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CHARLES WESLEY' S THEOLOGY OF REDEMPTION: A Study in Structure and Method

by

John R. Tyson

I. Introduction

Charles Wesley (1707-1788) is remembered as one of the patriarchs of the Wesleyan Tradition, and recognized by a broader circle of acquaintance as an important hymnologist. Despite the accolades granted him, Charles' accomplishments are typically not well known, and his theology receives consideration only as an appendage to that of brother John, or as an excursus on those two major points where Charles and John stoutly disagreed (Christian Perfection and Churchmanship). It is time to look beneath the younger brother's rather standard theological content (Anglican and Arminian), to the startling structures and methodology that held his soteriology intact; therein is his most creative contribution.

Few of Charles' sermons have survived; one (perhaps two) appear among the John Wesley's published works.¹ Twelve sermons attributed to Charles by the unsigned editor (probably his widow) of the 1816 *Sermons by the Late Charles Wesley A.M.* were actually composed by John Wesley, though Charles preached three of those early homilies with some regularity.² Six of Charles' maturer sermons, preserved in the difficult shorthand of Dr. John Byrom, have recently been located and are currently being transcribed.³ But even in view of these recent discoveries Charles' surviving sermonic corpus is dwarfed by the 151 extant John Wesley homilies. What has survived are Charles' hymns, nearly nine thousand of them!⁴ But commentators, excepting Franz Hildebrand and John Rattenbury,⁵ have been unwilling to look to the hymns with the theological interest given John's homilies; yet, both bodies of literature were offered as Methodist theological standards. It was in fact, John Wesley who termed the *Hymnbook for the People Called Methodists* "a little body of experimental and practical divinity."⁶ He also quoted Charles' hymns, in his sermons and tracts, to establish and illustrate Wesleyan theology.⁷

James Dale and John Rattenbury are correct to suggest that a comparison with a Thomas Aquinas or Karl Barth does not aptly measure Charles Wesley's theological acumen. Wesley was no systematic theologian. But both commentators seem to go too far in diminishing his importance as a theological figure.⁸ In fact, it can be argued that Charles Wesley was the epitome of what a theologian-especially a Wesleyan Theologian-ought to be; traditional in the finest sense of the term, yet fresh and creative in the application of the resources of the Christian tradition, able to wed Biblical themes, contemporary trends together with social concerns and shape these into the fluid expressions that impacted the present age. There was a divine audacity about this man who could, in sermon and in song, create narratives that placed Lam. 1:12 on the lips of Jesus.⁹ His constructions will not fit into the neat categories of more formal theologians, and those approaches to his soteriology which merely demonstrate that Charles affirmed all the standard doctrines certainly miss the fundamentally dramatic or narrative structure of his thought.¹⁰

Charles Wesley's theological method produced soteriology that embraced and over-flowed the traditional loci communes in pictures painted with vivid Biblical phrases and allusions. His approach was invariably Christocentric; constellations of images and allusions orbit about Christological centers. There is a symmetry and wholeness about Charles' theology of redemption that is both patristic and poetic; it moves between what Charles characterized as "the two great truths of the everlasting gospel, universal redemption and Christian Perfection."¹¹ The "bosom sin" of humanity can be healed in sanctification, the logical and theological consummation of the Edenic Fall.

II. Hymns, Poetry and Theological Method:

Charles' literary output was nothing short of astonishing! As George Findlay remarked: "There are two marvels-one that Charles' pen should be so ready . . . and the other that it should have written so much of permanent value."¹² While several critical issues emerge when one attempts to fix the exact number of Charles' poetical compositions, 9,000 hymns and sacred poems seems to be a reasonable estimate.¹³ If Charles composed approximately 9,000 hymns and poems, then he wrote at least one hymn a day every day for nearly twenty-five years of his adult life. This pace was maintained in the midst of a busy (one could say "frantic") public life that often included four or five sermons a day in as many different towns.¹⁴ Charles' journal and correspondence set his hymns in the larger context of his daily ministerial duties.¹⁵ They were written to be sung with his evangelistic services, in fellowship with Christian friends, or as a part of his own devotional life.¹⁶ Wearisome travel by horse, coach, or foot was made more pleasant by belting out a few Methodist hymns: "We sang and shouted all the way to Oxford."¹⁷ These hymns were born in a meeting of the life and faith of a Methodist evangelist.

Wesley was educated and wrote his poetry during a literary renaissance which looked to the past for the foundation of style and mode of expression. He was equally at home in the writings of Virgil or St. Augustine-and in the original languages! But Biblical images and language clearly overshadowed the allusions Charles drew from Classical, Patristic, or Anglican sources.¹⁸ He was, perhaps even more completely than his brother, *homo*

unius libri-a man of one book. Henry Bett has rightly termed Wesley's hymns "mosaics" of Biblical allusions.¹⁹ Charles selected, shaped and polished Biblical words, phrases, and allusions, and then cemented them into new constructions. The hymns and sacred poems are "Biblical" not only in the sense that they communicate Bible doctrines and concerns, but also in a more primary sense- the hymns are veritable patchworks of scriptural materials, words, phrases, and allusions were cut from the fabric of the Authorized Version and sewn into a new pattern, custom-tailored by the poet-theologian of the Methodist revival.

Charles' favorite description for the Bible was "the oracles," a designation which emphasized the revelatory impact that Wesley felt in the Scriptures.²⁰ For Charles the Bible was the enlivened Word because of the way in which God's Spirit bears witness to Christ through the vehicle of the written word. While Wesley had absolute confidence in the Bible, the Spirit or Christ-more often than the Bible-were said to be infallible in the revelatory event:²¹

1) *Let all who seek in Jesus' name,
To Him submit their every word,
Implicit faith in them disclaim,
And send the hearers to their Lord;
Who doth His Father's will reveal,
Our only Guide infallible.*

2) *Jesus to me thy mind impart,
Be thou thine own interpreter,
Explain the Scriptures to my heart,
That when the Church thy servant hear,
Taught by the Oracles Divine,
They all may own, the Word is Thine.*

It was precisely his emphasis upon the revelatory character of the Bible, expressed theologically in the dynamic relation of Word and Spirit, that gave Charles' hymns a shape that was so essentially Biblical, and yet also so fresh and lively. He had an acute reverence for the Bible, and yet was unwilling to make the Bible an end in itself; rather it was a means to communicate an end (such as reconciliation, sanctification, service, etc). The following verse from Wesley's hymn based on Mat. ix. 20-21 expressed well both his deep reverence for the Scriptures ("I blush and tremble to draw near"), and his concomitant interest to use the Bible as "a garment" with which to "touch my Lord"²²:

*Unclean of life and heart unclean,
How can I in His sight appear!
Conscious of my inveterate sin
I blush and tremble to draw near;
Yet through the garment of His Word
I humbly seek to touch my Lord.*

Charles Wesley, like many other commentators before him (including Augustine and Luther), was invariably Christocentric in his approach to Scripture. Barbara Welch, examining Wesley's poetry from a literary point

of view, pointed to his Christocentrism as a characteristic which distinguished Charles' work from both the contemporary Augustan poets (Dryden, Pope, Addison, Prior), and his hymnological precursors (like George Herbert and Isaac Watts).²³ It had roots in Wesley's conversion experience, and was consonant with his conception of sanctification as having the *Imago Dei* or mind of Christ formed within.²⁴ The Augustan mood meditated upon the wonders of nature in order to contemplate the greatness of God, but in Charles' hymns Christ and redemption through His death and resurrection were the focal points of the poet's message and reconstruction of Scripture. Where earlier writers, like Isaac Watts seemed to follow the more traditional poetic form of the neoclassicists, Charles Wesley refined that same poetic diction by restructuring it around Christ and other leading Biblical themes (like redemption, atonement, self-giving), thereby making his poetic approach more directly serve his theological agenda. Thus, Manning noted that Charles not "only paraphrased but also commented as he versified"; and the "boldness" which Manning observed in Charles' style can be traced to his willingness to grapple with Biblical passages artistically in order to shape them into his own theological affirmations.²⁵

Theology and poetry are image building enterprises. The basic metaphors may have come from the market-place, or law court, but religious language (and Scripture itself) sanctified those pictures and turned them into vehicles of theological communication. Classical theology employed four basic images to articulate its theology of redemption; 1) purchase language and imagery borrowed from the world of commerce; 2) the language of pardon, framed in law court imagery; 3) cleansing and purification ideas derived from rites of sacrifice and ritual cleansings; and 4) allusions drawn from armed conflict or acts of manumission which carry connotations of victory and liberation. Each of these foundational, scriptural images, is a "poetic" expression in the sense that it is a word-picture made into a vehicle of theological communication. Each of these basic images plays a prominent role in Wesley's poetic theology of redemption; he culled and cemented these Biblical images into structures that both approximated and extended their original expression. In this sense his poems are case studies in theology, since they capture and continue that image building process so basic to the nature of religious language. Add to a poem the music that transforms it into a hymn and it becomes a catechism for congregations or crowds. This was precisely the role played by Charles' hymns; he took essentially Biblical words, phrases, and images, and framed these into theological statements that sang on the lips and in the hearts of the common folk of England.

