poor man was just creeping out of his sick bed to his ragged wife and three little children, who were more than half naked and the very picture of famine; when one came bringing in a loaf of bread, they all ran, seized upon it, and tore it to pieces in an instant.”¹⁵

I found the following letter from John Wesley in *Lloyds’ Evening Post*, the *London Chronicle*, and the *Leeds Mercury*:

Why are thousands of people starving? . . . I’ve seen it with my own eyes in every corner of the land. I have known those who could only afford to eat a little coarse food every other day. I have known one picking up stinking sprats from a dunghill and carrying them home for herself and her children. I have known another gathering the bones which the dogs have left in the streets and making broth of them to prolong a wretched life. Why are so many thousand people in London, in Bristol, in Norwich, in every county from one end of England to the other, utterly destitute of employment?¹⁶

Could such conditions affect what Wesley would write and preach about predestination, free grace, or theological anthropology?

Several economic policies contributed to the state of affairs described above. I will identify and describe four such policies.

1. Policies of Employment and Unemployment

Perhaps we should say that the lack of an unemployment policy contributed to the starving conditions. England was an industrializing nation that had no experience or knowledge of how to deal with unemployment - nor did the upper class have any will to solve the problem. Yet, it was a desperate problem for the poor. A news item declared that “the misery... is almost incredible. The people are wholly out of Employ and in want of the Common necessities of Life.”¹⁷ “The deplorable case of the poor weavers at present cannot be enough lamented,” said the *Norwich Gazette*. “Not less than 10,000 are ... now starving for want of business.”¹⁸

“The great price of corn,” wrote one correspondent from Wellington, “has almost starved the Colliers and Common People, who have actually ate nothing but Grains and Salt for many days.”¹⁹

Those who did find work suffered the most degrading working conditions. Hours were long - up to fifteen hours per day - and pay was very low. Coal mining and textiles were the primary industries. The situation of the miners was desperate. Long hours in the bowels of the earth where dampness reigned made “rheumatism universal and consumption common. Deaths from accidents were an almost daily occurrence.”²⁰ Children worked in the mines as “pumpers.” For twelve hours per day and more, they stood in ankle-deep water, pumping water out of the mines. The mining industry had something for the whole family - “women were employed as beasts of burden and, with chains around their waists, crawled on hands and knees through narrow passages, drawing after them the coal carriages.”²¹

Children as young as six or seven carried 50-pound “coal creels” up the stairs from the bottom of the mines which “in aggregate equaled an ascent fourteen times a day to the summit of St. Paul’s Cathedral.”²² The lack of concern for the miners is painted boldly in this news item in the *Newcastle Journal*, March 21, 1767: “The catastrophe from foul air [in the mines] becomes more common than ever; yet as we have been requested to take no particular notice of these things, which, in fact could have little good tendency, we drop the farther mentioning of it.”

Again and again, leading citizens declared in the newspapers that England’s economic problems could be solved if more four- and five-year olds could be put to work in the factories. It was easy enough for parents

of hungry children to turn them over to the textile mill operator who would feed them milk or water gruel twice a day, give them some clothes, a place to sleep, and work them twelve to fourteen hours, six days per week.

No one was too young to work. Children as young as two years old were turned over to the chimney sweep gangs. Each day they would send their diminutive charges out in the streets crying, "Sweep, Sweep," trying to get householders to hire them to climb down their chimney and sweep out the soot. Many children were killed and maimed in tragic falls. By age six or seven, if not killed or disabled, they were too large to squeeze down sooty chimneys any longer and could then look for work in the factories or "hustle" the back streets, joining the other poor children who were "without shoes and stockings, half-naked or in tattered rags, cursing and swearing, rolling in the dirt and kennels [i.e., open drains or sewers], pilfering on the wharves."²³

Teenage poet William Blake, a contemporary of Wesley, confessed the nation's guilt in three poems about the plight of the chimney sweeps. One gives the image of a clergy person listening to the plaintive cry of a young "sweep" with sympathy yet, at the same time, noticing that the church's chimney is getting blacker and blacker. Another Blake poem is a graveyard song about chimney sweeps who were killed on the job. The third from his collection, "Songs of Experience," is called "The Chimney Sweeper." Notice the deft subtlety in the lines. For example, the sweeper cries, "Weep, Weep" rather than "Sweep, Sweep." Here Blake tells us that the subject is a very young child who, typical of toddlers, has not yet learned to pronounce words which begin with two consonant sounds. Before they can talk plainly they are out on the cold streets, tools of misguided parents, harsh employers, and cruel times.

A little black thing among the snow,
Crying, "weep! 'weep!" in notes of woe!
"Where are thy father and mother? say?"
"They are both gone up to the church to pray."
"Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil'd among the winter's snow
They clothed me in the clothes of death
And taught me to sing the notes of woe."
"And because I'm happy and dance and sing,
They think they have done me no injury,
And are gone to praise God and his Priest and King,
Who make up a heaven of our misery."²⁴

2. Exportation of Grain

English farmers could get more for their grain in France than in the local markets. Therefore, most of the crops were exported. Even when the poor had money to buy, there was often no bread, grain, flour, butter, or cheese to buy. This led to some 150 hunger riots during Wesley's ministry. The "mob" would stop outgoing barges, or take over the "grain factor's" warehouse. Sometimes the crowd would set its own price for the goods. Those who refused the offered price usually parted with their wares for nothing.

Reports of hunger riots often appeared on page three of *Lloyd's Evening Post*, *The Ipswich Journal*, *The London Chronicle*, *Daily Advertiser*, *The Norwich Gazette*, *The Public Advertiser*, *London Chronicle*, and *The Cambridge Journal and Weekly Flying Post*. A mob of six thousand at Manchester "overcame the civil powers, broke into the storehouses and destroyed or carried off grain, flour, and provisions to the value of 5 or £6000."²⁵ A few months later, a large mob rose in Liverpool and "obliged the farmers to sell their wheat at Prescott Market at 6s. 6d. per bushel, and other grain in Proportion."²⁶ On June 15, 1757, a crowd, mostly women, broke open the storehouse of a farmer who had refused 9s. 6d. per bushel and carried off all the wheat. The next day they struck again for 27 sacks of flour.²⁷ At Coventry, the hordes of the hungry "began by plundering the warehouses of cheese and selling the same at low prices." The journalist added, "many poor children had cheese for their suppers that had not tasted a bit for months past."²⁸

To quell the hunger riots, the government passed the Riot Act which forbade more than twelve persons to assemble for any sort of protest. But when one's children are starving, a Justice of the Peace reading the Riot Act is a small obstacle as the *Norwich Gazette* reported. "A mob arose at Blyth occasioned by the scarcity of corn... they broke into several granaries and ran off Justice White when he read the Proclamation [Riot Act] to them."²⁹

On the eve of his execution, one of the hunger rioters at Rossendale and Rochdale was asked why he would do such a thing. His answer, according to the *London Chronicle*, was, "We did not desire to hear our children weep for bread and [have] none to give them."³⁰

3. The Enclosure Acts

Just about every acre of England belonged, technically at least, to some duke, earl, or squire. Historically, however, the common people had access to the "common" lands. During the previous century, common

farming had been practiced. That is, on the open lands a peasant could raise a garden, keep a cow, pigs, chickens, etc. He could hunt small game and fish. Further, he could gather free firewood in the forests. But thousands of enclosure acts put the poor off their ancestral lands, leaving them homeless and penniless. Between 1650 and 1850 Parliament passed 4,000 enclosure acts. During Wesley's life, some 2,500 tracts of once common land were enclosed and taken from the people. This rhyme comes down to us from that era:

The Law doth Punish Man or Woman
That steals the goose from off the Common
But lets the greater Villain loose,
That steals the common from off the Goose.³¹

The newspapers announced most of the new enclosures. Some periodicals insightfully protested against them. A scribe calling himself "The Old Fashioned Farmer," wrote in the *London Chronicle* and the *London Evening Post* several articles which included these remarks. "Every session of Parliament multiplies laws for the destruction of our nurseries of corn and cattle by... new enclosures."³² These, the writer declared, "starve one part of the nation, while the other wallows in plenty." He challenged the nation's leaders, "Let it not be said that you were such negligent wretches as to suffer one half of the people to be starved to death for the sake of enriching the few... by enclosing."³³

The common people used less literary methods of protests. Left with no place to farm, hunt, fish, or even gather firewood, they often tore down enclosure fences or diverted a stream (that had been "enclosed") so they could get water. Of course, such crimes were punishable by death, and many citizens were executed for breaking fences or gathering illegal firewood. Robert Wearmouth has done excellent research in the newspapers and official state papers on this matter in his book, *Methodism and the Common People of the Eighteenth Century*. I refer the reader to this excellent source rather than expanding the present discussion.

I do want to share one of the most poignant newspaper stories I read about the enclosure acts. The *Ipswich Journal* carried the story of Ann Hoon, a simple woman who was seen breaking down a fence in order to gather firewood. The people told her she was bound to be caught and deported. That meant separation from her beloved only child, a fourteen-month-old daughter. She couldn't bear such a separation so she devised a plan. She would murder her daughter. She tried to drown her in a tub, but lost her nerve. Several hours later, she gathered her resolve and threw the

child in the river—it drowned. Ann then rushed to the town officials and told what she had done. She requested immediate hanging so she could join her baby in heaven. She was declared “not guilty” by the judge.³⁴

4. The Game Laws

Part of the starvation conspiracy was the long series of Game Laws. They all brought more restrictions on the poor, making all game and fish the property of the squire or duke or gentleman who owned the land. One fishing law was simply summarized as preventing the “destruction of pond or stew fish” by anyone except the landowner.³⁵ One of the new game laws of 1771 was spelled out in great detail in the *London Chronicle*. Apparently there was a loophole in previous legislation which Parliament moved quickly to plug. Rooks and squirrels had somehow not been specified in previous legislation. The new law declared that only landowners of four acres or more, or certain salaried employees, could be in possession of a rook or squirrel. If a “poor man” were caught with a rook or a squirrel without a “ticket” of permission from the landowner, he had to pay a £5 fine (more than he could earn in a year) and deliver the game to the landowner if “he lives within twelve miles.” If he lived farther away the constable was to deliver the dead rook or squirrel to the landowner.³⁶

And these laws were enforced. In 1750, some hungry people were digging wild rabbits out of their dens to keep from starving. The army was set upon these criminals and 28 persons were imprisoned for rabbit stealing or suspicion of same. An aloof writer of *the Gentleman’s Magazine* described the incident as: “Great disturbances in Leicestershire... by humor... among the populace of destroying rabbits.”³⁷

The words of a journalist from *Leeds* summarizes the result of the economic policies treated above. “The poor are without relief... without fuel, without food, and without the lawful means of procuring them.”³⁸

An insightful correspondent from Bury St. Edmunds reported, “Our jail is full of poor unhappy wretches for being concerned in the late riots, and their families are starving for bread, for the poor were never in so unhappy a situation in this country as they are at this time, and every method is made use of to keep them in distress.”³⁹

II. JUDICIAL OPPRESSION: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

In 1741, the Grand Jury of the King’s Bench was asked to consider the swarms of hungry people who choked the streets of London. After describing them as a “dreadful nuisance,” so “burthensome and disgrace-

ful,” they recommended enforcing the laws more vigorously “that we may not be thus troubled with the Poor.”⁴⁰

And enforce the laws they did. No fewer than 250 offenses were punishable by death. Fierce enforcement of laws that would make “an eye for an eye” look like a liberal mercy movement made the conspiracy of poverty and pain complete. The poor masses were shoved toward “crime” by ruthless economic policies and punished far beyond justice for their offenses. Old Bailey and Tyburn Tree in London are famous for the endless procession of nameless nobodies who were mass-murdered by a judicial machine built to devour the poor. In the *London Magazine* a poetic journalist called Old Bailey a place

Where poor offenders must submit to fate
That rich ones may enjoy the world in state.⁴¹

But all around England, though on a smaller scale, many courts carried out a bloody pageant of death and oppression. During every event and at each Christmas season, traveling “justices” held court throughout the land. More populous regions also had summer or fall assizes. The “sessions” of the Assizes were a sort of social season for the middle and upper classes. They would, of course, attend the court sessions and, since “everyone” would be in town, various banquets, balls, and business meetings were held. The “sessions” were opened by a sermon by the ranking local clergyman. John Wesley’s sermon, “The Great Assize,” was delivered in just such a setting. During the “sessions” the “justices” dished out their brand of distorted justice. Is it justice when the same judge on the same day gave the same sentence of hanging to a man who murdered his wife and to a teenager who stole a handkerchief?

The most popular sentences were death, deportation (for seven years, fourteen years, or life), public branding or “burning in the hand,” and public whipping.

Any crime against property was severely punished. Crimes against persons, as long as they were poor against poor, were strangely enough sometimes taken lightly. When Joseph Hall raped a child, his death sentence was reprieved.⁴² When Charles was convicted of “shooting Elizabeth Hicks in the head that she died instantly,” he was “burned in the hand” and released.⁴³ On the other hand, when Peter McCloud “burglarously” entered the house of J. Hankey, Esquire, and stole “a brass window screw,” he was sentenced to death.⁴⁴ When Charles Shuter, age fourteen, was “concerned with his mother in robbing a gentleman of

£62,” he was sentenced to death.⁴⁵ When John Gerrard picked from the pocket of Alexander Murray, Esquire, “one Cambrick handkerchief,” he, too, was sentenced to death.”⁴⁶

Another sort of double standard is illustrated by two counterfeiting cases. When an “eminent,” though discreetly nameless, Woolstapler and Shopkeeper passes counterfeit money, he was given six months in jail. The newspaper added that it was hoped that this case would deter “the inferior sort of people from this pernicious... practice.”⁴⁷ When Isabelia Condon, a poor woman, did the same, she was promptly tied to a post, “strangled and burned to death.”⁴⁸

In my study of the newspapers, I charted the record of crime and punishment for some 800 cases.⁴⁹ These are just the ones for which I could find the stories of the crime, arrest, and sentencing and the name of the offender. Some stories did not include the offender’s name. Others gave only partial information. The 800 charted in my notes, therefore, represent only a small sample of the victims of England’s judicial oppression machine. England executed up to 500 of her citizens every year throughout Wesley’s century. Let me cite only a few cases of those who were sentenced to death.

Henry Staples, William Sanders, and William Miller were typical of those executed for their crimes. Staples, along with two companions (W. Jones and J. Turner), ganged up on J. Pollard and robbed him of his silver watch. All three of the “Staples Gang” were executed.⁵⁰ William Sanders and his wife, Hannah, were hanged for stealing clothes, including 57 pairs of stockings. Their accomplice in the crime was one William Miller, who was also executed.⁵¹

Thomas Battledore, George Harris, and Thomas Tab were among the five men who took from T. Francis “some glass drops, a knife and some money.” All five were executed.⁵² James Mallone, Terrence MacCave, and two others committed a robbery of a hat and two shillings. All four men were hung.⁵³ Thomas Morgan, fourteen, and James Smith, twelve, were sentenced to death for stealing “a piece of silk handkerchief.”⁵⁴ Jane Whiting, fourteen, and Mary Wade, eleven, were sentenced to death for assaulting Mary Philips and stealing her cap, tippet, and frock while she was in the privy.⁵⁵ Robert Russell and John Nash, both fifteen, were sentenced to die for stealing “16 handkerchiefs.”⁵⁶ H. Webb died for helping in a robbery which netted “a hat and one shilling.”⁵⁷ Several persons, like Stephen Cratchley, were executed as “ringleaders” in hunger riots. Cratchley “carried” and “blew a horn to collect the mob.”⁵⁸ Many were

executed for stealing sheep or horses, or committing robberies of a shilling or two.

The system of judicial murder could see no difference between the offenses cited in the previous paragraphs and the offenses of people like Eleanor Croker who murdered her two bastard infant boys by stuffing them in “the necessary house,” 59 Mr. MacDonald, who beat his eight-year-old apprentice to death, or Francis Moulter who, according to the *Worcester Weekly Journal*, October 19, 1744, “committed a rape upon the body of Ann Bishop giving her the foul disease.” Murder and picking a pocket of a handkerchief frequently drew the same penalty from the same judge on the same day.

Executions were taken matter of factly—judicial murder was “a given” it seems. Sometimes it might be regrettable, but it was “necessary.” A sympathetic scribe wrote of a mass execution in 1785:

A shocking spectacle was exhibited before the debtors doors of Newgate where 20 miserable wretches were in one moment plunged into eternity. It is truly lamentable that the safety, peace, and good order of society, should render the sacrifice of lives... to the offended... laws...indispensably necessary.⁶⁰

Others of the press were even less sympathetic. A London newspaperman wrote the story of the execution of five “desperadoes.” Edmund Harris had burgled clothes, J. Lucas had helped in a robbery of “15 guineas and up,” Francis Curtis had robbed a man of a “silver watch, 9s. 6d.,” J. Coleman was hung for a robbery (51/2 guineas), for which two others later confessed. James Riley also died; he had shot a man, crippling him for life. The writer concluded, “It is high Treason against nature to shed a Tear for such Villains when passing the place of execution.”⁶¹

Cases like that of John Woods struck my interest. Mr. Woods had forged a bill of sale. *The Oracle and Country Intelligencer*, a Bristol paper, gave this short report.

John Woods, the forger, was executed. His death sentence was reprieved for three weeks for his appeal. After hearing the appeal, the Lord Justices wrote that Mr. Woods was “deemed an object not fit for mercy.”⁶²

Rev. Davies was appointed to minister to the condemned criminal, John Wood. He ran afoul of Methodists trying to do the same thing. Here is part of his letter to the *Oracle and Country Intelligencer*, published May 14, 1743:

I found in the room with John Woods, under sentence of Death, several of Mr. Wesley's crew of Methodists, brought thither by Felix Farley, unknown to the Keeper, to disturb the meditations of the unhappy prisoner and to invade the office of this Divine. One of these ranting Enthusiasts, whose name is Williams, because he was interrupted in a loud canting Strain of absurdity and nonsense, which he calls Prayer, and which in truth is a mere burlesque upon all Christian devotion, raved in a most abusive manner against the Rev. Mr. Davies, saying that the soul of the prisoner would be required of him, and that he would be damned for him, and then went on pronouncing everlasting damnation against this Gentleman, clenching his fist, stamping at, and threatening him in such a manner that Mr. Davies was obliged to call the constable... to remove them. At their Departure the modest Mr. Farley was pleased to declare in the Chapel that the Devil knew as much of Religion as Mr. Davies, adding that he (Mr. Farley) would be damn'd if the Devil did not. *Quere*, whether this is not a diabolical Declaration, or whether such insults as these on Regular clergyman of the Established Church, by such Quacks in Divinity as Williams, be consistent with the true Character of Christianity, however it be with its counterfeit, Methodism?

The same paper, reporting Wood's execution on June 11, said that he behaved with "great decency at the place of execution... and... died very penitent."⁶³ This is a typical report because the papers went to great pains to show that the victims confessed their guilt, sin, and the justice of their sentence. Perhaps such confessions salved the official conscience.

Is it any wonder that one had to pledge to do prison ministry to join the Methodist society at Bristol? Is it any wonder that prison reform was a high Methodist priority? Is it any wonder that Methodism produced such heroes of prison ministry as Charles Wesley, Sarah Peters, and Silas Told, the unpaid chaplain for 30 years at Newgate Prison, London? The Methodists got one of their own appointed as Warden at Newgate Prison, Bristol. They reformed the prison life and invited "officialdom" throughout England to use it as a model.

There is not time or space to explore why Methodists evangelized the prisoners, and provided medicine and food for the prisoners, while doing so little in the way of challenging the judicial murder machine that was the English justice system.

Still, Methodists produced many testimonies of conversion among those condemned to die. On one day when eight offenders were hung at

once, Silas Told reported that, because of the faithful work of Methodists, they all “appeared like giants refreshed with new wine.”⁶⁴

When Hogarth painted his famous series on London life during the 18th century, he created one painting of a hanging. Lolling in a luxurious carriage and swigging wine jovially, was the official Anglican chaplain. Standing with the condemned prisoner was a tall gaunt figure with a Bible in hand. That figure was honest Silas Told. The picture shows who, in the artist’s judgment, really cared for the nameless nobodies who fell victim to the judicial oppression of the government.

III. THE FORMULATION OF WESLEY’S THEOLOGY

Wesley’s “ministry” response to these economic and social conditions is widely known. We have heard much about the various kinds of schools the Methodists started, we know much of their societies, classes, and bands, which held these folks together. We have read of food and clothing distribution in London and Bristol, of the orphanage in Newcastle, the widows’ home in London. We know of the sick visitors’ corporation in London, and of prison ministry and reform. We have heard less of the first free medical clinic in England opened by Wesley in 1748, and of his unemployment plan, the Ladies Lying-in Hospital (which gave prenatal and postnatal care, as well as religious instruction and vocational training to destitute and unwed mothers), the Stranger’s Friend Society, the Christian Community (a ministry to those in the London workhouses) and Wesley’s loan fund for Methodists who wanted to start their own businesses.

John Wesley called himself “God’s steward for the poor.” He expressed his appeal in an oft repeated slogan: “Join hands with God to help a poor man live.”⁶⁵ Wesley’s hours and days and years were consumed by his mission to the poor. “I bear with the rich, and love the poor,” he said. His *praxis* was built around the needs of the poor, whether it was food, medicine, or a class or band to guide them. This much is obvious, but what of the development of his theology? In what ways and to what degree did the needs of the poor inform his theological synthesis?

Watch Wesley as he withdraws from the London streets teeming with starving, desperate people.

Watch him as he leaves Newgate Prison, as he watches a starving family pounce on a single loaf of bread and devour it in an instant. Watch him as he reads a letter that tells him that yet another Methodist lay preacher and his wife and children had “taken to bed.” (When starvation was eminent and there was no hope of finding

food, the people “took to bed,” thus keeping each other warm and preserving lives for a few more hours.) Watch “God’s steward for the poor” as he withdraws from such scenes for theological reflection. Could he dismiss such agonies in order to engage in the solemn abstractions of merely academic theology?

Consider this also. If one were to create a theology tailor-made for the needs of the people whom we have met in the preceding page, it would, first of all, have to be a theology that banished the then popular doctrine of predestination.

1. Predestination

That foundational Protestant doctrine of predestination had served well in a previous era, but now it was being abused. Once a liberating doctrine, it had, in these changing times, become a doctrine that imprisoned the poor. Leaders like Edmund Burke made public statements that told the poor that God had ordered their estate. “The poor,” he declared, “must respect the property of which they cannot partake... they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice.”⁶⁶ Clergymen like Joseph Priestly declared that Methodist ministries which aimed at bettering the estate of the poor would indeed “defeat the purpose of Divine Providence.”⁶⁷ With such self-serving council, and since God had *willed* the estate of the poor, it was easy for the wealthy to yield to “God’s own example” and leave the brutalized masses to freeze and rot and starve, or die in a gaseous mine.

Consider that it was not until 1963 that this song was dropped from the Anglican hymnal:

The rich man in his palace
The poor man in his gate
God made them high and lowly
And ordered their estate.

Even though particular election had come down “Sinai-like” from Geneva and Germany, had been affirmed in 1559 at Paris, etched in stone in 1618 at Dort, and ratified by the Assembly of Scottish and English Divines, Wesley knew it must be challenged. He could never lift his brutalized masses as long as Predestination stood on their throats in private beliefs and public proclamations.

Wesley did not see the awful conditions of the poor as willed by God. Rather he saw their plight as a contradiction of God’s salvific will! “I never did believe it [predestination],” Wesley declared in a 1772 letter, “nor the doctrines connected with it, no not for an hour. In this I have

been consistent... I never varied an hair's breadth."68 Wesley believed the "horrible decree" was an outrage to the character of God. It makes God "more false, more cruel, and more unjust than the devil... God hath taken thy [Satan's] work out of thy hands... God is the destroyer of souls."69 Particular election, Wesley insisted, "makes the whole Christian revelation a useless addendum." Further, thereby Jesus is made "a hypocrite, a deceiver... a man void of common sincerity."70

Thus, in spite of fierce opposition (even from men like George Whitefield), he did what he had to do for his people, he poisoned predestination.

If one were to compose a theology tailor-made for the needs of the people in Wesley's England, one would have to devise a doctrine of free grace.

2. Free Grace

Only from the ashes of particular predestination and limited atonement can the doctrine of free grace, phoenix-like, rise up. In Wesley's blend of the best in Augustine with the best in Pelagius, the best of Luther and Calvin with the best of James Harmens, we find a doctrine that preserves the holiness and love of God, Christ's atoning work, salvation by grace alone, and yet provides an arena that makes human beings responsible participants. It was a doctrine that Wesley's poor needed.

Wesley would not tolerate anyone who told his bedraggled hearers that Jesus died only for the elect. "Here I fix my foot," he declared. "On this I join issue with every assertor of it."71 Adam Clarke echoed his mentor when he declared, "Show me... the vilest wretch in... London, and I say, that he has the same claim upon God's mercy as the apostles had."72 This was Wesley's theme - though we cannot do one good deed on our own, God has given His preventing grace to all of us, enabling us to choose God and good. Did Wesley believe this because predestination is a logical and theological absurdity? Or, did he espouse free grace because he knew that his legion of the poor could never be lifted without believing that God loved them *all*, and sent His Son to die for them *all*?

If one were to create a theology tailor-made for the people of Wesley's England, he or she also would have to come up with a radical doctrine of assurance.

3. Assurance

The people on their upward exodus from poverty, powerlessness, ignorance, and sin could never make the journey before them unless they knew deep inside that God was with them. For his people Wesley needed a doctrine of assurance as:

an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ has loved me, and given himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God.⁷³

Wesley's pilgrims needed a doctrine that would bring each one to the point where he or she "could no more doubt the reality of his sonship, than he can doubt the shining of the sun."⁷⁴ Though Bishop Warburton accused him of being an example of "zeal run mad," and Bishop Butler declared his doctrine of assurance "a horrid thing, a very horrid thing,"⁷⁵ Wesley preached and taught a radical doctrine of assurance. The Wesleyan doctrine of assurance was much more than a feeling that you would escape hell and grasp heaven. It was the assurance that in this earthly struggle God is with you, God loves you, God is on your side.

Pastor Steve Rodeheaver describes Wesley's doctrine of assurance and declares that it is just what his parishioners in a San Diego slum need today.

In a world that was completely against you, it meant that God was for you. In a world that deemed you worthless, it meant that God reckoned you worthy of His very presence. In a world that offered no love, but only exploitation, it meant that God cared profoundly and offered His Son. In a world where children died unnoticed, it meant that God took notice, and made you His own child. The witness of the Spirit didn't just provide assurance that you would survive judgment; it assured that God was present in you in the midst of a world that seemed God-forsaken... The Spirit's witness gave you confidence that no matter how deadly the world became, it could not destroy your relationship with the life giver.⁷⁶

If one were to create a tailor-made theology for the people of Wesley's England, he or she would have to come up with a soteriology which included the perfectibility of humankind.

4. Perfectibility of Humankind

The most powerful elements in British society, among them the rigid class system and entrenched Calvinism, conspired against a doctrine of Christian perfection. But the "new man" of Wesley's dreams required perfectibility. The "new people" needed a lofty and noble ideal. So much the better if Wesley could find it in Scripture, in Macarius, the Mystics, and the Anglican creed. The prayer for perfect love in the Collect for the Purity which stood at the opening of the Communion Service was readily recruited and put to work.

No theological concept did more to fuel the Methodist revolution in its broad-based aspects. Cultural refinement, educational enterprises, compassionate ministries, evangelism, economic advancement were all energized by the concept of the perfectibility of human beings and human society. Wesley called Christian perfection “the medicine of life, the never failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men.”⁷⁷

The pursuit of Christian perfection was the stated aim of the classes and bands, the arenas where perfectibility was tested on an individual basis. The declared mission of Methodism shows the broad-based aim of perfection - “to reform the nation, particularly the church, and to spread scriptural holiness over these lands.”

Was ever a doctrine put to such a rigid test? Wesley took it to the dregs of society, to the very “precincts of embittered darkness,” the prisons, the factories, the mines, the workhouses. Wearmouth calls it a “most courageous crusade, this pilgrimage of grace, among the common people who were treated as industrial slaves, left to starve and suffer in dirty cellars and damp dwelling places, and, when infirmity came and old age... dispatched to miserable workhouses as though but dumb driven cattle.”⁷⁸ The result is history.

Let the *Gentleman's Magazine*, a periodical that regularly blasted Wesley, speak. The editors presumed that Wesley was enriching himself by exploiting his followers, but when he died “leaving nothing,” they printed this report.

It is impossible to deny him the merit of having done infinite good to the lower classes of people... By the humane endeavors of him and his brother, Charles, a sense of decency in morals and religion was introduced in the lowest classes of mankind, the ignorant were instructed, and the wretched relieved and the abandoned reclaimed... He must be considered as one of the most extraordinary characters this or any other age has ever produced.⁷⁹

Without his doctrine of the perfectibility of man, of Christian perfection, Wesley would have had little to say to the poor and oppressed.

If one were to create a theology tailor-made for the people of Wesley's England, it would have to include an egalitarian anthropology.

5. Egalitarian Anthropology

The “ignorant and ignored” lower classes found in Wesley's system new dignity and new self respect. Rich and poor, educated and unlearned

sat together as peers in Methodist classes and bands. This was new for the poor. They had no privileges, owned no property, did not have the right to vote. They held no memberships in clubs, and no one cared for their opinion. Yet, in Methodism, they counted.

Political prudence, it is said, caused Wesley to desire to push “spiritual equality” and not “social equality.” Then what was Wesley about when he told the poor workers that the mill operators and foremen were not superior to them? There could, he said, “be no excuse for despising them [the workers] though they be poor, mean, weak, or aged. The poorest and the weakest have the same place and authority which the richest and strongest have.”⁸⁰ The “leveling” tendencies in Methodist egalitarianism could not be denied. The Duchess of Birmingham certainly did not miss them. She said of the Wesleyans,

Their doctrines are most repulsive and strongly tinged with impertinence and disrespect towards their superiors in perpetually endeavoring to level all ranks... It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl the earth.⁸¹

Yes, Wesley’s egalitarian anthropology was a perfect fit for the times. It was a necessary arrow in Wesley’s theological quiver.

If one were to create a theology tailor-made for the people of Wesley’s England, it would have to include a meaningful doctrine of good works.

6. Good Works

The goals of the revival required some sort of system that made “acts of piety and acts of mercy” important. Wesley tried to bring this about by creating a doctrine that stood midway between “salvation by works” and the “broken reeds” of particular election that made works utterly meaningless. Wesley never permitted works to be regarded as salvifically meritorious, yet they were in some secondary way necessary.

Wesley declared that a true Christian “cannot but be zealous of good works. He feels in his soul a burning, restless desire of spending and being spent for them [others].”⁸² “Nor do we acknowledge him to have one grain of faith,” Wesley declared, “who is not willing to spend and be spent in doing all good ... to all men.”⁸³

Such statements drew from Jose Miguez Bonino this applause: “Here works are not a concession that God allows us in spite of their present imperfection and their eschatological futility — they are needed. . . by

God himself — they are the raw material for the new heaven and the new earth.”⁸⁴ In Wesley, Bonino sees ““an anthropology worthy of human beings.”⁸⁵

If one were to create a theology tailor-made for the people of Wesley’s England, it would need to have doctrines which legitimate upward mobility.

7. Sacralize Work, Sanctify Money, and Baptize Upward Mobility

Let us go forth, ‘tis God commands;
Let us make haste away;
Offer to Christ our hearts and hands,
We work for Christ to-day.⁸⁶

With this song sung at the 5:00 a.m. service, many a Methodist started his or her work day. Work became a lived out sacramental offering for many.

Wesley had carefully coached them well with these words: ““Be active, be diligent; avoid all laziness, sloth, indolence. Fly from every degree, every appearance of it: else you will never be more than half a Christian.”⁸⁷

The Methodists were industrious, honest, and reliable to a proverb. They soon rose to levels of middle management. They became the foremen, the supervisors, the leaders in the workplace. This upward mobility was in harmony with Wesley’s idea that every Methodist was to *be* good, *do* good, and *make* good. Bernard Semmel points out that Wesley’s economic ideas were in harmony with the entrepreneurial mood of England. And since his objective was to lift the poor, he had, according to Semmel, the most noble vested interest in the new free enterprise system.⁸⁸

Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* was read and believed by John Wesley. Therefore, upward mobility (long overdue in class-stratified England) was desirable and acceptable. These economic ideas, applied to money, produced the famous Wesley sermon on money which had these three points:

Earn All You Can, Save All You Can, Give All You Can.

Money, Wesley declared, “is unspeakably precious if we are wise and faithful stewards of it.”⁸⁹ Wesley recognized that money was safe only for the sanctified. He repeatedly warned his people against getting too attached to their money. “Treasuring gold or silver for its own sake,” Wesley said, “is as grossly unreasonable as the treasuring of spiders.”⁹⁰

To hoard money instead of using it to relieve the poor Wesley compared to buying poison for oneself. Those who fail as good stewards

are not only robbing God, . . . embezzling. . . their Lord's goods, and . . . corrupting their own souls, but also robbing the poor, the hungry, the naked; wronging the widow and fatherless; and making themselves accountable for all the want, affliction and distress which they may but do not remove.⁹¹

If one were to create a theology tailor-made for the people of Wesley's England, it would also need a powerful doctrine of civil obedience.

8. Civil Obedience

That is, while embracing a hundred religiously liberal causes, one must appear to be politically conservative. The aims of the movement must be attained without a bloody revolution. The goals of the French revolution, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, must be achieved without civil disobedience. War would be the worst possible scenario. Wesley wanted nothing to do with reform movements which were "in every county, city, and village... turning quiet men into wild bulls, bears, and tigers."⁹² Wesley observed that, "The consequences of these commotions will be exactly the same as . . . in the last century. First, the land will become a field of blood, many thousands of poor Englishmen will sheathe their swords in each others bowels, for the diversion of their good neighbors."⁹³ Here we see Wesley once again adopting conservative politics and elevating the New Testament doctrine of government as instituted by God in order to save his people, the poor, from destruction.

If one were to create a theology tailor-made for the people of Wesley's England, it would need to be a nurturing pastoral theology.

9. Nurturing Pastoral Theology

How could the faithful survive without a highly structured system of Christian nurture — like Wesley's societies, classes, and bands?

Our challenge, then, is to be faithful to the heritage and relevant to the times. To be Wesleyans, we must practice Wesley's way of doing theology. It seems to me that Wesley's theological method was to first survey the needs of the times, the needs of the people. Second comes the exercise of surveying all the resources of the Christian faith. Third is the step of fashioning any new synthesis from those resources that the times and the needs require. Fourth comes the bringing together of resources and needs. This is what Wesley did, I believe. He saw the desperate needs of the poor

(90% of the population), examined the resources of the Christian faith, noticing that the only notes being heard were the five notes of Calvinism. He said, so to speak, “Wait, there are 83 other keys to be played. Let’s try some of these combinations.”

One is led to ask how Wesley’s theology, tailor-made for the human needs of the times, would be different if he had had no Anglican creed, or Christian tradition, or even the Bible. How would Wesley’s theology have been different if he had never listened to William Law, never read Jeremy Taylor, Thomas a’Kempis, Henry Scougal, or Macarius?

Of course, such mental gymnastics are neither possible nor practical. Of course, the Bible, Christian tradition, and Wesley’s tutors helped shape his thought. I am not ready to declare that Wesley’s theology would have been the same without these factors, and I am even less ready to say that any such theology would be adequate. But I am ready to say that no one item in the Wesleyan quadrilateral outweighed the needs of the people as a factor in the formulation of Wesley’s theology — not even the Bible. On the day of Judgment we shall face these questions, Wesley says:

Wast thou . . . a general benefactor to mankind? feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, comforting the sick, assisting the stranger, relieving the afflicted . . .?

Wast thou eyes to the blind, feet to the lame? a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow? and didst thou labor to improve all outward works of mercy as means of saving souls from death?⁹⁴

One way of being Wesleyan today is to survey human needs and bring to bear on them any resources of the Christian faith that can help, even if this requires new syntheses, new emphases, and rediscovery of neglected truth. This we must do even if what we come up with does not come very close to matching the way Bresee believed it, or the way Roberts preached it, or the way Asbury expressed it. This we must do to be Wesleyan — even if it means muting or refuting some of Wesley’s own teachings. Perhaps we could start by refuting Wesley’s dedication to upward mobility. It and the system it represented rescued the poor then and created a needed middle class. But now it has become an instrument of oppression in many places. And, surely, Methodist leader and author Maxie Dunnam is correct when he says that in America today the religion of sinners is upward mobility.

Mr. Wesley, our spiritual and ecclesiastical ancestor, was not a systematic theologian, he was a “theologian of the road” as presented in this description by an unknown author:

Those of the balcony work out their theology at a distance from ordinary, everyday life, observing its movement and its actors like people in Spain who sit on their upstairs balconies in the evenings and watch life go by on the streets below. The theology which they produce is often of fine quality in terms of standards of academic scholarship, but it is remote from ordinary life, authoritarian, and cold. In contrast . . . the theologians of the road are those who share fully in the hustle and bustle of the streets, who give themselves to the dust, the sweat, and tediousness of travel, and who work out their answers as they walk along in company with others, sharing the burdens.

NOTES

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3 *The Bristol Oracle and Country Advertiser*, Feb. 15, 1740.

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5 *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, Feb. 15, 1740.

6 *Gentleman's Magazine*, Jan. 1740.

7 *Norwich Gazette*, Jan. 24-31, 1741.

8 *Ibid.*, Jan. 10-17, 1741.

9 *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, Jan. 8, 1740.

10 *The Cambridge Journal and Weekly Flying Post*, Jan. 5, 1754.

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16 *Lloyd's Evening Post*, Dec. 21, 1772; *London Chronicle*, Dec. 17-19, 1772; *Leeds Mercury*, Dec. 29, 1772.

17 *London Daily Post*, May 14, 1742.

18 *Norwich Gazette*, Jan. 24-31, 1741, quoting the *Evening Post*.

- 47 *Cambridge Journal*, Aug.17, 1751.
- 48 *Leeds Intelligencer*, Nov. 2, 1779.
- 49 These cases include 720 from my research and 80 from the work of Robert Wearmouth.
- 50 *The London Packet, or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, Apr.20, 1787.
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- 52 *Gentleman's Magazine*, Feb. 1785.
- 53 *London Magazine*, Oct. 1754.
- 54 *Woodfall's Register*, Dec.10, 1789. Cited by Wearmouth, *op. cit.*
- 55 *Morning Chronicle*, Aug.21, 1788.
- 56 *Worcester Weekly Journal*, Mar.26, 1741.
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- 59 *Norwich Mercury*, Sept. 17, 1743.
- 60 *Gentleman's Magazine*, Feb. 1785.
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- 65 John Wesley, *Journal*, July 17, 1748 in *The Works of John Wesley* (Javkson ed.; reprint; 14 vols.; Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978). See also *Works*, VIII.267.
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- 72 Adam Clarke, *Sermon*: "The Necessity of Christ's Atonement," *Sermons* (London: Wm. Tegg, 1868), IV.158.

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85 *Ibid.*, p.61.

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87 Cf. Rupert Davies and Gordon Rupp, eds., *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain* (3 vols.; London: Epworth Press, 1965), I:310.

88 Semmel, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

89 John Wesley, *Sermon*: “The Use of Money,” *Works (ed. cit.)* VI.126. Paraphrase mine.

90 Cf. Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of Rev. John Wesley M.A., Founder of the Methodists* (3 vols.; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890) III.159.

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JOHN WESLEY'S CRITICAL APPROPRIATION OF EARLY GERMAN PIETISM

by Kenneth Collins

Several recent authors have argued that Pietism as a religious movement has been poorly understood.¹ Indeed, for many, scholar and layperson alike, the term “Pietism” itself often evokes a well-worked stereotype which is composed of such unseemly traits as anti-intellectualism, obscurantism, individualism, irrelevance, and moralism. Part of the problem here, as Stoeffler aptly points out, arises from the practice of officials in religious establishments, professional religionists, who, for whatever reasons, have perpetuated this traditional caricature.² For an older example, Albrecht Ritschl, in his monumental *Geschichte des Pietismus*, maintained that Pietism was not, after all, a progressive movement, a continuation of the genius of the Protestant Reformation, as many of the Pietists themselves had claimed; rather, it was a backward movement in more than one respect.³ And Karl Barth, never known for understatement, observed on one occasion: “Better with the Church in hell than with pietists — of higher or lower type — in a heaven which does not exist.”⁴ With such examples, still influential, it is little wonder that the traditional stereotypes have persisted.

However, the study of Pietism in the twentieth century has called the “Ritschlian and Barthian captivities”⁵ into question in a remarkable way. For example, in the middle decades, Church historians such as the Germans Karl Mirbt, Leube, and Erich Beyreuther took a fresh look at this movement, unfettered by the polemics that speckled earlier works.⁶ Nevertheless, the most recent approaches to this subject remain in virtual

agreement with Ritschl’s scholarship on at least two salient points: first, that Pietism of whatever sort must be viewed as a historical phenomenon within a definite social, cultural, political and theological setting, and secondly, that Pietism is by no means monolithic; instead, it represents a

theological tendency, an emphasis, that characterized some considerably diverse groups.⁷

In light of this last point, this present study is of necessity limited to a consideration of the relationship of German Pietism — as represented specifically by Johann Arndt, Philipp Jakob Spener, and August Hermann Francke — to the life and thought of John Wesley. Thus, this paper will be composed of four sections: the first will place early German Pietism within its historical-theological context; the second will track Wesley's use and knowledge of the significant texts of this movement, as well as indicate some of the more interesting parallels between German Pietism and Methodism; the third will entertain Wesley's criticism — some of it quite severe — of the sources that nurtured and sustained German Pietism, demonstrating that the itinerant preacher's appropriation of the Arndt-Spener-Francke kind of Pietism was, in fact, both cautious and critical. And finally, the fourth section will offer some tentative conclusions.

I. The Historical Context of German Pietism

Three major factors prepared the way for the growth and development of Pietism in Germany during the early part of the seventeenth century. First of all, Protestant Scholasticism, with its emphasis on creeds (e.g., the *Formula of Concord*, 1577) and precise doctrinal formulation, led to a clear redefining of the Christian life. The ideal Christian believer was now “a person who interprets the Bible in terms of the Lutheran symbols as the truth of these symbols is expressed in an orthodox system of theology.”⁸ And creedalism soon contributed to an objectification of the faith which emphasized the literal word, justification as a forensic exchange, and the sacraments as *opera operata*.⁹ Accordingly, faith as trust in the living God, so prominent in the writings of Martin Luther, had now begun to devolve into mere assent, into a simple subscription to the formulations of orthodoxy. In the words of Stoeffler, “*Fiducia* had become *assensus*.”¹⁰

Moreover, a concomitant development which contributed to the construction of *Verkonfessionalisierung*¹¹ was the squabble which occurred within Lutheranism as the Philippists (followers of Philip Melanchthon) and the *Gnesio*-Lutherans (“true” Lutherans) vied with one another for

power. The Lutherans, for their part, feared the supposed Aristotelian flavor of the theology of the Philippists while the latter charged the *Gnesio-Lutherans* with being both uncooperative and unecumenical. In this heated context, a premium was placed on a correct and exact articulation of the articles of faith which led, once again, to a rigid orthodoxy.¹²

Second, war — contrary to popular belief — does not usually enhance either the ethical or the religious life of the populace.¹³ If anything, war, as a cataclysmic disruption of the social order, often leads to moral and religious *anomie* as the structures which normally give meaning and order to everyday life are thrown into disarray. This was certainly the case with the Thirty Years War, an internecine struggle which began in 1618 with the Defenestration of Prague and which concluded in the Peace of Westphalia (1648). Its effect on the German people — and other Europeans — can hardly be overestimated. Beside the carnage, this war, in the words of Brown, was “religiously divisive, morally subversive, economically destructive, socially degrading, and ultimately futile in its results.”¹⁴ And its effect on religious life, for the most part, was degrading, for it not only expanded the opportunities to express bigotry, hatred, and the worst sort of factionalism, but it also contributed to the hardening of a population which had witnessed, abetted, and encouraged almost every kind of atrocity. And these were performed, ironically enough, under the sacred canopy of religion and in the name of Christ.

Remarkably, a third contributing factor which gave rise to the response of Pietism was part of the legacy that Luther himself had bequeathed to the Church, that is, his bestowal of a spiritual role on the temporal powers — in this case the German Princes. In his address, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, for example, Luther declared:

I am carrying out our intention to put together a few points on the matter of the reform of the Christian estate, to be laid before the Christian nobility of the German nation, in the hope that God may help his church through the laity, since the clergy, to whom this task more properly belongs, have grown quite indifferent.¹⁵

Though Luther’s design here was most probably to check papal power in a pragmatic way, the spiritual investiture of the German nobility eventuated in a new form of Caesaropapism. This factor, coupled with the later development of the religious and territorial factionalism that emerged in the wake of the Thirty Years War, under the aegis of the formula *cujus regio ejus religio*, tended to breed indifference and formalism in the area of religion. As we might expect, reaction set in.

Thus, the scholasticism of sixteenth and seventeenth century orthodoxy, its tendency towards formality and impersonality in religion, and its relative neglect of the ethical life¹⁶ led to both a mystical reaction, as represented by Stephan Praetorius (1536-1603), Valentine Weigel (1533-1588), Jakob Boehme (1575-1624), and Johann Arndt (1555-1621),¹⁷ and to a theological one, as epitomized by the irenic and saintly Georg Calixt (1586-1656).¹⁸ The first group, for the most part, underscored the interior life, Christian devotion to God and the love of neighbor, while the latter developed the distinction between *diaphora* and *adiaphora* in its quest for Christian unity and peace.

To be sure, it was the “mystics” and those who followed in their train who believed that the renewal of doctrine and ecclesiastical practice which had begun during the Reformation must be supplemented by a renewal of life.¹⁹ This motif, in one form or another, surfaced repeatedly in the literature of German Pietism, but especially in the writings of Arndt, Spener, and Francke. “Classical Pietism,” notes Parsons, “thus asserted on the basis of the Reformation’s prior reassertion of the personal nature of faith the need for a radically existential turn in Protestant life and experience.”²⁰ Where earlier there had been excessive institutionalism, arid doctrinalism, and theological intolerance, the early German Pietists — as will be argued shortly — offered a more profound, penetrating, and sensitive understanding of the nature of the Christian life, though the contours of that life would come to be questioned by John Wesley.

II. Wesley’s Appropriation of the Insights of Arndt, Spener, and Francke

A. Johann Arndt

One might well argue here that Johann Arndt and not Philip Spener was the Father of German Pietism.²¹ In support of this, note that the themes of personal reform, the repudiation of stale intellectualism, the criticism of doctrinal provincialism, and the emphasis on sanctification-themes championed by the later Pietists — were already present in *Wahres Christenthum (True Christianity)* as early as 1610.²² Observe the opening lines of this work and the emphasis which they place on the practice of the Christian life.

Dear Christian reader, that the holy Gospel is subjected, in our time, to great and shameful abuse is fully proved by the impenitent life of the ungodly who praise Christ and his word with their mouths and yet lead an unchristian life that is like

that of persons who dwell in heathendom, not in the Christian world.²³

And Arndt continues with stinging effect:

Many think that theology is a mere science or rhetoric, whereas it is a living experience and practice. Everyone now endeavors to be eminent and distinguished in the world, but no one is willing to learn to be pious.²⁴

Arndt's work was immensely popular during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and eventually became a staple of German piety. In fact, in many German homes of this period, *True Christianity* found its place alongside the Bible. And though the term "pietism" came into vogue after Arndt's death,²⁵ his relationship to subsequent Pietism can be compared to that of Edouard Manet to Impressionism; that is to say, though Arndt was not, technically speaking, a part of the *movement*, he nevertheless served as its lodestar and mentor (largely posthumously). Simply put, the Pietists read Arndt.²⁶

Across the North Sea, in Britain, some were reading *True Christianity* as early as 1648.²⁷ However, it did not enjoy wide circulation until Anton Wilhelm Boehm (1673-1722), Chaplain to Prince George of Denmark (Queen Anne's husband), and Secretary to both Prince George and Queen Anne, translated it into English and submitted a copy to the Queen, with a suitable preface.²⁸

Did John Wesley read *True Christianity* (in either German or English)? His diary seems to attest to his having read at least some of it on 24 March, 1736, shortly after his arrival in Georgia, and having finished it on 31 March, 1736.²⁹ And, during early August, 1738, at least one interview with the Moravians in and around Hermhut brought it back to mind. In his *Journal* (for Tuesday, August 8, which also records some events of the 9th), he quotes at length from an interview with Pastor/Teacher David Nitschmann (we note only the paragraph salient to our purposes).

Many endeavored to persuade me that I [Nitschmann] had not a right faith in Christ. For I had no confidence in him; nor could I lay hold upon him as my Savior. Indeed, reading one day (in Arndt's *True Christianity*) that "if all the sins of all the men upon earth were joined in one man, the blood of Christ was sufficient to cleanse that man from all sin," I felt for a time comfort and peace.³⁰

And Wesley also included in his *Journal* a talk he held with Arvid Gradin three or four days after the conversation with Nitschmann, the content of which reflected his own experience when, in March of 1738, he had wanted to discontinue preaching for lack of the proper kind of faith.³¹ Wesley relates Gradin's words:

At seventeen, I [Gradin] went to the University of Upsal[la], and a year or two after was licensed to preach. But at twenty-two, meeting with Arndt's *True Christianity*, I found I myself was not a Christian. Immediately, I left off preaching, and betook myself wholly to philosophy.³²

Such reports doubtless impressed the leader of the British revival with the value of Arndt's work, so much so that he included an extract of it in the first volume of his *Christian Library*.³³ And on 3 March 1749, Wesley recorded in his *Journal*: "I corrected the Extract of John Arndt designed for part of the 'Christian Library.' But who can tell whether that and an hundred other designs will be executed or no?"³⁴

Just what did Wesley mean here? Did he really believe that *True Christianity* not only offered criticism but also a positive program, a design to implement (perhaps even in England), or was he simply referring to his own work, in particular the development of the *Christian Library*? The reference is not clear.

One can argue with some degree of confidence, however, that Wesley was probably attracted to *True Christianity* by three major themes found there: first, its soteriological thrust; second, its emphasis on genuine Christianity as embracing inward, as opposed to formal or external religion; and third, its irenic aim and tone.

As to the first point, the soteriological thrust, Arndt's work, like some of Wesley's sermons,³⁵ was very attentive to the developmental phases of the Christian life, as evidenced by the opening lines drawn from the introduction to Book Three:

As there are different stages and degrees of age and maturity in the natural life; so there are also in the spiritual. It has its first foundation in *sincere repentance*, by which a man sets himself heartily to amend his life. This is succeeded by a *greater illumination*, which is a kind of middle stage. Here, by contemplation, prayer, and bearing the cross, a man is daily improving in grace, and growing up to perfection. The last and most perfect state is that which consists in a most *firm union*, which is founded in, and cemented by, *pure love*. This is that

state which St. Paul calls “the perfect man,” and “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. iv. 1 3).³⁶

Second, both Arndt and Wesley affirmed that true religion, in part, consists in inward renewal that goes far beyond formal or institutional change. Thus, the German pastor, in describing the true worship of God, declared: “But that which God. . . commandeth, consisteth not barely in *external* figures, rites and ordinances: but is *inward*, requiring spirit and truth; principally demanding *faith* in Christ.”³⁷ And elsewhere he cautioned against the dangers of a formal Christianity: “While every one names himself a Christian, although he does not perform the part of a Christian; by such a conversation Christ is both denied and belied. . . .”³⁸

Wesley, likewise, underscored this same theme, especially in his published sermons. In the *Way to the Kingdom*, for example, he declared:

...true religion does not consist in meat and drink, or in any ritual observances; nor indeed in any outward thing whatever, in anything exterior to the heart; the whole substance thereof lying in “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”³⁹

Similarly, in another sermon, *The Circumcision of the Heart*, Wesley explored the title of this piece in the following way:

it is that habitual disposition of soul which in the Sacred Writings is termed “holiness,” and which directly implies the being cleansed from sin, . . . and by consequence the being endued with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus.⁴⁰

Clearly, Wesley’s attention to dispositions, inward tempers, and a religion of the heart (Arndt’s “inward religion”), quite readily predisposed the Methodist leader to a favorable reading of much of what Arndt had to offer in this regard.⁴¹

Third, Arndt held that we maintain purity of doctrine not by wrangling and needless dispute but by the demonstration of a holy life. And on one occasion he went so far as to say, “. . . it is infinitely better to love Him, than to be able to dispute and discourse about Him.”⁴² Wesley, who once had quipped, “God made practical divinity necessary, the devil controversial,” probably did not go so far in his quest for peaceful relations as Arndt suggests. But Wesley did immediately add: “But it is necessary: we must ‘resist the devil,’ or he will not ‘flee from us.’”⁴³ And he earnestly sought to avoid bigotry and diligently sought to instill a catholic spirit among the Methodists.⁴⁴

B. Philipp Spener

Philipp Jacob Spener undoubtedly read *True Christianity*. Joachim Stoll had probably introduced him to it.⁴⁵ Indeed, Arndt's work directly informed much of Spener's thought, for its emphases were clearly congenial to the task which this German leader hoped to accomplish: namely, to engender reform in both civic and ecclesiastical life. Like Arndt, Spener was faced with the problem of Caesaropapism, an *ex opere operato* view of the sacraments, and doctrinal rigidity. Like Arndt, Spener met this challenge by differentiating "true" Christianity from formal Christianity,⁴⁶ by emphasizing that the essence of Christianity consists in a personal relationship to God,⁴⁷ and by centering his theological concerns not so much around the forensic issues of justification, but around the issues of regeneration and a holy life. Furthermore, Spener, like Arndt, realized that the heady days of the Reformation were clearly over and that the great threat to vital Christianity was no longer moralism, but immorality; not doctrinal error, but doctrinal fixation. In short, Spener's work marks a continuation and development of an Arndtian piety that was already well known.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, there are two very good reasons why it can be argued that German Pietism as a *movement* began with Spener. First of all, though neither the formation of conventicles nor the idea of *ecclesiola in ecclesia* was original to Spener,⁴⁹ he was the first among the Pietists to make use of *collegia*. In 1670, for example, Spener established a *collegium pietatis* at Frankfort-am-Main for the purpose of providing, in the words of Snyder, "the intimacy and discipline of community which [would] contribute to the health of the whole church."⁵⁰ And the design of these societies can be seen, in part, in a seminal and prophetic homily preached by Spener in 1669 in which he declared:

O, what good it would effect if good friends would come together on Sundays, and instead of taking up glasses, cards, or dice would partake either of a book from which they could read something edifying for everyone or would repeat something they had heard in the sermon and each one would remember something that would help another therein, so that they might have some profit from it.⁵¹

Now the nature of Spener's *collegia pietatis* was generally conservative; he was more interested in the reform of existing ecclesiastical structures and life than in their overthrow. He was not a revolutionary nor a

radical such as the erstwhile Jesuit-Orationist-Jansenist, now Reformed pastor, Labadie.⁵² Certain aspects of a “national” church troubled him, such as its tendency to promote nominal Christianity. Nevertheless, he gave it tacit support by prohibiting the celebration of the sacraments in the *collegia* — a move portending similar action by Wesley.⁵³ But we must note that Spener substantiated the creation of *collegia* by appeal to the well-worn Lutheran claim that all believers are priests; while Wesley defended a larger role for the laity, including preaching, by an appeal to a distinction between ordinary and extraordinary messengers.

In 1744, all the Methodist Preachers had their first Conference. But none of them dreamed, that the being called to preach gave them any right to administer sacraments. And when that question was proposed, “In what are we to consider ourselves?” it was answered, “As extraordinary messengers, raised up to provoke the ordinary ones to jealousy.”⁵⁴

Not surprisingly, opposition to the Frankfurt *collegia pietatis* emerged quickly. Both the temporal and the spiritual authorities saw the *collegia* as a threat to the institutional church in terms of both the increasing role given the laity and the laity’s relative independence. Perceptions (and realities) along both lines raised issues of power, prerogatives, and control.

Spener tried to address this last charge, and by 1675 he desired a change in the *collegium* from “a private matter created for Christian fellowship”⁵⁵ to “a churchly institution.”⁵⁶ Spener repudiated all notions of separation from the mother church as Wesley would later do. In fact, as early as 1670, he so feared the specter of division that he declared to his people: “as long as God permits it to abide, even a corrupted ministry is an honorable office from which one may not separate.”⁵⁷ Compare this with Wesley’s comments to Rev. Samuel Walker in 1755 concerning his own ecclesiastical relation:

At present I apprehend those, and those only, to separate from the Church who either renounce her fundamental doctrines, or refuse to join in her public worship. As yet we have done neither, nor have we taken one step further than we were convinced was our bounden duty.⁵⁸

Given the sincerity, intensity, seriousness, and practical orientation of Spener and Wesley, and their respective followers, it is not surprising to learn that these leaders formed intentional groups to supplement — not

to oppose — the normal ministry of the church. Simply put, these deeply committed Christians hungered for more than the common fare offered to conventional Christians, and so they created parachurch structures, societies and *collegia* to meet their growing spiritual needs. Still, as Snyder correctly points out, “[Though] Wesley did not . . . explicitly draw on the Pietist *ecclesiola* model, he in fact viewed Methodism as an *ecclesiola*.”⁵⁹ That is to say, “his view of ‘extraordinary ministers and gifts’ seems to presuppose some kind of *ecclesiola* conception.”⁶⁰

The second major reason why it is appropriate to state that the German Pietist *movement* began with Spener is that he was the first to offer an extensive, clearly defined program of reform. The principal vehicle for this endeavor was none other than his famous *Pia Desideria* (*Pious Desires*), which first appeared as a preface to Arndt’s *Postils*! However, because of the popularity of Spener’s own work, it was soon issued in a separate edition in 1675. For the most part, the argument of the *Pia Desideria* is straightforward and moves from an assessment of the corrupt conditions in the church — Spener calls it discerning the times — to entertaining the possibility of better conditions, and then finally to some practical and specific proposals to correct matters in the church.⁶¹

Concerning corrupt conditions, Spener highlights defects in the character and practices of civil authorities, the clergy, and the common people. Of the clergy, for example, he maintained:

We must confess not only that men are to be found here and there in our estate who are guilty of open scandals but also that there are fewer than may at first appear who really understand and practice true Christianity (which consists of more than avoiding manifest vices and living an outwardly moral life) . . . their lives reflect (subtly, to be sure, but none the less plainly) a worldly spirit, marked by carnal pleasure, lust of the eye, and arrogant behavior....⁶²

A similar concern over the state and motivation of the ministry was likewise expressed by John Wesley in 1756, in his *Address to the Clergy*:

He therefore must be utterly void of understanding, must be a madman of the highest order, who, on any consideration whatever, undertakes this office, while he is a stranger to this affection [the love of God and neighbor]....

And is not even this degree of love to God and man utterly inconsistent with the love of the world; with the love of money or praise; with the very lowest degree of either ambition or sensuality.⁶³

When Spener, in the third section of his *Pia Desideria*, addressed the important topic of specific reforms to eliminate some of the abuses already noted, his discussion revolved around six principal issues: first, ministers should promote a wider use of the Bible which will entail not only reading the Scriptures publicly in church but also privately at home; second, the exercise of the spiritual priesthood of all God's children must be established, strengthened, and encouraged; third, pastors must underscore the importance of a practical versus a speculative knowledge of the Christian faith; fourth, the earnest believer should avoid all needless and harmful disputation, and instead demonstrate the truth of Christianity by a holy and God-fearing life — a life, by the way, which for Spener included the possibility of Christian perfection; fifth, administrators should reform the educational institutions so that, in the training of pastors, the maxim, “knowledge without piety is worthless,” is suitably inculcated; and lastly, all pastors, of whatever age and rank, are to be impressed with the value of preaching for the purpose of edification.⁶⁴ In other words, with the advent of Spener, Pietism had now moved beyond “indiscriminate criticism to a definite plan of action.”⁶⁵

However, what is truly remarkable here is the fact that although the life and thought of Spener suggest many parallels with Wesley in terms of an emphasis on the holy life and perfection,⁶⁶ the use of intentional groups, the stress on practicality, and the avoidance of needless doctrinal disputations, there is no direct evidence whatsoever either that Wesley ever read the *Pia Desideria*, or that the Anglican cleric ever looked to Spener himself as a model of what Christianity should be. In short, Spener's name does not appear in Wesley's *Journal*, diaries, letters, or theological treatises. (In fact, the complete *Pia Desideria* does not appear in English translation until 1964.)⁶⁷

Nevertheless, we justify the inclusion of Spener in this study on three grounds. First, we would point to the high degree of similarity between the teachings of Spener and those of Wesley — direct influence or no. Second, German Pietism as a whole cannot be understood or accounted for, nor its story faithfully related, without reference to Spener; nor can the story of Wesleyanism be understood or accounted for, nor faithfully related, without reference to German Pietism. Third, although Wesley probably never read Spener himself, he did read Arndt (to whom Spener owed much) and he did read Francke (who owed Spener much). These “grounds,” put together, rather strongly suggest at least, if they cannot prove, that Spener's thought had a significant influence on the

thought of John Wesley. And that influence merits due and sufficient consideration.

C. August Francke

August Hermann Francke had become well acquainted with Arndt's *True Christianity* in his childhood in Lubeck. His father, Johannes, had introduced it to him.⁶⁸ When August was only seven, his father died, but his sister Anna, who now took over many of the responsibilities of rearing the youngster, exercised a spiritual stewardship over the Francke household which included reading both the Bible and *True Christianity*.⁶⁹ (Later, Francke's continuing recommendation of Arndt's work would serve to increase its popularity well into the eighteenth century.⁷⁰) As a student at the University of Leipzig, matriculating in 1684, August Hermann maintained contact with Pietism by boarding at the home of Spener's son-in-law, Professor Rechenberg.⁷¹ And in 1686, while still a student in Leipzig, Francke began to take an active role in the Collegium Philobiblicum, a religious society with purposes that anticipated those of the Wesley's Holy Club at Oxford some forty-three years later.⁷² The Leipzig society so intrigued Spener that he visited it in 1686 and there met the young and energetic Francke for the first time.⁷³ Subsequent events indicate that Spener developed a positive, but not uncritical assessment of the Collegium Philobiblicum, and that he liked what he saw in August Hermann Francke. In January and February of 1689, Francke visited Spener's home,⁷⁴ and by 1692 he had won appointment to the faculty of the University of Halle, largely on the recommendation of Spener.

If it be said that Spener launched the Pietist movement, it may be said as well that Francke saw to its institutionalizing. From Halle, he gave the movement the prestige "associated with academic theologians."⁷⁵ And, equally importantly, he invested an outstanding gift for organization in establishing numerous enterprises (connecting many of them directly to the University or the city). Among these were "an orphanage, . . . a home for widows, a farm, a book store, a hospital, a bakery, a brewery, a library, and an art museum."⁷⁶

In theology, Francke extended and refined (see would say "essentially changed") some of the major themes of Arndt and Spener. Under his influence and direction, theological studies at the University of Halle bore four distinct marks. First, emphasis fell not on dogmatics and philosophical theology (then the standard fare in German theological education) but on Biblical theology.⁷⁷ Second, whereas Spener had thought pri-

marily in terms of the church, the community of faith, Francke placed increasing emphasis on the individual. Third, as his predecessors had done, Francke closely associated theology and ethics, and insisted that the study of theology must lead to moral renovation. And fourth, Francke reversed the order of priorities found in most German theological education by underscoring the primary importance of the devotional aspects of the Christian life, though it can scarcely be said that he mitigated academic and intellectual demands.⁷⁸

Perhaps the most striking discontinuities between Francke and his pietistic predecessors lay in his individuation of the faith and his consuming concern with conversion, both its reality and its form. Writing of these matters in his study of the relationship between Pietism and Methodism, Arthur Nagler refers to Francke as “the prophet of the *Busskampf* [penitential struggle],” and observes that “this could never have been said of his forerunner [Spener].”⁷⁹ To be sure, though Spener had emphasized the doctrine of the new birth, he never recounted a personal dramatic conversion experience, nor did he ever even hint that he had labored over what for Francke and others was the dark, slow and agonizing process of repentance. Dale Brown, in essential agreement with Nagler, postulates that it was “Francke who bequeathed to Pietism the penitential struggle and dated conversion experience.”⁸⁰ But perhaps Nagler, especially, goes too far here. He does marshal good evidence supporting a close association between Francke and *Busskampf*, but in drawing conclusions concerning Wesley from the same data, he appears to have made a too facile connection, and perhaps exercised ill-conceived judgment.⁸¹

John Wesley was twenty-four years of age when Auguste Francke died, and the two never met. But there is ample evidence to suggest that Wesley was familiar with the writings and the work of Francke. We know that en route to Georgia, both John and Charles Wesley read Francke’s *Pietas Hallensis*.⁸² And subsequently, during his stay in Savannah, Wesley encountered the Halle Pietists Boltzius and Gronau. In fact, the Pietist leader Ziegenhagen asked Boltzius and Gronau to describe Wesley’s activities and assess his character to the Pietist leaders in Halle in writing. Gronau wrote:

Mr. Wesley certainly is sincere in his Christianity and his ministry, and surely seeks nothing more than to bring salvation to himself and those who hear him. . . . Yet he has many a legalistic practice which I cannot imagine for myself, such as sleeping on the bare ground like the Indians, with a fur under

him and his clothes on, or eating foods without salt or fat, or wearing long linen trousers which reach to his shoes and, therefore, no stockings, etc.⁸³

And Boltzius expressed a similar estimation of Wesley to a correspondent in London: “He seems otherwise to be a sincere man, who has also presented the Divine Truth with diligence and zeal, if more legalistically than evangelically.”⁸⁴

As it turned out some months later, on 17 July 1737, Wesley, though he probably was not aware of what had been written of him, returned the compliment, as it were, and refused communion to Boltzius. Wesley noted in his diary on that date: “I had occasion to make a very unusual trial of the temper of Mr. Boltzius, pastor of the Saltzburghers, in which he behaved with such lowliness and meekness as became a disciple of Christ.”⁸⁵

Such occasionally strained relationships with the Salzburghers did not overshadow Wesley’s continuing interest in Halle. In fact, on his way to Herrnhut to visit the Moravians, in the summer of 1736, Wesley stopped over at Halle, on 26-27 July. On the return to Britain from Herrnhut, he again visited Halle for two days, 18 and 19 August. On the latter occasion he conversed with Professor G. A. Francke, son of the now-departed August Hermann Francke.⁸⁶

Wesley also demonstrated his interest in Hallensian Pietism by the value which he placed upon its literature. En route to Georgia, he read the *Pietas Hallensis*, as has been noted earlier, and he also read August Hermann Francke’s *Nicodemus* (or *A Treatise on the Fear of Man*), which Anton Wilhelm Boehm had translated into English in 1706.⁸⁷ Wesley’s decision to include this latter work in his Christian Library would seem to say that he valued it highly.

The central theme of *Nicodemus*, not surprisingly one very congenial to Wesley, was the necessity of overcoming fear of humanity through the power of faith. Francke warned his fellow ministers: “A fearful minister reproves common people boldly; but when he is to speak to great and honorable persons, his mouth is gagged.”⁸⁸ And the grand excuse for not speaking honestly and sincerely is found in the fear “of getting an ill name.”⁸⁹ Further, Francke saw clustering around the fear of humanity the ancillary issues of fear of suffering, “flinching from the cross,”⁹⁰ and lack of self-denial,⁹¹ all of them often leading to failure in the pulpit. The antidote for the vapid preaching which such attitudes produces, and an antidote to the fear of humanity, said Francke, is the exercise of a vital faith

in God which entails consideration of one's true spiritual state. Francke counseled his ministers:

The first and most necessary of all means is, a constant and earnest endeavor to free ourselves from the most dangerous deceitfulness of our own hearts. Nothing is a more fatal hindrance of a man's salvation, than the false conceit that he is already a Christian.⁹²

Francke went on to underscore the salutary effect of preaching on inward religion⁹³ and on holiness: "There is no true faith without holiness of heart and life. . . [and] the true boldness of faith is known by its continually working by love."⁹⁴ These are, of course, themes familiar to other Pietists as well.

Wesley was well aware, early in his career, of the importance of Francke's warnings to preach boldly. Two of his sermons, *The Almost Christian*, and *Scriptural Christianity*, among a few others, show Wesley displaying the Gospel without pulling any punches, before the gathered great in Oxford. In *The Almost Christian*, preached at St. Mary's Oxford, on 25 July 1741, he was in earnest to communicate the difference between nominal Christianity and real Christianity, a distinction which Francke had often treated in sermons. And if this sermon was warm in its exhortations, the next and last installment before an Oxford audience, *Scriptural Christianity*, was quite hot. Wesley concluded it with a stinging indictment of the youth assembled in that city: ". . . a generation of triflers; triflers with God, with one another, and with your own souls."⁹⁵ Francke would have been pleased; but Oxford was not.

D. Some Observations

The evidence brought forward so far would support an assertion that the Arndt-Spener-Francke movement had at least some explicit impact on the life and thought of John Wesley. The following list, long but by no means exhaustive, represents areas of religious concern held in common by the German Pietists and John Wesley: soteriology, the nature of true Christianity and the place of inward religion, Biblical theology, the development of small groups, the role of laity in developing spiritual life, organizational acumen and attentiveness, motivation for and of the ministry, fear of separation from the Mother Church, and, last, the avoidance of needless and harmful disputation.⁹⁶

Arthur Nagler was sufficiently impressed with the broad similarity in the concerns of the two movements to claim that "most of the principles

at the basis of Methodism had their analogies in Pietism; and . . . many of Methodism's institutions and practices found a precedent in the German revival."⁹⁷ In partial support of his assertion, he goes on to note, "about the middle of the eighteenth century, Steinmetz, a Pietist in England, gave expression to his astonishment at seeing a movement (Methodism) which in so many respects was similar to his own."⁹⁸

However, though German Pietism⁹⁹ and early Methodism clearly held some elements in common, as Nagler and others have noted, these must not be permitted to obscure the differences between them, some of which were considerable. Such is the task to which we now turn.

III. JOHN WESLEY'S CRITICISM OF EARLY GERMAN PIETISM

A. Arndt, Spener, Francke, and Medieval Mysticism

In the polemic with the orthodoxy of their day, the early German Pietists appealed to medieval mystics "as *Zeugen* in support of a specific wing within Lutheranism."¹⁰⁰ So it is that Arndt, who marks the beginning of this tendency,¹⁰¹ held up as paradigms of Christian spirituality and life examples from the much-criticized Middle Ages rather than examples drawn from his own age or that of the Reformation. Luther was his sole exception. This tendency led to the accusation that mysticism — more specifically, Roman Catholic mysticism — tainted Arndt's work.¹⁰²

One of Arndt's sources for his defense of "true Christianity" was John Tauler (1300-1361), a Dominican who was himself deeply influenced by the mysticism of Meister Eckhart. Tauler's writings sufficiently impressed Arndt that he used them as the principal basis for Book Three of *True Christianity*.¹⁰³ "The medieval mystic Tauler in particular treats of this [i.e., an inner Sabbath of the heart]," Arndt wrote, "and I have used his writings throughout this book."¹⁰⁴

Arndt also greatly valued the mystical spirituality of the *Theologia Germanica*, an anonymous, (probably) mid-fourteenth-century treatise.¹⁰⁵ He encouraged wide reading of the work by publishing it anew, with a lengthy introduction in which he took issue with some of the more controversial publications of the day.¹⁰⁶ He gives his own estimate of its value in Book Six of *True Christianity*:

. . . so this old *Theologia deutsch* steps forward in its rude German farmer's cloak; that is, in its old, rude speech in which it still teaches very high spiritual and lovely things, namely, to take on Christ's life, to practice the teaching of Christ in life, how Christ is to live in us and Adam is to die in us.¹⁰⁷

What is noteworthy for the task at hand is the fact that both the writings of Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica* represent a medieval mysticism that speaks the language of both asceticism and union with God in its attempts to explore soteriology. In defining spiritual growth, for example, the *Theologia Germanica* marks out a slightly abbreviated mystical way:

Now be assured that no one can be enlightened unless he be first cleansed or purified and stripped. So also, no one can be united with God unless he be first enlightened. Thus there are three stages: first, the purification, secondly, the enlightening; thirdly, the union.¹⁰⁸

In time, this mystical legacy was mediated to Arndt, who often wrote of the *unio mystica* and “sometimes in terms of God[‘s] being in the believer.”¹⁰⁹ Arndt explored the notion of mystical union, in considerable detail, in Book Five of *True Christianity*¹¹⁰ where he portrayed the union of the believing soul with Christ in terms of a favorite image of the mystic, a spiritual wedding.¹¹¹

Spener also appealed to medieval mystics in his struggle with his contemporaries. In emphasizing the new birth, Spener found the *brautmystik* of Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica* both useful and instructive.¹¹² So it is that in his *Pia Desideria* he wrote:

It might also be useful to make more effort to put into the hands of students, and recommend to them the use of such simple little books as the *Theologia Germanica* and the writings of Tauler, which, next to the Scriptures, probably made our dear Luther what he was.¹¹³

Elsewhere in the same work he continued:

Concerning *Theologia Germanica* Luther expressed this opinion: “To boast with my old fool, ‘No book except the Bible and St. Augustine,’ it has come to my attention from which [book] I have learned more about God, Christ, man, and all things.” Hence this little book was republished and furnished with a foreword by our dear Arndt in the interest of Christian edification. Moreover, it is in order to praise him rather than criticize him that we mention that the dear man often made use of Tauler and extolled him in his *True Christianity*.¹¹⁴

In his sermon, *Spiritual Union With God*, Spener exhibited a Christ-mysticism which is remarkably similar to that found in Arndt’s early writ-

ings.¹¹⁵ However, it should also be noted that although a mystical piety is evident in Spener's writings, he was very reluctant at times "to express his open appreciation for the Mystics." It was the speculative and at times fanatical mysticism of Jacob Boehme, especially, that gave him pause.¹¹⁶ Not, as we have seen, was it that of Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica*.

Francke, in his own way but in continuity with this spiritual trend, utilized the same mystical vocabulary of *unio mystica* so familiar to his pietist predecessors. Martin Schmidt, in his *Wiedergeburt und Neuer Mensch*, notes this appropriation of mystical spirituality:

In the rendering of the Christian life following the new birth, following the triumph of the new humanity over the old [with its] deep temptations, Francke himself employed mystical images in a way similar to Spener.¹¹⁷

It was especially useful to Francke in his considerations of conversion and of the new life in Christ — very important themes for him. At times, he spoke of being "united with Christ,"¹¹⁸ and at other times, for instance, in his *Sonn-und Festtagspredigten*, he spoke of being a "bride of Christ."¹¹⁹

Nevertheless, Francke, again doing as Spener did, used mystical texts sparingly, and from time to time he "energetically opposed"¹²⁰ some of the more recalcitrant mystics of his own time, especially those with Quietist leanings.¹²¹

B. Wesley's Criticism of Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica*

There is considerable evidence in Wesley's journals, diaries, and letters that he was quite early acquainted with the mysticism of Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica* — the mysticism which surfaced repeatedly in the writings of the Pietists. For example, Wesley's diary entry for 4 March 1736 says that he was then reading Tauler's life. The next day's entry reports that he had completed the piece.¹²² Almost nine months later, in a letter to his older brother Samuel, John Wesley shows a knowledge of both Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica*. With some measure of exasperation with them, he writes:

I think the rock on which I had the nearest made shipwreck of the faith was in the writings of the mystics, under which term I comprehend all, and only those, who slight any of the means of grace.

I have drawn up a short scheme of their doctrines, partly from

conversations I have had, and letters, and partly from their most approved writers, such as Tauler, Molinos, and the author of *Theologia Germanica*.¹²³

When Wesley finally read *Luther's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, on 15 June 1741, he expressed dissatisfaction with both Luther and Tauler: "How does he [Luther] (almost in the words of Tauler), decry reason, right or wrong, as an irreconcilable enemy to the Gospel of Christ."¹²⁴

Interestingly enough, in his subsequent correspondence, Wesley often named Tauler and Jacob Behmen (Boehme) in the same breath, as it were. For instance, in a letter to Bishop Lavington in 1752, Wesley protested: "The Mystic divinity was never the Methodists' doctrine. They could never swallow either John Tauler or Jacob Behmen; although they often advised with one that did."¹²⁵ That advisor was William Law, to whom Wesley, Law's erstwhile protegee, wrote in 1756: "In matters of religion I regard no writings but the inspired. Tauler, Behmen, and a whole army of Mystic authors, are with me nothing to St. Paul."¹²⁶ And on 6 January 1756, Wesley counseled Law: "Oh that your latter works may be more and greater than your first! Surely they would, if you could ever be persuaded to study, instead of the writings of Tauler and Behmen, those of St. Paul, James, Peter, and John."¹²⁷

If Tauler did not fare well in the writings of Wesley, neither did the *Theologia Germanica*. As was noted earlier, Wesley records reading this work on 15 January 1736 and finishing it the next day, apparently for the first time, while travelling to Georgia.¹²⁸ It was none other than William Law who had given it to Wesley, with high recommendation: "If that book does not plainly lead you to Jesus Christ, I am content to know as little of Christianity as you are pleased to believe."¹²⁹ But the book did not lead Wesley to Christ, and Wesley later complained to Law about it: "In *Theologia Germanica* I remember something of Christ our pattern, but nothing express of Christ our atonement."¹³⁰ To this, Law replied, "If you remember the *Theologia Germanica* so imperfectly as only to remember 'something of Christ our pattern, but nothing express of Christ our atonement,' it is no wonder that you can remember so little of my conversations with you."¹³¹ A few years later, in 1741, perhaps to see whether he had indeed misunderstood this work, as Law had claimed he had, Wesley once again read it in its entirety. His view did not change: "Oh how was it that I could ever so admire the affected obscurity of this unscriptural writer!"¹³²

Wesley's complaint concerning the writings of the mystics was threefold. First, as was indicated earlier in the discussion of his letter to

his brother, Samuel, the mystics' depreciation of the means of grace disturbed John Wesley. Many mystics instructed their adherents to "use all outward means only as they are moved thereto."¹³³ Others said, "when the end is attained the means cease."¹³⁴

Wesley specifically rejected these formulations in an important sermon, *The Means of Grace*, first preached in 1746. In this homily, Wesley contends that means of grace — e.g., reading the Scriptures, praying, and receiving the Lord's Supper — have a place at every stage in the Christian life.¹³⁵

The second aspect of Wesley's complaint concerning the writings of the mystics had to do with their understanding of the "dark night of the soul." Both Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica* taught that it is spiritually therapeutic for those who persevere in faith.¹³⁶ So, the *Theologia Germanica* taught that as "Christ's soul must needs descend into hell, before it ascended into heaven, so must also the soul of man."¹³⁷ Elsewhere, the same work advised: "Now God hath not forsaken a man in this hell, but He is laying his hand upon him, that the man may not desire nor regard anything but the Eternal Good only . . ."¹³⁸

There is evidence which suggests that Wesley himself imbibed some of these ideas, at least for a time. But later, he came to believe that not only is a state of alienation not necessary for growth in grace; in many instances, it is quite detrimental. So, he warned his followers:

But is not darkness much more profitable for the soul than light? Is not the work of God in the heart most swiftly and effectually carried on during a state of inward suffering? Is not a believer more swiftly and thoroughly purified by sorrow than by joy? By anguish and pain and distress and spiritual martyrdoms than by continual peace? So the mystics teach; so it is written in their books — but not in *the oracles of God*.¹³⁹

The third aspect of the teaching of the German mystics which disturbed Wesley was their depiction of the highest reaches of the Christian life in terms of union with God. (Some of them called it perfection.) For example, Tauler, in his *Sermon for Whitsunday*, pointed out that after the disciples had seen to the purging of their souls from all images, "the Heavenly Father drew [them], thus free and acquiescing, into so close a union that He gave Himself as truly unto them as they had given themselves unto Him."¹⁴⁰ And the *Theologia Germanica* averred, "we should be of a truth purely, simply, and wholly at one with the One Eternal Will

of God, or altogether without will, so that the created will should flow out into the Eternal Will, and be swallowed up and lost therein . . .”¹⁴¹

Wesley much preferred the language of communion to that of union; the language of the perfection of love (conceived as fellowship between God and persons of faith) to that of the melding of the soul into the dark abyss of God. In fact, in his commentary on the Gospel of John, Wesley passes over 17:23, the heart of Jesus’ prayer for unity and therefore a very important verse, most probably, Nagler thinks, because of his misgivings concerning unitive mysticism.¹⁴² “These considerations insensibly stole upon me,” Wesley noted, “as I grew acquainted with the Mystic writers, whose noble description of union with God and internal religion made everything else appear mean, flat, and insipid.”¹⁴³

Though it could be that Wesley was simply being guided by earlier editings of the work (originally it was published in four, not six, books), it was more probably Wesley’s uneasiness about mysticism that removed practically every reference to Tauler and to the *Theologia Germanica* from the edition of Arndt’s *True Christianity* which he prepared for inclusion in his Christian Library. This meant the excision of all of Book III, chapter 4, where Arndt used Tauleran language to depict the soul’s union with God, and of Arndt’s exaltation of the quiet Sabbath of the heart (a well-worked Tauler metaphor), in chapter 10.¹⁴⁴ Wesley may have simply omitted books five and six for similar reasons.