III. The Blood of Christ:

Charles' application of the Biblical word "blood" and its accompanying imagery is an important example of his methodology. "Blood" is the most numerically predominant soteriological term in the hymnological corpus; it appears nearly 800 times in the later hymns alone, which is roughly twice the number of occurrences in the Authorized Version of Wesley's day.²⁶ But this sort of language is a shock to modern sensibilities and as John Rattenbury observed, "Today the term 'blood' to some minds obscures what it symbolizes rather than illuminates it."²⁷

Charles' basic application of "blood" was to use it as a graphic synonym for "death," generally against the larger context of sacrifice or reconciliation.²⁸ This usage finds support in NT phraseology as Behm points out: "Like the cross, 'the blood of Christ' is simply another, and even more graphic phrase for the death of Christ in its soteriological significance."²⁹ Charles' hymns typically set "blood" and "death" in parallel to describe as the "prevalence" or saving significance of the "sacrificial Lamb."³⁰ In his poetic parlance Christ's "blood" became "the power of Thy passion below."³¹

Since the primary Biblical connotation for "blood" is death, the term is also closely linked to Levitical sacrifice. This nexus became the focus of one of Charles' favorite "blended images," as he worked "blood," and sacrificial imagery into vivid descriptions of the Christ event. His poetic commentary on Acts 3:2 drew the sacrifices of the Old and New covenants together³²:

*Soon as Moses prophesied,
Israel's deliverance came;
Soon as Jesus spake and died
The Sacrificial Lamb,
Life, the grand effect, ensued;
That blood for every soul was spilt,
Purged that all redeeming blood
The universal guilt.*

A similar connection was maintained through Charles' use of the phrase "covenant blood." Wesley's application of the phrase moved, even more easily than the writer of Hebrews³³ from the sacrifices of the Old Testament to Christ's sacrificial death. This sort of development was evidence in his comment on Jeremiah L.5, where the triune God applies the "covenant blood" in a day that both "takes our sins away" and creates everlasting fellowship with Him.³⁴ An obvious parallel to this phraseology was evidenced in Wesley's description of "atoning blood." Charles' most typical application of the phrase followed the Levitical pattern in describing the removal of the effects of sin. Thus, he wrote of Jesus "whose blood did for their sins atone"³⁵; and described Christians as being "wash'd in th' atoning blood."³⁶ The same "atoning blood" was the source of "the true liberty of love," and guaranteed that "we have free access to God."³⁷ His usage of the phrase "atoning blood" reflected a knowledge of the etymology of "atone" ("cover") and connected it with conceptions of reconciliation and forgiveness; it also suggested inward dimensions, since "the atoning blood" allows one to "know my Father reconciled."³⁸

Another Wesleyan soteriological phrase which had obvious roots in the cultic rites of the Old Testament is the "sprinkled blood." It is primarily the language of ritual cleansing, but through the Passover ceremony, it also carries connotations of forgiveness and liberation. For Charles Wesley the "sprinkled blood" was pre-eminently something that was "known" or "felt."³⁹ Following a Hebraic (holistic and relational) conception of "knowing" Wesley paralleled "knowing" and "feeling" as modes of experiencing the "sprinkled blood": "Who doth not yet his Savior know/
Or feel the sprinkled blood."⁴⁰ In the hymns "to know" implied more than mere cognition, it was to experience something fully, and to live in relationship with that which

was known. Thus, to "feel the sprinkled blood" was to "know Christ as Saviour"⁴¹ "to know, my Lord, My God!"⁴²

The image of "sprinkling," which in the OT was an acted parable of reconciliation and ritual cleansing, became a metaphor of justification and sanctification in Charles' hymns; it meant redemption from both the "guilt and power of sin." Thus "sprinkling with Christ's blood" imparts grace⁴³, comes to the hearer as Christ's "reconciling word,"⁴⁴ and is the source and basis of one's redemption: "I now in Christ redemption have,/ I feel it through the sprinkled blood,/ And testify His power to save,/ And claim Him for my Lord, my God."⁴⁵ Wesley, like the writer of Hebrews, moved directly from justification (access or initiation) language to sanctification (cleansing, washing, and purification) language.⁴⁶ This movement had precedent in the cultic application of the imagery, and was consonant with the structure of his theology of redemption (e.g. "full" salvation); hence, Charles' singers longed to "feel the sprinkling of that blood/ Which purifies the heart."⁴⁷ Wesleyan terminology, the "sprinkled blood" produces "real holiness,"⁴⁸ "uttermost salvation,"⁴⁹ and "finish'd holiness."⁵⁰

No phrase is more characteristic of Charles' theology of redemption than "blood applied." It was a soteriological epigram recalling the death of Jesus, and the present power that event holds for those who believe. Often Wesley wrote that "Jesus doth the blood apply."⁵¹ It was equally valid for him to sing that "The Spirit of the Son" applied "the sprinkled blood."⁵² Frequently, faith applied the "blood" in a saving manner.⁵³ In each case the distance between the cross and contemporary person was bridged by a Divine action and an enabled human response. Charles' use of "blood applied" touched all of his redemption categories. The application of Jesus' blood was preparatory to justification since it convicted one of unbelief.⁵⁴ With that conviction comes the Spirit-blood nexus, which gives birth to faith.⁵⁵ All of the traditional redemption categories are brought into contact with the "blood applied"; including, terms like "pardon," "forgiveness," "saved," and "salvation." The entire Wesleyan conception of justification could be encapsulated in the phrase⁵⁶:

*The blood by faith applied
O let it now take place,
And speak me FREELY JUSTIFIED,
And FULLY SAVED by grace.*

The same "blood" which "justified" simultaneously "blots out my offense," and "cleanses every stain."⁵⁷ Hence, "cleansing" and "washing" became powerful metaphors for describing the inward effects of Christ's redemptive "blood."⁵⁸ The Holy Spirit's application of the "blood" became synonymous with the process of sanctification⁵⁹:

*Send us the Spirit of thy Son,
To make the depths of Godhead known,
To make us share the life Divine;
Send Him the sprinkled blood to apply,
Send Him our souls to sanctify,
And show and seal us ever thine.*

Charles also wrote that "Jesus' blood applies, absolves, and wholly sanctifies."⁶⁰ This sanctification involved purification from one's sin (original and actual) and a concomitant filling of the person by the Holy Spirit or by "heavenly love"⁶¹:

*God of grace, vouchsafe to me
That Spirit of holiness,
Sighs my heart for purity,
And pants for perfect peace;
Spirit of faith, the blood apply,
Which only can my filth remove
Fill my soul and sanctify,
By Jesus' heavenly love.*

Charles also maintained an experiential dimension throughout his depiction of redemption as "the blood applied." His journal and hymns repeatedly report that one "felt the blood applied."⁶² An important result of the application of "the blood" was what Wesley termed "melting"; the effectiveness of Christ's death softened the heart hardened by sin so that a person could respond to the Word of God's acceptance.⁶³ A second metaphor expressed much the same idea as Wesley wrote: "Bleeding love-I long to feel it!/ Let the smart break my heart,/ Break my heart and heal it."⁶⁴ The "blood" also brings a sense of comfort or assurance to the soul.⁶⁵ Forgiveness "is sealed" on the soul or heart⁶⁶ this was synonymous with saying that it had a calming effect which "eases all our anguish."⁶⁷ The notion of "sealing" reaches back to a time when documents of importance were impressed with a signet. The practice continued into the Eighteenth Century, and many of the Wesleys' own letters bear the imprint of having been "sealed" in this way. As an image and metaphor, "sealed" carried connotations of "closed," "confirmed," or "attested." Wesley's "Hymns on the Lord's Supper," #79 seemed to blend these elements together to speak of a "pardon" which was both "closed" and experientially "attested"⁶⁸:

*The' atonement thou for all hast made,
O that we all might now receive!
Assure us now the debt is paid,
And thou hast died that all may live,
Thy death for all, for us reveal,
And let thy blood my pardon seal.*

The imagery of application of Christ's blood is a crucial soteriological nexus in Charles Wesley's theology. It runs the whole range of redemption themes, touching every doctrine from prevenient grace through Christian Perfection. It was firmly rooted in the Christ event and in Christian experience. The "blood applied" became so complete a statement of Charles' soteriology that the jeers of the crowd in Jerusalem (Mat. xxvii.25), "His blood be upon us and our children," became in Wesley's hands "the best of prayers, if rightly used."⁶⁹ His hymnological comment on the passage prayed⁷⁰:

*Horrible wish! Thy murderers dare
The blessing to a curse pervert:*

*We turn the curse into a prayer:
To cleanse our lives, and purge our heart,
In all its hallowing, blissful powers,
Thy blood be, Lord, on us and ours!*

Charles' hymns are replete with significant soteriological phrases like "blood applied." Each becomes an epigram for a set of redemption images, and each is extended beyond its original roots and brought into contact with other salient themes. The sacrificial roots of "blood" were maintained as it was extended through the introduction of purchase and healing metaphors. It was also personified into a "blood" which both "pleads" intercession⁷¹ and "speaks assurance into our hearts."⁷²

There were many poetic devices which Charles Wesley employed to create this dramatic effect in his literature. One of them was to paint the picture of the crucified Christ upon the canvas of the reader's mind. Wesley's verses are full of graphic descriptions. His phrases are short and his words are well chosen—they create and communicate a vivid sense of movement and mood. His lines are peppered with exclamation points, signaling the author's excitement and emotion. The poems are typically set in the present tense (as opposed to the narrative past), breaking the bonds of time and placing the reader and Biblical text in dramatic dialogue. Because of his reverence for the Bible, Charles Wesley reworked and applied it in ways we might term "existential." T. S. Gregory has put it well: Charles wrote his hymns "not only to express but to induce the experience they reveal."⁷³ The experiential communication was both doctrinal and didactic. It revolved around the central themes of the Christian faith and expressed those themes in ways that made them live in the reader's frame of reference.

IV. Motifs of Christ's Intercession:

Our examination of Charles Wesley's application of the word "blood" and its concomitant images evidences his poetic theological approach to the Bible. Biblical words, phrases, and allusions were the raw materials of Wesley's poems; they were shaped into a larger picture that communicated his own theological concerns. The various redemption terms and phrases found their coherence in the Christocentrism of Charles' hymns. Foundational phrases were shaped into orchestrated motifs or depictions of Christ's intercession. These motifs were metaphorical descriptions of Christ's intercessory role, which drew several of the smaller identifications into a more coherent and unified picture. They are image laden snapshots which recur throughout his literary corpus, but they are not "theories" of the atonement or the product of formal theologizing. Seven such integrated motifs are easily identified in the hymnological corpus.⁷⁴ These motifs included: 1) The Lamb of God, 2) Victor-Liberator, 3) Font of Salvation, 4) Physician of Souls, 5) Advocate, 6) High Priest, and 7) The Cross of Christ and of Christians. Each of these themes represents a longitudinal slice across the Wesley's theology, a concretion and integration of various other images.