IV. CONCLUSION

At the end of section two of this essay, we summarized and assessed the many parallels which emerge when the life and thought of John Wesley are compared to those of Arndt, Spener and Francke. Few would doubt their theological significance. But the mere observation of similarities and the noting of a common spirit and perspective do not in themselves substantiate a direct, causal relationship or a significant appropriation. There does seem to be stronger evidence of a direct relationship and significant appropriation in some other data: Wesley did meet with some of the Halle Pietists; he read the works of Arndt and A. H. Fraucke; he edited these works (and how!), and included them among his own. But is this sufficient to warrant including Wesley among the Pietists? Does it suggest truly significant appropriation? I think not, for the following reasons:

First of all, the term Pietism properly refers to a rather well-defined movement which surfaced in the seventeenth century and ran its course by the end of the eighteenth. By no stretch of the evidence was Wesley a

part of that movement. Rather, Wesley was an English evangelical caught up in his own thriving, demanding, awakening movement (a movement also rather well defined, historically). Wesley did evidence at times a spirit akin to that of the Pietists, but he was not part of that movement. A vague, largely amorphous understanding of just what it is that constitutes Pietism has led some to contend that Wesley was a Pietist, “just like Spener.” But the historical data belie and make almost comical such an assertion, as we have seen.

Second, Wesley flatly rejected much of the mystical piety which was so important to the early German Pietists’ descriptions of the Christian life and their critiques of the church. This is to say that although the Pietists and Wesley had similar soteriological emphases — e.g., repentance, new birth, holy living, perfection, etc. — the critical terms were nuanced differently in each case. The Pietist and Wesleyan soteriologies in themselves were significantly different. For example, the Wesleyan *ordo salutis* had little, if any, room for a stage of mortification (the concept of the dark night of the soul and Francke’s *Busskampf* are two Pietist forms of it); nor did the Wesleyan *ordo* conceive perfection as Arndt and Spener had — i.e., in terms of mystical union with God. Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica* were *Zeugen* for the Pietists; they manifestly played no testimonial role for Wesley.¹⁴⁵

Albert Outler has argued that Wesley was indebted for many of his soteriological emphases not so much to Latin mysticism (and, by implication, to German Pietism, which was based upon it) as to early and Eastern spirituality. This is especially true with respect to Wesley’s understanding of Christian perfection.¹⁴⁶ Beyond this, Wesley’s understanding of what Robert Cushman has referred to as the “Scripture way of salvation”¹⁴⁷ was informed not simply by Moravianism but by a vast and impressive array of readings from writers within the Anglican Reformation (Cranmer in particular), seventeenth-century English “Divinity,” and Puritanism. Wesley was, in fact, quite eclectic in his appropriation of traditional sources and apparently owed no allegiance to any particular school, Pietist or other, with the possible exception of Anglicanism. This eclectic approach has made it possible for many to claim Wesley as their own.

Ernest Stoeffler, whose studies of Pietism have advanced so greatly, especially among the English-speaking, the understanding of that tradition, has made much of the fact that Arndt’s *True Christianity* appears in the first volume of Wesley’s *Christian Library*. But it must be remembered that Wesley placed immediately ahead of Arndt’s work, in good Anglican fashion, the *Apostolic Fathers* and the *Homilies of Macarius!*

NOTES

1 Cf. Dale W. Brown. "The Bogy of Pietism," *Covenant Quarterly* 18 (1960). Brown, *Understanding Pietism* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1978), p.9, says: "Pietism has been one of the least understood movements in Judaeo-Christian history." This statement may be hyperbolic, but Brown is not alone in his judgment. Hereinafter, Brown's *Understanding Pietism* will be referred to as Brown, *UP*, p.9, etc. See Karl A. Olsson, "What is Pietism?" *Covenant Quarterly* 28 (1970), 3-14.

2 F. Ernest Stoeffler, review of Brown, *UP* in *Covenant Quarterly* 36:4 (November 1978), 17.

3 Albrecht Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus* (3 vols.; Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1880-1886), I.1.3-80; also see II.4, chapters 27, 28, entitled, respectively, "Die Herkunft der Lehre von der mystischen Vereinigung mit Christus bei den jüngeren lutherischen Theologen," and "Das wahre Christenthum von Johann Arndt." For critique of Ritschl's position see Martin Greschat "Zur neueren Pietismusforschung. Em Literaturbericht" in *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Westfälische Kirchengeschichte* 65 (1972), pp.220-268, and Martin Schmidt, *Wiedergeburt und neuer Mensch* (Wittenberg: Luther Verlag, 1969), pp. 169ff. Hereinafter, this work will be referred to as Schmidt, *Wiedergeburt*, 169ff. etc.

4 Cf. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, tr. G. W. Bromiley (13 vols.; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1936-1977), IV.3.2, pp.539-540.

5 Gerald Parsons, "Pietism and Liberal Protestantism: Some Unexpected Continuities," *Religion* 14 (1984), 223-243. It should be mentioned that in this article, Parsons tries to show that, on the basis of the shared tenet, "Christianity is essentially life, not doctrine," there is continuity between classical Pietism and the theological liberalism of Adolf von Hamack. Parsons' thesis is interesting but by no means convincingly argued.

6 H. Weigelt, "Interpretations of Pietism in the Research of Contemporary German Church Historians," *Church History* 39 (June 1970) 236- 241.

7 Cf. Ritschl, *op. cit.*, *passim*, but see especially his work on Pietism in the Reformed churches of the Netherlands (Labadie and Labadism), Germany, and Switzerland; in the Lutheran churches; in Halle, and in the Duchy of Württemberg; and lastly, the Pietism of Nicolas Zinzendorf. See also, F. Ernest Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: E. J.

Brill, 1965), pp.24-108. Hereinafter, this work will be referred to as Stoeffler, *REP*, 24-108, etc.

8 Stoeffler, *REP*, 183. Howard Snyder, "Pietism, Moravianism, and Methodism as Renewal Movements," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1983), p.56, sets the chronological boundaries of Protestant Scholasticism roughly at 1580 and 1680; more precisely the agreement on the final form of the Formula of Concord (1577) and the publication of Spener's *Pia Desideria* (1675).

9 Stoeffler, *REP* 202.

10 Stoeffler, *REP*, 183. For a lucid discussion of Protestant Scholasticism as it would bear upon the development of Pietism, see K. James Stein, *Philipp Jakob Spener: Pietist Patriarch* (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1986), pp.9-30.

11 Wilhelm Koepp, "Johann Arndt un sein Wahren Christentum," in *Aufsätze und Vorträge zur Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, 1959, p. 26.

12 F. Ernest Stoeffler, "Religious Roots of the Early Moravian and Methodist Movements," *Methodist History* 24 (April 1986), 136.

13 For an example of pastoral concern over familial piety during the Thirty Years War, see Martin Schmidt, *Pietismus* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1972), p. 32ff.

14 Brown, *UP*, p.21.

15 Martin Luther, "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation," *Luther's Works*, eds. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (55 vols.; St. Louis and Philadelphia: Fortress, 1955-1968), 44 (ed. James Atkinson):123.

16 Stein, *op. cit.*, pp.20-22.

17 *Ibid.*, pp.23-24. For a comprehensive study of the life and thought of John Arndt, cf. Wilhelm Koepp, *Johann Arndt. Eine Untersuchung über die Mystik in Luthertum* (Berlin, 1912).

18 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.24.

19 See F. Ernest Stoeffler, *German Pietism in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), p. x. In this work, Stoeffler emphasizes the pluralism within Pietism by examining the form of it which developed in Wurttemberg, Radical Pietism, and the Neo-Pietism of Jung-Stilling, a mystic who had much to do with forming the religious perspective of Tsar

Alexander I of Russia in the early years of the nineteenth century. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 253ff. Hereinafter, this work will be referred to as Stoeffler, *GP*, x, etc.

20 Parsons, *op. cit.*, p.227.

21 Stoeffler maintains that Arndt has not generally been recognized as the “Father of Pietism” because of the lingering effect of Ritschl’s argument that conventicles were of the *esse* of Pietism. Cf. Stoeffler, *REP* 202-203. Also see Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 11.97ff.

22 Cf. Peter Erb, “Introduction” to Johann Arndt, *True Christianity*, tr. Peter Erb (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), p.5. Erb notes here that Book I of *True Christianity* appeared in 1604, and that before 1609 Arndt had written three more books to be added to the work, so that, in 1609, he published *Vier Bucher vom Wahren Christentum*. Book I was entitled “The Holy Scriptures”; Book II, “The Example of Christ”; Book III, “Humanity”; and Book IV, “Nature.” By 1610, Arndt added yet two more books, in part to defend his position and to respond to some of his critics. So, from 1610, the work bore the title *Sechs Bucher vom Wahren Christentum*. Hereinafter, the edition of Arndt’s *True Christianity* cited here will be referred to as Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p.5, etc.

23 Erb, “Introduction” to Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p.21.

24 *Ibid.*

25 It appears that the religious perspective of Spener and his followers was first called “Pietism” in 1674. Cf. F. Ernest Stoeffler, *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1976), p.8.

26 Koepp, *op. cit.*, p.19.

27 Arthur Nagler, *Pietism and Methodism* (Nashville: M. E. Church, South, Publishing House, 1918), p.143.

28 Johann Arndt, *True Christianity*, in John Wesley, ed., *A Christian Library* (30 vols.; London: T. Blanshard, 1819)1.137-139. This edition of Arndt, *True Christianity*, will hereinafter be referred to as Arndt, *True Christianity* (Wesley ed.), 1.137-139, etc.

29 John Wesley, *The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley*, Frank Baker, ed.-in-chief (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984- ; vols. 7, 11, 25, and 26 of this edition appeared as the *Oxford Edition of the Works of John Wesley*, Frank Baker, ed.-in-chief [Oxford: Clarendon, 1975-1983])

Vol.18: *Journals and Diaries*, W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., (Nashville: Abingdon, 1988), pp.371, 373. Hereinafter, this work will be referred to as Wesley, Works (BE). *Journals and Diaries* 18:371-373, etc. The primary reason for caution here is the simple fact that Wesley says he “began Arndt,” but does not say which of Arndt’s works he “began.”

30 *Ibid.*, p.283.

31 *Ibid.*, p.228.

32 *Ibid.*, p.290. The themes of the *Almost Christian* and *Scriptural Christianity* (as opposed to nominal or popular Christianity) were important for Wesley. Cf. John Wesley, Sermon: *The Almost Christian in Works* (BE). *Sermons* Vol.1:131-141; and Sermon: *Scriptural Christianity in Works* (BE). *Sermons* Vol. I:159-180, to Erb, “Introduction” to Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), pp.21-25.

33 Stoeffler, *op. cit.*, pp.203-204, appears to attribute some significance to the fact that *True Christianity* was placed in the *first* volume of *A Christian Library*.

34 John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, Thomas Jackson, ed. (3d ed.; 14 vols.; London: Wesleyan Book Room, 1872 [Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979], *Journal*, Sat. 12 Aug. 1738, I.130. Hereinafter, this edition of Wesley’s works will be referred to as John Wesley, Works (Jackson ed.). *Journal*, Sat. 12 Aug. 1738, I.130. etc.

35 Cf. Wesley, Sermon: *The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption in Works* (BE). *Sermons* Vol. 1:248-266; and Sermon: *The Scripture Way of Salvation in Works* (BE). *Sermons* Vol.2:153-169. For a detailed treatment of Wesley’s soteriology, see Kenneth J. Collins, *Wesley On Salvation: A Study in the Standard Sermons* (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press/Zondervan, 1989).

36 Arndt, *True Christianity* (Wesley ed.) 1:355. Arndt’s soteriological concerns can also be seen in treatments of the following topics (page references are to Arndt, *True Christianity* [Wesley ed.]): repentance, p.277; self-denial, p.168; justification by faith, pp.172-173, 265, 381; faith and love, pp.170, 240-241; humility, pp.305-306; hope, p.343; regeneration by faith, p.267; new birth, p.153; deliverance by faith from the guilt and power of sin, pp.177, 367-368; restoration of the *imago dei*, pp.135-143; holiness and happiness, pp.173-203; Christ, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, pp.208, 274; love of God and neighbor,

pp.217-219, 221, 313; redemption, a narrow path, p.250; and Christian perfection, pp.355, 358. See also, Wilhelm Koepp, *Johann Arndt* (Berlin: Protestantischer Schriftenvertrieb, 1912), pp. 73ff.

37 Arndt, *True Christianity* (Wesley ed.), 1:207; see also 1:211, 213, 270, 356.

38 Arndt, *True Christianity* (Wesley ed.), I:177; see also I:269. Note that for Arndt and Wesley, social action is not the opposite of inward religion; rather, it is formal, orthodox (correct in opinion), impersonal, lifeless religion. Also, notice how deftly Wesley ties together inward religion, i .e. the religion of the heart and good works in the following comment, which is characteristic: “So manifest is it that although true religion naturally leads to every good word and work, yet the real nature thereof lies deeper still, even in ‘the hidden man of the heart.’” Cf. John Wesley, Sermon: *The Way to the Kingdom in Works*. (BE) *Sermons* I: 220; and see *ibid.*, 3:313, 320, 496, and 523.

39 John Wesley, Sermon: *The Way to the Kingdom in Works* (BE). *Sermons* I:218. Wesley often used the text for this sermon (“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” [Romans 14:17]) as a principal or supporting text for other sermons. For a complete listing of his uses, see *ibid.*, 4:674.

40 Wesley, Sermon: *The Circumcision of the Heart in Works* (BE). *Sermons* I:402-403.

41 Further evidence of Wesley’s understanding of inward religion may be found in a number of places. E.g., John Wesley, Sermon: *The Marks of the New Birth in Works* (BE). *Sermons* 1:418: “The true living, Christian faith, which whosoever hath is ‘born of God,’ is not only an assent, an act of understanding, but a disposition which God hath wrought in his heart”; and Sermon: *The Great Privilege of Those That are Born of God in Works* (BE). *Sermons* I:432: ‘We may learn that it [being born of God] implies not barely the being baptized, but a vast inward change; a change wrought in the soul by the operation of the Holy Ghost.’ Further examples may be seen in Wesley, Sermon: *Christian Perfection in Works* (BE). *Sermons* 2:117; and Sermon: *The New Birth in Works* (BE). *Sermons* 2:195.

42 Arndt, *True Christianity* (Wesley ed.), 1:356.

43 John Wesley, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M.*, Nehemiah Curnock, ed. (8 vols.; London: Epworth Press, 1938), 4:4.

Hereinafter, this work will be referred to as Wesley, *Journal* (Curnock ed.), 4:4, etc.

44 Cf. John Wesley, Sermon: *A Caution Against Bigotry in Works (BE)*. *Sermons* 2:61-78; and Sermon: *The Catholic Spirit in Works (BE)*. *Sermons* 2:79-96.

45 Stein, *op. cit.* p.39. For a detailed account of the influence of Stoll on Spener, cf. Martin Schmidt, *op. cit.*, pp.43-44.

46 Stoeffler, *REP*, p.238.

47 Stoeffler, *REP*, p.235. For more on Arndt's influence on Spener, see A. Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 2:97-98.

48 Stoeffler, *REP*, p.230. For a view which holds that Spener's work marks the beginning of Pietism, see Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p.42. Schmidt compares Spener's relationship to Pietism with that of Luther to the Protestant Reformation.

49 Howard Snyder, *op. cit.*, p.72. Also cf. pp. 11ff., where Snyder presents seven frameworks for analyzing the structures of renewal movements.

50 *Ibid.*, p.15. But, cf. Brown, *UP* p.61, who sees the creation of the *collegia* simply as an "extension" of the values derived from [Spener's] catechetical activities."

51 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.87; Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 2:135.

52 Cf. Olsson, *op. cit.*, pp.8-9, where Olsson calls into question any facile association of Anabaptists and Pietists when the issue of ecclesiastical reform is addressed. He insists that the Anabaptists were revolutionaries who sought to go beyond the accommodation of *cujus regio, ejus religio*, a form of compromise first worked out by Luther and the German princes and later formalized for the first time in the Peace of Augsburg (1555). Spener and other Pietists did find this arrangement chafing at times, but they worked within its terms. Olssen refers to the Pietists as "accommodants," moderates, on this point.

53 Wilda Morris, "Philipp Jakob Spener: Continuing the Reformation," *Covenant Quarterly* 38 (February 1980), 15.

54 John Wesley, Sermon: *The Ministerial Office in Works* (Jackson). *Sermons* 7:277.

55 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.90.

56 *Ibid.* Also see Snyder, *op. cit.*, p.71. Snyder points to three reasons behind the objections to the *collegia pietatis*: first, they elevated the role of the laity; second, they altered local congregational organization, especially the *collegium presbyterorum*; third, they tended to substitute meetings of the *collegium* for the confessional.

57 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.92. Also see Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 2:97-124. For a study of the source of the pietistic pastoral ideal, see Martin Schmidt, *Der Pietismus als theologische Erscheinung* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1984), pp. 122ff.

58 John Wesley, Letter to the Rev. Mr. Walker, 24 September 1755 in *Works* (BE). Letters 26:595.

59 Snyder, *op. cit.*, p.261.

60 *Ibid.* Note, however, that Spener was not as enthusiastic about the *collegia* toward the latter years of his career, especially after he had witnessed some flagrant abuses. Indeed, at one point, he even admitted that these groups were not necessary to carrying forward the reforming work he had in mind. Cf. Nagler, *op. cit.*, p.51.

61 Theodore Tappert, "Introduction" to Philip Jacob Spener, Pia Desideria, Theodore Tappert, tr. and ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), p. iii. Hereinafter, this work will be referred to as Spener, *PD*, p. iii, etc. Page numbers in small Roman numerals indicate Tappert's introduction.

62 Spener, *PD*, p 45.

63 John Wesley, *Address to the Clergy in Works* (Jackson) 10:487.

64 Spener, *PD*, p. iii. Also see Nagler, *op. cit.*, p.31. Nagler says that Spener, reflecting on doctrinal reform, affirmed all of the following: the right of private opinion, that doctrine should be simplified, that correctness of belief was not as important as [Lutheran] orthodoxy took it to be; and that the various aspects of a doctrinal system are of unequal value.

65 Stoeffler, *REP*, p.235. See K. James Stein, "Philipp Jakob Spener's Hope for Better Times for the Church," *Covenant Quarterly* 37 (August 1979), 3-20, for an account of Spener's assessment of the likelihood for success for his reforms.

66 Spener's theological opponents charged him with *Vollkommenheit* (perfectionism), and he wrote *Von dem Tempel Salomons*, setting forth and defending perfection as a "valid Biblical and traditional doctrine." Cf. Brown, *op. cit.*, p.97. Also see Spener, *PD*, p.80, where Spener says,

“ . . . we are nevertheless under obligation to achieve some degree of perfection.”

67 Spener, *PD*, p.17.

68 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.115.

69 Gary F. Sattler, *God's Glory, Neighbor's Good: A Brief Introduction to the Life and Writings of August Hermann Francke* (Chicago: Covenant. 1982), p.22. Hereinafter, this work is referred to as *Sattler, Francke*, p.22, etc.

70 Stoeffler, *GP*, p.2. For a more detailed treatment of the influence of Arndt on Francke, cf., E. Peschke, *Studien zur Theologie August Hermann Franckes*, 1964, vol.1, p.150-151.

71 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.115.

72 Stoeffler, *GP*, p.4. Note that the Collegium Philobiblicum studied the Bible in its original languages. One would also observe that August Hermann Francke had become involved with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in 1698 (the year of its founding), and later with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. For a discussion of the influence of Horneck on the religious society movement in England, see Snyder, *op. cit.*, pp. 111ff. Also cf. Sattler, *Francke*, pp.76, 78.

73 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.116; and Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 2:250-251.

74 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.116.

75 Sattler, *Francke*, p.19. Also see Schmidt, *Wiedergeburt und Neuer Mensch*, pp. 195ff.

76 Stein, *op. cit.*, p.132.

77 Stoeffler, *GP*, p.51; and Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 2:385ff.

78 Stoeffler, *GP*, p.55.

79 Nagler, *op. cit.*, pp.57-58. This doctrine quickly (and unfortunately) devolved into the notion that only the converted could or did understand the Bible or could or did have spiritual light. Martin Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p.74, states: “Er selbst [Francke] bezeichnete mit dem Busskampf . . . das Ringen des alten und des neuen Menschen in der Seele des einzelnen und war davon überzeugt, dass der neue nur unter heftigen Geburtsschmerzen ans Licht trat.”

80 Brown, *UP*, p.147. Emphasis mine. Scholarship on this matter is not of one mind. Stoeffler takes issue with those interpretations which

closely associate the idea of *Busskampf* with Pietism at Halle. Cf. Stoeffler, *GP*, pp.49-50.

81 Nagler, *op. cit.*, p.126, says, “We find Francke and Wesley insisting upon the importance of penitential pains with greater emphasis than the mild Spener, who even professed that they were not necessary.” The present writer would take issue with Nagler here, for although Wesley recommended a judicious use of the means of grace and works “meet for repentance” prior to justification (if there were time and opportunity), he also affirmed that works which precede justification are not the basis for divine acceptance and approval, nor are they absolutely necessary. For Wesley, the only necessary and sufficient ingredient for justification and regeneration is faith. Penitential struggles, dark nights of the soul, etc., really have little, if any, place in Wesley’s *ordo salutis*. Cf. Collins, *Wesley On Salvation: A Study in the Standard Sermons*, pp.33-42.

82 John Wesley, *Works (BE). Journals and Diaries* 18:319.

83 Karl Zehrer, “The Relationship Between Pietism in Halle and Early Methodists,” *Methodist History* 16, No.4 (July 1979), 214, 216ff. Zehrer points out the fact that once it became clear that Wesley desired a closer association with the Moravians, Gottlieb Francke showed little interest. When Wesley finally broke with the Moravians, Francke requested his writings.

84 *Ibid.*, p.215.

85 John Wesley, *Diary in Works (BE). Journals and Diaries* 18:528.

86 Snyder, *op. cit.*, p.137.

87 Martin Schmidt, *John Wesley: A Theological Biography*, tr. Norman R. Goldhawk (3 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1972), 1:140. Note that Anton Wilhelm Boehm is the translator of Arndt’s *True Christianity* noted earlier.

88 August Hermann Francke, *Nicodemus* in *A Christian Library: Consisting of Extracts from and Abridgments of the Choicest Pieces of Practical Divinity Which Have Been Published in the English Tongue*, John Wesley, ed. and comp. (30 vols.; London: J. Kershaw, 1826 [reprint of 1st ed.; 50 vols.; London, 1749-1755J), 29:468.

89 *Ibid.*, 29:479.

90 *Ibid.*, 29:473.

91 *Ibid.*, 29:483.

92 *Ibid.*, 29:482.

93 *Ibid.*

94 *Ibid.*, 29:492.

95 John Wesley, Sermon: *Scriptural Christianity in Works (BE)*. *Sermons* I:179. Also see Collins, *op. cit.*, pp.30-31, from which some of this material is taken.

96 Stoeffler, *REP*, pp. 13ff. lists the major characteristics of Pietism: a belief that the essence of Christianity consists in a personally meaningful relationship to God; a belief in religious idealism; an emphasis upon the study of the Bible; and a morally critical or oppositive perspective regarding the established Church. Brown, *UP*, pp. 27ff., suggests that the major characteristics of Pietism were: a concern for the reform of the Church; a Biblical orientation; a conscious concern to continue the Reformation, moving from doctrine to life; a theology of experience; and hope for the world.

97 Nagler, *op. cit.*, p.141.

98 *Ibid.*, p.148. Also see Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 2:507.

99 Two movements which lie beyond the scope of this present work also mediated the Pietist impulse to Wesley: the religious society movement in England (under the influence of Horneck and Labadie) and, more importantly, Wurttemberg (Swabian) pietism, one of whose principal leaders was Johann Albrecht Bengel. Few can doubt the considerable impact of Bengel on John Wesley, especially as Wesley composed his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*. For discussion of the impact of the religious society movement on Wesley, cf. Snyder, *op. cit.*, pp. 111ff. For information on the Pietism of Wllrttemberg, cf. Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 3:3-194.

100 Peter Erb, "Introduction" to Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p. 16.

101 *Ibid.*

102 Brown, *UP*, p.19. Italics mine.

103 Ritschl, *op. cit.*, 2:37. Erb attempts to downplay the Tauleran sources though they are considerable. Cf. Erb, "Introduction" to Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p.17.

104 Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p.224. Other references to Tauler in this work may be seen on pp.25, 30-31, 76, 166, and 175.

105 Luther rediscovered this work and published editions of it in 1516 and 1518. Cf. Susanna Winkworth, tr., *Theologia Germanica* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1907), pp. ixff. Hereinafter, this work will be referred to as *Theol. Germ.* (Winkworth ed.), pp. ixff., etc.

106 Erb, "Introduction" to Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p.5.

107 Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p.280. See pp.275, 278, and 281 for other references to the *Theologia Germanica*.

108 *Theol. Germ.* (Winkworth ed.), pp.46-47. It is recognized, of course, that while perhaps a majority of Christian mystics write in terms of three stages in the mystic way to union (or could be interpreted as presenting three stages), that number is hardly fixed.

109 Stoeffler, *REP*, p.209. Also see *ibid.*, p.200; where Stoeffler says, "Arndt took chapter 34 of the second book of his *True Christianity* directly from [Valentin] Weigel's *Gebetbuchlein*." Weigel (1533-1588) was the Lutheran pastor in Zschopau, Saxony, who developed a theosophic mysticism which was often criticized but never officially condoned in his lifetime. The theosophic side of his thought flowered in the thought of Jakob Bohme. Wesley denounced the views of Bohme on more than one occasion. Cf. John R. Tyson, "John Wesley and William Law: A Reappraisal," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 17, No.2 (Fall 1982), 67.

110 Erb, "Introduction" to Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p.7.

111 Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), p.255.

112 Martin Schmidt, *Wiedergeburt und Neuer Mensch*, pp.169-170. Schmidt takes issue with Ritschl's emphasis on the influence of medieval mysticism, asceticism, and monasticism on Spener.

113 Spener, *PD*, p.110. Note that in his proposals for creating better conditions in the church, Spener cites approvingly sections in Arndt's *True Christianity* which were based largely on the writings of Tauler. Cf. *ibid.*, p.96.

114 *Ibid.*, p. 111.

115 Nagler, *op. cit.*, p.39.

116 One possible explanation for this reluctance is that Friedrich Mayer, an opponent of Spener and a critic of the Hamburg movement, severely criticized Spener's failure to distance himself from the excesses of Jacob Bohme. But especially noteworthy here is Spener's apparent strategy: he apparently refused even to read Böhme's writings so that he

would not have to make a judgment on their merit. Cf. Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-138. For a study which downplays Spener's relationship to the mystics, see Johannes Wallmann, "Weidergeburt und Erneuerung bei Philipp Jakob Spener," in *Pietismus und Neuzeit*, Andreas Lindt and Klaus Deppermann, eds. (Bielefeld: Luther Verlag, 1977), pp.7-31.

117 Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p.205. Schmidt uses the same argument *verbatim* in his *Pietismus*, pp.74-75.

118 Stoeffler, *GP*, p.17.

119 *Ibid.*

120 Nagler, *op. cit.*, p.130.

121 *Ibid.*, p.131.

122 John Wesley, *Diary*, 4 March 1736, in *Works (BE). Journals and Diaries*, 18:363.

123 John Wesley, Letter to Samuel Wesley, 23 Nov. 1736, in *Works (BE). Letters*, 25:487-488.

124 John Wesley, *Journal*, 15 June 1741 (Curnock ed.), 2:467.

125 John Wesley, Letter to Bp. Lavington (Exeter), 8 May 1752, in John Telford, ed., *The Letters of John Wesley*, A.M. (8 vols.; London: Epworth Press, 1931), 3:321. One has to consider, however, whether it is fair to associate so closely with Tauler and Bohme. Hereinafter, this edition of the letters of John Wesley will be referred to as John Wesley, Letter to Bp. Lavington (Exeter), 8 May 1752 in *Letters* (Telford ed.), 3:321, etc.

126 John Wesley, "An Extract of a Letter to William Law," 6 January 1756, in *Letters* (Telford ed.), 3:332.

127 *Ibid.*, 3:370.

128 Cf. *supra*, n29.

129 *Works (BE). Letters* 25:543-544.

130 *Ibid.*, 25:547.

131 *Ibid.*, 25:548. Wesley's estimation of the christology of the *Theologia Germanica* was probably more accurate than William Law's. For instance, in the sections of the book where one would normally expect to find some comments on the death of Christ as in some way effectuating a reconciliation of humanity and God, one instead finds numerous descriptions of the problem of the "I, and Me, and Self, and Mine, and the like,"

(the author's way of depicting original sin) which is resolved in the example of Christ whose "human nature was so utterly bereft of Self, and apart from all creatures, as no man's ever was, and was nothing else but 'a house and habitation of God.'" Cf. *Theol. Germ.* (Winkworth ed.), pp. 48, 50.

132 John Wesley, *Journal*, 7-15 November 1741, in *Journal* (Curnock ed.), 2:515.

133 John Wesley, Letter to Samuel Wesley, 23 November 1736, in *Works (BE). Letters*, 25:488.

134 *Ibid.*

135 John Wesley, Sermon: *The Means of Grace in Works (BE). Sermons*, 1: 376-397. Outler correctly points out that "this sermon carries us back to Wesley's earlier conflicts with the Moravians and other 'quietists' " (*Ibid.*, 1:376). However, it would be a mistake to assume that this period (Fetter Lane experience) represents the *terminus a quo* for much of the thought contained in this homily. One should keep in mind that Wesley had already excoriated the mystical depreciation of the means of grace in 1736 in a way which portended his rebuke of the Moravians in July, 1740. Cf. John Wesley, Letter to Samuel Wesley, 23 November 1736, in *Works (BE). Letters*, 25:488.

136 Meister Eckhart described this "dark night" thus: "The genuine word of eternity is spoken only in that eternity of the man who is himself a wilderness, alienated from self and all multiplicity. . . . Where may one find peace and rest? Really only where he rejects all creatures, being alienated from them and desolate." Cf. Meister Eckhart, "Sermon Four" in Walter T. Stace, ed., *The Teachings of the Mystic* (New York: New American Library, 1960), p.149.

137 *Theol. Germ.* (Winkworth ed.), p.35.

138 *Ibid.*, p.38.

139 John Wesley, Sermon: *On the Wilderness State in Works (BE). Sermons* 2:219. One could call into question Wesley's apparent equating of the mystics' dark night of the soul and what he calls the wilderness state. The notions of Eckhart and Tauler concerning the dark night of the soul do not necessarily see it entailing a sinful state. To be sure, for these mystics, the dark night of the soul expresses an introvertive mysticism in which the mind becomes a desert (i.e., a wilderness state), devoid of all sensate content. By Wesley's time meanings were probably in some sense

conflated. Cf. Stace, *op. cit.*, p.15, and W. R. Inge, *Mysticism in Religion* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1947), pp. 45ff.

140 Susanna Winkworth, *The History and Life of the Rev. Doctor John Tauler of Strasbourg; with Twentyfive of His Sermons* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1907), p.351.

141 *Theol. Germ.* (Winkworth ed.), p.98.

142 Nagler, *op. cit.*, p.97.

143 John Wesley, Georgia Diary 1: 30 December 1735 to 17 January 1736, in *Works (BE). Journals and Diaries*, 18:338-342.

144 Cf. Arndt, *True Christianity* (Erb ed.), Book III, chptrs. 4 and 10 and Arndt, *True Christianity* (Wesley ed.), 1.378ff.

145 Tuttle contends that Wesley rejected the mystical *in orco* (dark night of the soul) as a stage along the soteriological path. However, he also argues that Wesley “continued to uphold the mystical concept of perfection (Christian mysticism’s fifth stage) as the end of religion.” It is perhaps more to the point to observe that Wesley had little use for either the fourth stage (mortification) or the fifth (union) as conceived by some mystics. Cf. Robert G. Tuttle Jr., *John Wesley: His Life and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980), pp.219-219, 331.

146 Albert C. Outler, ed., *John Wesley* (Oxford University Press, 1964), p.252. Observe that it makes little difference to the present argument whether or not Wesley correctly interpreted the mystical authors. Wesley’s perception, accurate or not, and the consequences which flowed from it, are the significant matters here. Cf. Nagler, *op. cit.*, p.101, for a discussion which maintains that Wesley’s system contained several mystical elements, and Stoeffler, *GP*, p.18, for a discussion which attempts to mitigate the unitive mysticism found in Arndt and Spener by drawing the distinction between ontological and psychological union.

147 Robert E. Cushman, *John Wesley’s Experimental Divinity* (Nashville: Kingswood, 1989), p.80.

MOLINA, ARMINIUS, PLAIFERE, GOAD, AND WESLEY ON HUMAN FREE-WILL, DIVINE OMNISCIENCE, AND MIDDLE KNOWLEDGE

by Barry E. Bryant

Upon first glance the title of this paper contains a strange mix of individuals, one or two of whom are perhaps more obscure than the others. What each has in common with the others is a vested interest in the issue of free-will. What they also have in common is the realization that arising from the doctrine of free-will is the paradox of omniscience.

The paradox of omniscience acknowledges that, while free-will relocates the responsibility of evil from Creator to creature, it also seems to deny God divine omniscience. This arises from the problem of how God's perfect knowledge, as a constitutive element of the divine and eternal nature, can be consistent with human free-will, presupposing that God's omniscience must also include foreknowledge of all future events. As modern discussions of the issue of free-will constantly point out, free-will; creates problems for the doctrine of God.

Further, Molina, Arminius, Plaifere, Goad, and Wesley also have in common the concept of "scientia media," or God's "middle knowledge," as an attempt to resolve the paradox of omniscience in order to maintain compatibilist view. It is this common denominator that I wish to explore this essay.

1. Luis de Molina

The general consensus is that "scientia media" was a phrase not simply used, but coined by Luis de Molina (1535-1600) in *Concordia Liberi*

Arbitrii cum gratiae Donis (Lisbon, 1588/Antwerp, 1595).¹ It entails a utilization of modal logic to describe God's knowledge not of necessities only, but also of hypothetical future contingents (i.e., events that do not have to occur).² Molina stated his point this way: "Unless we want to wander about precariously in reconciling our freedom of choice and the contingency of things with divine foreknowledge it is necessary for us to distinguish *three* types of knowledge of God."³

The first type of divine knowledge which Molina distinguished was God's natural knowledge. This knowledge consists not of individuals alone but consists as well of knowledge of all of the possible actions and circumstances associated with individuals. Although this knowledge of all future contingents existed before God created anything by His free will, it is not dependent upon God's will.⁴ Such knowledge is a divine attribute and is essential to God, which is why it is called "natural."

The second kind of divine knowledge which Molina distinguished was God's free knowledge, the knowledge by which, after the free act of God's will, God knows *absolutely* and *indeterminately, without any condition or hypothesis*, which states of affairs from among all contingent states of affairs are, in fact, going to obtain, and, likewise, which are not going to obtain.⁵ William Craig's observations and comments on this point are helpful.

This knowledge is posterior to the free decision of God's will to create, to instantiate one of the possible orders known by his natural knowledge . . . Since his knowledge is posterior to the decision of God's will and since God's decision to create this world is free, it follows that the content of free knowledge is not essential to divine omniscience, but is contingent upon which world God in fact creates. Had God created different worlds or even no world at all, the content of his free knowledge would have been different. So while it is essential to God to have free knowledge, the content of what he freely knows is contingent upon which world he chooses to create.⁶

In between God's natural and free knowledge is a third option, what Molina called,

middle knowledge, by which, in virtue of the most profound and inscrutable comprehension of each faculty of free choice, He saw in His own essence what each such faculty would do with its innate freedom were it to be placed in this or in that or, indeed, in infinitely many orders of things — even though it would really be able, if it so willed, to do the opposite . . . ⁷

Whereas by God's natural knowledge God knows what an individual *could* do if it placed in a particular set of circumstances, by middle knowledge God knows what an individual *would* do when placed in the same particular set of circumstances. It is, Craig has pointed out,

God's middle knowledge which thus provides the basis of God's foreknowledge of contingent events in the actual world. By knowing what every possible creature would do under any possible circumstances and be willing to establish a world order containing certain circumstances, God knows what will in fact take place in the world.⁸

As Molina himself said,

Therefore . . . we affirm that through the divine ideas (or, through the divine essence known as the primary object) all contingent states of affairs are represented with certainty to God, who comprehends in the deepest and the most eminent way both His own essence and all things, each of which is contained in that essence infinitely more perfectly than it is contained in itself. All contingent states of affairs are, I repeat, represented to God *naturally, before* any act of free determination of the divine will; and they are represented not only as being *possible* but also as being *future* – not *absolutely future*, but *future under the condition and on the hypothesis* that God should decide to create this or that order of things and causes with these or those circumstances . . . [O]nce that determination is made, God knows all the contingent states of affairs with certainty as being future *simply or absolutely*, and now *without any hypothesis or condition*.⁹

On the basis God may have knowledge of an event without determining it. Quoting (Pseudo-) Justin Martyr, Molina said,

Foreknowledge is not a cause of that which is going to be, but rather that which is going to be is a cause of foreknowledge. For that which is going to be does not ensue upon foreknowledge, but rather foreknowledge ensues upon that which is going to be.¹⁰

This resulted in a compatibilism which was derived from an understanding of God's natural, middle, and free knowledge in an attempt to solve the paradox of omniscience.

2. James Arminius

That Arminius advocated free-will is a well-documented fact of history. What is often overlooked is the fact that, like Molina, Arminius also an appeal to middle knowledge. What Arminius thought regarding the knowledge, or understanding, of God may be found in his “Disputations on Some of the Principal Subjects of the Christian Religion” (1610), Disputation IV, “On the Nature of God.” By this knowledge, or understanding, Arminius maintained that God knows

all things and every thing which now have, will have, have had, can have, or might hypothetically have, any kind of being.... God therefore understands himself: He knows all things possible, whether they be in the capability of God or of the creature; in active or passive capability; in the capability of operation, imagination, or enunciation: He knows all things that could have an existence, on laying down any hypothesis... 11

God has this knowledge through “‘infinite intuition,’ by which God all things from eternity, nothing recently . . . whether they be considered as future, as past, or as present.”¹² Such an understanding is certain, undeceived, and infallible, even with regard to future contingents.¹³ Yet, certainty of such knowledge “does not impose any necessity on nay, it rather establishes in them a contingency.”¹⁴ At this point Arminius described the nature of God’s knowledge which accommodates t notion. God’s simple knowledge may be distinguished by several modes — theoretical and practical knowledge, knowledge of vision, and knowledge of simple intelligence.¹⁵

XLI. *Theoretical knowledge* is that by which things are understood under the relation of Being and of Truth. *Practical knowledge* is that by which things are considered under the relation of Good, and as objects of the Will and of the Power of God. (Isa. xiii, 8; xxxvii, 28; xvi, 5.)

XLII. *The knowledge of Vision* is that by which God knows himself and all other beings, which are, will be, or have been. *The knowledge of simple intelligence* is that by which He knows things possible. Some persons call the former “definite” or “determinate,” and the latter “indefinite” or “indeterminate” knowledge.

XLIII. The Schoolmen say besides, that one kind of God’ s knowledge is natural and necessary, another free, and a third kind

[mediam] middle. (1.) *Natural* or *necessary* knowledge is that by which God understands himself and all things possible. (2.) *Free Knowledge* is that by which He knows all other beings. (3.) *Middle Knowledge* is that by which He knows, that “if this thing happens, that will take place.” The first precedes every free act of the Divine Will; the second follows the free act of God’s will; and the last precedes indeed the free act of the Divine Will, but hypothetically from this act it sees that some particular thing will occur.¹⁶

Here Arminius clearly elucidated three kinds of Divine knowledge — natural, free, and middle, in such a way as to suggest some sort of historical and theological connection between Arminius and Molina. Unfortunately it cannot be fully explored here. It does, however, indicate that like Molina, Arminius sought to resolve the paradox of omniscience through middle knowledge in an effort to maintain a compatibilist view.

3. John Plaifere

This brings us to the name of John Plaifere. Little is actually known about this seventeenth-century figure. The title page of his work reveals most of what is known, “Sometime Fellow of Sidney-Sussex Col. in Cambridge, and late Rector of Debden in Suffolk.” In 1719 a work was published anonymously and entitled, *A Collection of Tracts Concerning Predestination and Providence, and the other Points Depending on Them* (1719). The volume consisted of four essays, one of which was Plaifere’s *An Appeal to the Gospel, for the True Doctrin [sic] of Divine Predestination, Concorded with the Orthodox Doctrin of God’s Free-Grace, and Man’s Free-Will*. This work originally appeared in 1651, bound with Barnaby Potter’s *A Letter of the Learned Chr. Potter, D.D. Vindicating his Sentiments in these Controversies*.

In Plaifere’s work many references were made to middle knowledge, demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the issue, both historically and philosophically.¹⁷ In it, he put forward five opinions about predestination. After showing the weaknesses of the first four he then suggested a fifth, which he said,

is that of Arminius, which he interpreted accords to his own principles, in his *Theses de natura Dei*, . . . and the [Jesuit] Molina . . . and may therefore be less acceptable to some for the sake of the Teachers and Defenders of it; but a lover of Truth will not be prejudiced against it, because it hath besides these, the unanimous suffrage of the Fathers, Greek and Latin,

before St. Augustine, if their Doctrine concerning Prescience be rightly examined, and explained, namely:

1. That God by his infinite Understanding, from all Eternity, knew all things possible to be.
2. That among other infinite things possible, in his understanding, he conceived all this frame of the World that now is, and in it all the race of Mankind from the first Man to the last, every one in his several Order, Government and Event only as possible to be, if he would say the word.
3. That he knew how to alter the ordering either of all, or of any part, or person in the race of Men, so as other effects, and other ends than those that now are, might be brought forth, if he would otherwise order them.
4. But that, considering this frame of the World, and order of Mankind (as now it is) he judged it was exceeding Good for the Manifestation of the Glory of his Wisdom, Power, Goodness, Mercy, Justice, Dominion, and Lordship, if he should Will, or Decree to put it into Execution, and into Being.
5. That God infallibly foreknew, that if he should decree to put it into execution, that then these, and these particular persons, would certainly, by this order of Means and Government, be transmitted, and brought to Eternal Life; and that those other particular Persons, under their order of Means and Government, through their own fault would go into Perdition, if Justice should be done them.
6. That though he knew, what these would be, yet he determined and decreed, out of his own absolute Will and Pleasure to say, Fiat, be it so; and to put into Execution, and into being, all this which he had in his Understanding: and in so doing, he Predestinated all Men either to Life or Death Eternal.¹⁸

Plaufere referred to both Molina and Arminius and argued that predestination takes place on the basis of middle knowledge. God considered all things that were possible. From the realm of the possible God knew that if grace were offered to certain individuals they would reject it, while others would accept it. In explaining middle knowledge, or *scientia media*, what is significant is that Plaufere quoted both Arminius and Molina as proponents of middle knowledge.

1. Thomas Goad

This brings us to Thomas Goad, once provost at King's College, Cambridge. He was sent as a delegate to the Synod of Dort by King James as a substitute for the ailing Joseph Hall. It has been popularly assumed that Goad went there a Calvinist and returned an Arminian.

Tyacke has suggested that this is not “borne out by the original records.”¹⁹ In the 1620’s Goad wrote and licensed books against the Arminian point of view. The only “evidence” that Goad had eventually changed his views is based on the posthumous publication of *Stimulus Onthodoxus* in 1661. It is there that Goad’s doctrinal shift is speculated upon by the editor.²⁰ What is interesting is that Tyacke concluded that this work, “a discussion of the necessity and contingency of events, only indirectly concerns the Arminian controversy and is moreover compatible with a Calvinist stance on the points in question at Dort.”²¹

This hardly seems likely when one realizes that that work utilized a concept employed by the anti-Calvinists in both the Catholic and Arminian positions, namely what Goad called the “middle point” between necessity and contingency.²² Goad had said,

The Sum of the Controversy is this: *Whether all things that ever have or shall come to pass in the World, have been, or shall be effected necessarily, in respect of an irresistible Decree, by which God hath everlastingly determined, that they should inevitably come to pass . . . Whether many things have not been done contingently, or after such a middle Manner between impossibility of being, and necessity of being, that some things which have been, might as well not have been, and many things which have not been, might as well have been, for aught God hath decreed to the contrary.*²³

To Goad things were either done necessarily or contingently. Goad was convinced that God’s omniscience must consist of an infinity of knowledge.²⁴ By limiting God’s knowledge to only things that must necessarily take place, God’s knowledge is limited, hence finite. However, by expanding God’s knowledge to incorporate contingent events it becomes infinite. This

makes his *Prescience* more wonderful. God, say we, *ab aeterno*, hath ordered that such *Agents* as he created *Voluntarily*, should have a double *Liberty* in their Operations, viz., a *Liberty of Contradiction*, to do, or not to do; as a Painter may choose whether he will work or no: and a *Liberty of Contrariety*, to do a thing after this or that manner; as a Painter may use what colors, in what quantity, after what passion he pleaseth.

Now God leaving to his Creatures free Liberty to work or not work after this or that manner, so that for any necessity

imposed upon their Actions by him, whatsoever they omit was possible to be done, as what they did. And yet from all Eternity, *Fore-knowing* whatsoever his Creatures would do, or not do, his *Fore-Knowledge* must needs be *Infinite*, and most admirable. . . . And indeed this *Fore-sight* of future Contingents, is the true Character and Royal *Prerogative* of Divine Knowledge. . . 25

Knowledge of the contingent is created by the distinctions of liberty of contrariety and contradiction, particularly as displayed in the “square of opposition.”²⁶ Knowledge of the contingent was for Goad the middle point between what must necessarily come to be and what is possible. This knowledge is infinite.²⁷ Goad was convinced that without this middle path one must either walk on the path of Stoicism (i.e., determinism) or Epicurianism (i.e., fortuity). What is most important for our purposes is Goad’s reflection of something of an influence from Molina as he tried to solve the paradox of omniscience.

2. John Wesley

There is not enough evidence to suggest Wesley had more than a casual acquaintance with the “free-will” controversy between the Dominicans and the Jesuits precipitated by Molina’s work in the sixteenth century. For example, there is no reference to Molina in Wesley’s *Ecclesiastical History*, a four volume history of the church published in 1781.

There is still a great deal of debate as to whether Wesley ever actually read Arminius. There is only one piece of evidence that seems to suggest a very limited reading. In 1732 Wesley read Thomas Bennet’s *Directions for Studying* . . . (1714). As Bennet comments on the seventeenth Article of Religion, which relates to predestination, he refers to Plaifere’s work. At the bottom of pages 95-99 Bennet quoted Arminius.

There is, however, enough evidence to establish stronger links between Plaifere and Goad with Wesley. In the first volume of the *Arminian Magazine* — a periodical established by Wesley and circulated among early Methodists to propagate the cause of free-will — Wesley extracted Plaifere’s, *An Appeal to the Gospel* (1719), and published Plaifere’s opinions on predestination. By extracting Plaifere, Wesley exhibited a knowledge of the connection between Molina and Arminius on the issue of middle knowledge.

When it came to expounding the doctrine of middle knowledge Wesley did not use Plaifere, but Thomas Goad’s *The Disputation Concerning*

the Necessity and Contingency of Events in Respect of God's Eternal Decrees (1661). Admittedly, the material is used in a polemical setting, and there are no indications that Wesley ever sought to work out the implications of middle knowledge in any systematic way. Still, the material indicates that Wesley did see the immediate value of the concept of middle knowledge to his Arminian position.

What this evidence suggests is that the influence of Molinism among English Protestantism was perhaps more widespread than what many have perhaps assumed. There is certainly evidence to suggest that Molina influenced Arminius, both of whom influenced Plaifere, and even Goad. Goad and Plaifere in turn influenced Wesley. It has always been acknowledged that Wesley did much to propagate the Arminian cause in eighteenth-century England. In light of the evidence which suggests a link between Arminius and Molina it must now be asked, did Wesley implicitly propagate Molinism as well? Furthermore, what are the implications of *scientia media* for a Wesleyan-Arminian systematic theology?

NOTES

1 Luis de Molina, *On Divine Foreknowledge (Part IV of the Concordia)*, tr. Alfred J. Freddoso (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988). Hereinafter, this work will be cited as Molina, *Concordia* IV. etc. (I.e., Part IV. Disputation n. Paragraph n.)

2 William of Ockham, 'Modal Consequences,' in Norman Kretzman and Eleanore Stump trs. and eds., *The Cambridge Translations of Medieval Philosophical Texts. Volume 1: Logic and the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp.312-336.

3 Molina, *Concordia* IV.52.9.

4 Molina, *Concordia* IV.49. 11.

5 Molina, *Concordia* IV.52.9.

6 William Craig. *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents from Aristotle to Suarez* (Leiden: F. J. Brill, 1988), p.174.

7 Molina, *Concordia* IV.52.9.

8 Craig, *op. cit.*, p.177.

9 Molina, *Concordia* IV.50.15.

10 [Pseudo-] Justin Martyr, “Expositiones Quaestionum a Gentibus Christianis Propositarum” Q. 58 (MPG VI.1300C); Molina, *Concordia* 10.52.21; also cf. Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* (8:30) (MPG XIV.1126C-D).

11 “James Arminius, “Disputations on Some of the Principal Subjects of the Christian Religion. Disputation IV: On the Nature of God,” 1 .XXX-XXXI, in *The Writings of James Arminius, Translated from the Latin in Three Volumes, the First and Second by James Nichols, the Third by W R. Bagnall, with a Sketch of the Life of the Author* (Reprint of 1853 ed. [Auburn and Buffalo: Derby, Miller and Orton], itself a slightly revised edition of that printed in London [vols. 1 and 2; Longman, *et al.*, 1825 and 1828; vol.3; Thomas Baker, 1875]; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1956), I.444.

12 *Op. cit.* I.XXXIII-XXXIV (ed. cit., 1.445-446; 1825 ed., 11.121-122).

13 *Op. cit.* I.XXXVI (ed. cit., 1.447; 1825 ed., 11.122).

14 *Op. cit.* I.XXXVIII (ed. cit., 1.447; 1825 ed., 11.123).

15 *Op. cit.* I.XL (ed. cit., 1.448; 1825 ed., 11.123)

16 *Op. cit.* I.XLI-XLIII (ed. cit., 1.448; 1825 ed., 11.123-124).

17 Cf. John Plaifere, B. D., *An Appeal to the Gospel for the true Doctrine of Divine Predestination, concorded with the Orthodox Doctrine of God’s Free-Grace, and Man’s Free Will. . . (Wrote about the Year 1630)* in *The Arminian Magazine* 1(1778): 302ff., 337ff., 385ff., 433ff., 489ff., 545ff; 2(1779), 1ff., 49ff. *The Arminian Magazine* is hereinafter cited as *AM*.

18 Anon., *A Collection of Tracts Concerning Predestination and Providence, and other Points Depending on Them* (London: n.p., 1719), pp.1-42; also cf. Plaifere, *op. cit.*, in *AM* I(1778), 307-308; and Arminius, *op. cit.* “Preface” (1825 ed.), I:lvi-lvii.

19 Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c.1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), p.99.

20 *Ibid.*, pp.99-100.

21 *Ibid.*, p.100.

22 This concern with future contingents was also raised in “A Treatise concerning Election and Reprobation,” in *AM* 2(1779), 161ff., 217ff., 273ff., 329ff., 385ff., 441ff. Unfortunately, space for extended evaluation is lacking here.

23 Thomas Goad, *A Discourse Concerning the Necessity and Contingency of Events in the World, in Respect of God's Eternal Decrees. By Thomas Goad, D.D. [Wrote about the Year 1620]*, in *AM* 1(1778), 250-264; 289-302.

24 Cf. a similar view, more fully developed, in Anon., "On the Eternity of God," in *AM* 3 (1780), 33-41. I have been unable to identify this author.

25 *AM* 1(1778), 262.

26 Norman Kretzmann, *et al.*, eds.. *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 343ff. For Wesley's use of the square of opposition, see his "Compendium of Logic" II (*The Works of John Wesley* [Jackson ed.J, XIV.165-167).

27 Goad's argument introduces a philosophical dilemma: the notion that God may have an infinite knowledge of something finite. Lamentably, we lack space here to investigate this problem.

**SAMUEL BRENGLE
AND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE PNEUMATOLOGY OF
THE SALVATION ARMY**

by, R. David Rightmire

It is a curious fact that while most knowledgeable Wesleyan/Holiness adherents affirm the importance of Samuel Logan Brengle (1860-1936) to the American Holiness Movement, especially through his writings, little has been done in the way of either definitive biography or serious study of his theological thought.¹ In fact, Brengle dramatically influenced the early development of the theology of the Salvation Army.

A convert of the late nineteenth-century American holiness revival, Brengle became the major exponent of holiness theology in the Army, and was especially significant as a bearer of the established pneumatological emphases of the British holiness revival into the Army's American ranks.

Brengle's theology, a product of the context in which he was converted, moderated the earlier expressions of American perfectionism which had been mediated to William and Catherine Booth in the late 1850s and the 1860s by American evangelists laboring in Britain. A major aspect of this mediation was the increasing importance of pneumatological categories and language in the theology of the Holiness Movement in general and in that of the Salvation Army in particular. Here was a theological development which involved the interpretation of transatlantic holiness theologies. From the standpoint of the Army, a wonderful irony would arise as the legacy bequeathed to the British holiness revival

by the American perfectionist evangelists, through their itinerating and their writings, would eventually feed back into their home movement when the Army came to stay in the United States in 1880.²

The purpose of this study is to present Brengle's moderating of that development and the influence of his moderating. In order to make this presentation, it will be necessary to give some attention to the earlier period.

Transatlantic Theological Links with the Early Salvation Army

Proper assessment of Brengle's role in shaping holiness doctrine in the Salvation Army requires an understanding of his religious milieu.

The Army is a child of the mid-nineteenth-century holiness revival in Britain. That revival had its roots in John Wesley and early British Methodism, but, in fact, American evangelists from two perfectionist phalanxes — Wesleyanism and the modified Reformed understanding of it being propagated from Oberlin College — mediated it.

Among the American evangelists most important to the development of the Army in Britain were James Caughey and Walter and Phoebe Palmer. All were Methodists. Caughey traveled about Britain preaching with great effect from 1841 to 1847. He returned in 1857, and remained there through much of the American Civil War, but with much less marked success than earlier. Walter and Phoebe Palmer evangelized in Britain, primarily in England, but in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland as well, from mid-1859 until late-1863, when they returned to the United States. The work of Caughey and the Palmers proved helpful in paving the way for the British campaigns, in the 1870's, of the Smiths — Robert Pearsall and his spouse, Hannah Whittall; Asa Mahan; William Boardman; and Dwight L. Moody and Ira Sankey. Charles Finney had briefly taken part in the earlier British holiness revival, but his writings were to have a more lasting and wider effect than his presence on the propagation of perfectionist revivalism in Britain.

The Booths themselves would be most influenced by the Wesleyans, especially James Caughey³ and Phoebe Palmer⁴, but they laid the theological foundations of the Army with materials from both Oberlin and the Wesleyans.

Pneumatological interests and emphases especially marked the American contribution to the Army's theological formation, though those interests and emphases were not uniquely American in origin.⁵ They had roots deep in eighteenth-century British Methodism. But those roots had

shriveled in the moral pessimism and loss of faith in traditional religious institutions which was widespread in early nineteenth-century England. They revived in Victorian England in their American form by communicating a spiritual, moral optimism to a society caught up in an attitude of “transition” and “doubt,” a society deeply sensing a need for “practical” Christianity.

The renewed proclamation of holiness offered a “revival of hope.”⁶ The American perfectionists transplanted in England the “new era of American pietism”⁷ which, according to Perry Miller, characterized Antebellum religion in their own land. In pietist fashion, in England as well as in the United States, they emphasized experience rather than doctrine. Here was “practical Christianity,” grounded in a message concerning personal and social holiness which declared both experiential “certainty” and “immediateness” — a faith very attractive to a troubled and burdened people.⁸

William and Catherine Booth had found themselves so attracted. James Caughey played a principal part in William Booth’s conversion and decision to enter the ministry.⁹ Later, Phoebe Palmer’s revival “talks” (she never called her addresses sermons) provided the impetus for a then shy and reserved Catherine Booth to enter upon public ministry. Palmer’s teaching on entire sanctification influenced the holiness theology of both William and Catherine.¹⁰

Especially important in discussing the relationship of early Salvation Army perfectionist doctrine to the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement is the question of the nature of sanctifying faith.¹¹

In contrast to Wesley’s emphasis on the witness of the Spirit with our spirit as the assurance of the attainment of entire sanctification, early Salvation Army holiness theology (as mediated to the Booths by American evangelists) spoke of “naked faith.”¹² Once one has fulfilled the conditions for entire sanctification (consecration and faith), holiness can be claimed as complete.

In the Army’s early years, people were encouraged to ask for the assurance, but they were given to understand that the blessing was accepted by naked faith prior to any assurance.¹³ One American especially influential amongst the Army in propagating this point of view, with its attendant pneumatology, was the Methodist pastor and evangelist, J. A. Wood. His principal work, entitled *Perfect Love; Or, Plain Things for Those Who Need Them Concerning the Doctrine, Experience, Profession, and Practice of Christian Holiness*, captured and held the attention

of the Army for many years. Wood taught that faith must be “naked” to be “pure”; i.e., faith must precede the witness of the Spirit.¹⁴ William Booth concurred: “Remember, the most naked faith is the most efficacious.”¹⁵ But the Booths, and other writers in the early Army, were even more indebted to Phoebe Palmer. In fact, her book, *A Present to My Christian Friend on Entire Devotion to God* was printed by the Army and used as a primer for the teaching of entire sanctification within the movement.¹⁶

Because the mid-nineteenth-century American Holiness Movement influenced the holiness theology of the early Salvation Army so strongly, we must look briefly at its major components.

The Proclamation of Holiness in Mid-Nineteenth-Century North America

The pivotal point in the preaching of holiness in mid-nineteenth-century North America was the experience of entire sanctification as a second definite work of grace, a point rooted in John Wesley’s teaching. In the nineteenth-century holiness revival, the crisis experience which Wesleyans understood to be the point of initiation into the life of holiness or perfect love gained an importance which overshadowed its earlier, more strictly Wesleyan role as a critical moment in a growth-process.¹⁷ Moreover, the compounding of this perfectionism with American revivalism created an emphasis on the immediacy and completeness of the reception of the “second blessing,” as the experience was often called — the immediacy and the completeness of the critical or crisis moment. Holiness preachers urged believers to exercise faith and to consecrate themselves in order to receive it now, instantaneously. A principal architect and advocate of this recasting of Wesleyan understanding was Phoebe Palmer.

Phoebe Palmer came to her position by way of a concern for urgency in claiming the Biblical promise of the fullness of the Spirit. In what has been called her “altar phraseology,” Palmer insisted that Christ, as the altar, sanctifies the gift, the life of the already justified believer, when it is placed on that altar as an act of consecration.¹⁸ Thus, faith in God’s promise to “sanctify the gift” (cf. Rom. 12:1-2; Exod. 29:37; Matt. 23:19; Heb.13:10 for the Biblical passages critical to this position) and active and full consecration yield instantaneous sanctification. Palmer emphasized the witness of the Spirit and of the believer to the accomplished work. The former does not always immediately accompany the work of entire sanctification, but, said Palmer, it would eventually come to those believers who give regular public testimony to what God has done.

Nathan Bangs, an important Methodist author, editor and educator, a regular participant in Mrs. Palmer's Tuesday Meeting (once it became the custom to admit men as well as women into the gathering) and a holiness advocate, warned of the dangers involved in claiming a work of the Spirit without the accompanying witness of the Spirit to the completion of the work. The ensuing "witness controversy" led others to redefine the nature of the witness of the Spirit. In time, this process led some to emphasize emotional and physical evidences of the Spirit's presence.¹⁹

Mrs. Palmer taught that this "shorter way" to holiness is required of all. God requires "present holiness" and has made this "duty" plain. Moreover, it is available to all, by faith. Faith receives the promises of God now. Faith must precede feeling and must never be held back by lack of emotion. It believes that God is faithful and that His promises are for subjective appropriation.²⁰ Faith enables the sacrifice of entire consecration which is preliminary to the necessary and attainable state of "purity of intention." Such a sacrifice is acceptable to God only through faith in Christ, the Agent of sanctification. Faith in God's unchanging nature, which includes His fidelity to His promises, is the guarantee of receiving the "second blessing." So, Palmer says, "The act, on your part, must necessarily induce the promised result on the part of God."²¹

Writing about the unchangeable government of the "kingdom of grace," Palmer drew out the implications of our part in exercising faith:

The reason why you were not before blessed . . . was not because God was unwilling to meet you, but wholly from delay on your part in complying with the conditions upon which you were to be received. The moment you complied with these, you found the Lord.²²

Palmer applied the principle of appropriating faith to both justification and sanctification. The blood of Christ is efficacious in cleansing from all sin, sanctifying those who "make the required sacrifice" (i.e., consecration) by faith. This efficacy and the requirement of sacrifice make Christian perfection not only possible in this life, but obligatory — it is both privilege and duty. To doubt the attainability and reality of Christian perfection in this life is to devalue the atonement and its effects. Full salvation has already been purchased and is "already yours" if compliance with the conditions is accompanied by appropriating faith. "Simple faith," when exercised, appropriates the merits of Christ and makes possible entire sanctification. "You may have this full salvation now — just now." God commands us to believe and to receive, and He would prove unreasonable if the power to be obedient did not accompany the command.²³

Palmer carefully distinguishes seeking entire sanctification by faith from seeking it by works. Only the former is appropriate. So it is that she admonishes seekers after the experience, “Expect it *by faith*. Expect it *as you are*. Expect it *now*.” These three emphases are interconnected — “If you seek it by faith, you must expect it as you are; and if as you are, then expect it now” — and are based on the priority of grace and the faithfulness of God.²⁴

In her eagerness to advance what she believed to be a thoroughly Wesleyan doctrine and experience of holiness, Mrs. Palmer overstepped some of the dimensions which John Wesley had established. Wesley’s doctrine of perfect love emphasized process — the development of pure, godly intention through the purgation of internal impurities. Phoebe Palmer, on the other hand, emphasized intentional (and therefore undelayed and unconditional) consecration and sudden crisis. She likened entire sanctification to baptism, as external evidence of an internal experience. Her “altar theology” emphasized the importance of consecration or self-sacrifice upon the “altar”; that is, consecration or self-sacrifice to God through Christ, who is both altar and perfect sacrifice. The grace of God sanctifies every self-sacrifice of this sort. Whereas Wesley spoke of the attainment of perfect love in terms of a divine gift of the witness of the Spirit, Palmer spoke of attaining perfect love in terms of the believer’s faith in the promises of God found in the Bible. Once the believer met the scriptural conditions, he or she could claim the attainment of the experience of perfect love by faith. All that one needed in order to receive the experience was to believe, to appropriate God’s promises personally. Wesley emphasized the processive appropriation of grace (including sanctifying grace) by faith; Palmer emphasized the *state* of grace which is appropriated and guaranteed by faith in God’s promises.²⁵

As Wesleyan perfectionism developed within the nineteenth-century holiness movement, Wesley’s balanced view of perfect love as involving a crisis within a process of growth in grace faded into the background and an emphasis on the crisis character of entire sanctification came to the fore. One of the most important active ingredients in this development was the utilitarian and pragmatic spirit of the age.

Perfectionist revivalists sought to make Christianity practical.²⁶ Entire sanctification, as they saw it, was not a mystical quest; rather, it was the instantaneous perfecting in love of the believer, fitting that believer for service. So, following in the tradition of Wesley’s dictum, “There is no holiness but social holiness,” the Holiness Movement

emphasized the transforming power of God's Spirit as the basis for social reform. The perfectionist awakening in mid-nineteenth-century America, with its roots in the British Wesleyan revival of the previous century, answered the moral strivings of the age.²⁷

In particular, for the purposes of this paper, we note that it appeared to answer the spiritual concerns of a young man growing up in Fredricksburg, Indiana — Samuel Logan Brengle — who would both accept it and modify it.

Samuel Logan Brengle's Experience of Holiness

Samuel Brengle grew to manhood on the "edge of the wilderness." Having been brought up in the Methodist Episcopal Church, he turned to Indiana Asbury University (which changed its name to DePauw University in 1882) for his undergraduate education. Gifted in persuasive public speaking, Brengle, as a student, considered a future as a lawyer. But in 1882, he responded positively to a "call" to the ministry, and upon earning his A.B. degree in 1883, he accepted appointment as a circuit preacher in the Northwest Indiana Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. After a year on the circuit, he decided to expand his clerical qualifications and enrolled at Boston Theological Seminary, Boston University. There, he came to an awareness of the possibility of entire sanctification in this life through his involvement with the Octagon Club and his association with Daniel Steele. The Octagon Club was a student prayer group, not unlike Wesley's Holy Club at Oxford; and Daniel Steele, Professor of Didactic Theology in the University, was a very prominent figure in the Holiness Movement (*his Milestone Papers* had been published in 1876, and earlier he had been the founding president of Syracuse University).²⁸ The Octagon Club and Steele both encouraged Brengle to read as a means of spiritual growth, so he had pored over Wesley, Fletcher, Moody, Hannah Whitall Smith's *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*²⁹; and Catherine Booth's *Popular Christianity and Godliness*, two collections of Booth's addresses. These convicted him of his need for holiness and he came into the experience of entire sanctification, guided by Daniel Steele, on 9 January, 1885.³⁰

Brengle's sanctification experience did not immediately move to an emotional climax. Rather, he came to understand that the "second blessing" came as a result of simple faith in the promises of God. The assurance that God had imparted grace and the experiencing of heart-cleansing followed by two days Brengle's act of surrender and simple faith.³¹ In

that later “hour,” he became aware of a new dimension of the work of the Holy Spirit in his life.

I awoke that morning hungering and thirsting just to live this life of fellowship with God, never again to sin in thought or word or deed against Him, with an unmeasureable desire to be a holy man, acceptable unto God. . . . In that hour I knew Jesus, and I loved Him till it seemed my heart would break with love. I was filled with love for all His creatures . . . 32

This critical “glory experience” was just the beginning of a life-long process of sanctification. “It is a living experience. In time, God withdrew something of the tremendous emotional feelings. He taught me I had to live by faith and not by my emotions.”³³ Later, Brengle equated his holiness experience with purity of affection, heart cleansing, and the bending of the will into harmony with God’s will.³⁴

Acquaintance with the Salvation Army in Boston came gradually, each contact bringing Brengle closer to joining the Army’s ranks. His growing affinity with the Army arose from his perception that he and they held similar understandings of sanctification — a perception helped along by the testimony of Salvationist Elizabeth Swift to an experience and comprehension very like his own. In fact, the two fell in love with each other and married in 1887. And Brengle was to write, reflecting on the death of his wife almost 30 years later, that “holiness unto the Lord” had been the foundation and sustaining power in their marriage.³⁵

In the fall of 1885, in Boston, Brengle had heard William Booth speak, and the message and ministry of the Army’s founder so deeply moved him and the Salvation Army’s doctrine of social holiness so attracted him that, in 1887, Brengle traveled to London to meet with Booth. There, he became a cadet and did not return to the United States until he had completed his training.

Brengle came back to the States as a Salvation Army officer and held various corps commands, but from the earliest stages of his association with the Army he wanted to be a holiness evangelist within its ranks. In June, 1887, he had written to his wife from London:

I feel that my work will be particularly to promote holiness. I should like to be a Special to go about and hold half-nights of prayer just to lead people into the experience of holiness.³⁶

In November, 1888, not long after his return to Boston, Brengle suffered a near fatal encounter with a brick deliberately thrown at him by a

tough. But he used his long recuperation to move his desire toward fulfillment by writing “Helps to Holiness,” a series of articles for the *War Cry*, the Army’s paper. The demand for these articles led the Salvation Army to publish them under a single cover and the original title in 1895.³⁷ In 1896, Brengle published another popular series in the *War Cry* which the Army published in 1897 under the title, *The Soul-Winner’s Secret*.³⁸ And in that same year, 1897, Brengle received the Army commission for which he had hoped. He was named National Spiritual Special.

Brengle continued to write until the end of his life. Among his earlier works, *Heart Talks on Holiness* appeared in 1897; *The Way of Holiness* in 1902; and *When the Holy Ghost Is Come* in 1906. Among his later works were *Love Slaves*, 1923; *Resurrection Life and Power*, 1925; *Guest of the Soul*, 1934; and *Fifty Years Before and After*, 1935.³⁹ These works evidence Brengle’s practical and straightforward approach to spiritual issues. None of them attempts to present a holiness theology in systematic form. Rather, each presents “helps” and “heart talks” on experiential religion.

Brengle’s works were to prove very influential both in propagating holiness doctrine and practice throughout the Salvation Army world and beyond, and in the further institutionalizing of holiness doctrine within the Army.⁴⁰ In fact, Brengle’s holiness teaching has served as the basis for the Salvation Army’s pneumatological understanding throughout most of the twentieth century. So we turn now to explicate its fundamentals and will then go on to analyze some of its interactions and effects.

Brengle’s Concept of Holiness⁴¹

Brengle anchors his understanding of entire sanctification in the work of Christ. He interprets I John 3:5 and 3:8 as presenting a twofold purpose for Christ’s manifestation to the world: namely, He came to take away sin (3:5) and He came to destroy the works of Satan (3:8). The former results in the justification and regeneration of the believer; the latter in the believer’s entire sanctification. For Brengle, holiness is an essential part of Christ’s soteriological work.

One of the Army’s central doctrines and most valued and precious experiences is that of heart holiness. The bridge which the Army throws across the impassable gulf that separates the sinner from the Savior — who pardons that He may purify, who saves that He may sanctify — rests on these two abutments — the forgiveness of sins through simple, penitent, obe-

dient faith in a crucified Redeemer, and the purifying of the heart and empowering of the soul through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, given by its risen and ascended Lord, and received not by works, but by faith. Remove either of these abutments and the bridge falls . . .
42

Thus, the critical experience of holiness, involving the death of the “old man” and the impartation of the fullness of the Holy Spirit, is made possible solely through the work of Jesus Christ in his life, death, and resurrection.⁴³

Union with Christ is made possible by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, equipping the believer for effective service. In fact, mission requires this experience for power and purity. Christ, as Savior and Sanctifier, pardons that He might purify and empower for service.⁴⁴ The Army’s motto — Saved to Serve — finds expression in Brengle’s doctrine of holiness. A clean heart is prerequisite not only for personal growth, but also for a zeal for souls and perfected love for others.⁴⁵

Holiness, for you and for me, is not maturity, but purity: a clean heart in which the Holy Spirit dwells, filling it with pure, tender and constant love to God and man.⁴⁶

This emphasis on purity is evident in Brengle’s definition of holiness as “nothing more nor less than perfect love, for God and man, in a clean heart.”⁴⁷

Brengle’s treatment of Acts 15:9 and Isaiah 1:1-20 illustrates the priority of purity in his understanding of the experience of entire sanctification.⁴⁸ He treats the question, “From what is the heart cleansed?” and, with an eye on the practical dimensions of holiness doctrine, he delineates the nature of the “sinful tempers” which pollute it.

Holiness is a state in which there is no anger, malice, blasphemy, hypocrisy, envy, love of ease, selfish desires for good opinion of men, shame of Cross, worldliness, deceit, debate, contention, covetousness, nor any evil desire or tendency of the heart.⁴⁹

No sexual impurity is to be allowed, no unclean habit is to be indulged, no appetite is to be permitted to gain the mastery; but the whole body is to be kept under and made the servant of the soul.⁵⁰

Heart purity is a result of the impartation to human beings of Christ’s divine nature.⁵¹ “Holiness is that state of our moral and spiritual nature which makes us like Jesus in His moral and spiritual nature.”⁵²

Brengle uses pneumatological language as he insists on the necessity of intimate knowledge of and union with the person of Jesus Christ in sanctification: “The baptism of the Holy Ghost is to bring us into union with Christ . . .” In fact, “the baptism of the Holy Ghost” is “personal and living” evidence of the resurrection.⁵³ It makes true knowledge of Jesus experiential, for that knowledge comes “by joyful union with the risen Christ,” and it is precisely the “baptism of the Holy Spirit” which brings about and sustains this communion with the risen Christ.⁵⁴ This “spiritual union” involves unity of “will, faith, suffering, and purpose,” and the secret of true knowledge and union is found in the daily communion with Christ, a communion sustained by the Holy Spirit.⁵⁵

This intimate union with Christ, sustained by the work of the Holy Spirit, is the basis of Brengle’s understanding of holiness. Obviously, it is a relational perspective, and, as such, it must take into account both our relationship to God and our relationships with others. This should characterize life within the Body of Christ. “The religion of Jesus is social. It is inclusive, not exclusive. We can have the glory only as we are united.”⁵⁶

Brengle turns to John 17 to elaborate on sanctified unity. Later Christians, like the original disciples, must be united — “one, as He and the Father are one, that they might be the habitation of God upon Earth, and that the world, seeing this, might believe on Him.” The basis for this unity is the indwelling presence of the Spirit of Christ: “The spirit of Jesus in the heart, which is the spirit of holiness, makes all men brothers and brotherly.”⁵⁸

In *Helps to Holiness*, Brengle defines holiness as “pure love.”⁵⁹ The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a “baptism of love.”⁶⁰ Holiness is also a “perfect deliverance from sin”; a relationship free from intentional sin, doubt, or fear; a relationship “in which God is loved and trusted with a perfect heart.”⁶¹ Defined as Christian perfection, holiness is not absolute, angelic, or Adamic perfection; rather, it is a perfection relative to our natural limitations as fallen creatures.⁶² Defined as the “second work of grace, holiness is for all who are already believers, and it is not to be equated with growth in grace. Brengle readily recognizes that growth in grace is essential to maintaining the “blessing,” but his emphasis is upon its critical nature, the fact that, defined as “entire sanctification,” holiness begins with an uprooting of the sin nature and an implanting of the divine nature.⁶³

Brengle insists that holiness frees the individual from bondage to sin, but this liberty can be maintained only by “continual warfare with Satan.”

So it is that he applies the Pauline phrase “good fight of faith” (I Tim. 6:12) to the experience of entire sanctification. This “fight” is necessary to “hold[ing] fast [to] faith in . . . the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying and keeping power.”⁶⁴ Having claimed by faith God’s sanctifying presence, one must not doubt the reality of that presence, for to doubt in this way is to grieve the Holy Spirit.⁶⁵ The struggle against doubt is an aspect of spiritual warfare against Satan. Brengle characterizes an “evil heart of unbelief” as “Satan’s stronghold” against salvation or sanctification.⁶⁶

It is a fight of faith, in which the soul takes hold of the promise of God, and holds on to it, and declares it to be true in spite of all the devil’s lies, in spite of all circumstances and feelings to the contrary, and in which it obeys God whether God seems to be fulfilling the promise or not.⁶⁷

Though much of Brengle’s descriptive language is pneumatological, he insists that the work of the Holy Spirit in entire sanctification points the believer to Christ: “The great work of this Holy Guest is to exalt Jesus.”⁶⁸ The coming of the Holy Spirit in fullness is a provision of Christ’s atoning work: “[It is only] through His precious blood [that] we are saved and sanctified.”⁶⁹ Brengle emphasizes the mediatorial role of the Holy Spirit in revealing Christ.⁷⁰

He [Christ] had been revealed to them in flesh and blood, but now He was to be revealed in them by the Spirit; and in that hour [Pentecost] they knew His divinity, and understood His character, His mission, His holiness, His everlasting love and His saving power as they otherwise could not, had He lived with them in the flesh to all eternity.⁷¹

The flesh-and-blood Christ was revealed only locally; the resurrected and glorified Christ is revealed universally by the Holy Spirit in prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace. “This Advocate is the other self of Jesus; in Him we have Jesus evermore with us in the Spirit, and without Him we lose Jesus as Savior and Lord . . .”⁷² The Holy Spirit not only reveals the living Word; the Spirit also inspires the written Word. And the Holy Spirit interprets both to the believer. Brengle tells his readers that they should understand inspiration not only in terms of the original production of Scripture, but also in terms of its interpretation by a given reader. ⁷³

Reflecting on the first work of grace, Brengle, like Booth, understood regeneration as partial sanctification. Thus, he saw it as implicitly

defective in scope. Although Brengle believed that the Holy Spirit is active in conviction of sin, and then in repentance, in faith, in forgiveness of sins, in assurance of salvation, and in empowering the justified believer for spiritual welfare, he viewed such activity as preparatory.⁷⁴

The concept of a new nature's being wrought in the believing heart by regeneration is curiously absent from Brengle's theology. He does say that "in some measure" the indwelling of the Holy Spirit begins at conversion. But he insists strongly that a second work of grace is needed to pluck out the remaining "roots of bitterness." The indwelling fullness and purity of God cannot be experienced until the individual is thus "sanctified wholly." And so it is that Brengle interprets holiness in terms of purity, not in terms of maturity.⁷⁵

In regeneration there is salvation from the voluntary commission of sin and the binding of the "old man." But this work only comes to completion in entire sanctification. Thus, justification, with its corollary, regeneration, is viewed as an intermediate state in the work of salvation. Nonetheless, the believer need not await glorification for full salvation. Full salvation is a present "privilege of all believers."⁷⁶

Perseverance in holiness is certainly possible, but it is conditional, requiring "continual joyful and perfect consecration"; "steadfast, childlike faith"; prayer and communion with the Lord; "diligent attention to the Bible"; confession of the experience, and "aggressive" efforts to bring others to the experience; "self-denial"; and refusal to "[rest] in present attainments."⁷⁷ Assurance comes through the agency of the Holy Spirit, who provides knowledge of acceptance with God, salvation, and sanctification. This "witness of the Spirit" is aimed at the "consciousness," which responds in kind: "My own spirit witnesses that I am a new creature."⁷⁸

While Brengle does have much to say of the believer's experience of holiness as the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, his underlying emphasis is on the agent of sanctification, the Person of the Holy Spirit, whom he often calls the "Holy Guest."

He is not a mere influence, passing over us like a wind or warming us like a fire. He is a Person, seeking entrance into our hearts that he may comfort us, instruct us, empower us, guide us, give us heavenly wisdom, and fit us for holy and triumphant service.⁷⁹

Like William Booth, Brengle emphasized union with the person of Christ in entire sanctification. To receive the Holy Spirit into the mind, will, and affections means to receive the indwelling of Christ.⁸⁰ Thus, the "blessing" is not to be sought in and of itself, but is important only in relation to the "keeping" of Christ — it is the "result of His indwelling" in the heart.⁸¹

This “spiritual union” is maintained by daily communion with Christ through the Holy Spirit.⁸²

Holiness, says Brengle, has to do with both body and soul (I Thess. 5:23). The *imparted* (in contrast to the *imputed*) righteousness of Christ is active in the sanctified believer, synergistically interacting with that believer.⁸³

Brengle draws an analogy between the Holy Spirit’s taking possession of the believer in entire sanctification — the Spirit’s indwelling — and the incarnation of Jesus.

When Jesus came, a body was prepared for Him (Hebrews 10:5), and through that body He wrought His wondrous works; but when the other Comforter comes, He takes possession of those bodies that are freely and fully presented to Him, and He touches their lips with grace; He shines peacefully and gloriously on their faces; He flashes beams of pity and compassion and heavenly affection from their eyes; He kindles a fire of love in their hearts, and lights the fire of truth in their minds. They become His temple, and their hearts are a holy of holies in which His blessed presence ever abides, and from that citadel He works, enduing the man who has received Him with power.⁸⁴

So it is, according to Brengle, that the Holy Spirit indwells and empowers “bodies,” as distinct from the Spirit’s indwelling and empowering the Body of Christ. Brengle is silent at this point on the corporate nature of holiness, except as it is impinged upon by the holiness of its members. In this he is unlike John Wesley, who emphasized the social ramifications of the individual’s experience, and he is unlike Booth, who emphasized that corporate character of the experience (i.e., that it properly fits the sanctified for service, which is an essential reason for their being saved at all). Brengle here reflects the Holiness Movement’s characteristically individualistic understanding of the experience of entire sanctification.

In another christological “move,” Brengle equates the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the revelation of the resurrected Christ in the heart. The power of the Holy Spirit is the power of Christ’s resurrection. In the experience of Spirit-baptism, therefore, the power and presence of the resurrected Christ are mediated to the believing heart, resulting in spiritual

communion and fellowship with Christ. Thus, true knowledge of Christ is experientially realized in union with Him.⁸⁵ And since the Spirit mediates Christ directly to the heart, all other mediators are unnecessary.

Those who have not the Holy Spirit, or who do not heed Him, fall easily and naturally into formalism, substituting lifeless ceremonies, sacraments, genuflections, and ritualistic performances for the free, glad, living worship inspired by the indwelling Spirit.⁸⁶

Brengle and the Appropriation of Holiness

Brengle held that both the experience of conversion and the experience of entire sanctification involved a synergism.