The foregoing allusions to "blood" found expression in the Lamb of God motif, since it was replete with sacrificial imagery. One of Charles' favorite sermon texts was Jn. i.29, 36 "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."⁷⁵ This text, and others like it from Hebrews and the

Suffering Servant Songs, provided Charles with an theological bridge between the sacrificial Lambs of the Old and New covenants.

Christ depicted as the Lamb of God appeared over 300 times in Charles' later hymns alone. The basic connection sustained in the Lamb motif was in the sacrificial and substitutionary significance Charles saw in Jesus' death. Jesus was the "Lamb who died for me," who "died for sinners," or for "the whole world."⁷⁶ Thus, in Wesley's mind, the death Jesus died was aptly depicted as a sacrificial death which was foreshadowed in the Levitical rites.⁷⁷ Following the pattern of the Levitical sacrifice (Yom Kippur) the Lamb of the New Covenant was also found to be "without spot or blemish,"⁷⁸ and He was "slaughtered" or "slain"-descriptions which conjure up sacrificial images.⁷⁹ Charles' hymns picture Christ's cross as an "altar" upon which the Lamb is laid,⁸⁰ and His death is described as a "pure oblation,"⁸¹ "the great sacrifice,"⁸² or "a sin offering" for "all mankind."⁸³

The motif was further articulated by identifying Jesus as the "paschal Lamb." The Exodus-event became a paradigm of the reader's own deliverance through the agency of the Lamb; Egypt becomes a metaphor for our bondage to sin, and Christ "our passover" has come to set us free. His "blood" sprinkles not only the doorposts of the houses of Israel, but "every house and every heart."⁸⁴

Another important application of the Lamb of God motif connected it with Charles' eucharistic theology. The sacrificial Lamb became a bridge spanning from Christ's death to the Eucharist sacrifice.⁸⁵ The eucharist was described as a rite which made the partakers contemporaries of that paschal meal and the saving import of Christ's death⁸⁶:

*Then let our faith adore the Lamb
To-day as yesterday the same,
In Thy great offering join,
Partake the sacrificial food,
And eat Thy flesh and drink Thy blood,
And live for ever Thine.*

The Eucharist, in Charles' view, communicated Christ's life to the partaker and in a way that was experientially discernible. Hence, he asked the rhetorical question: "Is the memorial of your Lord,/ An useless form, an empty sign?/ Or doth He here His life impart?/ What saith the witness in your heart?"⁸⁷ The Lord's Supper was an authentic sign, which set Christ and His sufferings in the midst of the congregation, to call everyone to believe⁸⁸:

*In this authentic sign
Behold the stamp Divine
Christ revives His sufferings here,
Still exposes them to view;
See the Crucified appear,
Now believe He died for you.*

In Charles Wesley's own terms the eucharist was both a "sign and a means of grace"; or "this great mystery,/ Figure and means of saving grace."⁸⁹ It was, therefore, "a sacred and effectual sign"⁹⁰:

*The sacred, true effectual sign,
Thy body and The blood it show;*

*The glorious instrument Divine
Thy mercy and Thy strength bestow.*

Charles also found in the Lamb of God a pattern worthy of our emulation. He identified "meekness" as one of these characteristics; but this "meekness" should not be confused with the "insipid" connotations the term carries today.⁹¹ "Meek" and "mild" were Wesley's words for describing a servant's attitude. He consistently used these terms to construct a kenotic Christology. They were synonyms for describing the self emptying (Phil. 2:5-8) and self-abasement which the writer termed "the mind of Christ." It was this sort of "meekness" Wesley thought should be emulated, and often the speakers of his hymns longed to be made "meek" like the Lamb⁹²:

*Lamb of God, I would like thee
Quiet to the slaughter go,
Toward my cruel murders[sic.] show;
Crush'd by presenting power,
Suffer all the wrongs of man,
God in humble peace adore.*

But Charles insisted that this gospel "meekness" ought not be confused with weakness; in fact, he saw it as a source of strength and power. Borrowing imagery of Rev. 5:1-7, Charles blended the Lamb of God with a second powerful image, "The Lion is the Lamb of God!"⁹³ Juxtaposing these two, seemingly contradictory Biblical images, Charles pointed to both the humility of Jesus and the victorious power latent in His self-abasement.⁹⁴ In a masterful application of Biblical themes Wesley mingled the Suffering Servant with *Christus Victor* to emphasize that the way of suffering and death was also the way of Jesus' victory over "our foes." His victory also allows Christians to conquer the world, the flesh and the devil in Jesus' "name" (power) and through His "blood"⁹⁵:

*Jesus' tremendous name
Puts all our foes to flight!
Jesus the meek, the angry Lamb
A Lion is in fight;
By all hell's host o'erthrown,
And conquering them through Jesus' blood,
We still to conquer go.*

Each of the major motifs on Christ's intercession was tied to the others by the over-arching significance given the words, phrases and images used to construct them. "Blood" was not only embalmed in the sacrificial rites of Leviticus and the paschal lamb, it flowed from the side of the wounded Christ into a fount of cleansing-in which our sins may be washed away. Its effects both heal our brokenness /Physician Motif and Liberate the Christian from his/her sins (Victor Motif). The "blood" raises its metaphorical voice to plead intercession before God's throne and speak assurance into hungry human hearts. It is poured out by the great High Priest in a heavenly tabernacle (Priestly Motif). Shed upon the cross of Christ, it is the efficacy of His death and the bequest He makes over to Christians by faith. Each of our seven motifs is highlighted and united by "blood" (for example), and

yet each motif is a cohesive metaphor capable of standing on its own feet as a method of depicting Christ's intercession and its effectiveness for us.

V. Theological Structure:

Charles Wesley's theology of redemption combined Biblical and poetical hermeneutics; from the former he mined Biblical loci from the mother lode, with the latter he extended those theological themes and images which spoke the gospel with the fervor of a revivalist. The structure of his theology of redemption reflects this same synthesis and sense of balance. It bears a striking resemblance to the Patristic doctrine of recapitulation.

Irenaeus (d. 198?) is generally considered the first leading exponent of this theological posture; through him and successive theologians recapitulation became an important soteriological approach in the ancient Eastern Church. The basic point of departure may have been the Pauline pairing of the First and Second Adams.⁹⁶ The original righteousness (*Imago Dei*) of the First Adam, subsequently lost in the primordial Fall, establishes Christian Perfection as the goal of the incarnation and reconciliation of Christ the Second Adam. Irenaeus, therefore, understood restitution of the Divine image within a person as the central feature of the Christ-event: ". . . our Lord Jesus Christ," he wrote, "Who did through His transcendent love, become what we are that He might bring us to be even as He is Himself."⁹⁷ From the earliest years of his preaching, Charles Wesley pointed to Christian Perfection, understood as the restoration of the *Imago Dei*, as the "One Thing Needful" for Christians. His sermon by that title (1737?) made sanctification the primary thrust of redemption, and described Perfection in the categories of recapitulation: "To recover the first estate from which we are fallen is The One Thing Needful; to re-exchange the image of Satan for the image of God, bondage for freedom, sickness for health! Our one great business is to erase out of our souls the likeness of our destroyer, and to be born again, to be formed anew after the likeness of our Creator."⁹⁸ In this pre conversion sermon, (which was subsequently preached during the revival), the foundation for Charles' unqualified conception of Christian Perfection was laid; and Charles clung to it tenaciously-even in the face of the disputes over sanctification in the 1760's and through his own feelings of god-forsakenness.

Charles' hymns looked to Golgotha with historical and theological intensity; yet, there was also a contemporaneity at work in them. The Atonement, though complete or "finished" from the perspective of potentially putting sin away, also needed to be completed by the response of faith and corresponding deeds of faithfulness. As the latent effectiveness of Christ's death was affirmed in dramatic terms, the contemporary cross enters into the life of the Christian through the demands of faith and costly discipleship. Wesley used the term "atonement" to describe both the finished and unfinished work of the Cross. Presented in his poetic, dramatic format, this meant that Christ hung ever before the seeker in order to elicit the response of faith. This approach was not limited to his hymns, it is also demonstrated in Charles' journal and suggested in his sermons.⁹⁹ A similar finished-unfinished dialectic emerged in Wesley's theology of suffering. "The school of the Cross" (as he called it) demanded that the Christian be "conformed to an expiring God."¹⁰⁰ The formative thrust of "the school of the cross" was to be found

in an imitation of Christ, most specifically, in imitation of His suffering and cross-bearing example. The Christian's conformity to "the pattern" of the suffering has as its goal a re-creation of Christ's character-Perfect love¹⁰¹

- 5) *While I thus my Pattern view,
I shall bleed and suffer too,
With the man of sorrow join'd
One become in heart and mind*
- 6) *More and more like Jesus grow,
Till the Finisher I know,
Gain the final Victor's wreath,
Perfect Love in perfect death.*

Charles Wesley also found in suffering a purification of will and intentions which made the way of the Cross into a path toward Perfection. This emphasis was graphically established through his application of the Lukan phrase "daily dying." In Wesley's hands the contemporary "cross" became an epigram for the self renunciation that was preparatory to receiving "the crown."¹⁰² His poetic commentary on Mk. 8:34 (Mat. 16:24) combined all of these themes¹⁰³:

*The man that will Thy follower be,
Thou bidd'st him still himself deny,
Take up his daily cross with Thee,
Thy shameful death rejoice to die,
And choose a momentary pain,
A crown of endless life to gain.*

Many commentators, including Charles' brother John, have found Charles' theology of suffering a bit extreme; few formal theologians link personal suffering and inner purification as directly as the younger Wesley did.¹⁰⁴ Through his own blend of a profound concern for Christian Perfection, his own ill health and melancholy, and his keen awareness of the inner harmony of the Scripture, Charles extended the atonement into the daily life of Christians as few Protestant theologians have dared.