God and man must work together, both to save and to sanctify . . . To get the priceless gift of the Holy Spirit — a clean heart, we must work together with God. On God's side, all things are ready, and so He waits and longs to give the blessing; but before He can do so, we must do our part, which is very simple, and easily within our power to do.⁸⁷

The first step in man's work is recognizing and confessing the need for holiness. This is possible only for those who have experienced justification and have received "spiritual eyes." The next step is believing that the blessing is personally as well as presently available: "You must believe that it is for you *now*." The final step is one of consecrating all to God, otherwise described as "coming to Jesus for the blessing with a true heart." This blessing results in "perfect cleansing from sin, perfect victory over the Devil, and the Holy Spirit to dwell in our clean hearts to teach and guide and comfort us...."⁸⁸

Brengle emphasized three essential truths concerning the appropriation of the experience of holiness:

First, that men cannot make themselves holy . . . Second, . . . that the blessing is received by faith . . . Third, . . . that the blessing is to be received by faith now.⁸⁹

Brengle believed that the distinction between sanctification and consecration lies in the fact that the former involves more than giving and also entails receiving. God sanctifies those who both consecrate their lives to Him and also seek the blessing of holiness. Although entire sanctification requires seeking, it is still God's work, to be waited on patiently and by faith.⁹⁰

Entire sanctification is the gift of God in response to “full consecration and childlike faith in Him.” If the conditions are met, one must exercise sanctifying faith until God confirms the experience by the “mighty workings of the Spirit.”⁹¹

Hindrances to receiving the experience of entire sanctification and to living the life of holiness are “imperfect consecration” and “imperfect faith.” These indicate impurity of heart. A clean heart is the vessel necessary for perfect love; and a clear conscience toward God and man issues from a “faithful discharge of duty and simple faith without any hypocrisy.”⁹²

Brenge distinguished between the *grace* of faith and the *gift* of faith as aspects of the experience of “the second blessing.” The *grace* of faith is that which enables every person to come to God. With this, Brenge aligned himself with the Wesleyan understanding of prevenient grace. The *gift* of faith, however, is given subsequent to the ability implied in the *grace* of faith. Those who exercise the *grace* of faith (i.e., those who come to God) are given the *gift* of faith by the Holy Spirit. This *gift* gives them the ability to discern spiritual truth. The *grace* of faith brings assurance, which is prerequisite to receiving the *gift* of faith. Brenge viewed as dangerous any claiming of the *gift* before the *grace* of faith has been fully exercised.⁹³

For Brenge, holiness, viewed from the Godward side, is dependent upon God’s sovereign grace. Thus, it is received by faith, not by works. But we remind ourselves that when Brenge viewed the matter from the human side, he spoke the language of synergism. So he says: “He [God] will do it [entirely sanctify] today – now — this moment, if you will but believe.”⁹⁴

Here, Brenge urges his readers to appropriate the second blessing and to do it “now.” That is to say, Brenge emphasized the need for the believer to expect to receive entire sanctification as a gift at a definite point in time; and he emphasized the need to desire it in the present.⁹⁵ Those who trust God “for present cleansing from all sin” must “keep steadily looking to Him for . . . the filling of their hearts with the fire of perfect love.”⁹⁶

Brenge held that, although entire sanctification is itself “an instantaneous act,”⁹⁷ its attainment requires a process of “diligently seeking”⁹⁸ and may require waiting for God.

Beware of urging [believers] to claim a blessing God has not given them. Only the Holy Ghost knows when a man is ready

to receive the gift of God, and He will notify that man when he is to be blessed . . . Let no one suppose that the grace of faith will have to be exercised a long time before God gives assurance.⁹⁹

So, the seeker may have to wait on God in faith for an indeterminate period.
100

What patient, waiting, expectant faith reckons done, the baptism of the Holy Ghost actually accomplishes. Between the act of faith by which a man begins to reckon himself “dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God”. . . and the act of the Holy Spirit, which makes the reckoning good, there may be an interval of time; but the act and state of steadfastly, patiently, joyously, perfectly *believing*, which is man’s part, and the act of baptizing with the Holy Ghost, *cleansing* as by fire, which is God’s part, bring about the one experience of entire sanctification.¹⁰¹

The period of “patient waiting” can be “shortened by mutual consent.”¹⁰² Consecration and faith are the conditions that need to be met and “maintained against all contrary feelings” for God to “suddenly come into His holy temple, filling the soul with His presence and power.”¹⁰³

Brengle encouraged those who sought the blessing of holiness to be patient, trusting, and expectant in waiting for God to witness to their heart cleansing.¹⁰⁴ “Is it right to wait till the assurance comes? Yes, certainly. That is the one thing for you to do . . . quietly, patiently wait on the Lord . . .”¹⁰⁵

The Holy Spirit is the agent of assurance,¹⁰⁶ providing knowledge of acceptance with God, salvation, and sanctification. The “witness of the Spirit” is aimed at the “consciousness,” which responds in kind, as has been noted.¹⁰⁷ “My own spirit witnesses that I am a new creature . . . My conscience bears witness that I am honest and true in all my purposes and intentions.”¹⁰⁸

Active waiting on the work of the Holy Spirit is essential to the holiness theology of Brengle. “There is no substitute for much wide-awake, expectant, set waiting upon God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit . . .”¹⁰⁹ Encouraging constant and expectant waiting, Brengle does not specify the time interval between the “act of faith” and the “act of the Holy Spirit” in the experience of entire sanctification.¹¹⁰ Although God may not bestow the blessing “now,” it is to be expected “now.” There is an obvious tension between the immediacy of the experience itself and the need to wait for it. Active waiting involves the continuing exercise of faith until the witness of the Spirit comes.¹¹¹

They must wait on God and cry to Him with a humble, yet bold, persistent faith till He baptizes them with the Holy Ghost and fire. He promised to do it, and He will do it, but men must expect it, look for it, pray for it, and if it tarry, wait for it.¹¹²

Brengle insists that “there is but one way” to know one has experienced entire sanctification, “and that is by the witness of the Holy Spirit.”¹¹³

Conclusion

The pneumatology of early Salvation Army theology did not work with the tension between calling on believers to expect the experience of entire sanctification “now,” by appropriating it by faith alone, and the experience of many that their assurance that the work was done came after a period of waiting.¹¹⁴ Instead, predominant attention was given to the immediacy of the experience of entire sanctification, with special emphasis on its appropriation by faith.¹¹⁵ Brengle too, emphasized the receiving of the second blessing *sola fide*, concurring thus far with the predominant point of view. But he also insisted that the witness of the Spirit is essential to knowing that the blessing has been given. His writings, especially *Helps to Holiness* and *Heart Talks on Holiness*, both of which were written before the turn of the century, emphasize the need to wait on the Lord for His witness and assurance. In this particular, at least, they are more nearly akin to the nuances of Wesley and such American students of Wesley as Nathan Bangs and Daniel Steele than to the nuances of the revivalist mainstream of the nineteenth-century American Holiness Movement.

It was, in fact, Brengle’s role to direct the Salvation Army away from the “shorter way” emphasis of Phoebe Palmer and her adherents, and from the “only believe” misuse of her altar theology in popular Holiness Movement piety, to a more nearly classical Wesleyan expression of the doctrine and experience of Christian perfection. That this was Brengle’s role may be seen in the almost unrivaled prominence given to his writings from the close of the nineteenth century to the present day. Rather less obvious, but still significant as evidence of the importance of Brengle’s role, are the Army’s reprinting of some of the works of Brengle’s mentor, Daniel Steele, early in the twentieth century, and the effort made to commend them to the rank and file in Army publications.¹¹⁶

The corrective which Brengle’s theology presented both moderated earlier American holiness emphases within the Movement and influenced Salvation Army pneumatological development. The inter-penetration of

transatlantic holiness theologies as mediated through the ministry and message of Samuel Logan Brengle helped center Salvation Army holiness theology in the tradition of Wesley, maintaining a balanced tension between active faith and patient waiting in the experience of entire sanctification.

NOTES

1 See Clarence W. Hall, *Samuel Logan Brengle: Portrait of a Prophet* (New York: The Salvation Army, 1933); Alice R. Stiles, *Samuel Logan Brengle: Teacher of Holiness* (London: The Salvation Army, 1974); William Clark, *Samuel Logan Brengle: Teacher of Holiness* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980); and Sallie Chesham, *Peace Like a River* (Atlanta: The Salvation Army, 1981). These works do contain some valuable primary source material but they lack the necessary bibliographic information for critical analysis of references.

2 Cf. Melvin E. Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980), pp.60-61, 156; John Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism* (London: Epworth Press, 1978), pp. 295ff.

3 The specific influence of Caughey on the holiness theology of William Booth is unclear. Booth's conversion during a Caughey-led holiness revival in Nottingham and Booth's exposure to Caughey's writings on holiness are certain data which imply a significant relationship. From an early date, the Salvation Army included selections from Caughey's works in their publications; e.g., James Caughey, "Holiness: Your Remedy," *War Cry* 11 (March 6, 1880). Cf. Harold Begbie, *The Life of William Booth, the Founder of the Salvation Army* (2 vols.; New York: Macmillan, 1920), 1:9, 61-62; Richard Carwardine, *Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America, 1790-1865* (London: Greenwood Press, 1978), pp. 102ff.

4 Phoebe Palmer's influence on the Booths was most profound. The Booths' sanctification experiences date back to 1861, two years after their first known contact with her. William and Catherine's correspondence with one another from this period reflects a direct dependence upon Mrs. Palmer's holiness thought, especially her "altar theology." See Frederick de Latour Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth* (2 vols.; New York: Fleming Revell, 1892), 1:206, 208-209; Kent, *op. cit.*, 326-327. In addi-

tion, some Salvation Army doctrinal language and hymnody is directly borrowed from Phoebe Palmer. See *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Salvation Army* (London: Salvation Army, 1881), n.p.; *Songs of the Salvation Army* (London: Salvation Army, 1878), "Holiness Section" — nn. 445-484; *Holiness Hymns* (London: Salvation Army, 1880), nn. 4, 32; Kent, *op. cit.*, 336-340.

5 Salvation Army historiography has failed to recognize the obvious dependence of the Booths' holiness theology on the pneumatological emphases of the American Holiness Movement. Early Salvation Army literature often incorporates parts of others' works without citation, thus leaving the impression that there was no explicit ideological connection. E.g., the devotional works of Phoebe Palmer were re-published by the Army press without any mention of her name. This has led most Army historians to miss the vital inter-relationship between the American holiness revivalists and the Booths' fledgling movement. See John Kent, *op. cit.* (London: Epworth Press, 1978), pp.325-328.

6 Cf. Walter E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 63ff.

7 Cf. Perry Miller, *The Life of the Mind in America: From the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965), p. 93.

8 Cf. Dieter, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-205, 211.

9 Cf. *supra*, n.3.

10 Cf. *supra*, n.4.

11 From its beginnings to the present, the Holiness Movement, except for a few of its technical theologians, has used a very flexible vocabulary in referring to the two religious experiences which it preaches and teaches as essential to salvation. Holiness people have referred to the initial experience as salvation ("being saved" or "getting saved"), conversion, new birth, justification, and regeneration. The subsequent experience has been called sanctification, entire sanctification, holiness, the second Messing, the fullness of the Spirit, perfect love, Christian perfection, heart purity, the baptism with (of) the Holy Spirit, and the fullness of the blessing. Much of the terminology is synecdochical. That is to say, a term which technically refers only to an aspect of the given experience is used to denote the experience as a whole or vice versa. So, for instance, holiness people have commonly used the term "second blessing," which techni-

cally refers to the fact that entire sanctification is subsequent to conversion, as an exact synonym for entire sanctification. Brengle, as careful as his thinking was in so many instances, reflects this terminological web. In this paper, we will retain the language and flavor of Brengle, recognizing its problematic aspects.

12 Cf. James Caughey, *Earnest Christianity Illustrated* (Boston: J. P. Magee, 1855), pp.198-199, 202; Kent, *op. cit.*, p.323.

13 See ‘Subject Notes,’ *Officer* 1.3 (March, 1893), 88.

14 New York: Office of the Methodist Home Journal, 1861, pp.64, 75.

15 William Booth, ‘Letter from William Booth to the Brethren and Sisters Laboring for Jesus in Connection with the Dunedin Hall Christian Mission, Edinburgh,’ *The East London Evangelist* I (Ap. 1, 1869), p.105.

16 See ‘Sanctification,’ *The Christian Mission Magazine* 8 (February, 1876), pp.35-36. Cf. Phoebe Palmer, *A Present for My Friend on Entire Devotion to God* (New York: Published for the author, 1847). The Salvation Army printed it under the title *Entire Devotion to God*, in several editions. Cf. the 14th ed., n.d., p.40.

17 Note, by way of contrast, the balanced view of sanctification as a ‘gradual’ and an ‘instantaneous’ work in Daniel Steele, *Love Enthroned: Essays on Evangelical Perfection* (New York: Hunt and Eaton, 1875).

18 In point of fact, Palmer’s ‘altar theology’ is derived directly from the writings of Adam Clarke. Cf. Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible . . . ; with a Commentary and Critical Notes. . . .* (6 vols.; New York: Carlton and Porter, 1837), 6:787. See Phoebe Palmer, *Entire Devotion to God* (London: Salvation Army, n.d.), pp.40-41; Kent, *op. cit.*, pp.321-322.

19 Cf. Dieter, *op. cit.*, pp.33-34; also see Dieter, ‘Wesleyan-Holiness Aspects of Pentecostal Origins,’ in Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), pp.62-63; and John L. Peters, *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p.113.

20 Phoebe Palmer, *The Way of Holiness, With Notes By the Way; Being a Narrative of the Religious Experience Resulting From a Determination To Be a Bible Christian* (New York: Lane and Scott, 1850), pp.19, 22-24, 31, 38, 40-41.

21 Phoebe Palmer, *Faith and its Effects; Fragments From My Portfolio* (New York: W. C. Palmer, 1854), pp. 101-104.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

23 *Ibid.*, pp.34-35, 41, 52-53, 58.

24 *Ibid.*, pp.285-286.

25 Cf. Charles E. Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1974), pp.5-6; Ivan Howard, "Wesley Versus Phoebe Palmer: An Extended Controversy," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 6:1 (Spring 1971), 31-40; and cf. Charles E. White, *The Beauty of Holiness: Phoebe Palmer as Theologian, Revivalist, Feminist, and Humanitarian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), pp.125-144.

26 The utilitarian spirit of the holiness revival is evident in the terminology employed by its leaders. Consider, for example, some titles of works published by leaders in the Holiness Movement: James Caughey, *Methodism in Earnest: Being the History of a Great Revival in Great Britain, In Which Twenty Thousand Souls Were Justified, and Ten Thousand Sanctified, in About Six Years, Through the Instrumentality of Rev. James Caughey; including an Account of Those Mental and Spiritual Exercises which Made Him So Eminent a Revivalist*, selected and arranged from "Caughey's Letters," by R. W. Allen, and edited by Rev. Daniel Wise (Boston: Charles H. Pierce, 1850); _____, *Helps to a Life of Holiness and Usefulness, or Revival Miscellanies . . .* (5th ed.; Boston: James P. Magee, 1852); Phoebe Palmer, *Faith and Its Effects: or, Fragments from my Portfolio* (New York: Joseph Longking, Printer, 1852); _____, *Incidental Illustrations of the Economy of Salvation, Its Doctrines and Duties* (New York: Foster and Palmer, Jr., 1855).

27 See Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (reprint; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), pp.145-146.

28 See Daniel Steele, *Love Enthroned: Essays on Evangelical Perfection* (New York: Hunt and Eaton, 1875); "Let Go and Trust," *War Cry* 82 (July 14, 1881); *A Defense of Christian Perfection; Or; A Criticism of Dr. James Mudge's Growth in Holiness Toward Perfection* (New York: Hunt and Eaton, 1896); *The Gospel of the Comforter* (Boston: Christian Witness Co., 1897); and *The Milestone Papers*. Steele also wrote introductions to two of Catherine Booth's books, *Godliness* (Boston: McDonald and Gill, 1883), and *Aggressive Christianity* (Boston: Christian Witness, 1883).

29 Cf. Samuel Logan Brengle, "Light and Letters on Books," *Staff Review* 6.1 (January, 1926), 66: "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life cleared my mental path into the way of holiness."

30 See Hall *op. cit.*, pp.56-57; Chesham, *op. cit.*, pp.26-27. Brengle's holiness experience parallels his mentor's testimony. See Steele, *Love Enthroned*. . ., pp. 268ff. Steele's influence on Brengle's understanding of entire sanctification was both experiential and theological. As one "who defended ably . . . the traditional Wesleyan position," Steele served as a model for Brengle in mediating Wesley back into nineteenth-century holiness thought, especially back into Salvation Army pneumatology. Cf. John L. Peters, *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p.165.

31 Samuel Logan Brengle, *Fifty Years Before and After* (n.p.: National Association for the Promotion of Holiness, 1935), p.11: "God had spoken to my inmost soul in those words, and especially in the words to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,' and with my whole heart I believed and in that moment a deeper and more assured peace. . . took possession of my heart. I knew that I was clean, and my fellow students in the school of theology who saw me immediately after said they recognized the inward work by the deep peace and light reflected in my face." Also see Brengle, *Guest of the Soul* (reprint; Atlanta: The Salvation Army, 1978), p.124.

32 Quoted in Hall, *op. cit.*, p.59; cf. Samuel Logan Brengle, "Full Salvation — My Personal Testimony," *The Field Officer* 20, 4 (April 1912), 137-138.

33 Quoted in Hall, *op. cit.*, p.60; cf. Brengle, *Fifty Years Before and After*; pp.13-14.

34 Samuel Logan Brengle, "After Twenty-Nine Years: A Personal Testimony," *The Officer* 21, 11 (November 1913), 546.

35 Cf. S. L. Brengle, "Holiness — A Working Experience in the Hour of Affliction and Death: A Personal Testimony," *The Officer* 6, 23(June 1915), 419-422.

36 S. L. Brengle, Letter to (Mrs.) Elizabeth Swift Brengle, 20 June, 1887, quoted in Hall, *op. cit.*, p.91.

37 S. L. Brengle, *Helps to Holiness* (London: Salvation Army Publishing House, 1896). By the time of Brengle's death, in 1936, the Army had sold better than a quarter-million copies of this book in twelve languages. Cf. Frederick Coutts, *The Better Fight: The History of the Salva-*

tion Army, Vol.6:1914-1946 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1973), p. 141.

38 S. L. Brengle, *The Soul Winner's Secret* (N.p.: The Salvation Army, 1897).

39 Samuel Logan Brengle, *Heart Talks on Holiness*, preface by Bramwell Booth (London and New York: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1897); *The Way of Holiness* (New York: Salvation Army Printing and Publishing House, 1902); *When the Holy Ghost Is Come* (London: Salvation Army Book Department, 1909); *Love Slaves* (London: Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing, 1923); *Resurrection Life and Power* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1925); *The Guest of the Soul* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1934).

40 See Edward H. McKinley, *Marching to Glory: The History of the Salvation Army in the United States of America, 1880-1980* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980), p.34.

41 Cf. *supra*, n11.

42 Brengle, *Love Slaves*, pp.68-69. Also cf. S. L. Brengle, *Wait On the Lord: Selections From the Writings of Samuel Logan Brengle*, John Waidron, ed. (New York: The Salvation Army, 1960), p.4; Samuel Logan Brengle, "The Holiness Standard of the Salvation Army in Teaching and Practice," *Officer* 23, 3 (March 1915), 145-151; Samuel Logan Brengle, "Maintaining the Holiness Standard," *Officer* 50, 6 (June 1930), 441-442.

43 Brengle, *Heart Talks on Holiness*, pp.1-2, 19-21; and cf. Brengle, *Guest of the Soul*, p.11.

44 Brengle, *Heart Talks on Holiness*, pp. 37-44; Brengle, *Love Slaves*, pp.68-69. Also cf. Brengle, *Wait on the Lord*, p. 11; Steele, *Love Enthroned: Essays on Evangelical Perfection*, pp. 303ff.

45 Brengle, *Heart Talks on Holiness*, pp. 37-44; Brengle, *The Way of Holiness* (5th ed.: New York: The Salvation Army, 1911), pp.77-82; Brengle, *The Soul-Winner's Secret*, p.1; Samuel Logan Brengle, "Holiness and Zeal for Souls," *Officer* 31, 5 (December, 1920), 525-526. Cf. Samuel Logan Brengle, "Officers Who Burn and Shine!," *Officer* 38, 2 (February, 1924), 139.

46 Brengle, *Wait On the Lord*, p.24.

47 Brengle, *Way of Holiness*, p.15.

48 Samuel Logan Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come* (New York:

- The Salvation Army, 1909), p.32
- 49 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, p.2.
- 50 Brengle, *Way of Holiness*, p.22.
- 51 Brengle, *Resurrection Life and Power*; p.184.
- 52 Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, p.17; and cf. Brengle, *Way of Holiness*, p.2.
- 53 Brengle, *Resurrection Life and Power*, p.14.
- 54 Samuel Logan Brengle, "A Man in Christ: The Sons of God Unveiled," *Officer* 25, 2 (February 1917), 124; also Brengle, *Guest of the Soul*, pp.53, 76.
- 55 Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, pp.96-101; Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, p.99.
- 56 Samuel Logan Brengle, *At the Center of the Circle: Selections From Published and Unpublished Writings of S. L. Brengle*, ed. by John D. Waldron (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1976), p.38.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p.42.
- 58 Cited in Hall, *op. cit.*, p.271.
- 59 Cf. *supra*, nil.
- 60 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, p.2.
- 61 Brengle, *The Guest of the Soul*, pp.81, 82.
- 62 Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, p.17.
- 63 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, pp 5ff., 103-104. Also cf. Brengle, *Heart Talks on Holiness*, p.17; Samuel Logan Brengle, *The Way of Holiness* (5th ed.; New York: The Salvation Army, 1911), pp.2, 6-7; Brengle, *Fifty Years Before and After*; p.18.
- 64 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, p.20.
- 65 *Ibid.*, pp.27-28.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p.30.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p.31.
- 68 Brengle, *Wait on the Lord*, p.32.
- 69 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, p.25.
- 70 Cf. Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, pp.1-8, 19-21.
- 71 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, pp.89-90. Cf. also Brengle, *Love Slaves*, p. 11; and Daniel Steele, "The Paraclete's Ecce Homo," in *The Gospel of the Comforter* (Boston: Christian Witness, 1904), pp. 160ff.

72 Samuel Logan Brengle, "The Way to Pentecost," *Officer's Review* 2, 2 (March-April 1933), 127.

73 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, p.136; Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost is Come*, p.117; and Brengle, *Resurrection Life and Power*, pp.166, 168-177.

74 Samuel Logan Brengle, "The Blessedness of the Pentecostal Baptism," *Staff Review* 10, 2 (April 1930), 189.

75 See Brengle, *Way of Holiness*, pp.6-7. Also see Daniel Steele, *Love Enthroned*, pp.27-33. Charles G. Finney also omits this concept.

76 Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, p.59; Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, p.17; Brengle, *Way of Holiness*, pp.31-36. Also, cf. Daniel Steele, *The Gospel of the Comforter* pp. 104ff.

77 Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, pp.45-51, 94.

78 Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, pp.34-35.

79 Brengle, *Guest of the Soul*, p.46. Also see Samuel Logan Brengle, "The Holy Guest of the Soul," *Staff Review* 10, 1 (February 1930), 56-60.

80 Samuel Logan Brengle, "God's House of Flesh and Blood," *Officer* 38, 2 (November 1917), 685-688.

81 Brengle, *Way of Holiness*, pp.42-51, 67.

82 Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, pp.81-82, 96-101.

83 Cf. *supra*, n78.

84 Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, pp.54-55.

85 Brengle, *Guest of the Soul*, pp.47-49, 53, 76; Brengle, *Resurrection Life and Power*, pp.6-8, 14.

86 Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, p.61.

87 Brengle, *Way of Holiness*, pp.18-19.

88 *Ibid.*, pp.24-26.

89 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, pp.103-104.

90 *Ibid.*, p.125.

91 Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, p.16.

92 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, pp. 13-17; Brengle, *Way of Holiness*, p.16.

93 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, pp.62,100.

94 Samuel Logan Brengle, "A Perfect-Hearted People," *Officer* 44, 3 (March 1927), 190.

95 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, pp. 112-113. Also cf. Steele, *Love Enthroned*, pp. 55ff.

96 Samuel Logan Brengle, "How to Get People Sanctified Wholly," *Officer* 6, 8 (August 1898), 238.

97 Brengle, *Fifty Years Before and After*, p.18.

98 Samuel Logan Brengle, "Officers Who Bum and Shine!," *Officer*, 38, 2 (February 1924), 139.

99 Brengle, *Fifty Years Before and After*, p.63.

100 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, p.113. Daniel Steele sounds this same note: "Keep on believing the promise, and insisting that God is true. He may delay for days and weeks the declaration of your complete acceptance, in order to develop and test your faith." Cf. Daniel Steele, "Let Go and Trust," *War Cry* 82 (July 14, 1881), n.p. See also Steele's personal testimony in Steele, *Love Enthroned*, pp. 291-292.

101 Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, pp. 16-17; cf. Brengle, *Resurrection Life and Power*, pp.6-8.

102 Samuel Logan Brengle, "Is the Baptism With the Holy Ghost a Third Blessing?" *Officer* 49, 4 (October 1929), 273.

103 Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, p.94.

104 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, p.112; Brengle, *Heart Talks On Holiness*, p. 94.

105 Samuel Logan Brengle, "To Elijah Under the Juniper Tree: A Letter to a Depressed Officer," *Officer* 48, 6 (June 1929), 506-507.

106 Samuel Logan Brengle, "How to Get and Keep the Fire," *Field Officer* 15, 6 (June 1907), 212. Brengle here testifies to his own experience: "Many years ago God kindled a great fire of love in my heart, and filled me with assurance.

107 Cf. *supra*, n78.

108 *Ibid.*

109 Samuel Logan Brengle, "No Substitute," *Field Officer* 15, 9 (September 1907), 344.

110 Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, pp. 15-16. Also cf. Steele, *Love Enthroned*, pp. 388-389.

111 Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, pp. 31ff.

112 Brengle, *op. cit.*, pp.124-125. Also cf. Steele, *Hints for Holy Living From the Milestone Papers*, (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1959), p.45.

113 Brengle, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, p.24.

114 The early Army had little interest in systematic theology, but various members of the Booth family and George Railton did theologize on occasion. In particular, they dominated pneumatological expression throughout the Army's first three decades.

115 Especially influential on the thinking of the Booths and Railton in this matter were such perspectives as those expressed by Wood, *Perfect Love*, p.62; and Palmer, *Entire Devotion*, pp.38, 153, 176-177. See W. Bramwell Booth, "The Sheffield Council of War," *The Salvationist* 11 (April 1879), 89; and W. Bramwell Booth, "What Must I Do?" *War Cry* 31 (July 24, 1880), n.p. Cf. John Rhemick, "The Theology of a Movement: The Salvation Army In Its Formative Years" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1984), pp.82-87.

116 E.g., "*Milestone Papers*, A Book for the Head and the Heart," *Officer* 30, 4 (October 1919), 322-324; and "Holiness Vindicated in Scripture and Experience," *Officer* 30, 5 (November 1919), 444-445 [review of Daniel Steele, *Difficulties Removed in the Way of Holiness*].

THE CRUSADE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THE FORMATIVE ANTECEDENTS OF THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT

by Douglas M. Strong

In the historiography of the antislavery movement, it is frequently asserted that women's rights were advocated by religiously heterodox abolitionists and opposed by evangelical abolitionists. According to this interpretation, the promotion of women's rights was one of the major reasons why William Lloyd Garrison's coterie of anticlerical, anarchistic reformers was bitterly attacked by church-oriented, politically-minded reformers.¹ Orange Scott, a founder of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, is often cited as one of these conservative, anti-women's rights clerics. In 1839, for example, Scott forthrightly declared that neither he nor any other abolitionist Methodists would support Garrison's "rotten-hearted, no human government, women's rights" organization.²

In a seeming contradiction, religious historians such as Donald Dayton and Nancy Hardesty have indicated a probable connection between early women's rights activism and antebellum evangelicalism, especially the Wesleyan Methodists and other perfectionists. They point to the fact that the first women's rights convention was held in the Seneca Falls, New York, Wesleyan Methodist Church, that Wesleyan Methodist leader Luther Lee was an active participant in women's rights meetings, and that Lee preached the sermon at the South Butler, New York, ordination of Antoinette Brown, the first woman to be ordained in the United States. They also mention the fact that Brown and other women who were active

in the early women's rights movement were educated at Oberlin College, a center for evangelical perfectionism.³

Since some of the groups to which these reformers belonged later became part of the holiness movement, Wesleyan-Holiness historians see such support for feminist issues by antebellum perfectionists as prescient of the expansion of woman's sphere by postbellum Holiness churches.⁴ The postbellum advancement of women's issues in the holiness movement is typically traced to evangelist Phoebe Palmer, whose 1858 book, *Promise of the Father*, argued for a larger role for women in the church.⁵

There are historiographical problems with the assumed connection between the feminism of antebellum abolitionist perfectionists and the enhanced role for women in the church encouraged by postbellum holiness leaders. To what extent were the forerunners of the holiness movement actually involved in feminist issues? How is one to interpret the opposition to women's rights by persons such as Orange Scott? How is one to interpret Phoebe Palmer's noninvolvement in abolition? If the formative antecedents of the holiness movement were involved in women's rights, why was the postbellum holiness movement nearly invisible in the later suffragist movement?⁶ Conversely, to what extent did early women's rights activists actually embrace the ideology of Christian perfection?

The lack of a clear connection between the early women's rights movement and the later holiness movement seems to leave us with a conundrum: many social historians assert that women's rights advocacy was derived almost solely from anarchistic, heterodox Garrisonianism, while holiness historians assert that women's rights activity was (somehow) influenced by Phoebe Palmer and other relatively conservative evangelical progenitors of the holiness movement.

I suggest that neither view is complete because the full spectrum of perfectionistic abolitionism in the antebellum period has not been appreciated. More specifically, Luther Lee, Antoinette Brown and many other abolitionist women's rights activists were neither Garrisonian anti-institutionalists nor evangelically "orthodox" supporters of established institutions. Rather, they held to a position in between these two extremes. It is important to comprehend the breadth of antebellum perfectionist and abolitionist options in order to have a more complete understanding of the formative history of both the holiness movement and the women's rights movement. And, by determining the theological content behind women's rights advocacy and the extent of feminist involvement in the nascent

holiness movement, we will also have a better understanding of how the antebellum doctrine of Christian perfection operated in the personal lives and in the faith communities of its proponents.

I

Digging to the roots of these questions demands that we unearth the complexity and interrelatedness of antebellum reform. The nuances of the differences between various perfectionists and various abolitionists become very important for our present study, since the differences shed light on the rationale that the reformers developed for their support of or rejection of women's rights agitation. Thus it is necessary to unravel the complicated history of these reform movements, beginning with their revivalistic heritage, particularly in the "burned-over district" of upper New York state.⁷

One of the best known of Charles G. Finney's controversial revival methods in New York was his encouragement of women to pray publicly in so-called "promiscuous assemblies." Methodists had long permitted women to "testify" publicly,⁸ but among Presbyterians in the late 1820s this tactic was considered a "new measure."⁹ Many of the evangelists who radiated out from the burned-over district of upstate New York began to advocate the public participation of women — and often for very pragmatic reasons, since women tended to be the strongest supporters of the revival work.¹⁰ At least as early as 1833, for instance, itinerant preacher Luther Myrick was challenging the way that women were traditionally treated in Presbyterian churches — treated, he contended, "as if they had no souls." Myrick was formally charged with heresy by his Presbytery because of such perfectionist challenges to the *status quo*; not surprisingly, he found that it was women who most often came to his defense.¹¹

Hundreds of churches were disrupted in a similar fashion in the 1830s and 1840s by controversies over various perfectionist reforms.¹² During these disputes, the perfectionists realized that they needed the political support of the women in the churches. They therefore encouraged the public participation of women in congregational decision making.¹³ One "come-outer" Congregational church, for example, was angrily divided over the demands by some members for more preaching of holiness doctrine and for a more democratic, nonsectarian polity. In order to gain political advantage for their cause, these perfectionist members of the congregation argued that "women have the right to vote on all questions in this church" — a radically new principle. Even more startling was

their contention that “females in the church have the same right to preach and administer the ordinances as the regular ordained minister.”¹⁴

It is evident that the earliest expressions of support for an enlarged public sphere of influence for women came from evangelical perfectionist revivalism.¹⁵ The promotion of women’s “spiritual” rights of self-expression and suffrage in the church set the stage for the promotion of their civil rights of self-expression and suffrage in the broader society — and this promotion began several years before women’s rights were advocated by abolitionists. In fact, the revivalists’ support for feminist issues developed before abolitionism had even organized as a popular movement.¹⁶

Thus, when perfectionist revivalists became involved in the antislavery crusade (which they were from the beginning of the movement), they brought with them their interest in women’s issues. Some of Finney’s converts were most conspicuous in this regard. Oberlin College, the center for the training of persons in perfectionist abolitionism, was both biracial and coeducational from 1835. Through the influence of Oberlin and several similar, but less famous colleges,¹⁷ scores of itinerants were trained to preach a perfectionist agenda that included abolitionism, radically democratic antisectarianism, and women’s rights, among other reforms.

In 1840, the united front of the abolition movement was shattered by a tumultuous schism. One faction was centered at Boston around the personality of William Lloyd Garrison. The Garrisonians were characterized by their commitment to furthering the expansion of human rights to all oppressed groups — African Americans, of course, but also to women. Thus the Garrisonian faction was known to favor “universal reform” rather than solely the emancipation of slaves. They were also opposed to hierarchical power in any form and established institutions of any kind, such as political parties, clerically controlled churches, and even the national government. The Garrisonians desired that there be no mediating authorities — no human laws or institutions — between themselves and the “higher law” of God. According to the Garrisonians, humanly written creeds or rules are unnatural and coercive. Consequently, they rejected the binding authority of the U.S. Constitution, the Bible, and any religious doctrines that they considered to be human-made (such as the doctrine of the Trinity). Due to such ideas, the Garrisonians were considered to be “anarchistic,” since they did not believe in the need for any human authority.

The basis for the views of the Garrisonians was their particular conception of perfectionism. Although their interpretation of perfection even-

tually became quite unorthodox, nonetheless it was derived from some of the same sources as the more evangelical perfectionism preached by Finney, Myrick and others. After all, it was the eccentric perfectionist John Humphrey Noyes who convinced *both* Garrison and Finney of the truth of holiness doctrine.¹⁸ It is not so surprising, then, that the perfectionism of the burned-over district revivalists would have much in common with the more anarchistic perfectionism of the Garrisonians.

Directly opposed to the Garrisonians was another faction, the conservative abolitionists, who were centered in New York City and Cincinnati.¹⁹ The conservative abolitionists were committed to working for change within established denominations and the existing political system. They were opposed to broadening the abolitionist agenda beyond antislavery to other issues such as women's rights. The theology of most of the conservative abolitionists was pragmatic, and not favorable toward the idealism that tended to be inherent within perfectionism.²⁰

Many historians have described these two opposing abolitionist factions, but only recently have a few historians realized that a third group existed, centered in the burned-over district of upper New York.²¹ The orientation of this third group was in between the other two — neither completely institution — supporting nor fully anti-institutional. Along with the Garrisonians, these folks felt that existing “pro-slavery” denominations and political institutions were corrupt; but, contrary to the Garrisonians, they thought that such institutions could be “reformed” as sanctified, purified organizations. In short, they believed in (what they called) “secession and reorganization.”²²

As a result of these ideas, the “reformist” abolitionists seceded (or “came out”) from their denominations to form independent “abolition churches” such as the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, the Union churches, the antislavery Congregational churches, the Freewill Baptists, the Congregational Friends, and others. They also “came out” of their political parties to form the Liberty party. Most significantly, they cooperated together in the work of political abolitionism and antisectarianism. By the early 1840s, a well-developed network of Liberty party/abolition church evangelical perfectionists was operating in upstate New York and elsewhere.²³

The reformist abolitionists tried to hold a balance between the two other extreme abolitionist positions.²⁴ The various come-outer abolition churches, for instance, promoted both a moderate view of Christian perfection and a moderate attitude toward existing institutions. Like the Gar-

rationians, these abolitionists believed that Christians should perfectly obey the higher law of God. But unlike the Garrisonians, they affirmed that some human laws and structure were necessary for the orderly governing of society.²⁵ Since the established structures were compromisingly sinful, it was imperative that they be replaced with holy institutions. The abolition churches thus gave unequivocal support to the Liberty party as a righteous alternative to the slavery-tainted Whig and Democratic parties. They also insisted on a radically democratic restructuring of ecclesiastical polity, which included the breaking down of denominational distinctions, the elimination of centralized denominational authorities, and mutual cooperation with other like-minded congregations in the work of revivalistic reform. This acceptance of what might be called a “Campbellite ecclesiology” was a common trend in the nineteenth century, and was characteristic of groups as diverse as the Christians, the Disciples of Christ, the Church(es) of Christ, the Church(es) of God, the Church of Christ in Christian Union, the New Testament Church of Christ (a fore-runner of the Church of the Nazarene) and, I would argue, the Wesleyan Methodist Connection. These groups (most of which later became part of the Holiness movement) were seeking a Christian unity that was undivided by “artificial” sectarian creeds and dogmas.²⁶ By a similar logic, they advocated equal rights for women, because obedience to the law of God required that no unnatural or “artificial” distinctions be made on the basis of creed, social class, race or gender.

Several examples will demonstrate the strength of this interlocking network of reformist abolitionists. Hiram Witcher was a perfectionist Freewill Baptist preacher who actively campaigned for the Liberty party. He encouraged the Freewill Baptists to abandon their sectarian trappings and join other abolition churches in a merged, multi-denominational antislavery sect.²⁷ Freewill Baptists had long encouraged a public role for women,²⁸ so it was not unusual that Witcher was one of the leading voices at a women’s rights convention in Rochester, New York, held just two weeks after the famous Seneca Falls convention.²⁹

Rhoda DeGarmo and Thomas and Mary Ann McClintock also demonstrate the broad linkages among reformist abolitionists. They were leaders of a come-outer group of Congregational Friends in Waterloo, New York, a perfectionist abolition church that supported the Liberty party.³⁰ DeGarmo and the McClintocks were strong early women’s rights activists — Mary Ann McClintock was one of the organizers of the Seneca Falls convention.³¹

Other examples can be drawn from the Union churches. Union churches were intended to unite abolitionist come-outers from all denominations.³² The Union church in Cleveland, Ohio,³³ was founded by Caroline Maria Seymour Severance, who learned her radical ecelesiological views from her association with Oberlinite revivalism. Severance was a Finney convert, and she later became very active in the Liberty party and women's rights advocacy.³⁴ Another Union church — in Peterboro, New York — was founded by the perfectionist Gerrit Smith, a leading figure in political abolitionism and one of the most prominent and persistent voices to advocate for women's rights. Smith's ideas were influential with his famous feminist cousin, Elizabeth Cady Stanton.³⁵

Also active in the interconnecting web of reforming abolitionists were antislavery Congregational churches. These churches were "Congregational" in name, but were in fact wholly independent like the Union churches. They did not belong to any Congregationalist judicatory because they were fearful of hierarchical authority. The come-outer Congregational church in China, New York, hosted Liberty party political rallies, circulated a controversial perfectionist Statement of Faith written by Oberlin-trained pastors, and encouraged the public speaking and preaching of women. The state Liberty party's candidate for Lieutenant Governor was the head elder of this church. One of the pastors of the church was the former slave, Samuel Ringgold Ward, a fervent Liberty party campaigner and feminist; another was the husband of Mary Hosford Fisher, the first woman ever to graduate with a liberal arts degree (from Oberlin).³⁶ Similar stories could be related about other Union churches and antislavery Congregational churches — at least eighty of which existed in New York state alone.

The largest group of come-outer abolition churches was the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, established in 1843.³⁷ The close affiliation of the Wesleyan Methodists with the Liberty party is well established.³⁸ Less known is the fact that the early Wesleyan Methodists in New York state were interested in merging with other abolitionist seceders (such as the Unionists, Freewill Baptists and antislavery Congregationals) into a comprehensive, antislavery, antisectarian "sect."³⁹ The Wesleyan Connection, it must be remembered, was founded expressly to counter both "slavery and episcopacy" (*italics mine*); often, in historical treatments of the denomination, only the former is emphasized. The burned-over district Wesleyan Methodists, in particular, shared with the other antislavery come-outers of their region a disdain for undemocratic institutional hierarchies within the church or state.

Luther Lee, for instance, held a view of church reform that was close to the perfectionist views of his abolitionist come-outer associates. Like the Unionists and the antislavery Congregationals, Lee insisted that each abolitionist church was not to allow its “personal identity and rights to be swallowed up in the power and general government of a connexion.” He believed in a congregational polity, and opposed any “development of power and undue influence” within the new Wesleyan Methodist structure.⁴⁰ It is a telling observation that some of his contemporaries thought that Luther Lee was, in fact, a Congregational minister.⁴¹

The views of Lee and the other New York state Wesleyan Methodists regarding democratic church polity were so similar to the views of their fellow abolitionist come-outers that Wesleyan Methodist congregations were often confused for Union churches or antislavery Congregational churches.⁴² In practice, the various abolition churches were not distinguishable from each other, despite their respective origins within differing Arminian and Calvinist traditions. Antislavery advocates in Watertown, New York, built a “Free Church” that would accommodate all “the friends of the abolition cause,” although it happened to be “under the supervision of the Wesleyan Society.” Likewise, in Ashford, the abolitionist congregants were not denominationally discriminating even though they were supplied by a Wesleyan preacher. They called themselves simply the “Anti-Slavery Church Society” of Ashford.⁴³

A significant difference, however, is evident in the abolitionist activity of Orange Scott, a Wesleyan Methodist founder who was not from the burned-over district. He was from Massachusetts, and reacted strongly to the excesses of anti-institutionalism and unorthodox doctrine characteristic of his Garrisonian neighbors. Scott’s context helps to explain why he was so opposed to women’s rights advocacy; in his mind it was too intimate with Garrisonian anarchism. For similar reasons, Scott favored retaining the centralized Methodist form of episcopal polity with only slight alterations, since he believed that the ecclesiastical structure of the parent church was not inherently evil but simply “overgrown.”⁴⁴

There was a clear difference of opinion among early Wesleyan Methodists over the degree of acceptance of anti-institutional perfectionist ideas. On the one hand, Orange Scott was a relatively conservative abolitionist, who was less troubled by the trappings of denominationalism than his Wesleyan colleagues in New York state. Scott did not see the need to broaden the agenda of the abolitionist movement to include women’s rights. Luther Lee and other burned-over district Wesleyan

Methodists, on the other hand, embraced a more radical, yet still moderately reformist abolitionism. Their views were similar to the Garrisonians' on issues of institutional corruption and universal reform (particularly regarding women's rights), but differed from the Garrisonians' on the need for a limited organizational structure, the expediency of political action, and the retention of evangelical doctrine.

II

Two interrelated factors help to explain the women's rights activism characteristic of this network of reforming abolitionists: their particular formulation of the doctrine of Christian perfection and their political involvement in the Liberty party. It was their ethical interpretation of entire sanctification that grounded their political antislavery work and propelled them into advocacy of feminist causes.

Christian perfection, according to these abolitionists, was defined as a higher level of religious commitment in which the believer fully obeyed the moral law of God. Entire sanctification did not "consist mainly . . . in sensations or emotions," but rather in "being perfect in obedience."⁴⁵ Abolitionist come-outers desired not only preach the doctrine of Christian holiness "in the *abstract*, but to reduce it to practice, and urge it upon our people as a gospel requirement."⁴⁶ For reformist abolitionists, entire sanctification was synonymous with an ethical earnestness demonstrated in practical terms.

This view of Christian perfection differed from the other two perfectionist views then current, particularly regarding the Christian's appropriate response to traditional institutions. On the one side, the Garrisonians believed that perfect obedience to God's law required the rejection of all human laws and authorities. Consequently, they rejected political action because human government was corrupt; they rejected the Bible and the doctrine of the Trinity because human-made creeds were unnaturally coercive; and, they rejected the patriarchal rules of the society that denied women their rights because such social conventions were artificial human constructions.

On the other side, Phoebe Palmer believed that entirely sanctified believers should support established human laws and institutions. Sanctified Christians should leave the correction of societal wrongs to God. In fact, according to Timothy Smith, Palmer's followers "were laggards in whatever demanded stern attacks on persons and institutions" — including women's rights.⁴⁷

The reformist abolitionists were consistent in their “middle course” between the two positions of institutional support and anti-institutionalism. They accepted the idea that perfect obedience to the law of God required a rejection of the corrupt human laws and institutions that were then in force but, at the same time, believed that God required them to reconstitute those institutions on a purified basis.

Reformist abolitionists were critical of any doctrine of Christian perfection, such as that preached by Palmer, that continued to support established political and ecclesiastical institutions. They decried any “monkish search after sanctification” that was not accompanied by the “fruits and evidences of that holiness” demonstrated in social and political reform.⁴⁸ The politically active abolitionists who became women’s rights advocates were more concerned with sanctified reform activity than with the attainment of a sanctification experience abstracted from the work of reform.⁴⁹

But these abolitionists also disagreed with the type of perfectionism promoted by the Garrisonians, for different reasons. Contrary to the anarchism of the Garrisonians, the reformist abolitionists believed that entire sanctification would result in the right discharge of “political duties.”⁵⁰ Holiness was defined in terms of concrete moral obligation, which is why Luther Lee urged the Wesleyan Methodists to “vote the Liberty ticket as a religious duty.”⁵¹ If perfection was the practical fulfillment of one’s religious duty to the moral law of God, then a Liberty vote demonstrated the abolitionist’s sanctified resolve. For reformist abolitionists, the ballot became an essential symbol of holy living and the extension of human rights to all people.⁵² They believed that the perfect millennial day would be near if those who were enfranchised voted in a holy manner and if oppressed people who were disenfranchised were given the right of suffrage.⁵³

At first the platform of the Liberty party was restricted to obtaining social and political rights for the slaves.⁵⁴ But soon, the perfectionist leanings of most of the party’s leaders led them to advocate a broad social agenda that was similar to the universal reform promoted by the Garrisonians. As early as 1843, the Liberty party members stated that they were obliged by their obedience to the moral law of God to “carry out the principles of Equal Rights, into all their practical consequences and applications.”⁵⁵ Because of the interconnectedness of various kinds of oppression, Liberty party members were convinced of their need to be “comprehensive in their views of human rights.” Thus by 1847 the participants at a Liberty convention stated that if they could be shown “any

other measure that justice requires” beyond simply the elimination of slavery, they would add it to their platform.⁵⁶ The stage was set for the Liberty party to address the injustice of the disenfranchisement of women.

It was the very next year, at the National Liberty Convention in June 1848, that the party members compared the exclusion of slaves from the right of suffrage to the “exclusion of woman” from the right of suffrage. A pure and perfected government, they reasoned, must include the purifying influence of women. Backing up their assertions with concrete action, the names of two women, along with several men, received votes for nomination as the party’s candidates for President and Vice President of the United States, in both 1847 and 1848.⁵⁷ The Liberty party national convention thus raised the issue of woman’s suffrage one year earlier than the similar (and more famous) action at the Women’s Rights Convention in Seneca Falls.⁵⁸ That simultaneity was no mere coincidence, because the same influences were shaping both events — a belief in Christian perfection and support for political abolitionism.⁵⁹

Indeed, there is a clear connection between the early women’s rights movement and perfectionistic political abolitionism.⁶⁰ Liberty party leaders and women’s rights activists were in regular correspondence; the Liberty party frequently declared its support for the equal social and political rights of women; and women’s rights leaders spoke at Liberty party conventions.⁶¹ And since many of the early feminist leaders believed in Christian holiness, they used perfectionist phraseology in their speeches and writings.⁶²

The women’s rights movement also evidenced the middling position characteristic of the reformist abolitionists. Although some feminist leaders were associated with Garrison’s anarchistic brand of abolitionism, many others were more comfortable with the political action they had learned from the Liberty party. In language identical to that used by their colleagues who had “come out” from conventional denominations and political parties in order to organize purified ones in their place, the women stated that their task was to “pull down [the] present worn-out and imperfect human institutions” and “reconstruct them upon a new and broader foundation.”⁶³ From the Seneca Falls convention onward, they stressed the importance of obtaining the ballot for women. “The Right of Suffrage,” they declared, is “the cornerstone of this enterprise.” This commitment to reforming the political system posed a problem for women who were anarchistic Garrisonians, but not for those many other

women right's advocates who were schooled on the perfectionistic political platform of the Liberty party.⁶⁴

III

Let us return to where we began — to the more familiar parts of the crusade for women's rights — but with some of the missing pieces in place. The location of the first Women's Rights Convention in 1848, for instance, is now more understandable. The Seneca Falls Wesleyan Methodist Church was not merely the closest available building that would accommodate the feminist meeting but was, rather, a particularly appropriate venue for the beginning of the women's rights movement.

This Wesleyan church was formed in 1843 when some of the leading antislavery activists in Seneca Falls seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church. It soon became the religious haven for come-outer abolitionists from many denominations. Similar to the members of abolition churches in other communities, the Seneca Falls Wesleyans were active in the Liberty party.⁶⁵ And like other perfectionist abolition churches, this Wesleyan Methodist congregation struggled to develop a church polity that was not too institutionally bound.⁶⁶ Consequently, after several years, the pastor and some of the members of the church voted to sever their ties with the Wesleyan Methodist connection and become a "Congregational" church.⁶⁷

It was in this environment of perfectionist doctrine, political abolitionism, and antisectarianism that Elizabeth Cady Stanton found a suitable place to hold her women's rights convention. She chose the Wesleyan church in her town because she knew that the Liberty party supporting perfectionists of that church would embrace the radically innovative ideas of social and political equality for women. In fact, ten of the one hundred signers⁶⁸ of the "Declaration" that resulted from that first Women's Rights Convention were members or constituents of the Seneca Falls Wesleyan Methodist Church.⁶⁹

An apocryphal story has developed regarding this convention. In Stanton's account of the meeting, it is recorded that some of the persons arrived early and found the church door locked, so a young boy was lifted through an open window to unlock it.⁷⁰ From that simple statement, a number of historians have erroneously deduced that the "reluctant minister had regretted his rash act in making his premises available for such an occasion."⁷¹ The preposterousness of this statement is made evident by the fact that, of the ten Wesleyan Methodist signers of the Women's Rights Declaration, one was Saron Phillips, the minister of the church!⁷²

News of the radical proposals made at the Seneca Falls convention spread rapidly. At the Ladies Literary Society of Oberlin College, the ideas put forth at Seneca Falls were eagerly discussed and had a profound impact on a young student of theology, Antoinette Brown.⁷³ Brown was particularly drawn to the resolutions that encouraged women “to speak and teach... in all religious assemblies” and to “overthrow the monopoly of the pulpit” held by men.⁷⁴

Soon Brown was one of the many Oberlin perfectionists committed to a moderate, reformist abolitionism. She disliked the unorthodoxy and extreme anti-institutionalism of the Garrisonians. But Brown also disapproved of the existing political parties and the hypocrisy of the so-called “orthodox,” yet pro-slavery denominations.⁷⁵ Not surprisingly, she became a lecturer for women’s rights and an active campaigner for the Liberty party, serving as a member of the party’s National Committee.⁷⁶ This speaking on behalf of political abolitionism and her prominent leadership positions in the women’s rights movement thrust her into the public limelight.⁷⁷

Brown’s longtime desire was to be a fully-qualified, local pastor.⁷⁸ Her opportunity came when the radical members of the abolition church in South Butler, New York, called her to be their minister. Previous ministers of this church included Lewis Lockwood, a leading antisectarian political abolitionist and Samuel Ringgold Ward, an African-American Liberty party leader.⁷⁹ Therefore Brown came to a church that was accustomed to unconventional leadership and political activism.

Antoinette Brown and the South Butler church that she served are usually labeled as “Congregationalist.” But neither she nor the church was Congregationalist in any formal denominational sense. Like so many of the political abolitionists, they were congregational in polity but were actually abolitionist come-outers — associated more with the Union churches and the Wesleyan Methodists than with the New England Congregationalist denomination.⁸⁰

Consequently, Luther Lee’s participation in Brown’s ordination (or, more properly “installation”⁸¹) is now more comprehensible. Lee and Brown were colleagues in the work of reformist abolitionism.⁸² They agreed on several key principles that motivated their mutual ministry: moderate evangelical perfectionism, Liberty party activism, antisectarianism, congregational church polity, and a commitment to universal reform, including the equal rights of women in both ecclesiastical and political life.

IV

Several summarizing questions will recapitulate this discussion and point the way toward further research. The first question is quite basic: What was the relation of the early women's rights movement to evangelical perfectionism? Feminist historians have often argued that most women's rights activists were Garrisonian abolitionists who held unorthodox perfectionist doctrines. While this contention is true, it is not the whole story. A network of other early women's rights activists were reformist abolitionists who affirmed evangelical (Oberlinite) perfectionist doctrines. These evangelical perfectionists adopted a moderate anti-institutionalism in which the task of "re-formers" was interpreted as the restructuring of corrupt ecclesiastical and political organizations into sanctified abolition churches and the sanctified Liberty party. Such "practical" perfectionism was more in line with the "practical" goals of early feminists, who desired above all to obtain political power (specifically, the franchise) for women. Since involvement in the political process was anathetical to the views of anarchistic Garrisonians, many women were drawn toward the pragmatic perfectionism characteristic of the Liberty party and the come-outer churches, such as the Wesleyan Methodist Connection.

Despite their participation in early feminist activism, however, it is important to observe that for most antebellum evangelical perfectionists, women's rights advocacy was never as central a reform interest as antislavery had been. Indeed, some evangelical perfectionists did not support women's rights at all. The determinative factor was their connection to burned-over district revivalism and political abolitionism, which radically challenged prevailing social conventions. Those evangelical perfectionists (such as Phoebe Palmer) and those abolitionist come-outers (such as Orange Scott) who were from other regions tended to be more conservative concerning feminist issues.

While Palmer had a progressive attitude regarding women *within the church*, she did not challenge the societal norms regarding woman's role in the broader political institutions of the culture, as did Antoinette Brown, Luther Lee and others. Palmer's articulation of an enhanced role for religious women was carefully limited so as not to disturb the dominant patriarchal structures of the society.⁸³ Within the framework of nineteenth-century gender roles, church activities — even those outside the home — were considered an extension of a woman's domestic sphere. Thus the encouragement for women to express themselves religiously

(including the right to preach) did not necessarily indicate a substantive change in women's social status, especially when that encouragement neglected to call for an improvement in the political and economic rights of women.⁸⁴

Interestingly, Orange Scott seems to have been influenced to a greater degree by Palmer's more static conception of holiness than by the ethically-defined, Oberlinite doctrine of perfection embraced by Lee and the New York state Wesleyan Methodists. This theological dependence of Scott's may help to explain his conservatism on women's rights.⁸⁵

A second summarizing question follows up on the first question; viz., what was the extent of the relationship between the postbellum Holiness movement and the burned-over district reformist abolitionists who were women's rights advocates? That is, to what degree was political abolitionism and its concomitant reform movement, feminism, formative for some of the groups that would later coalesce into the Holiness movement? The answer, I would contend, is that there was a strong connection between these movements. In the first place, it is likely that the antisectarianism of the various abolition churches provided a model for the ecclesiology of later Holiness groups such as the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), the Church of Christ in Christian Union, and the New Testament Church of Christ. This is an area of unexplored, but potentially fruitful research. Furthermore, it is evident that the major source for the radical reform of early Wesleyan Methodism, at least in the burned-over district where Wesleyanism was strongest, was Oberlin perfectionism and the network of Liberty party-supporting abolition churches. Thus the Liberty party and the Unionist and antislavery Congregational churches need to be interpreted by Holiness historians as a significant, but neglected part of the pre-history of the Holiness movement. Particularly in the case of women's rights agitation, the Liberty party and the Unionists were a more important influence on the Wesleyan Methodists than Phoebe Palmer.⁸⁶ The Wesleyans offered a systemic critique of many of the social structures of the day. In contrast, Palmer's relatively conservative views regarding established institutions and her equivocation on the slavery issue would have been anathema to the Wesleyans.⁸⁷

A related question regarding the origins of Holiness groups has to do with why the earliest Free Methodists in western New York were not drawn toward the Wesleyan Methodists — who were already very strong in the same region. B. T. Roberts, for instance, pastored Methodist Episcopal churches in small communities (Eagle and Rushford, New York) in

the 1840s that had well-established Wesleyan Methodist churches.⁸⁸ Although one would suppose that the Wesleyans would have been his natural allies, Roberts makes no mention of his affinity with them.

Perhaps part of the answer to this curious question about the lack of connection between the early Wesleyan Methodists and the early Free Methodists has to do with Roberts' well-documented attraction to Palmer's interpretation of entire sanctification in contrast to the Wesleyans' early preference for Oberlinite perfectionism.⁸⁹ While these two groups agreed on many issues, their priority of emphasis on the issues differed. Wesleyan Methodists stressed political abolitionism and antisectarianism, undergirded by a dynamic, ethically-oriented perfectionism, while Free Methodists stressed the sanctification experience first, which was then manifested in their support for "free pews" and "free men."

After the Civil War, when the issue of slavery was ostensibly settled with the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, Wesleyan Methodists were left without their primary *raison d'être*. During this post-war period many Wesleyans concentrated on denominational consolidation and drifted toward the particular sanctification emphases characteristic of Palmer and the Free Methodists. That is, there was a conflation of interests among those who were beginning to institutionalize the Holiness movement. Some of the more radical Wesleyan Methodists interpreted these institution-building developments as the reintroduction of sectarianism and a withdrawal from earlier commitments to universal reform. Consequently, many of the radicals, such as Luther Lee⁹⁰ and a portion of the Seneca Falls church, left the Wesleyan Methodist Connection.

This brings us to a final question arising from our study: how should we understand the character of mid-nineteenth century evangelical perfectionism? Several attributes of evangelical perfectionism are evident. For example, the abolitionist evangelical perfectionists were broadly ecumenical. Wesleyan Methodist churches, Union churches, antislavery Congregational churches, and so forth, were not denominationally specific. Rather, they tended to view themselves as generic abolition churches. They were more concerned with an individual's sanctified reform activity (especially regarding political antislavery and women's rights) than with one's assent to creedal formulae.

Consequently, these perfectionists were not doctrinally rigid. While they considered themselves to be "evangelicals," they nonetheless experimented with the prevailing social and even theological norms. Antoinette Brown, for instance, called herself a believer in "limited orthodoxy." It is

not surprising, therefore, that in the 1850s and 1860s, some of the reformist abolitionists left evangelical Christianity for Unitarianism or freethinking religious ideas (Antoinette Brown and Gerrit Smith are examples). Historian Ruth Doan refers to this as a “boundary crisis at the edges of orthodoxy” that was common in the antebellum period.⁹¹ Not all antislavery come-outers, of course, left the faith. Many reformist abolitionists and their progeny remained thoroughly committed evangelicals. Nonetheless, even the Holiness heirs of antebellum perfectionism continued to be more comfortable emphasizing Christian experience than creedal orthodoxy — at least until the mid-twentieth century, when fundamentalist concerns became influential with some in the Holiness movement.

Lastly, antebellum reformist abolitionists were committed to a type of perfectionist doctrine that was ethically focussed toward the disenfranchised of their society. Their agitation on behalf of African-American slaves drew them toward the needs of the many others who were marginalized in American culture: Native Americans, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, industrialized workers, poor immigrants — and women.⁹² Their identification with the disenfranchised grew directly out of their particular understanding of Christian perfection — an ethical earnestness that challenged (and reformulated) the conventional power structures of their culture.

NOTES

1 Aileen S. Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834-1850* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), 39-62; Blanche Glassman Hersh, “To Make the World Better: Protestant Women in the Abolitionist Movement,” in Richard L. Greaves, ed., *Triumph Over Silence: Women in Protestantism* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), 173-74, 187; idem, *The Slavery of Sex: Feminist-Abolitionists in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978); idem, “‘Am I Not a Woman and a Sister?’ Abolitionist Beginnings of Nineteenth-Century Feminism,” in Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman, *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 272- 76; Louis Filler, *The Crusade Against Slavery, 1830-1860* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1960), 130-31, 134-35; Richard H. Sewell, *Ballots For*

Freedom: Antislavery Politics in the United States, 1837-1860 (New York: Oxford University Press 1976), 28, 34, 40; Robert H. Abzug, *Passionate Liberator: Theodore Dwight Weld and the Dilemma of Reform* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 115; Ronald G. Walters, *The Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism After 1830* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 93.

2 *Liberator* (11 October 1839), cited in David M. Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791-1850* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 161. See also John L. Thomas, *The Liberator: William Lloyd Garrison* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1963), 261- 62. Orange Scott was referring to the Garrison-controlled Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, the state branch of the American Anti- Slavery Society.

3 Donald W. Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976); Lucille Sider Dayton and Donald W. Dayton, “‘Your Daughters Shall Prophecy’: Feminism in the Holiness Movement,” *Methodist History* 14 (January 1976), 70-72; Nancy Hardesty, Lucille Sider Dayton and Donald W. Dayton, “Women in the Holiness Movement: Feminism in the Evangelical Tradition,” in Rosemary Ruether and Eleanor McLaughlin, *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), 230-32; Nancy A. Hardesty, *Women Called To Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the 19th Century* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984), 46-51, 97, 125.

4 On “woman’s sphere” in the nineteenth century, see Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven, Yale University, 1977); Mary P Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 186-91, 218-225; and Barbara Welter, *Dimitry Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976).

5 Phoebe Palmer, *Promise of the Father: or a Neglected Specialty of the Last Days* (Boston: H. V. Degen, 1859). Hardesty (*op. cit.*, 55-58) moves immediately from her discussion of Oberlin perfectionism to an account of Phoebe Palmer. Similarly, Dayton and Dayton (*op. cit.*, 72) describe Oberlin and then imply a connection to Palmer’s work: “In the next generation Holiness leadership passed to Phoebe Palmer.” This ostensibly easy transition from the relatively anti-institutional Oberlin to the institutionally-supportive Tuesday Meeting has yet to be demonstrated; indeed, although some persons interacted with both of these cen-

ters of Holiness preaching, a direct transfer of perfectionist leadership from Oberlin to the Tuesday Meeting is not self-evident from the available data.

6 A notable exception to this invisibility was Frances Willard. Although Willard experienced and advocated Christian perfection, she was not considered a leading voice for the Holiness movement. See Hardesty, *op. cit.*, 13-25, 63-64.

7 See Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950).

8 See Russell E. Richey, *Early American Methodism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 18.

9 See Hardesty, *op. cit.*, 44-46, on Finney's conflict over mixed, or "promiscuous" assemblies.

10 Ryan, *op. cit.*, 83-98.

11 J. I. Root, et. al., *An Account of the Trial of Luther Myrick, Before The Oneida Presbytery* (Syracuse: J. P. Patterson, 1834), 38, text located at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA.

12 See, for example, Glenn C. Altschuler and Jan M. Saltzgaber, *Revivalism, Social Conscience, and Community in the Burned-Over District: The Trial of Rhoda Bement* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Warsaw [New York] Presbyterian Church, *Schism the Offspring of Error, Illustrated in Historical Sketches of the Presbyterian Church of Warsaw, Genesee County, N.Y* (Buffalo: Robert D. Foy, 1841); Douglas M. Strong, "Organized Liberty: Evangelical Perfectionism, Political Abolitionism, and Ecclesiastical Reform in the Burned-Over District" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1990), 179-262, 266-71, 336.

13 See, for example, *Trial of the Rev. Asa T. Hopkins, Pastor of The First Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, Before A Special Meeting of The Buffalo Presbytery: Commencing October 22, and ending October 31, 1844* (Buffalo, 1844), 6.

14 China [Arcade], New York, Congregational Church, *Church Records for the 1st Congregationalist Church of The Town of China* (Volume 2, 1836-1858), 3 March 1849, manuscript located in the church office, Arcade United Church of Christ, Congregational, Arcade, NY.

15 Evangelical support for a greater role for women was especially the case in the burned-over district. In other areas, Quakers often initiated

the discussion regarding an increased sphere of influence for women. The impact of the Friends in upstate New York, however, was quite minimal.

16 Garrison's American Antislavery Society was not organized until 1834 and the New York State Antislavery Society was organized in 1835. The overt support of the AASS for women's rights was not until the late 1830s. Meanwhile, Myrick and other "new measures" revivalists were promoting an increased role for women by at least the early 1830s.

17 Two other perfectionist/abolitionist colleges were Oneida Institute (Whitestown, NY) and New York Central College (McGrawville, NY). These institutions gave support to the women's rights movement. See Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joselyn Gage, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 2nd ed. (Rochester, NY: Charles Mann, 1889), I, 519n.

18 James H. Fairchild, *Oberlin: The Colony and the College, 1833-1883* (Oberlin: E. J. Goodrich, 1883), 81-90; George Wallingford Noyes, *Religious Experience of John Humphrey Noyes* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), 122, 333-34; Wendell Phillips Garrison and Francis Jackson Garrison, *William Lloyd Garrison. 1805-1879: The Story of His Life Told by His Children* (New York: The Century Co., 1885), 144-53, 172, 286.

19 Lawrence J. Friedman, *Gregarious Saints: Self and Community in American Abolitionism, 1830-1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 68-70; Robert Merideth, "Edward Beecher: A Conservative Abolitionist at Alton," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 42 (June 1964): 101; James Brewer Stewart, *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1976), 92-96, 100ff.; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War Against Slavery* (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1969), 272ff., 279.

20 Finney was loosely connected with this conservative faction, through his association with the Tappan brothers. However, Finney continued to be closely associated with the more radical perfectionists of upstate New York, as well. Finney, a complex man, was quite supportive of the Liberty party and come-outer churches, and he never completely broke his ties to the Garrisonians. A number of Garrisonian women attended Oberlin, and Garrisonian speakers were always accorded a cordial welcome at the school (although their anarchistic ideas were not generally accepted). The conservative and progressive sides of Finney are

explored in James H. Moorhead, "Social Reform and the Divided Conscience of Antebellum Protestantism," *Church History* 48 (December 1979): 416-30.

21 Lewis Perry, *Radical Abolitionism: Anarchy and the Government of God in Antislavery Thought* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 158ff.; Lawrence Friedman, *Gregarious Saints: Self and Community in American Abolitionism, 1830-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

22 *Christian Investigator* 3 (June 1845): 237-38.

23 See Douglas M. Strong, "The Application of Perfectionism to Politics: Political and Ecclesiastical Abolitionism in the Burned-Over District," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 25:1 (Spring 1989): 21-41.

24 The balancing act of the reformist abolitionists is evident in their desire to keep the lines of communication open between themselves and the Garrisonians, with whom they felt strong sympathy in their common commitment to universal reform and their shared suspicion of established institutions (although they were wary of the unorthodoxy of the Garrisonians). The reformist abolitionists also kept in contact with the more conservative abolitionists (such as the Tappan brothers, Gamaliel Bailey, Owen Lovejoy, Edward Beecher, Orange Scott, and Henry B. Stanton), some of whom were colleagues in the Liberty party and others who were old friends from earlier revival work. Consequently, the reformist abolitionists of the burned-over district labored to end the schism within the antislavery movement between the Garrisonians and the conservatives. See "The National Liberty Convention," in *Emancipator Extra* (September 1843): 31; *Madison County Abolitionist* 1 (7 December 1841): 45, 46, serial located American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA.

25 See Jonathan Blanchard, *A Perfect State of Society* (Oberlin: James Steele, 1839).

26 See Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). Even the Mormons originally called themselves the "Church of Christ." Klaus J. Hansen, *Mormonism and the American Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 38.

27 G. A. Burgess and J. T. Ward, *Free Baptist Cyclopaedia. Historical and Biographical* (Chicago: The Women's Temperance Publication Association, 1889), 692; *The Liberty Press* 3 (16 November 1844): 5; *ibid.* (15 February 1845): 59; *Morning Star* 18 (8 November 1843): 114; *Christian Investigator* 1 (December 1843): 88.

28 See Timothy L. Smith, *op. cit.*, 82.

29 Whitcher was invited to open this Rochester woman's rights convention with prayer. In the comments regarding the Rochester convention in the *History of Woman Suffrage*, Whitcher (misspelled "Wicher") is proudly held up as an example: "even at that early day, there were many of the liberal clergymen in favor of equal rights for women." Stanton, et.al., *History of Woman Suffrage I*, 76.

30 Congregational Friends, Waterloo Yearly Meeting, *Earnest and Affectionate Address to all people and especially religious professors of every name, and an address to reformers: from the Yearly Meeting of Congregational Friends, held at Waterloo, N.Y.* (Auburn: Oliphant's Press, 1849), 13, 16; *Liberty Party Paper* 2 (21 May 1851); Allen C. Thomas, "Congregational or Progressive Friends," *Bulletin of Friends' Historical Society of Philadelphia* 10 (November 1920): 25, 28.

31 Theodore Stanton and Harriot Stanton Blatch, eds., *Elizabeth Cady Stanton* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), I, 146-47; Stanton, et. al., *History of Woman Suffrage*, 67-71.

32 In practice, Union churches consisted primarily of seceders from Presbyterian and Congregational churches.

33 This perfectionist abolition church in Cleveland was called the "Independent Christian Church."

34 See Edward T. James, ed., *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), III, 265-67. Severance remained personally close to Garrison even though she campaigned for the Liberty party, which was not unusual for reformist perfectionists.

35 See Stanton and Blatch, 53-66; *Elizabeth Griffith, In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 24, 40.

36 Jeffrey C. Mason and Harry S. Douglass, *Alive in the Spirit Since 1813: The Arcade United Church of Christ, Congregational* (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1990), 60-64,73-75,79-99.

37 Approximately 120 Wesleyan Methodist congregations existed in New York state in the 1840s. See Strong, "Organized Liberty," 336.

38 See Douglas M. Strong, "Partners in Political Abolitionism: The Liberty Party and the Wesleyan Methodist Connection," *Methodist History* 23 (January 1985): 99-115. One minister, Wesley Bailey, served as the Connection's Utica District Chairman while editing the state Liberty party's leading newspaper, *The Liberty Press*.

39 The paradox (and seeming hypocrisy) of organizing a new sect comprised of those who rejected "sectarianism" was not lost on their opponents. See Warsaw Presbyterian Church, *Schism the Offspring of Error*, 14; *Morning Star* 16 (3 November 1841): 112.

40 Lee accepted the concept of a limited "connexion" for the Wesleyan Methodists, but each congregation's involvement in that "connexion" was completely voluntary. Luther Lee and E. Smith, *The Debates of the General Conference of the M.E. Church, May, 1844* (New York: O. Scott, 1845), 476-77; Ira Ford McLeister and Roy Stephen Nicholson, *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church*, 3rd ed. (Marion, IN: The Wesley Press, 1959), 38; *Christian Investigator* 2 (July 1844): 151; *ibid.* 6 (August 1848): 512, 528. Other leaders of New York state Wesleyan Methodism, such as Cyrus Prindle, agreed with Lee.

41 In an account of Antoinette Brown's ordination, Lee was referred to as a "prominent Congregationalist from Syracuse," *Rochester Daily Democrat* (20 September 1853): 2, cited in Joseph Michael Saeli, "South Butler's Reverend Antoinette L. Brown," TMs in Wayne County Historian's Office, Lyons, NY.

42 Timothy Smith, for example, incorrectly identified Unionist Luther Myrick as a Wesleyan Methodist (*op. cit.*, 116), and Whitney Cross mistakenly identified the South Butler antislavery Congregational church as a Wesleyan Methodist church (*op. cit.*, 283).

43 *The Liberty Press* 4 (29 November 1845): 15; William Adams, ed., *Historical Gazateer and Biographical Memorial of Cattaraugus County, N.Y.* (Syracuse: Lyman, Horton & Co., Ltd., 1893), 451-52.

44 Lucius C. Matlack, *The Life of Rev. Orange Scott* (New York: C. Prindle and L. C. Matlack, 1851), 202-3, 255-57; Lee and Smith, *The Debates of the General Conference*, 477.

45 William Goodell, "Entire Sanctification" (manuscript sermon), Goodell Papers, Berea College, Berea, KY

46 Franckean Evangelical Lutheran Synod, *Journal of the Third Annual Session of the Franckean Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Convened*

at Stone Mills, Jefferson Co., June 4, 1840 (Fort Plain, NY: David Smith, 1840), 23. For a similar statement by the Wesleyan Methodists, see Matlack, *op. cit.*, 343.

47 Timothy L. Smith, *op. cit.*, 212; Dayton and Dayton, “Your Daughters Shall Prophecy,” 72.

48 *Christian Investigator* 2 (July 1844) 149; *ibid.* 1 (July 1843): 48.

49 See Goodell, “Entire Sanctification,” 23, 25. Theodore Hovet, “Phoebe Palmer’s ‘Altar Phraseology’ and the Spiritual Dimensions of Woman’s Sphere,” *The Journal of Religion* 63 (July 1983): 267-70, describes the way in which Palmer’s theology emphasized “a supernatural experience as the central element in the Christian life.” See also Charles Edward White, *The Beauty of Holiness: Phoebe Palmer as Theologian, Revivalist, Feminist, and Humanitarian* (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury Press, 1986), 204. The political abolitionists did not deny the need for a supernatural sanctification experience, but they insisted that such an experience go hand in hand with specific reform activity.

50 William Goodell, “Discussions on Perfection” (manuscript sermon, 1844), 14, Goodell Papers, Berea College, Berea, KY.

51 Luther Lee, *Autobiography of the Rev. Luther Lee* (reprint, New York: Garland Publishing, 1984), 227.

52 According to the Liberty party, voting was “a moral and religious duty” because they needed to obey the “moral laws of the Creator.” “National Liberty Convention,” in *Emancipator Extra* (September 1843): 5 (resolutions 26 and 37).

53 J. N. T. Tucker, *The Liberty Almanac. No. Two. 1845.* (Syracuse: Tucker & Kinney, 1845), 29. See also Stanton, et. al., *History of Woman Suffrage* 1, 77.

54 Although the Liberty party platform was initially restricted to legislating for the equal rights of African-Americans, the party (in upper New York) had a practice of extending equal rights to women, as well. The “womanish propensities” of the New York Liberty party were in sharp contrast to the views of their “third party brethren in Massachusetts, who left the old society for the woman question.” The New Yorkers encouraged the conservative Massachusetts Liberty men (presumably including Orange Scott) to emulate their “radicalism” on this question — perhaps, then, the conservatives would also have “new ideas of woman.” *Madison County Abolitionist* 1(7 December 1841): 46, serial located at the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA.

55 “The National Liberty Convention,” in *Emancipator Extra* (September 1843): 3 (Resolution 4). Likewise, the next year the Liberty party asserted that it was ‘the only [party] that sustains unequivocally the *Equal Political Rights of All*.” J. N. T. Tucker, ed., *The Liberty Almanac, for 1844* (Syracuse: I. A. Hopkins, 1844), 15.

56 William Goodell, *Address of the Macedon Convention By William Goodell; And Letters of Gerrit Smith* (Albany: S.W. Green, Patriot Office, 1847), 8-14. The Macedon Convention was actually a gathering of the “Liberty League,” a perfectionist splinter from the Liberty party that existed for two years. Perkal, *op. cit.*, 204-24.

57 Perkal, *op. cit.*, 204; *Proceedings of the National Liberty Convention Held at Buffalo, N.Y, June 14th and 15th, 1848, Including the Resolutions and Addresses Adopted By that Body and Speeches of Beriah Green and Gerrit Smith On That Occasion* (Utica: S.W. Green, 1848), 5, 14.

58 Although the Seneca Falls convention received a great deal of notoriety from the press, the proceedings of the 1848 national Liberty party convention (held one month before the Seneca Falls convention), including its position on women’s suffrage, would have been well known among abolitionists.

59 On his way from his home in Peterboro, New York, to the 1848 Liberty party convention in Buffalo, Gerrit Smith visited his cousin, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, in Seneca Falls. One can presume that they spoke of the impending issues to come before the Liberty convention, including women’s rights. It is difficult to know exactly who influenced whom, but certainly there must have been mutual encouragement to feminist advocacy during that visit.

60 In 1848 there was a split among political abolitionists. Some remained with the Liberty party, while the majority went into the new coalition of the Free Soil party. Women’s rights advocates were found in both factions.

61 “The Liberty Party of the United States, To the People of the United States,” *Proceedings of the National Liberty Convention*, 14; *Liberty Party Paper* 2 (12 February 1851); Stanton, et. al., *History of Woman Suffrage* I, 519-20; “Minutes of the State Liberty ‘Party Convention,’” *Liberty Party Paper* 1(1 August 1849). Some of the persons who operated within movements included Lucretia Mott, Gerrit Smith, Luther Lee,

Antoinette Brown, Caroline Severance, Jonathan Metcalf (of Seneca Falls), G.W. Johnson (New York state chairman of the Liberty party), and Dr. Cutcheon (of New York Central College in McGrawville).

62 Sanctification and millennial language were part of the women's rhetoric. See Stanton, et. al., *History of Women Suffrage I*, 78, 523. Elizabeth Cady Stanton used a characteristically perfectionist phrase when she remembered that at the Seneca Falls convention "a religious earnestness dignified all the proceedings." Theodore Stanton and Harriot Stanton Blatch, *op. cit.*, 146.

63 Stanton, et. al., *History of Women Suffrage I*, 524.

64 Stanton, et. al., *History of Women Suffrage I*, 825; Walters, *op. cit.*, 108. Gerrit Smith, speaking to the 1852 Women's Rights Convention, affirmed the franchise as the "great right that guarantees others." Stanton, et. al., *History of Women Suffrage I*, 527.

65 Joseph and Jonathan Metcalf, both seceders from the Methodist Episcopal Church, were leaders in the state Liberty party. Joseph Metcalf was the prime financial backer of the new Wesleyan church. *The Abolitionist* 2 (11 October 1842): 223; *ibid.* 2 (18 October 1842): 227; Seneca Falls Wesleyan Methodist Church, "Book No. 1. The Property of the First Wesleyan M. Church, Seneca Falls, N.Y.," manuscript located at the Seneca Falls Historical Society; George Pegler, *Autobiography of the Life and Times of the Rev. George Pegler. Written by Himself* (Syracuse: Wesleyan Methodist Publishing House, 1879), 409-15; Seneca Falls Methodist Episcopal Church, "Minutes of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Seneca Falls," 1838-1843, manuscript located at the United Methodist Church office, Seneca Falls, NY.

66 See Matlack, *op. cit.*, 178.

67 Seneca County, New York, *Manual of the Churches and Pastors of Seneca County, 1895-1896* (Seneca Falls: Courier Printing Co., 1896), 171-72.

68 Three hundred persons are estimated to have attended the convention, but only one hundred signed the "Declaration." Obviously, many came as curious onlookers. Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 77.

69 Signers of the "Declaration and Resolutions" included the following persons: Sophia Taylor, Sarah Whitney, Joel Bunker, Saron Phillips,

and probably Sally Pitcher and Jonathan Metcalf were members of the Wesleyan Methodist church; the parents of signers Mary and Elizabeth Conklin were members of the church; the husband of signer Mary Martin was a member; and the wife of signer Henry Seymour was a member. See Seneca Falls Wesleyan Methodist Church, "Book No.1"; *idem*, "Roll of Members," 5, 7, manuscript located at the Seneca Falls Historical Society; Stanton and Blatch, *op. cit.*, 147. I wish to express my appreciation to Judith Wellman, State University of New York at Oswego, for her assistance in locating the identities of these persons. Other "subscribers" to the Women's Rights Convention included Jeremy and Rhoda Bement, who attended the Wesleyan Methodist chapel, but were not members. Glenn C. Altschuler and Jan M. Saltzgeber, *Revivalism, Social Conscience, and Community in the Burned-Over District: The Trial of Rhoda Bement* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 48, 143.

70 Stanton, et. al., *History of Woman Suffrage* I, 69.

71 Flexner, *op. cit.*, 76. See also Pheta Childe Dorr, *Susan B. Anthony: The Woman Who Changed the Mind of a Nation* (New York: AMS Press, 1970, reprint), 49; Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*, 91.

72 See *Manual of the Churches and Pastors of Seneca County*, 171; Stanton and Blatch, *op. cit.*, 147.

73 Elizabeth Cazden, *Antoinette Brown Blackwell: A Biography* (Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press, 1983), 28, 36.

74 Stanton, et. al., *History of Woman Suffrage* I, 72-73.

75 Cazden, *op. cit.*, 31, 42, 56, 70, 84-85; Carol Lasser and Marlene Deahl Merrill, eds., *Friends and Sisters: Letters between Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown Blackwell. 1846-93* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 133.

76 Lasser and Merrill, *op. cit.*, 108, 123; Cazden, *op. cit.*, 67-68; *National Era* (9 September 1852), cited in Perkal, *op. cit.*, 233.

77 Cazden, *op. cit.*, 70-71; Stanton, et. al., *History of Woman Suffrage* I, 519n, 524-25, 535-40.

78 Cazden, *op. cit.*, 35ff.

79 *Christian Investigator* 3 (March 1845): 216; *ibid.* 4 (April 1846): 318; W. H. McIntosh, *History of Wayne County, New York* (Philadelphia: Everts, Ensign, and Everts, 1877), 79; Marjorie Allen, "First United States woman minister ordained in S. Butler," *Wayne County Star* (2

September 1973), located in the files of the Wayne County Department of History, Lyons, NY. Most of the South Butler church members were “political abolitionists of the most frantic and rabid kind” (*ibid.*).