If the Suffering Servant image became one of Charles' favorite depictions of Christ, and the pattern of the Christian's life, it must be added that Wesley never lost sight of the "servant" side of that identification. The follower of Jesus, bearing the Cross, is called "to fill my Lord's afflictions up."¹⁰⁵ The hymnologist's applications of that Pauline phrase had its basis in his proclivity for seeing Christ mirrored in the face of the outcast, oppressed or neighbor; alleviating their affliction was deemed a portion of the reconciling effects of the Cross. Charles' hymns and sermons on "The Good Samaritan" were particularly powerful explications of the connection between the cross of discipleship and Christian service.¹⁰⁶

The doctrine of the Trinity also played a vital role in Charles Wesley's soteriology. Redemption was deemed a Triune work¹⁰⁷:

- 1) *The sacred three conspire
In love to fallen man,
To' exalt the creature higher,
And turn his loss to gain;*

*Still in the new creation
The persons all agree,
Joint causes of salvation,
To raise and perfect me.*

2) *The Father's grace allures me,
And to my Savior gives;
The Savior's blood assures me,
That God His child receives;
The Comforter bears witness
That I am truly His,
And brings my soul its fitness
For everlasting bliss.*

3) *The Father, Son, and Spirit
Himself to me makes known,
And I in Him inherit
One God, forever One:
Jehovah's purest essence
My raptured spirit seals;
And all His blissful presence
In all His people dwells.*

Redemption as recapitulation takes its impetus from changing roles within the Trinity. Christian Perfection, in its various descriptions, was presented as a work of the Trinity. Sanctification as "Perfect Love" looked to love as the Divine essence to explain how God or Christ was formed within the Christian through the work of the Holy Spirit. Perfection as restoration of the *Imago Dei* also had a Trinitarian emphasis; the "image of God" becomes "the mind of Christ" brought into the inner person by the indwelling Spirit. Furthermore, the dilemma of the Atonement, with its tension between the juridical wrath and Son sending love of God was resolved in the intertrinitarian communion. As Charles wrote: "My Savior in my Judge I meet."¹⁰⁸ The imagery of the law court plays a vital role in Charles Wesley's hymns, but judgment and legal reparations are not the final word in his courtroom. The Judge is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; in the Trinitarian equality of the Father and the Son, the stern Judge dissolves into the friendly Advocate: "And in the Judge our Brother find, / Our Advocate and Friend."¹⁰⁹ The doctrine of the Trinity was not merely a theological artifact in Wesley's soteriology, it emerged as a principle of integration which brought coherence to several of his leading constructs.

Charles' hymns were invariably Christocentric. He employed most of the traditional devices for describing the person and work of Christ, including the "threefold office." Yet over fifty different Christological titles appear in Charles' late hymns. Like Anselm before him, Charles affirmed that the focus and motive of the incarnation was located in the Atonement of Christ: "Who man became for man to die."¹¹⁰ The phraseology of the Suffering Servant Songs provided Wesley with vivid images to describe the Incarnation of Christ: "The Son of Man, the Man of woe,/Why did He leave the sky? 'Twas all His business here below,/To serve us, and to die!"¹¹¹ But the goal of the

Christ-event was not reached in the celestial rule of Christ "at the right hand of the Father." For Charles Wesley the incarnation (in a sense) continues as Christ is formed in Christians; thus, the culmination of the Christ-event, while including the heavenly session, is more directly found in the inner renovation of "His faithful people"¹¹³:

1) *He did; the King invisible,
Jehovah, once on earth did dwell,
And laid His majesty aside;
Whom all His heavens cannot contain,
For us He lived, a mournful man,
For us a painful death He died.*

2) *Still the great God resides below,
(And all his faithful people know
He will not from His church depart)
The Father, Son and Spirit dwells,
His Kingdom in the poor reveals,
And fill with heaven the humble heart.*

Recent scholarship has drawn attention to the importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit for Wesleyan soteriology.¹¹⁴ From his earliest sermons onward, Charles described sanctification (the "One Thing Needful") as having Christ formed within, or alternately have the *Imago Dei* restored through the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit. Union with Christ /or having the "mind of Christ") and the presence of the Holy Spirit were functional equivalents. The Vine branches imagery of Jn. xv became an apt analogy for describing one's reception of the grace of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit that allows us to grow into His image¹¹⁵:

1) *Unless we faith receive
And still to Jesus cleave,
Our God we cannot please
By fruits or righteousness,
Or work a work, or speak a word,
Or think a thought, without the Lord.*

2) *But freely justified
In Jesus we abide,
The Spirit's fruits we show,
In true experience grow;
Daily the sap of grace receive,
And more and more like Jesus live.*

The constructive thrust of Charles Wesley's pneumatology is to be found in his persistent definition of sanctification under the impact of the Trinity. For Charles, sanctification meant having God's image formed within a person- it was a recapitulation of the paradisiacal *Imago Dei*, an undoing of Eden's Fall. Since this renewal was synonymous with having Christ (His "image" or "mind") formed within the Christian, the Holy Spirit-as the One commissioned to "call to mind the things of Christ"-is the agent of this renovation. Charles, therefore, connected terms like "blood," "virtue," and "grace"

to the work of the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁶ The office of the Spirit was to apply the effectiveness ("blood, merits, virtue") of Christ's life and death to the life of the Christian-by faith. This conception is shaped by Charles' concern for sanctification, and clearly sets Christian Perfection in the larger context of his soteriology; and it effectively undercut the "enthusiastic" (heretical) perfectionism which threatened Methodism in the 1760's. Charles' doctrine of sanctification was essentially Christocentric, (as opposed to pneumatic or ecstatic). It typically emphasized the unqualified ideal (which John Wesley lamented was a mark "set too high"), and the path towards that perfect mark.¹¹⁷

Charles Wesley's hymns (and to a lesser degree-his sermons) build soteriology out of Biblical words, phrases and allusions. While these expressions were informed by a close reading of the resources of the Christian Tradition, they were also shaped and formed by Charles' own *Sitz im Leben* and religious experience. His soteriological snap-shots communicate basic Bible and theology wrapped in their practical and experiential connections and set those kerygmatic constants in the life experience of the church. The Biblical narratives are frozen in a sort of eucharistic timelessness, to be seen and felt afresh through the hymnological vistas created by Methodism's poet theologian.

The hymnological Christocentricism was fashioned through Charles' own acknowledgement, recognition and confession of Jesus Christ as Christ *pro me*.¹¹⁸ His hymns had the not-so-subtle agenda of an evangelist, they put Wesley's affirmations on our lips and bid us to "sing our Great Redeemer's Praise"; urging us to affirm, appropriate and find comfort in Christ through faith.

Charles' soteriology has a wholesome interest in the entire person which took expression in "full salvation" and Christian Perfection as the logical and theological (recapitulation) response to the dilemma of human evil. His dialectic of the finished and unfinished work of the Cross extended incarnation-atonement into the life of the Christian, as "the atonement is received" and "Christ is formed within." His hymns, like Charles' life, welded doctrine and experience into an indissoluble unit; "the blood" is "felt," comfort and pardon are "known" (in the richness of the Hebraism). His theology of the Cross not only marked out the path of costly discipleship, but also demanded that the pilgrim "fill our Lord's afflictions up" by serving Christ in the person of our neighbor or the wounded traveler.

Certainly it was his blend of the Biblical witness with Augustan poetic diction, and classical theology-a synthesis born in and shaped to induce Christian experience-which gave Charles Wesley's soteriological expressions (and the hymns that bear them) a life even into our own day.

Notes

1. John Wesley, *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* (London: The Wesleyan Conference, 1872 reprinted by various publishers), V, 25-37 ("Awake, Thou That Sleepest"); VII, 386-400 ("The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes").

2. Charles Wesley, *Sermons by the Late Rev. Charles Wesley, A.M.* (London: Baldwin, Craddock, & Joy, 1816). The unsigned editor is thought to be Charles' widow. These sermons were actually composed by John Wesley; cf. Richard Heitzenrater, "John Wesley's Early Sermons," *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, Vol. 37, No. 4, (Feb. 1970), 110-128], but it is clear that Charles preached at least four of the homilies while in America; #V, "One thing is Needful"; VII, "He that goeth forth and weepeth"; #VIII, "The Single Eye," and #XIII, "There the wicked cease from troubling."

3. The present writer played a small role in this discovery; cf. Thomas Albin, "Charles Wesley's Earliest Evangelical Sermon," *Methodist History*, Vol. XXI, No. 1, (Oct. 1982), 60-63).

4. Frank Baker, *The Representative Verse of Charles Wesley* (London: Epworth Press, 1962), p. xi. The calculation of the number of Charles' hymns runs as low as 6,000 if one excludes the lyric poems, which were rarely (if ever) sung. Baker's figure of 9,000 is slightly higher than the traditional ascriptions; J. E. Rattenbury, for example [*Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (London: Epworth, 1948), 19-20], suggests that 7,300 is an apt count. Recent documentary finds support Baker's higher estimate, and indicate that 9,000 may be a rather conservative figure. Other critical issues, like distinguishing authorship of the Wesleyan hymns, also have direct bearing on this question. I have give this matter thorough treatment in the first chapter of my Ph.D. dissertation, "Charles Wesley's Theology of the Cross: An Examination of the Theology and Method of Charles Wesley as seen in his Doctrine of the Atonement," (Drew U. Graduate School, Madison, NJ, 1983); cf. Rattenbury, op. cit., ch. III., p. 61f.

5. Franz Hildebrandt, *I Offered Christ* (London: Epworth Press, 1967), and John Rattenbury, *Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (London: Epworth Press, 1941).