80 See McIntosh, *History of Wayne County*, 79; Cazden, *op. cit.*, 77-78; Lasser and Merrill, *op. cit.*, 133. Historian Whitney Cross (*op.cit.*, 283), mistakenly identified the South Butler congregation as a Wesleyan Methodist church. Lasser and Merrill, 133n, incorrectly determined that Brown’s attendance at a “Christian Union” meeting was the “American and Foreign Christian Union.” Clearly the context demonstrates that Brown was at a meeting of antisectionarian Union churches.

81 There is some doubt as to whether Brown was actually “ordained.” Lee seemed to have some question about it later (See Cazden, *op. cit.*, 84). Was Lee betraying a latent patriarchy or an ambivalence about women’s rights? Probably not. More accurately, Lee was merely demonstrating his antisectionarian antipathy toward any formal distinction between lay and clergy. Among reformist abolitionists, the laying on of hands in ordination signified the establishment of a clerical “caste.” One local account states that Brown was “‘installed’ as pastor of the church (authority by any one to ‘ordain’ being disclaimed and denied).” McIntosh, *op. cit.*, 79. See also Perkal, *op. cit.*, 169.

82 Another colleague who took part in Brown’s installation was Gerrit Smith. Smith’s perfectionist theology, political abolitionism and universal reform principles put him at the center of all of these diverse movements. It is interesting that he was a participant at Brown’s installation and also a strong influence on Stanton’s women’s rights advocacy.

83 Hovet, *op. cit.*, 275; White, *The Beauty of Holiness*, 206; Dayton and Dayton, “Your Daughters Shall Prophesy,” 72.

84 See Welter, *Dimity Convictions*, 21-23; and Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood*, 140-43, 146-48, 154-59. This interpretation of Palmer differs from the one advanced by Charles White (*The Beauty of Holiness*, 204-5). White correctly states that Palmer encouraged women to have a mission-minded focus to persons beyond the home. Although the outward focus of women does demonstrate an enlargement of their religious role, White contends, nonetheless it did *not* challenge the essential definition of woman’s place within the domestic sphere, because religious activities (even those external to the home) were viewed as appropriate, even essential, to woman’s domesticity.

85 See, for instance, Scott's description of holiness ("our souls and our bodies" are to be "laid on the altar" [Matlack, *op. cit.*, 250]) which is very similar to Palmer's terminology regarding holiness.

86 Here, I am countering Timothy Smith's interpretation of Wesleyan Methodist origins. Smith (*Revivalism and Social Reform*, 212-13) implies that the major influences on the Wesleyans were Phoebe Palmer's ideas combined with those from Oberlin.

87 Smith, *op. cit.*, 212; White, *op. cit.*, 228.

88 Benson Howard Roberts, *Benjamin Titus Roberts. Late General Superintendent of the Free Methodist Church. A Biography* (North Chili, NY: "The Earnest Christian" Office, 1900), 51; Clarence Howard Zahniser, *Earnest Christian: Life and Works of Benjamin Titus Roberts* (Circleville, OH: Advocate Publishing House, 1957), 44, 47; Helen Josephine White Gilbert, *Rushford and Rushford People* (n.p.: Chautauqua Print Shop, 1910), 232-34; John Horton, Edward Williams, and Harry Douglass, *History of Northwestern New York* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1947) I, 573.

89 Benson Howard Roberts, *op. cit.*, 56; Zahniser, *op. cit.*, 45-46.

90 In 1866, Lee and a large portion of the Wesleyan Methodist leadership returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is likely that Lee and the others were so deeply disappointed by the failure to create an ecumenical "union" of reform-minded Methodist Protestants and Wesleyan Methodists that they simply returned to their parent church. This move to Methodist Episcopacy is somewhat ironic given Lee's antipathy to hierarchy.

91 Ruth Doan, *The Miller Heresy, Millennialism, and American Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 16-30, 215- 28.

92 Goodell, *Address of the Macedon Convention*, 8-14; *Proceedings of the National Liberty Convention* (1848), 5, 14; Perkal, *op. cit.*, 204.

**CHRISTIAN BAPTISM AND
THE EARLY NAZARENES:
THE SOURCES THAT SHAPED
A PLURALISTIC BAPTISMAL TRADITION**

by Stanley Ingersol

“Unity in essentials; liberty in nonessentials.” Around the principle embedded in this old aphorism, the founders of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene merged three separate denominations into one. These churches had originated in different sections of the nation: the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America in the eastern United States, the Holiness Church of Christ in the south and southwest, and the Church of the Nazarene on the Pacific coast. In spite of their diverse and independent points of origin, much already united the three groups prior to their merger. Each held to the Wesleyan way of salvation and Christian life as modified by the American holiness movement. Each embraced pietism as its dominant spiritual mode; each also accepted the modifications made to the pietist tradition by American revivalism. All three churches ordained women, had female pastors, and did so on a commonly held theological basis. Likewise, each was a *believers’ church*, exhibiting the traits of a distinctive style of churchmanship whose classical characteristics are enumerated by Donald E Dumbaugh in *The Believers’ Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism* (1968).

Dumbaugh argues that the believers’ church is a voluntary fellowship based on the idea of separation from the world and the gathering together of converted believers, rejecting any notion of the visible church as a mixed assembly. The believers’ church emphasizes the necessity for

all members to be active in Christian work; it practices church discipline; its members care for the poor and especially for Christian sisters and brothers in need; it follows a simple pattern of worship; and its common life is centered on “the Word, prayer, and love,”¹ With varying degrees of emphasis, the uniting groups of 1907-1908 reflected the characteristics of the believers’ church tradition, and each did so with specific reference over-and-against episcopal Methodism, then the largest Protestant tradition in the land and fast developing into the quintessential American denomination. The “northern” branch, the Methodist Episcopal Church, was the largest Protestant church in the nation; the “southern” branch, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was second largest.

Differences between and within the regional holiness denominations remained, and these were reconciled by the principle of “liberty in nonessentials.” The 1898 *Manual* of Phineas Bresee’s Church of the Nazarene in the West makes clear that “essentials” were beliefs necessary to salvation.² Particular eschatologies and baptismal views were nonessentials and required liberty of conscience. Were these doctrines then deemed unimportant? Hardly so. If educator A. M. Hills held staunchly to post-millennialism, Southern churchman J. B. Chapman and others were pre-millennialists with equal conviction. Did general superintendents Bresee and H. F. Reynolds affirm the importance of infant baptism? Rescue worker J. T. Upchurch disdained that doctrine and practice.³ In the newly organized Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, liberty of conscience was required precisely because particular baptismal and eschatological views were affirmed strongly-so strongly, in fact, that it was pointless for those of one school of thought on these issues to seek prevalence in church councils over those who held contrary views. Pluralism was not indifference to these doctrines but the very opposite, though rooted in the belief that the focus of Pentecostal Nazarene unity should lie elsewhere-on the Wesleyan way of salvation, in particular.

Two questions bear examination within this context: what were the actual baptismal traditions of the uniting churches, and what did the very fact of pluralism in baptismal theology bring to the Pentecostal Nazarene synthesis?

I. BAPTISMAL THEOLOGY IN THE HOLINESS CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Holiness Church of Christ was the Southern root of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, and the largest of the three uniting denom-

inations. Itself the product of merger, the Holiness Church of Christ had two parent bodies, and in each a different baptismal tradition emerged. One baptismal tradition was broad and inclusive, while the other was focused and exclusive. These two views were reconciled in 1904 at Rising Star, Texas, when the two Southern churches united, committing themselves in the process to the principle of pluralism of baptismal expression, but with insistence on the absolute necessity of Christian baptism for church members.

The restrictive doctrine of baptism was that held by the New Testament Church of Christ, a restorationist body originating in western Tennessee. The New Testament Church of Christ was a form of Free Methodism indigenized and fitted to the Southern context. Robert Lee Harris, its founder, encountered Free Methodism in Texas in the early 1880s, was sanctified under its auspices, entered the Holiness Movement through its doors, joined its clergy, and was ordained deacon and elder by B. T. Roberts, its founding general superintendent. Harris was a valued evangelist in the Texas Conference of the Free Methodist Church, but his enthusiasm for independent foreign missions put him at odds with denominational programs. He withdrew in 1889, uniting with a Southern Methodist congregation in Memphis. Harris continued his evangelistic career, using a local preacher's license as the new basis of his ministerial authority. He was involved in "the evangelist controversy" in Southern Methodism, and was again drawn into conflict with denominational authority. Another source also fueled Harris' tension with Southern Methodism: as he itinerated, he propagated Free Methodism's distinctive spirituality which was united to restrictive personal ethics and, in many instances, liberal social doctrines. Harris searched for an answer to his ecclesiastical dilemma throughout his five years in the Southern Methodist Church. Besides scripture, it is unknown what specific theological texts he searched, although he lived in an area conducive to restorationist views. Memphis was the home of Baptist controversialist James Graves and a center for the dissemination of Landmark Baptist doctrines. The people of western Tennessee were also conversant with the restorationist views of the Christian Church, known popularly as Campbellites. But Harris' new movement differed from these by uniting to its restorationist base the spiritual and moral vision of Free Methodism.⁴

Baptismal theology became an important element in the new holiness sect that sprang from Harris' ministry. The New Testament Church of Christ took shape during May and June of 1894 as Harris preached a

series of sermons in Milan, Tennessee on “the church question,” or the relationship of Wesleyan-holiness people to the “popular churches.” According to the unpublished diary of Donie Mitchum, Harris “unmasked sin in and out of the churches and showed all sects and denominations to be unscriptural.” Afterwards, he preached a series on “justification, sanctification, second coming of Christ, and how our souls were fed. After [that,] he preached a sermon on pouring as the scriptural mode of Baptism.” This last sermon provoked a challenge from a local Campbellite. Harris then set aside services to debate baptismal theology with his challenger, gaining from this debate a new and significant convert, Robert Balie Mitchum, a Baptist deacon.⁵ One month later, on July 5, 1894, the New Testament Church of Christ was “set in order,” a phrase meaning that the church of which Christ alone is founder already existed among the Christian people and was being recognized and ordered along scriptural lines. In a service held four days later, Harris summarized the government and doctrines of the New Testament church, called for new members to step forward, and rebaptized those whose previous baptism was by immersion. The identities of two of these are known. One was Donie Mitchum, a life-long Methodist who taught the young girls’ Sunday school class at the Methodist Church. Her Baptist husband, Balie Mitchum, was another.⁶ The new church’s doctrines were reported by a Memphis newspaper, and Harris’ view of baptism was stated succinctly:

“The baptism of the Holy Ghost was administered by pouring, and therefore as water baptism is a likeness of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, it also must be administered by pouring.”⁷

The earliest available exposition of this baptismal theology was published in the 1900 *Guidebook* of the Texas Council of the New Testament Church of Christ. Article 10, on baptism, is identical to the wording that appeared in the Memphis newspaper, and therefore bears the direct stamp of Robert Lee Harris. The article is followed by a series of scripture texts, each dealing primarily with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:15-18; Acts 10:44-48; Acts 11:15-16; and Joel 2:28).⁸ More than three pages of discussion followed. This is significant, for baptism was the only doctrinal point given exposition in the entire manual! The case for pouring as the scriptural mode was stated in three points: (1) “The baptism of the Holy Spirit was promised to believers throughout this dispensation.” (2) Spirit baptism is *real* baptism, while water baptism “is called baptism” because its design is to be “the likeness, or picture, of real baptism.” Harris argued: “Wine was called the blood of Christ when drank [sic] to rep-

resent it, yet it was not the blood in reality, but it wore the name of the thing it [depicted] . . . so it is with water baptism. If it is not. . . [done in a mode that depicts] the real baptism, it is no more baptism than wine, when drunk [sic] without reference to the blood of Christ, is blood.” (3) Real baptism consists of the Spirit, the baptismal event, and the mode of outpouring. In water baptism, water symbolizes the Spirit, and the mirror image of Spirit baptism is by pouring. Article 11 defined *who* could baptize-vesting that authority in a duly recognized minister, but adding that “under circumstances of necessity a simple disciple may administer baptism.”⁹ There was no printed baptismal ritual, nor any indication of whether infants could be baptized.

Robert Lee Harris died five months after the New Testament Church of Christ was formed. That fact altered completely the trajectory of the movement. Harris had created a church in which ecclesiology and soteriology were both determinative doctrines in a theological system, but in the hands of his successors the gravity of theological weight shifted, increasingly subordinating ecclesiological values to soteriological ones. A clear theological transformation took place within the sect over the course of the next decade.¹⁰

As the New Testament Church of Christ expanded, its baptismal doctrine inhibited its growth within a Southern religious culture steeped in immersionist thinking. This was recognized early and led to a reconsideration of the church’s baptismal doctrines when the first connectional council met in 1899. The discussion was quite heated. Harris’ widow, Mary Lee Harris (soon to become Mary Lee Cagle), insisted that her late husband’s founding principles should be maintained without amendment. Others strongly disagreed. Donie Mitchum wrote in her private journal that Mary Harris “would not yield an inch but rather manifested (apparently) an ugly spirit. All other talks were made in the spirit of Christ. My sympathy goes out for her as she has much to overcome on the line of having her way about things.” After debating the issue three separate times, the council reaffirmed pouring as the scriptural view but recognized that

there are saved people in [God’s] church who give evidence of the same by their godly walk and conversation who have been immersed, and we recognize them as God’s children and we as a part of His household cannot afford to turn away those He accepts . . . as we are congregational in government it is left with each local congregation to say whether or not they accept

or reject members who believe in and practice immersion and have not been baptized by pouring.¹¹

On this basis, the sect's churches in Tennessee and Arkansas continued to baptize by pouring but opened the way for individuals previously baptized by other modes to join those New Testament churches that might elect to receive them without rebaptism.

This adjustment applied only to the Eastern Council of the New Testament Church of Christ. Before this time, Mary Lee Cagle had organized congregations in Texas, and in 1902 she formed these into a separate Texas Council. There, baptism by pouring remained a condition of membership, though in 1903 it became a contested issue. In that year, the Texas Council debated a motion that read: "Resolved, that we do not make the mode of water baptism a test of church membership." This resolution was defeated, but the issue was reopened the following day when the council learned that some congregations had accepted, without rebaptism, members previously baptized by other modes. The council president ruled that such persons were not members, and this ruling stood. Rev. J. W. Manney, who had led attempts to change the rule, then reported "that he had set in order a congregation at Chilton, Texas, composed of 30 members, all of whom agreed to submit to the ruling of the Council on the baptism question."¹² Thus, the Eastern and Texas Councils of the New Testament Church of Christ remained agreed on pouring as the scriptural mode of baptism, but differed on whether rebaptism was required to receive into membership those already baptized by other modes.

During this period, the New Testament Church of Christ moved toward merger with the Independent Holiness Church led by Charles B. Jernigan and James B. Chapman. Jernigan, a consummate organizer, believed in casting wide nets. In 1901, he helped organize both the Holiness Association of Texas, an interdenominational body, and the Independent Holiness Church, a sectarian one. In justifying the rise of the Independent Holiness Church, Jernigan stated repeatedly that its people sought "a place where the sacraments could be administered." In his view, the scattered holiness bands in East Texas needed to be organized into churches because in the bands "there was no baptism, no sacraments for her people, and they were called come-outers by the church people." The Independent Holiness Church recognized all modes of baptism as valid and scriptural, though Chapman, at least, preferred immersion. According to critic B. F. Neely, they also accepted unbaptized Christians into membership.¹³

In the late summer of 1904, Jernigan sought the merger of three Southern churches: the Independent Holiness Church, the New Testament Church of Christ, and the Holiness Baptist Churches of Arkansas organized and led by W. J. Waithall of Texarkana. In sharp contrast to the New Testament Church of Christ, the Holiness Baptists were strict immersionists. Some version of Jernigan's position was obviously the only valid basis for a merger of the three bodies. At their annual council in late September, the Holiness Baptists expressed very strong interest in consolidating with other holiness churches, but only if immersion were the *exclusive* mode of baptism practiced.¹⁴ The other two denominations went forward without the Holiness Baptists, calling for a delegated meeting in November at Rising Star, Texas. There, Mary Lee Cagle and her associate, B. F. Neely, defended pouring as the scriptural mode, but agreed ultimately to a compromise in which both groups made concessions. The two churches agreed that in the new Holiness Church of Christ, baptism would be required for church membership, but mode would be left to the individual conscience. Jernigan's published account of this council declared baptism a "nonessential." What did he mean, exactly? In context, it meant that different modes of baptism could be accommodated in the search for unity in holiness, though baptism itself was a requirement, in their view, for identification with the visible church. This point was strengthened in the *Manual* of 1906, when a sentence was added following that on freedom of mode. The new line declared: "This article can in no wise be construed to mean, that one can be admitted into the congregation without water baptism."¹⁵

II. BAPTISM AND THE ASSOCIATION OF PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES OF AMERICA

Like the Holiness Church of Christ, the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America stood in the believers' church tradition. Also like its Southern sister, it was the product of a merger. No single manual bound this denomination together, for each congregation wrote its own. Like some Baptist denominations, this one was a union of congregations united by a common theology, mutual support between churches, educational and publishing interests, and a strong sense of mission to the world. Except for a lengthy statement on entire sanctification, the doctrinal standards of the denomination were brief, containing but one short reference to baptism as the "initiatory rite" of the visible church. Our method here, then, must be to analyze baptismal statements of congregational manuals.

The older branch of this body was the Central Evangelical Holiness Association, a small New England denomination formed in 1890 by ten independent congregations all less than four years old. One of these was the People's Evangelical Church of Providence, Rhode Island, formed in 1887 under the leadership of Fred Hillery. A vital church, its paper, *The Beulah Christian*, functioned after 1890 as a connectional organ for the New England churches, and after 1897 as the official organ of the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America. A congregational manual of the People's Evangelical Church, dated 1895, resonates with the key themes of the believers' church tradition. Its opening paragraph states:

A church consists of a number of believers who unite themselves by a public profession of the Christian religion, and by mutual covenant, to pray together and watch over one another in love, to maintain the worship and service of God, and the ordinances and discipline of the gospel.¹⁶

The manual contains a Confession of Faith, with three of its eleven articles concerning the church and sacraments (Articles VII, VIII, and IX). Two of these are quoted in their entirety:

ARTICLE VII

We believe that Christ has a visible church in the world, that its ordinances are Baptism and the Lord's Supper; that the Christian Sabbath and the Gospel Ministry are institutions of divine appointment, and that it is the duty of Christians to unite with this visible church and observe its sacred ordinances.

ARTICLE VIII

We believe that the outward sign in Baptism is water applied in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that the inward grace signified in this ordinance is a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness.¹⁷

A good deal is left unsaid. Were infants baptized, and was mode of baptism an issue? Was baptism a condition of church membership? Taking the last question first, Christian baptism was indeed required. Article VII stated clearly that the visible church's ordinances are two in number, and that "it is the duty of Christians to unite with this visible church and observe its sacred ordinances." The congregational covenant gave this general principle concrete application, a line of it stating: "We do covenant to attend the worship of God and the ordinances of the gospel

with this Church.” Moreover, a baptismal ritual is integrated into the ritual for church membership. The place in the membership ritual where the baptismal act occurs is in brackets, indicating the option of omission, but the option would be for new members previously baptized. Indeed, all the means of grace were valued so highly that Standing Rules 10 and 11 made their neglect, including “unnecessary absence” from communion, a ground for church discipline and dismissal.

Two other items are worth noting. First, the manual required the church clerk to keep a “chronological register of all members showing name and date of those baptized.” Second, the church had five committees, including a Baptism Committee. The Manual set forth its duties:

The committee shall arrange things necessary for the proper observance of this ordinance, and, if the mode of baptism selected by the candidate be immersion, furnish suitable dresses and proper conveyance to and from the water.

Clearly mode of baptism was a matter of individual conscience. Many other marks of the believers’ church tradition are reflected in this manual, including a Sick and Destitute Committee composed of nine members. Its duties included visiting the sick, the infirm and the destitute; furnishing watchers for the sick; providing for the needy from the funds at their disposal; and assisting the unemployed to find suitable employment.¹⁸ This and other such characteristics reinforce the idea that Christian baptism was understood as initiation into a community of devotion, service and love.

The year after the People’s Evangelical Church organized, a sister congregation formed in Lynn, Massachusetts. A manual dated 1898 contains a Confession of Faith identical to that of the People’s Church, including three identical articles on the church and sacraments.¹⁹ Everything else in the Lynn church’s manual is different, including its church covenant and standing rules, though evidence of the believers’ church tradition again abounds. The church Constitution established regular covenant meetings as a specific type of meeting distinct from business and prayer meetings. The significance of the covenant meeting was underscored by its relationship to the sacrament of communion: “The covenant meeting should be held the last Friday evening before the first Sunday in every month, and the Holy Communion should be celebrated on the succeeding Lord’s Day.”²⁰ The Lynn congregation vested oversight of baptism in the Official Board of the church, assigning it the task of examining candidates and making necessary preparations for observing

the rite. Nothing more of baptism appears in this manual, but the believers' church tradition is the context for the observance of both sacraments. For instance, the Lynn church's emphasis on mutual support is reflected in the fact that among its five committees were a Committee on Sick and Poor and a Committee on Hospitality.²¹

In 1897, the Central Evangelical Holiness Association, including these member churches at Providence and Lynn, united with the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America, an organization formed in 1895 under the leadership of William Howard Hoople of Brooklyn. Both merging groups were congregational in government. Each ordained ministers subject to a congregational vote and the examination and laying on of hands by a presbytery of ministers.²² Hoople's wing of the merger was vital and growing but may have lacked theological depth, since some later congregational manuals of the united body contain confessions of faith modeled after the confessions of the older New England churches. The name of the younger body was geographically inclusive and was retained as the name of the united body, which by 1907 had congregations extending from Nova Scotia to Iowa.

One finds both less and more when looking for baptismal doctrines in the manuals of the New York and Pennsylvania churches that stemmed from Hoople's wing of the denomination. Lincoln Place Pentecostal Church in Pennsylvania was organized in 1899. Its manual of 1904 has a single article (Article VIII) on the church and its sacraments, referring to the latter simply as "the initiatory and memorial rites, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper." A lengthy exposition of the article follows but deals solely with establishing a theological basis for the independence of the local church. This manual carries no rituals and its only other mention of baptism is to vest the church advisory board with the task of examining baptismal candidates.²³

By 1900, however, the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America had in print a generic manual that new congregations could adopt or modify. The generic manual provides the most detailed glimpse available into baptismal practices. It includes rituals for both infant and believers' baptisms. The ritual for infants appeals to Jesus' welcoming the little children. It then sets forth specific conditions for parents or sponsors, including teaching the child to know the "nature and end of this holy sacrament." Children were to be taught to give "reverent attendance upon the means of grace," specifically public and private worship, the ministry of preaching, and study of scriptures. The ritual for believers' baptism is strikingly dif-

ferent. It begins with a narrative of Nicodemus' conversation with Jesus on the distinction between water and Spirit, moves to the renunciation of the devil and his works, affirms the Apostles' Creed and ends in a vow of obedience to the commandments of God. The generic manual recognizes sprinkling, pouring, and immersion as valid modes, leaving the choice of mode to the candidate.²⁴

The Beulah Christian reports a variety of baptismal practices in use throughout the denomination. In 1893, for instance, Rev. H. N. Brown conducted a service at the church in Keene, New Hampshire in which he "baptized five children, received two adults on probation, and administered the Lord's Supper." In a different vein, the church at Malden, Massachusetts conducted a baptismal service in 1895 in which three adults were immersed. One reads that "the service was impressive."²⁵

Baptismal practices within the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America can be summarized as follows. First, each congregation was at liberty to shape its own theological statement about the meaning and significance of baptism. Secondly, the denominational framework allowed the widest latitude, permitting infant as well as believers' baptism, and making choice of mode a matter of the candidate's conscience. Third, the fact of pluralism meant that church members were expected to maintain a spirit of harmony with those who thought and acted differently on the subject. Fourth, all this was within the framework of a strong believers' church tradition that stressed a local congregational covenant, church discipline, good works, and mutual support.

III. BAPTISM IN THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE IN THE WEST

In turning to the Church of the Nazarene in the West, the treatment is more cursory, limited to identifying salient features that invite comparison and contrast with the other groups. A key place to turn is to the 1898 *Manual*-the first published by Phineas F. Bresee's organization. The contrast with the early ecclesiology of the New Testament Church of Christ could not be more dramatic. An introduction states that the founders of the Pacific coast movement, "believing that the Lord Jesus Christ had ordained no particular form of government for the Church," were guided by "common consent" in framing their polity, provided that nothing agreed upon was "repugnant to the Word of God."²⁶ Clearly, these people were not restorationists, and certainly not in the ecclesiological sense. Yet the basis for counting this group as a believers' church is

unmistakable. The introduction states that those who formed the first congregation in Los Angeles were “called of God to this work, to come out and stand together.” They were called especially to live holy lives together, to minister to the poor and neglected, and to give active Christian testimony to their faith. Firm and explicit guidelines were given for applying church discipline.²⁷

The section on baptism is specific and liberal, affirming infant and believers’ baptism as proper choices, allowing any mode of baptism, and allowing rebaptism “on account of uncertainty, or lack of proper instruction, or scruples having arisen as to mode.” The rituals for infant and adult baptism state that it “is an external seal of the New Covenant,” while the internal seal is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. In the case of infants, the external seal of baptism replaces the external seal of circumcision in the Old Covenant. The story of Jesus and the little children in Luke 18 was called to remembrance before the charge to parents or sponsors was read. Among the charges is the obligation of parents to teach the child “the design of this sacrament,” the scriptures, and other things necessary to salvation.²⁸

In the ritual for baptizing adults, more explicit connection was made between water and Spirit baptisms. The candidate was reminded that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is promised to all believers and will be fulfilled “in answer to obedient faith.” Later in the ritual the candidate was asked: “Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed—if not, do you now present yourself a living sacrifice to be cleansed from all sin?”²⁹ Thus a connection was made between water and Spirit baptism in which the former could function in some as a witness to Spirit baptism, and in others as anticipation of a future event.

The *Manual* of 1905-06, the last manual of Bresee’s church prior to union with other holiness denominations, shows unmistakable development and change in baptismal thinking and ritual. In a forthcoming biography of Phineas Bresee, Professor Carl Bangs will provide a fuller account of these developments. The major points to make here are that in the later manual the connection between water baptism and the Holy Spirit is no longer obvious, and the rite is now tied concretely to the declaration of saving faith. The ritual for believers’ baptism has another change, too, with the Apostles’ Creed now made part of the baptismal covenant.³⁰

IV. CONCLUSIONS

These summaries now provide sufficient data to draw definite conclusions. First, the cursory look at Bresee's branch, and our longer look at the Holiness Church of Christ and the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America, show ongoing development of baptismal theology and practice within the regional groups that created the present-day Church of the Nazarene. Since the principle of development of baptismal doctrine is so well grounded in that early history, there should be little surprise that the new denomination's baptismal theology continued to develop after 1908, and continues to develop today. Secondly, variety of baptismal expression, particularly with regard to the mode of believer's baptism, existed in each regional entity prior to their coming together. What is not clear is the stand of the Holiness Church of Christ on infant baptism, though both the Eastern and Western denominations permitted and practiced this. The very fact that early Nazarenes embraced pluralism in baptismal theology indicates that the focus of Nazarene unity rested on other points, namely those related to the Wesleyan way of salvation. The other side of this fact is that outside "the essentials" early Nazarenes not only tolerated but *expected* diversity of opinion and practice.

Third, the founding churches were serious about the practice of baptism because they were serious about the church as a gathered and disciplined body of believers who testified to their faith through words and acts. Jernigan's insistence on the sacramental necessity for organizing the Independent Holiness Church was prompted by a concern to bring the signs and blessings of the visible church to the holiness bands, but it was also an implicit rebuke of the Methodist denominations, which practiced the sacraments in increasingly undisciplined churches in which many of the means of grace were being steadily abandoned by the membership. At first independently, and later as a unified body, the founding groups of the present-day Church of the Nazarene placed their baptismal theologies within the context of the believer's church tradition, with its emphasis on commitment and love.

V. APPROPRIATING THE USABLE PAST

The Church of the Nazarene did not adopt a formal Article of Faith on "The Church" until 1989. Nevertheless, there were definite ecclesiological assumptions behind the multiple separations of local bodies from episcopal Methodism, and the coalescing of these groups into regional churches, then a national one, and, with the accession of the Pentecostal

Church of Scotland in 1915, into a multi-national one. The believers' church tradition lies at the very heart of the Nazarene experience, and thereby gives evidence that the Church of the Nazarene originated with a unique soul—one that in its original context was both Methodistic and Baptist, yet not completely one or the other. In birth, it generated a unique soul of its own. This interpretation helps us better understand why that church (and some other Wesleyan-holiness churches) came into existence, even though a majority of Wesleyan-holiness people remained ever-loyal to episcopal Methodism. Moreover, it identifies a leading tension between the Methodist and believers' church poles that has shaped a leading Wesleyan-holiness denomination's subsequent development. As a believers' church in the Wesleyan tradition, early Nazarenes were not unlike American episcopal Methodism in its first century and British Methodism since the death of John Wesley. Like recent mainline Methodism, however, Nazarenes now risk destroying the character of their original vision, though by way of a much different trajectory. While mainline Methodism now reflects the full pluralism of American culture, the Church of the Nazarene has come to reflect much of the pluralism found within American evangelicalism—much of it based on patterns of thought antithetical to Wesleyan ideas of scripture, salvation, and the means of grace. This tendency has influenced Nazarenes to accent ever more strongly the believers' church side of their tradition at the expense of the Wesleyan side. For this reason, attempts to “re-Wesleyanize” the church—they may have natural limits—are regarded by some as necessary to restore the balance of the founding vision. A key part of the Nazarene theological task today may be to rediscover what it means to be a *believers' church* in the *Wesleyan* tradition. Indeed, this *may* be a theological need of the Wesleyan-holiness denominations generally. In the Nazarene context, the point is nowhere better illustrated than in the case of current baptismal practice, where the trend increasingly is toward the exclusive practice of believers' baptism, and increasingly by immersion. This is one of the strongest evidences (but by no means the only one) that Nazarenes are developing a Baptist soul and character at the expense of their own, and losing that creative and meaningful tension that characterized early Nazarene faith and practice.

The restoration of that creative tension, if it occurs, will have to come through various means. One aspect of that process can be the joyful recovery and practice of pluralism in baptismal expression. As a matter of conscience, ministers should become able and willing to articulate the

theological basis behind each baptismal expression. Likewise, it may be essential for theologians to help by restating the case for these practices, as Rob L. Stables has done in his recent *Outward Sign and Inward Grace* (1991). The historian can also play a role by calling to remembrance the people, words, and deeds that exemplify founding principles.

The historian can call to remembrance, for instance, the testimony of Mary King Snowbarger, the mother of Nazarene educators, who was baptized in Hutchinson, Kansas nearly eighty years ago. In her oral autobiography, she stated that Re~ H. M. Chambers “baptized Bertha, Esther, and myself at the same time as we knelt at the altar. He was using a pitcher and poured water on our heads. That has been a satisfactory baptism to me.”³¹ Another person to recall is Phineas Bresee, who was sought out at district assemblies to baptize infants, some of whom are still active church members today.³² Nor was Bresee the only founding general superintendent called upon for this honor. Hiram E Reynolds was likewise pressed into willing service of this kind. Consider this notation in the 1924 *Journal* of the Eastern Oklahoma District: “At 2 o’clock Dr. Reynolds baptized six babies, which occasion was a blessing to all. After this a great ordination service followed.” Or note these lines from the San Antonio District Journal of 1927: “Baptismal service followed. Dr. Reynolds called for all who wished to bring their children for baptism and seven were presented.”³³ Similar statements can be found to infant baptisms conducted in district assemblies by early general superintendents Roy T. Williams, 3. B. Chapman, and John W. Goodwin, indicating the one-time popularity of the practice in a setting that held it, and its theological significance, up to a wide audience.³⁴

The early pluralism of baptismal practice generated a flow of questions to the editor of *Herald of Holiness*, the leading denominational paper, and this became an opportunity for instructing the church. In the 1920s, editor J. B. Chapman, an immersionist, defended infant baptism, immersion, and pluralism itself as acceptable and commendable practices of the church. Chapman also counseled ministers to baptize by modes they did not prefer rather than make people wait for a minister in wholehearted agreement with their mode of choice. One thing he did *not* defend was membership of unbaptized Christians in the Church of the Nazarene. He insisted: “It is expected that people who unite with the Church of the Nazarene shall have *some* water by *some* mode.”³⁵

Another person to recall is Mary Lee Cagle, who once stood steadfast for pouring as the only scriptural mode of baptism. After 1904, she

embraced thoroughly the ideal of liberty on baptismal mode and timing, becoming on this issue a model pastor who was responsive to the individual consciences among her people. In an autobiography, she recounted a community baptismal service performed by her and her husband in an unchurched town in New Mexico. There were unbaptized people present who had been converted in various revivals over the years. Her account is written in the third person but refers to her husband and herself: “It was one time they baptized every way under the sun-by every mode possible. They dipped-they plunged-they poured-they sprinkled and they baptized babies. It was a time of rejoicing; and the shouts of the redeemed echoed and re-echoed through the hills.”³⁶

NOTES

¹Donald F. Dumbaugh, *The Believers' Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), pp.4, 32-33.

²See *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene; Promulgated by the Assembly of 1898 held in Los Angeles, Cal.* (Los Angeles: Committee of Publication [of the Church of the Nazarene], n.d.), p.10.

³The post-millennialism of A. M. Hills is presented, among other places, in his *Fundamental Christian Theology. A Systematic Theology* (2 vols.; Pasadena, CA: C. J. Kinne, 1931), II: 339, 351-360. Chapman's pre-millennial views are stated in the same volume, pp.339-351. The practice of infant baptism by Bresee and Reynolds is documented toward the end of this essay. J. T. Upchurch's antagonism to infant baptism is mentioned in *The Holiness Evangel* (June 1, 1907): 1.

⁴Robert Lee Harris' Free Methodist background and its impact on his Southern Methodist ministry and on the creation of the New Testament Church of Christ are detailed in chapters 4 and 5 of Robert Stanley Ingersol, “Burden of Dissent: Mary Lee Cagle and the Southern Holiness Movement,” Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1989.

⁵The Journal of Donie Adams Mitchum, unpublished manuscript, p.17. Microfilm copy in the Donie and Robert Balie Mitchum Collection of the Nazarene Archives. Balie Mitchum became a significant lay leader in the New Testament Church of Christ and its successor, and at the union of 1908 was president of the Holiness Church of Christ. In 1923, he was a

founding member of the General Board of the Church of the Nazarene. He became a rather successful Nashville businessman.

6Donie Mitchum's Journal, pp.19-20; "The Church of Christ," *Milan (TN) Exchange* (July 7, 1894): 4; and "Organized His Church," *ibid.*, (July 14, 1894): 4. The Mitchum daughter Hazel did not require rebaptism, since she had been baptized by pouring at age six in the parlor of the Mitchum's home. That service was performed by Mrs. Mitchum's brother, T. L. Adams, a Southern Methodist minister and holiness evangelist. For that account, see Donie Mitchum's Journal, unnumbered pages inserted inside the front cover.

7Clipping on page 23 of Donie Mitchum's Journal.

8*Government and Doctrines of New Testament Churches* (Waco, Texas: The Evangelist Publishing Company, 1900), p. 24-25.

9*Ibid.*, pp.25-29.

10In Ingersol, "Burden of Dissent," there is discussion of the relationship between the New Testament Church of Christ and the Church of God (Holiness), another holiness-restorationist body, including ordination of elders in the New Testament Church by Church of God ministers. There is also discussion of *why* these two groups, with similar ecclesiologies, followed different trajectories of development. See pp.165-168.

11Official Journal of the Church of Christ, unpublished ms., New Testament Church of Christ Collection, Nazarene Archives, pp.3-4; Donie Mitchum's Journal, p.115.

12See *Texas Annual Council, New Testament Church of Christ: Second Session; held at Ruby, Texas, Nov. 26-29, 1903* (n.p., n.d.), not paginated. See "Second Day-Afternoon Session," Resolution No.2, and the discussion following. Also see "Third Day-Evening Session."

13Charles B. Jernigan, *Pioneer Days of the Holiness Movement in the Southwest* (Kansas City: Pentecostal Nazarene Publishing House, 1919), pp.109 and 123; on Chapman's preference for immersion, see *Herald of Holiness* (Jan.10, 1923): 3, and (February 7, 1923): 3. As settlers in Oklahoma Territory in early 1899, Chapman's family drew close to the Disciples of Christ Church. Later that year, Chapman writes, "one of my sisters and my mother joined the Christian Church and were baptized, putting in their membership at Soldier Creek." Chapman's account is reprinted in D. Shelby Corlett, *Spirit Filled: The Life of The Rev. James Blaine Chapman, D.D.* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, n.d.), p.25. Per-

haps Chapman was influenced directly by Disciples' baptismal theology, in which "immersion" was synonymous with "baptism," and John the Baptist was referred to often as "John the Immerser."

14"Annual Convocation of Holiness Baptist Churches," *Pentecostal Herald* (Oct.26, 1904): 6, and Jernigan, *Pioneer Days*, pp.122-123. Although the Holiness Baptists did not enter the merger, some ministers and lay people united individually, including Rev. Dora Rice, later a companion and mentor to Agnes White Diffie, and Rev. E R. Morgan, later a Nazarene district superintendent.

15"Union of Holiness Churches," *Pentecostal Herald* (Dec. 7, 1904): 4; and Jernigan, *Pioneer Days*, p.123. Also see the *Manual* of the Holiness Church of Christ, 1904-1905, esp. pp.15-16. On Neely's role, see notes of Timothy L. Smith's conversation with him, August 10, 1955, in the Timothy L. Smith Collection of The Nazarene Archives. Neely was baptized by Mary Lee Cagle in 1901, and at Rising Star took the position that he "could not and would not join a church that rejected water baptism-one of Christ's commands." Also see Smith's account in *Called Unto Holiness* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1962), pp.170-171, where he draws out the significance of the water baptism issue in the merger process at Rising Star. On the addition to the article on baptism, see the 1906 Manual, p.19.

16*Manual of the People's Evangelical Church of Providence, R.I.* (Providence: Office of the Beulah Christian, 1895), p.3.

17*Ibid.*, p. 8.

18See the church's Covenant, *ibid.*, pp.4-S; for the baptismal covenant and vows, see pp. 27-28; on Standing Rules related to neglect of the means of grace, see pp 12-13; on the registry of baptisms, see p.18; on the Baptism Committee and other committees, see pp.19-22. An interesting feature of the internal organization of the People's Church was the division of the entire membership into Methodist type classes that met weekly under the direction of class leaders. Among other duties, the class leaders were to "consult with the pastor for the welfare of the Church," take charge of worship in the pastor's absence, and prepare and assist in administering the Lord's Supper. See *ibid.*, pp.10, 17-18.

19*Manual of the First Pentecostal Church of Lynn, Mass.* (Providence, R.I.: Pentecostal Printing Co., 1898), pp.8-12.

20*Ibid.*, p.14.

21*Ibid.*, pp. 15-17.

22The ordination practices of the Central Evangelical Holiness Association are clear from reports of ordination in the *Beulah Christian*, 1890-1894 *in passim*, which show that congregations selected a candidate for minister, and that a panel of ministers from sister churches examined and ordained the candidate. In the United Church after 1897, explicit guidelines outline the ordination process, including the statement that ordination will be “by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.” See Article VII under Summary of Doctrines in: Association of Pentecostal Churches of America, *Minutes of the Sixth Annual Meeting* (Providence, R.I.: Pentecostal Printing Company, 1901), p.58. The ordination credential of John Norberry, in the Nazarene Archives, has the term “presbytery” in its text and bears the signatures of the ordaining ministers.

23*Articles of Faith and Government of the Lincoln Place Pentecostal Church of Lincoln Place, Pa.* (Providence: Pentecostal Publishing Company, 1904), pp. 10-11, 18. This congregation’s manual required a monthly communion observance; see *ibid.*, p.17.