6. JW. *Works*, XIV, 340. The two terms, "experimental" and "practical," are elaborated by the context of the Preface. The former is a synonym for "experiential" that is born in the Lockian connection of life and thought. This identification is reinforced by the parallel with "practical" which the Preface twice sets in contrast with "speculative." Cf. the fine article by Frederick Dreyer, "Faith and Experience in the Thought of John Wesley," *The American Historical Review*, Vol.83, No.1 (Feb.1983), pp. 12-30, which sets John Wesley's conception of religious experience in an Lockian context. Donald Green, "Augustinianism and Empiricism: A Note on Eighteenth Century English Intellectual History," *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 1, (1967), pp. 33-68 sees a similar synthesis of ideology and practical experience at work in Charles Wesley's poetic contemporaries.

7. Cf. JW. *Works* VI, 20-22, Sermon XL, "Christian Perfection"; Ibid., 189-190, Sermon LIV, "On Eternity"; VIII,43, "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion"; Ibid, p. 135; XI, 370, 382, 385,392,393, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection."

8. James Dale, "The Theological and Literary Qualities of the Poetry of Charles Wesley in Relation to the Standards of His Age." Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, England, 1960. p. 185-186; J.E. Rattenbury, *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (London: Epworth Press, 1941), p. 85ff.

9. Lam. i.12: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" (AV). Cf. Thomas Jackson, ed. *The Journal of Charles Wesley, A.M.* (London: John Mason, 1849; reprinted Baker Books, 1980), Vol. I, p. 177; 188; 194; 247; 313; 321; 342- 351. [Hereafter: *CW. Journal*, Vol. etc.] And George Osborn, ed. *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley* 13 Vols. (London: Wesleyan Methodist Conference, 1868-1872), Vol. X, p.48, #1367, and #1368. [Hereafter: *PW. Vol. etc.*]

10. John R. Renshaw, "The Atonement in the Theology of John and Charles Wesley," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University School of Theology, 1965, for example, treats Charles' soteriology as an appendage to John's, more or less proof-texting the standard doctrines out of the younger brother's hymns without feeling the creative force of his method and fluid connections.

11. *CW. Journal*, I, 286.

12. George H. Findlay, *Christ's Standard Bearer* (London: Epworth Press, 1965), p. 14.

13. Cf. note #4, above.

14. Thomas Jackson, *A Life of Charles Wesley*, 2 Vol. (London: John Mason, 1862), I, 332.

15. John R. Tyson and Douglas Lister, "Charles Wesley, Pastor: A Glimpse Inside His Shorthand Journal," *QR: The Methodist Quarterly Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1, (Spring 1984), pp. 9-22.

16. *CW. Journal*, I, 131, 134, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 145, 146, 150, 154, 166; II, 214.

17. *Ibid*, I, 131, 145.

18. One of Charles' manuscript hymns announces that he is introducing "a saying of Chrysostom," Ms. Luke, an unpublished hymn based on Lk. xxi.1, located in the Methodist Archives, John Rylands Library and Research Center of the University of Manchester, Manchester, England, Ms. p. 296. Henry Bett, *Hymns of Methodism*, pp. 98-107, detects phrases borrowed from Tertullian (*De Carne Christi*), Ignatius (*Epistle to the Romans*) and Augustine (*Confessions*), in Charles' hymns. *The Book of Common Prayer* was a portion of the Anglican tradition that figured prominently in Charles' life and writings. His journal indicated that he used the prayer book in private prayer and public worship; his "Short Hymns on Select Passages of Scripture," (1762 and unpublished mss.) indicate the prayer book also informed his poetic diction, since many of his hymns based on the Psalms follow the prayer book version instead of the A.V. which he used throughout the rest of the hymnological corpus. For Charles' use of the *Book of Common Prayer*

cf. *Journal*, I, pp. 104, 111, 120, 121, 123, 125, 127, 130, 131, 201, 258, 287 (twice), 289, 298; II, 254. For the hymns based on the prayer book version cf. PAW. IX, pp. 284-293, "Short Hymns" nos. 819, 821, 824, 828, 832, 835, 836. 837. 839, 840, 844, 846, 848, 851, 852, 853, among others.

19. Henry Bett, *The Hymns of Methodism in Their Literary Relations* (London: Epworth Press, 1912), p. 35-36.

20. PAW. XII, p. 411; cf. IX, 380; *Journal*, I, 113 etc.

21. PAW. XIII, 183, #3372.

22. PAW. X, 224-225, #216.

23. Barbara Welch, "Charles Wesley and the Celebrations of Evangelical Experience." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1971, p. 113-114.

24. C.W. *Journal*, I, p. 88. In his entry for Wed. May 17th., 1738, Charles wrote: "I spent some time with Luther [via the Reformer's *Galatians*], who was greatly blessed to me, especially his conclusion of the 2d. chapter. I labored, waited, and prayed to feel 'who loved me, and gave himself for me.' " Cf. Charles' sermon "The One Thing Needful," Sermons, p. 86ff, where the phraseology of the title describes the importance of the restoration of the *Imago Dei* or Christian Perfection.

25. PAW. II, 156-158; IV, 378ff and *Journal*, I, 208; PAW. II, 173f and *Journal*, I, 278.

26. By "later hymns" I mean those which Charles published in his *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, 2 Vol. 1749 edition, or thereafter; these were hymns which were produced and printed without John Wesley's editorial oversight, and can assuredly be attributed to Charles without the difficulty of the brother's habit of publishing the earlier hymnals jointly. Cf. JW. *Works*, XI, p. 391, for his disclaimer for the 1749 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*: "As I did not see these before they were published, there were some things in them which I did not approve of."

27. Rattenbury, *Evangelical Doctrines*, p. 202.

28. Cf. Ms. *Miscellaneous Hymns*, #113, Ms. p. 162, located in the Methodist Archives, John Rylands Library and Research Center of Manchester University, Manchester, England. Ms. Acts, Ms. p. 554, an unpublished hymn based on Acts. xv.8, 9; PAW. VI, 441; VII, 228, 398; XII, 56, 59; XIII, 22, 164.

29. Behm, *T.D.N.T.*, "Haima," I, 174.

30. PAW. VII, 241.

31. PAW. IV, 419, #21.

32. PAW. XII, 165, #2410.

33. Heb. ix. 20; x.29; xiii.20; cf. Ex. xxiv.6.

34. PAW. X, 46, #1364; cf. PAW. X, 119, #1559, etc.
35. P W. XII, 305.
36. PAW. VII, 339
37. P. W. XIII, 143.
38. P W. I,99, 106; II, 323-334, ("Arise, My Soul, Arise"); VII, 395; PAW. X, 110; XI, 502-503; Ms. Luke, M s. p. 213, an unpublished hymn based on T .k . xiv.16.
39. P W. VII, p.328, #31; VIII,303; X, 11,74,80; XII,236,243, Ms. Acts, Ms. p. 455.
40. PAW. XII, 243, #2576; cf. p. 236.
41. PAW. XII, 243, #2576.
42. PAW. XII, 236, #2560.
43. P W. X, 110, #1542.
44. PAW. X, 80, #1449.
45. P W. VI, 303. Cf. PAW. X, 74; IV, 188; 3. PAW. III, 111; VII, 212, 328; X. 11: XIII. 120.
46. PAW. X, 11 -1291; cf. IV, 364, 349; V, 266.
47. P W. X, 11, #1291; Cf. IV, 364, 349; V, 266.
48. PAW. X, 28-29.
49. PAW. XII, 91, #3206.
50. Ibid
51. P W. VII, 397; XIII, 33, 43, 71, 397.
52. PAW. IV, 166; VII, 297; XII, 40, 298, 300-301.
53. P W. VI, 3; XI, 502; XII, 157, 431.
54. P W. XIII, 43, #3115.
55. P W. VII, 279, #108.
56. PAW. VI, 3, #1. Emphasis added.
57. P W. VII, 384, #32.
58. p W. VII,384, #32; VIII,403, #49; X,23, 1311; XII, 299, #2692; XIII, 173, #3352.
59. P W. IV, 166; cf. X, 23, #1310; XII, 298, #2690; XIII, 71, #3170.
60. PAW XIII, 71, #3170.
61. PAW. XII, 298, #7690.

62. Journal, I, p. 215; PAW. XI, 365, #1713; XII, 109, 248, 256.
63. PAW. III, 168; IV, 168, 265.
64. PAW. VII, 384.
65. Cf. James Townsend, "Feelings Related to Assurance in Charles Wesley's Hymns," an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1979.
66. PAW. XII, 222, #43; PAW. VII, 397, #2532.
67. PAW 208, cf. XIII, 235, #347.
68. PAW. III, 271.
69. CW. Journal, I, 410.
70. PAW. X, 423, #731.
71. Ms. John, p. 334, an unpublished hymn- PAW. IV, 228, #14- VII, 116, #97; 154, #128; IX, 13, #37; X, 417, #714, XIII, 252.
72. PAW. IV, 261, #40; V, 277, #94; XI, 269, #1498; XIII, 146, #3290; XIII, 161, #3326.
73. T. S. Gregory, "Charles Wesley's Hymns and Poems," *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, Vol. 182, (1957), p. 261.
74. Cf. Tyson, "Charles Wesley's Theology of the Cross," op. cit. Ch. III, "Major Motifs of Christ's Intercession," pp. 378ff.
75. He preached it at least the twenty-two times indicated by his journal.
76. Ms. Deliberate, p. 5-6, an unpublished hymn; the manuscript is housed in the Methodist Archives, John Rylands Library of the University of Manchester, Manchester, England. PAW. V, 14; III, 112; X, 396; XIII, 119-120.
77. PAW. XI, 322, #1620; cf. PAW. I, 265, 336; V, 103, 127; VI, 389; VII, 162.
78. PAW. IX, 42, #134; Cf. XI, 283; XI, 397, #659; IV, 218; XI, 282; Ms. John, p. 394, an unpublished hymn on Jn. xviii.39.
79. PAW. III, 219, 227-228, 232, 234, 252-253, 292, 301, 302, 319, 320, 336; XI, 282.
80. PAW. XI, 283, #1528.
81. PAW. III, 218, #3.
82. PAW. III, 218-219, #4.
83. PAW. V, 135, R209 is an excellent example since it blends themes of guilt bearing, sin offering, and ceremonial purification through the imposition of blood as imagery for describing Jesus' death.
84. PAW. IX, 42, #134; cf. XI, 283.
85. PAW. III, 219; 227-228, 301, 302, 319, etc.

86. PAW. III, 218, #3.
87. PAW. III, 279, #89.
88. PAW. III, 221, #8.
89. PAW. III, 236, #28.
90. Ibid cf. 211; #35.
91. Eric Sharpe, "Gentle Jesus, Meek and Mild-Variations on a Nursery Theme, for Congregation and Critic," *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. 53, No. 3, (July-September 1981), pp. 149-165.
92. Ms. Acts, p. 176, an unpublished hymn on Acts viii.2.
93. PAW. X, 89, #1469.
94. PAW. XI 293-294.
95. PAW. V, 273, #91.
96. I Cor. xv.22, 45; Rom. x.14, 15.
97. Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," cited from the Roberts-Douglas ed., *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, reprint, 1977), p.52. Charles' writings do not clearly indicate that he studied Irenaeus, though it seems likely that the Eastern Father would have been a portion of Wesley's regimen. It is clear that he read Augustine, Tertullian, Ignatius, Chrysostom, and Clement of Alexandria.
98. CW. *Sermons*, p. 86.
99. CW. *Journal*, II, 71; Cf. PAW. IX, 362, 363, 387-388; VIII, 341-342.
100. Ms. Luke, p. 34, an unpublished hymn based on Lk. ii.34.
101. PAW. XIII. 152-154. #3313.
101. Ms. Luke, p. 78, an unpublished hymn on Lk. xi.11; Ibid, p. 276, an unpublished hymn based on Lk. xix.11; PAW. III, 331; IV, 32, 39; V, 154, 163, 169, 177. 196. 209, etc.
103. PAW. V, 153-154.
104. Cf. PAW. IX, 100, 150; XIII, 151, 181 for examples of John Wesley's rejection of Charles' theology of purification through suffering.
105. PAW. V, 20.
106. PAW XI, 196; X, 314-315.
107. PAW. VII, 338, #42
108. PAW. XI, 417, #1893.
109. PAW. VII, 224, #31; cf. PAW. X, 264, #316.
110. PAW. XI, 305, #1584.

111. PAW. XI, 37.

112. PAW. XI, 306.

113. PAW. IX, 175, #550; cf. Ibid, 160.

114. Albert Outler, "Preface," in Frank Whaling, (ed.), *John and Charles Wesley* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), pp. xv-xvi; Timothy Smith, "The Holy Spirit in the Hymns of the Wesleys," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, 16, 2 (Fall 1981), pp. 20-48; T. Crichton Mitchell, "Response to Dr. Timothy Smith on the Wesleys' Hymns," Ibid., pp. 48-58.

115. PAW. XII, 19-20.

116. Cf. Tyson, "Charles Wesley's Theology of the Cross . . .," op. cit., Ch. II, "Redemption Language," pp. 125-362.

117. John Telford, ed. *The Letters of John Wesley, A.M.* (London: Epworth Press, 1931), V. 20.

118. CW. *Journal*, I, 88.

DEVELOPMENT IN WESLEY'S THOUGHT ON SANCTIFICATION AND PERFECTION

by

D. Marselle Moore

I.

John Wesley's concept of sanctification is an important contribution to the subject of theology. It is a vital part of his own theology and is perhaps the most misunderstood doctrine of Methodism, both for those on the "inside" and for those on the "outside." The misunderstanding is visible in the array of separate Methodist churches, and in the disdain many Protestants, Romanists, and others share for any notion of perfection this side of eternity.

In this paper I seek to explicate John Wesley's view of sanctification and perfection. My approach is a chronological one which seeks to pay attention to specific historical events as the events influence Wesley's theology. His life is divided into three general periods: the early years from 1725 to 1738, the middle years from 1739 to roughly 1763, and the later years from 1764 to months before his death. The first section focuses on Wesley's theological sources, whereas the latter two analyze his writing. This approach, though it is cumbersome at times, is used for the sake of comprehensiveness.

The goal of this paper is to test Wesley's own claim that his concept of Christian perfection did not change throughout his life.¹ If the doctrine did change, how, and to what degree? Once we are clear on these points, we are in a position to perceive what Wesley intended by the terms "sanctification," "Christian perfection," and all the other terms he employs.

II.

The first section of this paper deals cursorily with the decade and a half following Wesley's conversion to "serious religion" in 1725. By examining Wesley's enormous reading list, we gain an idea of his concept of Christian perfection during this period. Jeremy Taylor was the spark that fired Wesley's serious religion, not in his general religious viewpoint, but in the direction of practical exercising of religion. *Rule and Exercises of Holy Liv-*

ing and Dying brought Wesley directly to the Bible, to frequent communion, to the practice of prayer and to the general rules for governing his life.²

The following year, Wesley again read *The Imitation of Christ*. He was probably reared on the classic by his mother and his schoolmaster, Dr. John King.³ Later on, Wesley would edit and publish the work himself. In 1726 however, it served to create Wesley's first theological controversy. Like Taylor's *Rule and Exercises*, the subject of Kempis' book is the perfection of the Christian. But unlike Taylor's concept of Christian perfection, Kempis sees Christian perfection laying wholly beyond this world in the mystical subjectivity of the individual. Renunciation of self must be renewed daily through spiritual aids; poverty and bitter suffering like Christ, the ecclesiastical disciplines of Catholicism, and the highest exercises of monastic asceticism. Kempis' view also lacked social dimension. As a result, Wesley rejected Kempis' notion of perfection.⁴ Even though he disagreed with Kempis, Wesley remained intrigued with the *Imitation of Christ*, as demonstrated by the Oxford group studying it in April of 1729. The next two years they studied, among other writings, selected works on Christian perfection. Perhaps it was due partly to John Norris' suggestion (of whose works Wesley read fourteen) that "those books which sought to explain Christianity as life rather than doctrine" should be enthusiastically read.⁵

Richard Lucas' *An Inquiry After Happiness* was the first they read. Wesley's respect for this work can be seen by his publishing it in *A Christian Library*.⁶ For Lucas, life, happiness and perfection are inseparably dependent on each other. Life, the rational exercises, and employment of our powers and faculties naturally terminate in perfection. Perfection, "which is nothing else but the maturity of human virtues," is happiness. "Religious perfection, therefore, is nothing else but the moral accomplishments of human nature; such a maturity of virtue as man in this life is capable of."⁸ As such for Lucas, perfection is the "ripe and settled habit of true holiness."⁹

Lucas' view of assurance is what Wesley appears to mirror later as Christian perfection. Lucas says first that his view is the scriptural view. Second no one in this life is free from trials or temptation. Third, perfection is a state we arrive at very late (but it is our own fault).¹⁰ And four, "the perfect" are capable of improvement.¹¹ Even Lucas' means of perfection are similar to Wesley's: practicing wisdom and virtue. The instruments of perfection are the Word and the Spirit. Perfection comes through prayer, enlivening the conscience, confirming our resolutions of obedience, and raising up holy and devout affections.

After Lucas, the group examined William Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. Wesley also later published parts of this.¹² Law, similar to Taylor in understanding perfection as regaining the Divine likeness, stressed predominantly the will. All of our actions, Law thought, should necessarily be governed by rules which lead to the worship of God. Such actions should spring from intentions to please God.¹³ Proper actions will move one up the ladder of Christian perfection. Many of Wesley's scruples about the proper use of time and money reflect Law's *Serious Call*.

Following this, in September of 1732, the Oxford group studied two renowned classics: Henry Scougal's *The Life of God In The Soul of Man* and *Spiritual Combat* by Lorenzo Scupoli. The latter was one of Susanna Wesley's

favorite books,¹⁴ and the former, Martin Schmidt claims, she elevated above even Richard Baxter's *The Saint's Everlasting Life*.¹⁵

Spiritual Combat is centered around the call to Christian perfection. A notion solely derived from the idea of God, perfection is acquired through humans apprehending the inexpressible goodness of God and at the same time their own nothingness.¹⁶ It is perfection through education. We must learn how to guard and fight against temptation by looking unto God, who alone is the spiritual victor. Perfection is not pious acts of mortification, fasting, and so on, but attitudes. Thus true Christian perfection is "the perfect hatred of ourselves and the perfect love of God."¹⁷

Scougal represents another approach. "True religion is a union of the soul with God, a real participation of the divine nature, the very image of God drawn upon the soul."¹⁸ Perfection, or holiness as Scougal terms it, is "the right temper, the vigorous and healthful constitution of the soul."¹⁹ The way to arrive at perfection is by "fixing our love on the divine perfections that we may have them always before us and derive an impression of them on ourselves."²⁰ This "perfect love" is a kind of self dereliction, a wandering out of ourselves, a kind of voluntary death, wherein the lover dies to all self-interest that he or she may please God.

Wesley studied Law's *Practical Treatise Upon Christian Perfection* with his group two months later, in November of 1732. Most likely, he had already studied both of Law's works before he used them with the Oxford group.²¹ In *Christian Perfection* Law begins by defining perfection as "the right and full performance of those duties which are necessary for all Christians, and common to all states of life."²² The chief characteristic of Law's doctrine is the emphasis on taking up the cross and denying oneself.²³ This doctrine is not limited to a special group of people, but is expected of all people in the common everyday duties of life. He believes that we aim at the highest level of perfection to escape mediocrity; for absolute devotion to God is demanded of all Christians. And lastly, Law's ideal is that Christian perfection is likeness to Jesus Christ. We are to be imitators of Christ if we expect to go where He went.