24The generic manual was adopted by two congregations for certain: First Pentecostal Church of Johnson, Vt. and Second Pentecostal Church of Oxford, Nova Scotia. Copies of each are in the Nazarene Archives. The Oxford congregation personalized its manual with a special cover bearing the church name. On the rituals for infants, and adults, see either manual, pp.14-17; on mode of baptism, see esp. p.17. Other manuals with the identical ritual include that of the Pentecostal Mission Church, West Somerville, Mass. (1901), the First Pentecostal Church of Lowell, Mass. (1904), and the *Discipline of Ebenezer Pentecostal Church of Allentown, Penn.* (n.d.). (The latter was a congregation formed by former members of the Evangelical Association.) An expanded form of the same ritual appears in the manual of the First People’s Church of Brooklyn, N.Y. (1907).

25*Beulah Christian* (Sept. 1893): 2 and (October 1895): 2.

26*Manual of the Church of the Nazarene, 1898*, p.10.

27Quotation from *ibid.*, p.9; also see pp.10, 16-17, 20-21, 24, and 28-30.

28*Ibid.*, pp. 22-23, 39-40.

29*Ibid.*, 40-41.

30Manual of the Church of the Nazarene . . .]905, with Changes Adopted at Assembly of]906 (Los Angeles: Nazarene Publishing Company, n.d.), pp.63-64.

31Mary King Snowbarger, *Autobiography*, edited from interviews conducted by Willis Snowbarger, 1983, Transcript, Nazarene Archives, p. 11.

32One such infant was Alpin P. Bowes. who became an official in the Department of Home Missions at the Nazarene Headquarters. Another is Alan Bresee Smith, a retired Presbyterian minister and teacher, now of Osawatomie, Kansas. See: Alpin P. Bowes, memo to Stan Ingersol, March 20, 1990, which quotes an extract from the unpublished diary of his father, Alpin G. Bowes; and Alan B. Smith, letter to Stan Ingersol, August 31, 1989.

33On H. F. Reynolds, see the *Journal* of the Eastern Oklahoma District, 1924:16-17, and the San Antonio District *Journal*, 1927: 36. Also see the Eastern Oklahoma District *Journal*, 1928: 22.

34For references to infant baptisms conducted by general superintendent Roy T. Williams, see the *Journal* of the San Antonio District, 1921: 30, and *ibid.*, 1926: 26; also the *Journal* of the Western Oklahoma District, 1931: 31, and *ibid.*, 1934: 37. On an infant baptism conducted by J. B. Chapman, see the Western Oklahoma District *Journal*, 1929: 28. On John W. Goodwin, see *ibid.*, 1932: 36; *ibid.*, 1935: 45; and the San Antonio District *Journal*, 1936: 31.

35*Herald of Holiness* (Dec.13, 1922): 2; (August 2, 1922): 2; (Jan. 10, 1923): 3; (Feb. 7, 1923): 3; (Nov. 5, 1945): 8.

36Mary Lee Cagle, *Life and Work of Mary Lee Cagle* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1928), p.119.

GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR IN LUKE'S GOSPEL

by

Mel Shoemaker

Cautiously we venture into one of the great storm centers of New Testament scholarship (Van Unnik, 16), knowing that the predominant interpretation of Luke gives emphasis to a motif of divine blessedness and royal justice in favor of the poor. A survey of the third canonical gospel suggests that modern scholarship may have exceeded the word and spirit of Jesus (cf. I Cor. 4:6), even promoting a reverse discrimination and a limited gospel in favor of the poor. Would not some have everyone join the ranks of St. Francis of Assisi, transforming the church, the holy bride, into Lady Poverty? (Green, 126). Is the good news of the kingdom of God a call for everyone to sell all one's possessions and give to the poor? Are not some guilty of overlooking the fact that Luke's Gospel was addressed to "most excellent Theophilus" (Lk. 1:3), and is characterized further by a striking universalism, frequent table fellowship with wealthy hosts, and an implied audience (readers), including the wise, the influential, and perhaps even those of noble birth (cf. 1 Cor. 1:26)?

There are four words which are relevant for this study: ἔνδεής, πενιτεάς, πτωτός, and τρεῖα. Luke uses ἔνδεής in Acts 4:34, which is the only occurrence of the word in the New Testament. The word means "poor" or "impoverished" (Arndt, 261), and the NIV translates it "needy" in the phrase, "There were no needy persons among them." The second word found in the Lukan vocabulary is πενιτερός, which appears in Luke 21:2, and again this is its only occurrence in the New Testament canon.

The adjective *πενιτρός* is related to the adjective *πένης* (Liddell, 542), and Aristophanes gives the following explanation, “The life of a poor person (*πηωτός*) is to live, having nothing at all, whereas the life of a needy person (*πένης*) is to live sparingly, and dependent on toil” (*Plutus*, 553, as quoted by Fitzmyer, 28A: 1322). Indeed, such a person is poor, and thus the NIV translates the phrase, “Jesus also saw a *poor* widow put in two small copper coins” (Luke 21:2). The fourth word, *τρεία*, occurs seven times in Luke (5:31; 9:11; 10:42; 15:7; 19:31,34; 22:71) and five times in Acts (2:45; 4:35; 6:3; 20:34; 28:10). This word signifies that “there is need of something,” “a lack,” or “a want” (Arndt, 893). Thus, Jesus healed those who *needed* healing (Luke 9:11), and he *needs* a colt to ride into Jerusalem (Luke 19:31, 34). The council of elders of the Jews *need* no more witnesses to condemn Jesus of blasphemy (Luke 22:71).

The crucial third word, *πηωτός*, translated “poor,” occurs 34 times in the NT (Mk., 5t; Lk., 10t; Mt. 5t; Jn., 4t; Pauline, 4t; Jas., 4t; Rev., 2t). This word originally meant “destitute,” “mendicant,” “to beg for one’s bread” (Kittel, 6:886). The beggar has nothing, and lives at the lowest level of bare existence. The word occurs some 100 times in the Old Testament (LXX), and primarily “expresses a relation rather than a state of social distress,” taking on religious significance: “humble” and even “pious” (Kittel, 6:888). Is this religious nuance present in Luke’s Gospel? Or does Luke use *πηωτός* only with social and economic implications?

Six of the ten occurrences of *πηωτός* in Luke are found in pericopes peculiar to the author (Lk. 4:18; 14:13, 21; 16:20, 22; 19:8), and do not allow for redactional comparison. Twice the word is found in Q material (Lk. 6:20; 7:22). In the first of these, Matthew supplements “Blessed are you poor” with the phrase “in spirit” (Mt. 5:3). Further, the final two occurrences are found in material Luke uses from Mark and the Synoptic tradition, and “poor” is found in the parallels (Lk. 18:22; 21:3). Therefore, it is observed that *πηωτός* does not occur in the Lukan redactional material of the Gospel nor does it occur in Acts, and for this reason it is to be concluded that the motif is not important to the evangelist. In the words of Ernst Bammel, “Luke neither thinks from the standpoint of the poor nor really seeks to address them” (Kittel, 6:907; cf. Conzelmann, 233; Esler, 165).

It is the purpose of this paper to show that the Gospel according to Luke primarily addresses, not the poor, but rather the wise, the influential and those of noble birth, namely, Theophilus and his kind. The good news

is written primarily appealing to them, and yet, secondarily, to all who would read and repent, take up their cross daily, and follow Jesus in discipleship. This discipleship is characterized by repentance, humility, joy, generosity, and the purposeful use of one's worldly wealth and influence to win friends for oneself and the kingdom. Thus those addressed are to become channels or servants of the loving mercy of God to the poor: to preach good news to the poor (Lk. 4:18; 7:22), to invite the poor to the banquet of God (Lk. 14:13, 21), and to promote justice and protection for the poor (Lk. 8:1-8).

I. A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Luke's Gospel has a peculiar catholic stamp (Cassidy, 24; Van Unnik, 19). It is good news to all peoples on earth, beginning with the birth announcement of Gabriel to the priest Zechariah, and continuing that motif with the news given to a virgin named Mary. God is announcing good news to all people in every age. One reads of this universalism in Mary's Magnificat,

“My soul praises the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.

From now on *all generations* [italics mine] will call me blessed...”

(Lk. 1:46-48).

Again, we see the motif in the angel's announcement to the shepherds,

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be *for all the people* [italics mine]” (Lk. 2:10).

Simeon continued this theme in the birth narrative, as the infant Jesus was presented in the temple after 40 days:

“For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight *of all people* [italics mine], a
light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel” (Lk. 2:30-32).

The Lukan motif becomes clearer as we come to the introduction of the mission and preaching of John the Baptist. In this Q material, we note that Matthew includes only the quotation of Isaiah 40:3:

“A voice of one calling in the desert,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him’ “(Mt. 3:3).

Luke continues the quotation, including Isaiah 40:4-5 also. For our purposes here, the last line is of special significance: “And *all mankind* [italics mine] will see God’s salvation” (Lk. 3:6).

Unlike Matthew who begins the genealogy of Jesus Christ with Abraham, the father of Israel, Luke begins with Jesus and traces the generations back to Adam, the father of all peoples (Lk. 3:23-38). In a similar inclusive way, where Matthew reports Jesus as saying, “Many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 8:11), Luke expands the statement to read, “People will come from the east and west *and north and south* [italics mine], and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God” (Lk. 13:29).

This universal motif is again reaffirmed in the resurrected Christ’s commission to the eleven apostles, as he says, “Repentance and forgiveness of sin will be preached in his name *to all nations* [italics mine], beginning at Jerusalem” (Lk. 24:47). This includes people of every generation and every nation and every social class in those nations, both rich and poor.

The good news is specifically addressed to “most excellent Theophilus” (Lk. 1:3). Theophilus (Θεόφιλος) is a proper name, meaning “friend of God,” and is common from the third century before Christ. It has been found in both Greek papyri from Egypt and inscriptions, and was used by both Gentiles and Jews (Fitzmyer, 299; Nolland, 10). Luke addresses him further with the honorific title, “most excellent” (κράτιζης) . This title occurs three times in Acts ascribing honor to Felix, who was governor of Judea, and then to his successor Governor Festus (Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25). Felix, a former slave who had become a freedman, proved to be an incompetent governor, with his two years in office troubled by numerous disturbances and unrest (Koester, 1:399). And yet, Felix had been appointed to an official office and was thus worthy of respect. When Luke addresses his Gospel to “most excellent Theophilus,” he is at least implying that Theophilus was socially respected, probably well off, and highly placed in the society to which Luke had access (Fitzmyer, 28:300).

Henry J. Cadbury concludes that this dedication to “most excellent Theophilus” is merely a “literary formula” which does not affect the contents of the work (203), and Esler endorses Cadbury’s conclusion (24). Cadbury adds, however, “It is to possessors, not to the dispossessed, that Jesus speaks on alms and on the cares and pleasures of property” (262). It is to this audience that Jesus says, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his

possessions” (Luke 12:15). Luke’s Gospel appeals for a conscience and sense of duty among the privileged classes rather than for social discontent and the rights of the economically deprived (Cadbury, 263). Therefore, contrary to Cadbury and Esler, we would suggest that the address to Theophilus does provide an explicit indication as to Luke’s implied reader/audience throughout his evangelistic apology. The Gospel is addressed primarily to those who are far from poverty and are best described as the wise, the influential and those of noble birth. They are in most cases considered to be wealthy. Although the five pericopes in which “poor” (πηωτός) occurs in Lukan material are more indicative of the comprehensive, inclusive nature of the gospel than they are of the redactional interest of the author, it is worthwhile to review our findings.

The first pericope is the story of Jesus’ rejection in his hometown and synagogue of Nazareth (Lk. 4:16-30). Jesus read from the scroll of Isaiah (61:1-2), which states,

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor [italics mine].

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Lk. 4:18-19).

‘One cannot avoid the emphasis upon the theme, “good news to the poor,” announced here. But to whom is Jesus preaching? To his friends and neighbors in his hometown who remember him as Joseph’s son (Lk. 4:22). This pericope continues the Lukan emphasis upon the nativity and humanity of Jesus, a righteous man and the son of Adam, but far more, the Christ, the Son of God, and it fulfills a programmatic function within Luke-Acts as a whole (Esler, 34). He has come to his own people, the Jews, and they reject him. Jesus’ sermon recalls Elijah’s gracious ministry to the starving widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:12), and then that of Elisha to the leprous Syrian general Naaman, who was miraculously cured of his disease (2 Kings 5:1-5). According to Luke, both non-Jews- a needy widow and a powerful, wealthy military commander-qualify as “poor.” Here, then, we see the broad meaning of the word “poor” in Luke’s vocabulary; one may be socially or economically poor in the sense of being without a husband, food and/or shelter, or be helpless and dependent upon the mercy of another without being economically destitute. Naaman is an example of one who was rich in worldly wealth, but he

was utterly dependent upon the mercy of God and the prophet Elisha. Both were poor, humble beggars, who received from the bounty of God's riches. Note:

“It is widely agreed that Luke's election of these two characters is related to his desire to present the gospel as open to the Gentiles. . . . Accordingly, it must be considered likely that Luke is making the further point that Jesus has predicted and authorized the presence within the Christian community of both the rich and the poor” (Esler, 180; cf. 183).

Luke, recounting a prophetic drama of Israel's unbelief, recalls how Jesus' hometown rejects his message and attempts to throw him down a cliff.

The second story takes place in the house of a prominent Pharisee during Sabbath dinner (14:1-24). In this section the word poor occurs twice, in what may be considered two separate pericopes, given a common setting by the Evangelist. The first is found in an admonition given to his host:

“When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, *invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed* [italics mine]. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous” (Lk. 14:12-14).

The second is similar, as it is addressed especially to one of those guests who was present (cf. 14: 15). Given Jesus' criticism of his host, it may be presumed that this guest was either a friend, brother, relative, or rich neighbor (Lk. 14:12). To this dinner guest and others present Jesus tells the parable of the great banquet (Lk. 14:16-24). “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests” (Luke 14:16), implying that the host has some degree of wealth. At the time of the banquet those invited refuse to come. Then the servant is sent out into the streets and alleys of the town and told to “bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame” (Lk. 14:21). It is the host's desire that those first invited would come, but they have other interests and refuse the invitation. T. W. Manson has argued that the original guests invited were the Jews. The first of the new guests represent the religious lower classes, such as tax collectors and sinners, while the second group of new guests comes from distant and remote lands and peoples (Manson, 130). Of

course, one must not rule out the possibility of the very literal meaning of “the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.”

The third story in which the word poor occurs happens to be the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31). Once again the word occurs twice, as in Luke 14:1-24.

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid *a beggar* (πηωτός) [italics mine] named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

“The time came when *the beggar* (πηωτός) [italics mine] died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.

As we continue to read the parable (Lk. 16:24-31), we come to realize that it concentrates on the plight of the rich man and his suffering in hell, which is seen as more horrible in light of the blessedness of Lazarus the beggar, who now rests in the presence of Abraham. The message is to the rich man and his brothers: if they have not listened to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced about their responsibility to show kindness and mercy to the poor at their gate by means of a resurrection from the dead (cf. Lk. 16:27-31). Once again, Luke records the words of Jesus to affirm clearly the Old Testament principles requiring one to act justly and to love mercy, especially toward the poor. However, it is addressed to the rich man and his brothers, more specifically to the sneering, greedy Pharisees (Luke 16:14), and not to Lazarus the beggar.

The final uniquely Lukan passage which speaks of the poor is found in the story of Zacchaeus the tax collector (Luke 19:1-10). Of course, Zacchaeus is not just a tax collector, but is said to be the “chief tax collector” (19:2). Tax collecting was contracted out by the Romans to businessmen, who were to pay the taxes due and then were relatively free to use any appropriate means to collect money to reimburse themselves, and that, of course, at a profit (Stambaugh, 77). It was for these reasons that they were generally assumed to be greedy and prosperous (cf. Lk. 3:12-13). It is said that Zacchaeus is wealthy (Lk. 19:2), and that he serves as the unexpected host to Jesus and his entourage, which is passing through Jericho. The presence of the visitor has quite an impact on the wealthy tax collector, and he makes a startling announcement:

“Look, Lord! Here and now *I give half of my possessions to the poor* [italics mine], and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount” (Lk. 19:8).

Again, Luke sets forth Zacchaeus as an example to be emulated by those who would, like Zacchaeus, come to experience the salvation of God (cf. other example stories: Luke 10:25-37; 16:1-9; 18:1-8). Zacchaeus serves as a model of those who give generously to the poor.

Luke does not issue the call to proclaim good news to the poor to those who are poor, but to those seen to be the wise, the influential, the noble and the wealthy in first-century society and in the early church. We can see this by simply surveying Luke’s cast of characters in the historical narrative and parable:

The Wise

The expert in the law who asked what he must do to inherit eternal life (10:25-37)

The criminal who feared God, asking to be remembered (23:40) In parable, the faithful and wise manager (12:42-48)

The Influential

Most excellent Theophilus (1:3)

Tax collectors (3:12; 5:29; 15:1)

Soldiers (3:14)

Levi the tax collector (5:27-32)

The centurion in Capernaum (7:1-10)

Joanna, the wife of Chuza, manager of Herod’s household (8:3)

Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue (8:4)

Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector (19:1-10)

The Sadducees who question Jesus about the resurrection (20:27-39)

The teachers of the law ((20:46-47)

The centurion at the Cross (23:47)

Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Council (23:50-54)

In parable: the two servants of the man of noble birth who went to a distant country to receive a kingdom and gave them each a mina, which they profitably invested (19:11-27)

Those of Noble Birth

Zacharias and Elisabeth, priestly descendants of Aaron (1:5) Herod the Tetrarch (3:19)

The Rich Ruler (18:18-25)

In parable: the man of noble birth who went to a distant country to receive a kingdom (19:12)

The Wealthy

Luke mentions still others in his gospel, both subjects of accounts and subjects of parables, who we may infer to have had some worldly wealth though he does not explicitly say that they are wise, influential or of noble birth:

Accounts

The centurion in Capernaum (7:1-10; Esler 172)

Simon the Pharisee, host at table fellowship (7:36-50)

Women who support Jesus and his entourage out of their own resources (8:3)

The brothers who greedily argue over their inheritance (12:13-15)

The prominent Pharisee, host at table fellowship (14:1-24)

The rich ruler (18:18-25)

Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector (19:1-10)

The centurion at the Cross (23:47; Esler 172) Joseph, a member of the Council (23:50-54)

Parables

The two forgiven debtors, who, respectively, owed 500 and 50 denarii (7:41-42)

The rich fool (12:16-21)

The tower builder (14:28-30)

The king who is about to go to war (14:31-32)

The shepherd who owns 100 sheep (15:3-7)

The woman who has 10 silver coins (15:8-10)

The waiting father (15:11-32)

The shrewd manager (16:1-9)

The rich man who died and went to Hades (16:19-31)

The owner of the vineyard who rents to farmers (20:9-16)

This survey provides an antithesis or counter-balance to the assumptions upon which many scholars choose to build today. Frequently, the conclusion is drawn that preaching the good news of the kingdom of God created an early cadre of disciples who were predominantly economically

and socially poor. Such an assumption is based upon a literal, economic interpretation of Jesus' thematic announcement in the synagogue (Lk. 4:18-19), the omission of "in spirit" (cf. Mt. 5:3) in the beatitude, "Blessed are you poor" (Lk. 6:20), and the inclusion of the converse, "Woe to you who are rich" (Lk. 6:24), and the response of the Sanhedrin to the preaching of Peter and John in Acts 4:13, where the two apostles are said to be "unschooled, ordinary men."

It was in this vein that Martin Hengel spoke in his 1987 Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary:

"We do not have a personal writing from any of the Twelve, and the same goes for all early Christian teachers mentioned in Acts and in the letters of Paul other than Paul himself, Mark, Luke and James. Only the Christian Gnostics who had had higher education broke through a barrier here and began a richer literary production" (Hengel 37).

Clearly Hengel rules out any apostolic authorship of the canonical books in the New Testament. Those acquainted with inductive methodology know that such limited literary examples or statements do not establish a universal truth, and such a conclusion based upon a narrow economic interpretation is most tentative.

In 1 Corinthians 1:26 Paul states, "Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not any of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth." But the obverse is also affirmed; there were some. "As early as Origen this passage was cited as an objection to Celsus's opinion that in Christian gatherings one would find only the lower classes" (Theissen 72). A sociological study made by E. A. Judge, in which he canvassed the evidence of three early Christian centers—Jerusalem, Antioch, and Corinth—concluded that the early church in those cities "represent[s] a diverse mixture with clear contributions from those who are relatively well off" (Theissen 4-5). Gerd Theissen concurs with these findings, and adds that if the wise, influential, noble and wealthy were few, their influence was certainly out of proportion to their numbers, as witnessed at Corinth (Theissen 73). They were also "puffed up" (1 Cor. 4:8-13), and were the source of many of the problems existent in the Corinthian church (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:17-34).

Certainly one can compile a secondary list of the stories or references in the gospel to those who for economic, political or relational reasons were poor and dependent. Their poverty may be either the result or the cause of their humble situation.

Economic Poverty (Physically Disabled, Sick, Demon Possessed, Day

Laborers, Landless Peasants, Debt Ridden)
Demon possessed man in synagogue at Capernaum (4:33-37)
Leper (5:12-14)
Paralytic lowered through the roof tiles (5:17-26)
Man with shriveled hand in synagogue (6:6-11)
Legion, a demon possessed man (8:26-39)
Daughter of Jairus who was dying (8:40-56)
Demon possessed boy (9:37)
Demon possessed man who was mute (11:14)
Hunchback woman (13:10-17)
Lazarus the beggar in the parable of the rich man (16:19-31)
Ten Lepers (17:11-19)
Blind beggar of Jericho (18:35-43)

Kinship (Widows, Orphans)

Anna the prophetess, elderly widow of 84 years (2:37)
Widow of Nain, whose only son had died (7:11-17)
Parable of the persistent widow (18: 1-8)
Poor widow's offering (21:1-4)

Political & Civil Injustice (Disfranchised, Slaves)

John the Baptist, imprisoned, then beheaded (3:19-20; 7:18-35; 9:7-9)
Man beaten by robbers on road to Jericho (10:30-37)
In Parable: servant watching for his master (12:35-38)
In Parable: servant serving two masters (15:13)
All of these references to both real characters and those in parables serve to give us a more complete picture of the first century world; however, the audience being primarily addressed is that of Theophilus and his friends (cf. Esler, 184).

II. A COSTLY COMMITMENT

The Gospel of Luke is addressed to those who enjoy the comforts of life, who can afford to keep the honorable customs of society, and who cherish the table fellowship of the community. Jesus calls such as these to follow him. Listen!

“As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

He said to another man, “Follow me.”

But the man replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family.”

Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God” (Lk. 9:57-62).

The reader must count the cost. If the gospel calls one to leave everything—summarized here as the comforts of home, the customs of the society, and the celebrations of table fellowship with family and friends—then the good news sounds like bad news to those having worldly possessions. Who would respond? Only the homeless, the orphan and the lonely? That may be the tragic final outcome, but Luke’s evangelistic apology is, nonetheless, addressed to those who are not poor.

In Luke 9:51 the reader is told, “Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. . . .” Then the writer notes that certain Samaritan villages do not welcome him, because he is heading toward Jerusalem, which would result in his rejection and crucifixion by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law. The would-be disciple is called to repentance from sin and to follow Jesus Christ, who is crucified. This is the heart of the gospel, and it creates a crisis for the reader. One must make a decision between present worldly wealth and the promise of a future reward at the resurrection of the righteous (cf. Lk. 14:14) . The disciple is called to “deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow” Jesus (Lk. 9:23). “It is, therefore, hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God,” we agree (Lk. 18:24). “Hard? Perhaps even impossible,” we say. “Who then can be saved?” Jesus responds in the Synoptic tradition, “What is impossible with men is possible with God” (Lk. 18:27). Luke’s gospel announces the good news of the incarnation, the cross and the power of God. It is a gospel of possibilities! Of the forgiveness of sins and eternal life (cf. Lk. 1:37; 18:27). The greatest barrier of all to salvation is worldly wealth.

Here lie the cost and the crisis. Theophilus and everyone who would follow Jesus must “leave everything,” if they would escape eternal suffering and experience the kingdom of God. This call for radical forfeiture of

everything, for placing all that one has in the service of the kingdom of God, becomes a prominent motif in Luke's gospel. A positive decision is not easy, especially for those enjoying power and possessions. Unlike Mark who places the invitation to discipleship given to Simon and Andrew, James and John early in his account of the ministry of Jesus (Mk. 1:16-20), Luke follows the birth narrative and genealogy with an expanded temptation account. More significantly, Luke goes on to indicate that before Jesus issued an invitation to discipleship, he traveled extensively throughout Galilee preaching in the synagogues (Lk. 4:15,16), exorcising demons (Lk. 4:33-36), healing Simon Peter's mother-in-law of a high fever (Lk. 4:38-39), and healing many others who were brought to him (Lk. 4:40-41). And Luke tells us that everyone, except those in his home town of Nazareth, were amazed at his authority and power (Lk. 4:14-15, 36-37). The people of Capernaum wanted to keep the itinerant preacher from leaving, but it was his purpose to "preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns. . . because that is why I was sent" (Lk. 4:43).

So it is not until Luke 5 that we encounter a call to discipleship. Here one witnesses the appearance of Jesus along the Sea of Galilee, and the crowd has become so large that he must teach from one of Simon Peter's boats put out just a little from shore. Then follows the miraculous catch of fish, which so astonishes and overwhelms Simon that he falls at Jesus' knees and says, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (Lk. 5:8). To the kneeling figure, Jesus says, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men" (Lk. 5:10). Then the reader is told that the four fishermen "pulled their boats up on the shore, *left everything* (ἀθένηες πάντα) (italics mine) and followed him" (Lk. 5:11). This is clearly Lukan redaction, as seen in both the arrangement of the material and in the vocabulary chosen. Whereas Mark emphasizes the suddenness and seeming impulsiveness of their decision (cf. Mk. 1:20), Luke emphasizes the thoughtful contemplation, which brings the fishermen to a radical response, "they left everything."

Luke's model for his readers is a person having position, power and possessions, who, having considered the invitation fully, thoughtfully decides to surrender everything to the lordship and mastery of Jesus, for he is indeed "the Christ of God" (Lk. 9:20). Thus, we hear the motif repeatedly throughout the gospel:

"And Levi got up, *left everything* (καταλιπὼν πάντα) (italics mine) and followed him" (Lk. 5:28; cf. Mk. 2:14).

“*Sell your possessions and give to the poor* (Πωλήζατε ἡὰ ‘σπάρτονα σμων καὶ δόηε ‘ελεημοζβνην) (italics mine). Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Lk. 12:33-34; cf. QMt. 6:19-21).

“In the same way, any of you who does not *give up everything he has* (‘αποη’αζζεηαι πάζιν ηοῖζ ‘εασηοῦ’σπάρτοσζιν) (italics mine) cannot be my disciple” (Lk. 14:33; cf. none).

“So you also, when you have *done everything* (ποιήζηηε πάνηα) (italics mine) you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty’” (Lk. 17:10; cf. none).

“When Jesus heard this, he said to [the rich ruler], ‘You still lack one thing. *Sell everything you have* (πάνηα ὕζαέτειζ π’ωληζον) (italics mine) and *give to the poor* (διάδοζ πηωτοῖζ) (italics mine), and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me’” (Lk. 18:22; Mk. 10:21; Matt. 19:21; note Luke adds πάνηα and changes δόζ to διάδοζ, which intensifies the imperative).

“Peter said to [Jesus], ‘*We have left all we had*, (‘Ιδοῦ ἡμεῖζ, ,αθένηεζ ἡὰ τδια[italics mine], lit. “leaving our own things”) to follow you!’” (Lk. 18:28; Mk. 10:28; Matt. 19:27; note Luke substitutes ἡὰ Τδια for πάνηα found in the Markan tradition).

Luke 5:28 and 12:33-34 indicate the redactional interest of the Evangelist, whereas Luke 14:33 and 17:10 are found in material peculiar to Luke. Luke 18:22, 28 are very similar to the wording found in the Synoptic parallels. This is what the Lukan Jesus means by counting the cost. The disciple must repent, turn away, let go of her/his attachment to the material possessions of the present world and follow Jesus, seeking first, above all else, to advance the kingdom of God.

Jesus’ repeated question to Peter in John’s Gospel, “Do you truly love me more than these?” (21:15), is given similar description of a dynamic tension in “this world” relationships by Matthew, as Jesus commissions the Twelve:

“Anyone who loves his father or mother *more than* me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter *more than* me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (Mt. 10:37-38) (italics mine).

Luke, on the other hand, amplifies the comparative tension to the point of making a startling demand for radical allegiance to Jesus and the kingdom.

“If anyone comes to me and does not *hate* his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters-yes, even his own life-he cannot be my disciple” (Lk. 14:25-26) (italics mine).

Where natural affection for one’s own family and the blessings of this life compete with or oppose the kingdom’s principles and goals, a disciple must make a choice. It is characterized by a deliberate beginning, daily renewal (Lk. 9:23), and never looking back (Lk 9:62).

This may be seen most clearly in two parables, which are unique to Luke (Lk. 14:28-33):

“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’

“Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.”

As can be seen in the last line, the subject of the pair is discipleship and the necessity of letting go of everything to follow Jesus (cf. Lk. 14:27). Therefore, the first parable compares the decision of becoming a disciple to that of building a tower or some form of fortification to protect one’s vineyard, house, or possessions. One does not recklessly make such a decision to begin until one counts the cost, and knows that it can be completed. To do otherwise may result in the failure to finish, and expose the builder to ridicule.

The second parable urges the person contemplating discipleship to act expeditiously. The would-be disciple is like a king-which is a signif-

icant Lukan paradigm-about to go to war against another king. Wisdom requires such a person also to sit down and consider more than her/his own private finances. The decision must be made for the good of others and it must be made quickly. So a delegation is sent to ask for terms of peace. It is of particular interest that the would-be disciple is likened to a builder of a tower and then to a king. These are figures appropriate to Luke's readers, and again the cost is "everything." They must prepare to meet the heavenly king, and do so quickly. Such a costly commitment to Jesus Christ creates a salty presence and influence, which benefits the poor, the church, and all of society.

III. A CHAMPION FOR THE POOR

How is the reader to be salty (Lk. 14:34)? By giving away life and possessions to the poor and needy of the world. Following Jesus, the disciple becomes like him, proclaiming good news to the poor, resolutely setting out for Jerusalem and the cross. On this journey one encounters in Luke the comprehensive spiritual, social and economic implications of the redemptive message of the kingdom. Esler is regrettably correct in his observation that generations of scholars "have been so successful in making Luke's message on possessions palatable for bourgeois taste that its genuinely radical nature has rarely been noted" (Esler 170). The converse conclusion is just as troubling, for there is a danger in so emphasizing social and economic redemption that we fail to see the motif of spiritual poverty, the call to repentance, and the gift of the Holy Spirit emphasized in Luke (cf. Lk. 11:13).

In a context of social and ethnic elitism, Jesus warns that his listeners must also repent. Like the Galileans killed while offering sacrifices in the temple and the 18 who died as construction laborers, they also will die (Lk. 13:1-5). Jesus follows the warning with a parable concerning a privileged fig tree planted in a vineyard (Lk. 13:6-9). The owner looked for fruit on the tree, but finding none, instructed the gardener to cut it down. The gardener appealed for the owner's mercy, requesting a one-year postponement. The theme is still repentance and its fruit. Then Luke gives the reader a pointed example, the Sabbath healing of the woman crippled for 18 years. The synagogue ruler objected to Jesus' healing the woman on the Sabbath, to which Jesus responded that he was setting a prisoner free (Lk. 13:12,16; cf. 4:18d-f) . The fruit of repentance which Jesus seeks- especially from his socially privileged followers-is that his listeners give what they have, whenever there is need, to the poor in their community,

i.e., their neighbor. The disciples are called to become champions of compassion for the spiritually, socially, and economically poor.

Repentance, then, takes on special meaning for those possessing material wealth. As Bruce J. Malina suggests, “In the eastern Mediterranean in New Testament times, ‘rich’ or ‘wealthy’ as a rule meant ‘avaricious, greedy,’ while ‘poor’ referred to persons scarcely able to maintain their honor or dignity” (Malina 355). Such social attitudes were shaped by three generally accepted truisms: (1) all goods are limited; (2) no one goes without necessities; and (3) the rich person is inherently evil (Malina 362-363). Repentance or a change in character in a wealthy person will then be witnessed in a dramatic way by the world. Contrary to expectations, a disciple having worldly wealth gives generously to the poor and needy.

The disciple’s first circle of responsibility is to her/his own people. As Jesus went first to his hometown synagogue in Nazareth and the new disciple Levi invited his tax collecting friends to dinner, so also the reader is commissioned to invite those within her/his own world of influence to the kingdom of God. When Jesus participates in Levi’s great banquet, he is enjoying table fellowship with the middle class and wealthy (Lk. 5:27-32). The Pharisees and the teachers of the law, however, criticize his conduct, since this is modeling the wrong image for a rabbi. He is associating with “sinners.” They are assumed guilty of wrongdoing in the collection of taxes and exploitation of the poor. And yet, Jesus considers these tax collectors to be poor and sick. He answers the Pharisees’ charges by saying, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Lk. 5:32). Here we see an important Lukan redaction. Whereas Mark 2:17 and Matthew 9:13 simply have, “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners,” Luke adds “... to repentance.” In this context one is not reading literally of good news to the economically poor and the physically sick, but understands Jesus to be proclaiming good news to the spiritually poor and freedom to those held prisoner by their sins. He comes as the doctor to the sick at Levi’s party, calling them to repentance and spiritual healing.

The motif of going first to one’s own people should not surprise us, as Luke 14:16-24 reminds us of the first invitation to the designated guests. It is when the invited refuse to come that the master of the banquet issues two further invitations to those in the streets and alleys of the town and then to those in distant and remote places. The gospel summarizes the commission given to the disciples in Luke 24:47: “Repentance and for-

givenness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” This mandate for the mission of the disciples and the church continues in Acts 1:8: “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” The circle of responsibility starts with one’s present sphere of influence, but only begins there. The relevant point for this study is that “poor” in Luke’s Gospel at times seems to imply nuances of spiritual poverty, piety, and humility before God, without economic or material implications. He appears to prefer complex rather than simple images, multiple rather than single meanings. Therefore the meaning must be determined by the context.

Lukan redaction now becomes more apparent. In the Q material narrating the preaching of John the Baptist, Luke supplements the sermon, adding 3:10-14:

“What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

John answered, “The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same.”

Tax collectors also came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should do?”

“Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?”

He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

Luke shows a special interest in the man with two tunics, the tax collectors, and the soldiers. Here are three examples of wealth, authority, and power over others, and the good fruit expected from those who would repent. Of course, the economically poor and the socially oppressed will be the greatest beneficiaries of such righteous deeds.

Unlike the other gospels which report someone criticizing the anointing of Jesus with expensive ointment as a great waste, in similar but non-parallel accounts (Mt. 26:8-9; Mk. 14:4-5; Jn. 12:4-6), Luke exalts such an act as a fitting, generous expression of great love from one who has been forgiven a great debt (Lk. 7:36-50). In Luke’s Gospel the criticism raised by Simon the Pharisee, probably a man of some means, is that Jesus is allowing a sinful woman to touch him. Here one witnesses social acceptance and giving worth to a sinful woman. There is no criticism of the woman’s generosity, nor is this act denounced as waste. The other

three gospels all reveal such a criticism by either the disciples, or Judas in particular, stating that the ointment should have been sold and the money given to the poor. To this criticism, Jesus responds with a polemical corrective or defense of the woman's deed with the words, "You always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me" (Mt. 26:11; Mk. 14:7; Jn. 12:8). This is significantly omitted in Luke. Generosity to the Lord and to the poor will characterize Luke's readers, and here one observes the absence of tension.

The opposite attitude is greed. Unique to Luke's narrative and further evidence for the writer's redactional interest, is the inclusion of the story of someone coming to Jesus asking that he would tell his brother to divide the inheritance with him (Lk. 12:13-15). Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" Then he said to the crowd, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." As if to seal the argument, Jesus tells the parable of the rich man harvesting a bumper crop, and choosing to build more barns, that he can keep it all for his own security and pleasure (Lk. 12:16-21). His philosophy of living is a quest for the life of ease—"eat, drink and be merry"—and it comes abruptly to an end. In God's judgment, he was a poor man, though having big barns and worldly wealth. He serves as a negative model and a warning to the reader. What did he choose not to do, which he should have done, and thus was condemned? He should have sold his possessions and given to the poor (cf. Luke 12:33). Instead, he was greedy.

Dennis E. Smith has observed the frequency and prominence of table fellowship in Luke's Gospel. "Luke has built his argument and theology around various literary structures and themes such as 'possessions' and the idea of the benefactor" (613). This thesis is supported by the frequent references to the symposium setting of Jesus' "table talks," notably Luke 7:36-50; 11:37-54; and 14: 1-24 (Smith, 614). Such eating and drinking in itself is a sign of luxury, and affluence and social prominence were accredited especially to the host (Smith 617, 623). One may compile an expanded list of occasions when Jesus is said to be a guest at dinner and participating in table fellowship, although there is no extended report of the table talk or his teaching: Lk. 5:29-32; 10:38-42; 19:5-6; 22:14-38; 24:30-32. Still other passages are less specific (cf. Lk. 7:34; 15:2, 23). But all these references to table fellowship serve as examples for the readers to observe. The first conclusion may be that Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners (Lk. 5:30; 7:34; 15:1-2). It may be just as appropriate

to conclude that he also eats with prominent Pharisees (Lk. 7:36-50; 11:37-54; and 14:1-24).

Table fellowship signifies the central social activity in the life of the believing community, and is a prominent theme in Luke's Gospel. The rich person may do much to provide the meal, but the guest list must be inclusive, not exclusive. Nor are the places of honor to be the exclusive domain of one's friends, brothers or relatives, or one's rich neighbors. The host must invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind (Lk. 14:13, 21), and honor them in the life of the community. Such a person is extending the welcome of God, and all are included in the divine hospitality. Here an eternal blessing is promised when the rich humble themselves, choose to serve tables and give a special welcome to the poor (Lk. 14:14).

Worldly wealth makes one accountable to God, and must be used for the building of the kingdom. The parable of the shrewd manager may puzzle and even trouble many as a moral example, but the principle taught is plain:

"Use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings" (Lk. 16:9) (italics mine).

This principle applies whether the disciple has little or much. If one follows Jesus, there will be a shift from money to relieving the burdens experienced by poor debtors (Moxnes 141). The perceptive, shrewd manager makes a clear choice on the side of the poor. Only such a person is found trustworthy in handling worldly wealth (Lk. 16:10-11). In fact, worldly wealth belongs to God, and it must be used for God's purposes (Lk. 16:12). The choice is clear, "You cannot serve both God and Money" (Lk. 16:13). If you serve God, your money will also serve him. How?

Jesus and his disciples are the champions of the poor. The gift required may be everything possessed by the rich ruler (Lk. 18:22), or half of one's wealth, as in the case of Zacchaeus (Lk. 19:8). Or the responsibility may be to feed the poor man at one's door, even providing healing antiseptics for a man's sores, as witnessed in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:20-21).

The final story in Luke's travel account (Lk. 9:51-19:27) serves to summarize our thesis. Luke follows the account of the salvation of Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, with Jesus' parable of the ten minas (19:11-27). "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return." Ten servants are each given a mina or

about three month's wages and instructed to engage in business while he is away. The man was made king, *and* returns home. Each servant in his turn is called for an accounting and rated on the basis of investment success. The first has earned ten more minas, and the second, five. The third in fear hid his mina, without even placing it on deposit where it could draw interest. To those who had used and multiplied their money was given the responsibility of governing cities in the king's province. The man gaining the additional ten minas was told to take charge of ten cities, and the second five cities.

Once again, we have encountered a parable having particular appeal and application to those in positions of power and influence. Luke writes an evangelical apology especially addressed to those to whom much has been given and from whom much is required by God (Lk. 19:26). The gospel of the kingdom of God must be proclaimed to others as well, but Luke's implied readers must recognize Jesus as the Christ, whom God has appointed king. Those who use their influence, position, and wealth for the benefit of the kingdom of God will receive a proportionate reward. For those who find this demand *too* great and choose to hide the mina, it will be taken from them. At the judgment all will be lost.

To Luke's readers God has given the responsibility of governing cities, using worldly wealth, and living out their discipleship in positions of influence. They are to become God's means of invitation and welcoming the poor into the kingdom. They will give generously-even sacrificially to the point of literally giving everything-to the poor and needy, and also for the building of churches and colleges (cf. Lk. 7:5). They will serve as hosts at dinners, and will see that the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame are invited, welcomed, and seated in places of honor at the table (Lk. 14:1-14). They will be judged on how well they have carried out the divine trust. To some this has meant leaving family and the family business, and to others selling everything and giving the money to the poor. But to all it has required following Jesus Christ to Jerusalem and the cross. These are those to whom God has given a special appointment among Luke's readers, to preach the good news of the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. The poor are nearby and waiting for more than the crumbs from their tables.

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