A month later, on January 1, 1733, Wesley preached "Circumcision of the Heart" in St. Mary's at Oxford. Early in December, the Oxford Methodists had experienced an abusive attack, being charged with "asceticism, voluntary affliction of their bodies, fasting strictly twice a week, rising at four in the morning, singing hymns for two hours every day, and in short 'practicing everything contrary to the judgment of other persons.'"²⁴ Such attacks kept Wesley busy in explicating his beliefs. In 1765, Wesley summarized this sermon in defense of his doctrine of perfection.

It is that habitual disposition of the soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness, and which directly implies, the being cleansed from all sin, 'from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit'; and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus, the being so 'renewed in the image of our mind' as to be 'perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.'

He concluded with,

Here is the sum of the perfect law, the circumcision of the heart. Let the spirit return to God that gave it, with the whole train

of its affections. . . . 'Have a pure intention of heart, a steadfast regard to his glory in all your actions.' For then, and not till then, is that mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus. . . .²⁵

Wesley's remarks bear a strong resemblance to Taylor, Scougal, Lucas, and especially Law.²⁶ Wesley's concept of Christian perfection at this stage is a combination of these writers.

Wesley notes in his diary that he read Michael de Molinos and Madame Guyon in the first two months of 1735. The only quietistic mystic the Oxford group had read earlier was Francis de Sales in February of 1731 (therefore discussion was postponed till now). The common thread these writers share is an understanding of union with God in which the soul "neither wills nor desires anything but to be willed by her Beloved."²⁷ And while de Sales might speak of charity, this charity remains ethereal.²⁸

Wesley was initially intrigued with these writers because as he said, they "gave me an entire new view of religion-nothing like any I had before."²⁹ But he soon turned against them. By January of 1738 the conclusion Wesley came to was that "the mystics are the most dangerous of its [Christianity's] enemies."³⁰

The last and most important group of spiritualists Wesley read during this period were the Eastern fathers of the early church: Macarius the Egyptian, Clement of Alexandria and Ephraem Syrus. The Eastern understanding of perfection is markedly different, both in substance and form, from the Latin traditions mentioned above. And as Professor Outler observes, "If Wesley's writings on perfection are to be read with understanding, his affirmative motive of 'holiness' in the world must be taken seriously-active holiness in this life-and it becomes intelligible only in the light of its indirect sources in early and Eastern spirituality."³¹

Wesley discovered Macarius the Egyptian while in Georgia. On the thirteenth of July, 1736, he noted in his diary reading Macarius. Later, Wesley published sixty pages of his Homilies in the first volume of *A Christian Library*. Macarius' impact on Wesley, in its fullest degree, was latent for many years; it was not readily felt until the sixth decade of the century.

The theology of Macarius had several distinctive ideas. The first was his doctrine of individualism. The reason for this individual concentration is that God made the human soul in God's own image. For Macarius "The life of the soul does not come from its own nature but from the Godhead, from God's own Spirit."³² A second idea is that the true life of the soul is God-given. This is grounded in the mystery of the Incarnation: because God in Christ had drawn near, there is no region of the soul's progress where it does not find Christ. A third idea lies in Macarius' notion of the Christian life. The goal is love. Love is something that a person gradually grows in, and comes to be a perfect person. And lastly, Macarius has an idea about measuring perfection. "If any man reaches the perfect love, that man is from henceforth fast bound, and is the captive of grace."³³ This kind of love is ecstasy. But Macarius does not think of this ecstasy as the final stage. For in ecstasy the inward person's whole being is carried off into a cloud of oblivion.³⁴ And even though this person "being set at liberty, arrives to such a degree of perfection, as to become pure and free from sin," he or she

would not be able to undertake the dispensation of the word. Neither could he bear to hear, or have any concern for himself or the morrow; but purely to sit in a corner in a state of elevation: so that the perfect degree of all hath not been given, that a man may be in a capacity to attend the care of the brother, and the ministration of the word.³⁵

A combination of events while Wesley was in Georgia brought about a dramatic change in his self understanding, both theologically and personally. All but his final theological doctrines were hammered into shape there. He read some sixty titles.³⁶ His reading influenced experimentation with worship. He also met the Moravians. It was Mr. Spangenberg who faced Wesley with forceful questions that deeply troubled him,³⁷ to say nothing of traveling aboard ship. In the next two years, Wesley's theology was "smelted and forged into an integral and dynamic theology in which Eastern notions of synthesis (dynamic interaction between God's will and man's) were fused with the Protestant *sola fide* and *sola Scriptura*, and with the Moravian stress upon 'inner feeling.'"³⁸

In 1738, Wesley's sermon "Salvation by Faith" gave witness to the Protestant *sola fide* and *sola Scriptura*. The sermon, which he preached on June 11, was probably written before the Aldersgate experience. Wesley sums up his newly formed position saying, "Christian faith is, then, not only an assent to the whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of His life, death and resurrection. . . . and, in consequence hereof, a . . . cleaving to Him as our 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption,' or, in a word, our salvation."³⁹

This marks the end of more than a decade of striving after perfection. Wesley, later in *The Appeals*, reflects back on this period saying:

I was utterly ignorant of the nature and condition of justification. Sometimes I confounded it with sanctification-particularly when I was in Georgia. At other times I had some confused notion about the forgiveness of sins, but then I took it for granted the time of this must be either the hour of death, or the day of judgment.

I was equally ignorant of the nature of saving faith, apprehending it to mean no more than 'a firm assent to all the propositions contained in the Old and New Testaments.'⁴⁰

Some twenty years after this statement, Wesley gives another account of the early period in the Minutes of 1765. "In 1729 my brother and I read the Bible; saw inward and outward holiness therein; followed after it, and incited others so to do."⁴¹ In 1737 John said that he and Charles saw that "holiness comes by faith."⁴² In 1738 John said, "We must be justified before we are sanctified. But still holiness was our point, inward and outward holiness."⁴³

In this early period, Wesley examined at least five different concepts of Christian perfection. Taylor and Lucas represent partially the Church of England's concept which was the belief that one becomes perfect through rationally disciplined exercises. Perfection however is not attained until death. The early writings of William Law provide a second concept. He emphasizes the will of the individual to the degree that perfection is per-

forming the duties or actions of a Christian with the proper intentions. A third concept of Christian perfection is seen in Kempis, Scougal and Scupoli. These writers tend to stress attitudes as the key to perfection. Perfection expresses itself not in outward action as seen in the first two concepts but in the individual subjective realm of self-denial and love of God. A fourth concept stresses union with God to the extent that even the self is lost in never willing anything but to be willed by God. The last concept of Christian perfection brings us back around full circle. The Eastern fathers believe in a union with God to the extent of losing oneself in the union. Yet this is not the final stage. The final stage is to return to the creaturely world to care for people and to administer the word of God. Of these five options, we will see that Wesley chooses a version of the last one.

III.

The second section of this paper deals with the middle and controversial years of Wesley's life, from 1739 to roughly 1763. In 1739, the Wesley's published *Hymns and Sacred Poems*.⁴⁴ In the preface John says, on the one hand the mystics speak against expecting to be accepted of God for our virtuous actions, "and then teach that we are to be accepted of God for our virtuous habits or temper."⁴⁵ On the other hand, non mystics or "common writers" suppose we are justified for the sake of our outward righteousness. The truth is we are no more justified by one than the other. "Holiness of heart, as well as holiness of life, is not the cause, but the effect of it [justification]. . . . And even the condition of it is not (as they suppose) our holiness of either heart or life: but our faith alone. . . ."⁴⁶

Wesley then explains what he means by perfection. The mystics put forth a solitary religion. If the wilt be perfect, say they, "trouble not thyself about outward works."⁴⁷ But this is directly opposite to the gospel of Christ, for the gospel "knows no religion, but social; no holiness, but social holiness. Faith working by love is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection."⁴⁸ "You have unction from the Holy One, that teacheth you to renounce any other or higher perfection, than faith as it hath opportunity doing of good unto all men."⁴⁹

The following year, the Wesley's published a second edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. In the preface, John affirms "as a first principle among true believers" that whoever is born of God "sinneth not: but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Again, "Whosoever abideth in him [Christ] sinneth not." And again, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin. For his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."⁵⁰

Later in 1740, Wesley wrote *The Principles of a Methodist* in response to a tract entitled "A Brief History of the Principles of Methodism." Evidently there was an uproar over his two prefaces in *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, for Wesley was being accused of believing in "sinless perfection." This was the first of many such charges to come. (A section of *The Principles* is also used directly in the preface to the 1742 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*.)

Wesley addresses this charge by making some distinctions-the method for which any good theologian opts. First he suggests that the general prejudice against Christian perfection is the result of misunderstanding. Perfec-

tion is neither a dispensation from doing good and attending the ordinances of God, nor is it freedom from ignorance, mistake, temptation, or infirmities. But instead of stating what perfection is, Wesley tells us who is perfect. Using scriptural phrases which become stock phrases, he says one is perfect who has "the mind which was in Christ," who "walketh as Christ walked," who is "cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," who "doth not commit gin," etc.⁵¹ "This is to be 'a perfect man,' to be sanctified throughout: even 'to have a heart so all flaming with the love of God' . . . as continually to offer up every good thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ."⁵²

The subject matter shifts then in *The Principles* to the doctrine of assurance and regeneration. The leading of the Spirit is different with different people. Quoting Michael Linner, Wesley says, "Usually the method is to give in the same moment forgiveness of sin and a full assurance."⁵³ Regeneration comes in stages. It usually begins the moment a person comes to Christ by faith and is justified. But the person is born again in an imperfect sense, for there are two, if not more, degrees of regeneration. At this stage the person has power over all the stirrings and motives of sin, but not a total freedom from them. That freedom Wesley calls sanctification. Sanctification is

the last and highest state of perfection in this life. For then are the fruitful born again in the full and perfect sense. Then is there given unto them a new and clean heart; and the struggle between the old and new man is over.⁵⁴

Sanctification here means what Wesley will later term Christian perfection, or entire sanctification. As we will see when the term sanctification appears two years later, it will include the entire movement beginning simultaneously with justification, and cover assurance, regeneration, and perfection.

Wesley's first sermon publication addressing this issue was an unpreached sermon, "Christian Perfection." It was printed in 1741, along with Charles Wesley's twenty-eight stanza hymn on "The Promise of Sanctification." The origin of the sermon he explains arose in the latter part of 1740, out of a conversation with Dr. Gibson, bishop of London, at Whitehall.

He asked me what I meant by perfection. I told him without any disguise or reserve. When I ceased speaking, he said, 'Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to all the world.' I answered 'My lord, I will'; and accordingly wrote and published the sermon on Christian perfection.⁵⁵

Beginning with a caveat that "whosoever 'preaches perfection'-that is, asserts that it is attainable in this life-runs great hazard of being accounted by them as a heathen man or a publican,"⁵⁶ Wesley then proceeds by averring that we must speak of perfection because Scripture does; but we must distinguish in what sense Christians are not, and in what sense Christians are "perfect." Christians are not perfect in knowledge, or free from mistakes, ignorance, infirmities, or temptation. Christians, rather, are perfect in that Christian perfection "is only another term for 'holiness.' Thus, every one that is perfect is holy, and every one that is holy is, in the Scriptural sense, perfect."⁵⁷ Unfortunately, Wesley does not define what he means by holiness. Yet he says there is no absolute perfection on earth. "So that how much so ever any man has attained, or in how high a degree so ever he is perfect, he hath still need to 'grow in grace' and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God his Saviour."⁵⁸

In what sense Christians are perfect is thoroughly examined in the second section of the sermon. Wesley prefaces his remarks with the premise "that there are stages in Christian life; some Christians are babes while others have attained more maturity."⁵⁹ What follows is a long discourse on sin. Wesley zeroes in on Scripture, attempting to demonstrate that Scripture itself holds the high view that Christians do not commit sin. Though he admits that Old Testament characters committed sin, he argues that they were under the dispensation of the law; but the Christian dispensation changed this. The necessity of sinning no longer exists. In conformity to the New Testament, "we fix this conclusion: a Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin."⁶⁰

Several significant points stand out in this sermon. First, the sermon concentrates on sin; freedom from sin as the sum of Christian perfection. Second, the sermon provides the exegetical basis for Wesley's doctrine throughout his career. No other writing contains such an extensive Biblical study of the scriptural position. A third point is that this sermon becomes Wesley's touchstone for the next two decades, which he refers to repeatedly as his standard position. Lastly, Wesley chooses specific terminology: holiness and perfection. Their meaning is synonymous, and they are understood to describe Christians, from babes to those becoming mature.⁶¹

In 1742, Wesley published a pamphlet entitled *The Character of a Methodist*. The point of the pamphlet is to set out the distinguishing marks of a Methodist. "These marks are not opinions of any sort, neither are they words or phrases, nor actions, customs, or usages of an indifferent nature nor by laying the whole stress of religion on any single part of it. Rather, a Methodist is one who has 'the love of God shed in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him'"⁶²; one who loves God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength; one who is filled with "perfect love." All distinctions that may separate Methodists from other Christians here are disparaged. And no special doctrine is exemplary of a Methodist.

Wesley made his first major defense of his movement to the English world in 1742 with the publication of *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*. By this time, he had experienced mob violence, pamphlet smears, and name calling, a good deal of which was generated due to poorly informed sources. In an age boasting of rationality, Wesley attempts to provide serious recovery of the validity of faith.⁶³

He begins his discussion on Christian perfection by defending his earlier writings (especially "Christian Perfection"). First, he notes that they have heard his teaching that "Men may live without sin." He then asserts that Scripture teaches the same thing-people may live without committing sin. Paul says that those who believe do not "continue in sin."⁶⁴ Peter says he that suffers in the flesh has ceased to sin.⁶⁵ John says he who commits sin is of the devil . . . whoever is born of God does not commit sin,⁶⁶ and whoever is born of God sins not.⁶⁷ So, Wesley claims, it is not the Methodists but God's Word which proclaims this doctrine. So Christians "then have been empowered not to commit sin."⁶⁸

Nothing new with regard to Christian perfection appears in *An Earnest Appeal*. As already mentioned, it is basically the same as Wesley's sermon "Christian Perfection." However, the emphasis appears to shift more toward love than sin.

By 1744, the novelty of the Revival was wearing off. It would have probably dissipated had it not been for Wesley's own patterns of polity and discipline. His preachers were in need of an elementary doctrinal compend and an administrative charter.⁶⁹ Wesley accomplished both with an annual conference in which the format was question and answer. The Minutes of those meetings, along with Wesley's sermons which he began to publish two years later, and the Explanatory Notes On the New Testament, become the standards of doctrine for Methodists.

The Minutes of 1744 mark a change in the terminology of Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection. The term sanctification replaces the term Christian perfection, which is not mentioned in the Minutes of 1744. The change might be explained partly by Wesley reverting back more heavily to *the Homilies and Articles of Religion of the Church of England*.⁷⁰ Pressure was mounting on what some considered novel and dangerous theology. Wesley saw sanctification as being renewed in the image of God, in true righteousness, and true holiness. Faith is the condition and instrument of sanctification. When we begin to believe, salvation begins; and as faith increases, holiness increases (notice that Wesley uses "holiness" and "sanctification" synonymously). When one is reborn, a great change is wrought in the heart and affections, although one is still full of sin so that he or she does not have a new heart in the full sense. Here a distinction is made between different levels of believers. A believer who has sin is born of God in a low sense. "But he that is in the proper sense born of God cannot commit sin."⁷¹ This distinction was made first in the sermon "Christian Perfection." Being made perfect in love is defined as loving God with all our mind, soul and strength. The term "Perfect in love" also appeared in *The Character of a Methodist*, but this time it is directly connected with the term sanctification, for if one is "perfect in love," one cannot sin. All sin is taken away. This is another instance where "sanctification" is used as "Christian perfection."

In the second conference of 1745, the doctrine of sanctification is more fully developed. And the doctrine of assurance becomes tangled with it. Assurance is absolutely necessary to inward holiness, but not to outward holiness.

Wesley is confronted with the often repeated charge, especially later on, that he has changed his preaching or doctrine. He responds in 1745 by pointing out that at first he preached to unbelievers. But those now whose

foundation is already laid, we exhort to go on to perfection; which we did not see so clearly at first, although we occasionally spoke of it from the beginning. Yet we now preach, and that continually, faith in Christ as Prophet, Priest and King, at least as clearly, as strongly and as fully as we did six years ago.⁷²

Full attention is then directed toward sanctification. Inward sanctification begins at the moment of justification, when "the seed of every virtue

is then instantaneously sown in the soul. From that the believer gradually dies to sin and grows in grace. Yet sin remains in him, yea, the seed of all sin till he is sanctified throughout in spirit, soul and body."⁷³ If a person dies without being sanctified, "he cannot see the Lord. But none who seeks it sincerely shall or can die without it, though possibly he may not attain till the very article of death."⁷⁴ In fact, Wesley believes that those who expect and ask for it may attain it much sooner than a little before death. "Although we grant (1) that the generality of believers are not so sanctified till near death; (2) that few of those to whom St. Paul writes in his Epistles were so at the time he wrote; (3) that he himself was not perfected at the time of his former Epistles."⁷⁵ But Scripture does affirm St. John and all of those he wrote to as being wholly sanctified.⁷⁶

In the first two years' Minutes, sanctification is understood as beginning simultaneously with justification. But in the second year, Wesley introduces two new terms-"the state of full sanctification" and "wholly sanctified"-and stresses striving after such an experience. So "sanctification" and "the state of full sanctification" or "wholly sanctified" are different. "Entire sanctification" is a new term as well. But it is not clear from the Minutes what it means. On the one hand, it is used in connection with justification⁷⁷ similar to sanctification in the 1744 Minutes. On the other hand, entire sanctification is used like "wholly sanctified" or "the state of full sanctification" in suggesting that we should preach this to those not pressing on.

Later in the same year, Wesley published *A Further Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* in response to the urging of his associates at the June conference of 1744. He follows a similar course to that already charted in the 1739 preface to *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. He also uses the term "sanctification," a word not employed in the first Appeal. It is used interchangeably with salvation, and retains a similar relation to justification as in the Minutes early in the year.

What is new in the *Further Appeals* is the discussion on salvation. Salvation does not mean

barely (accordingly to the vulgar notion) deliverance from hell, or going to heaven, but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity, a recovery of the divine nature-the renewal of our souls after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy and truth.⁷⁸

The difference between these two notions is this: the vulgar notion, with its focus on our future state, does not deal with present sin. Wesley believes it is paramount to do so. Only when we deal with present sin can we speak of holiness. And holiness and salvation, Wesley believes, are synonymous.

Several earlier aspects are missing in this description of sanctification. Entire sanctification is cursorily named as something that goes before our final justification at the last day.⁷⁹ Wesley also employs a new image in speaking about salvation. Its gradation is compared to the kingdom of God: if a person should cast seed into the ground, it springs up, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn on the ear. The first sowing of the seed is instantaneous.

After explicating his beliefs, Wesley takes up the argument of his critics. Regarding the doctrine of sanctification, the pamphlet *Observations*,⁸⁰ which was widely ascribed to Bishop Gibson of London. Questions Wesley about the practical outcome of this doctrine.⁸¹ He asks, "Does not imagining that one is in the state of perfection lead man into spiritual pride? And do not men who have attained this probably despise others as to what they account the low and imperfect way, i.e., as growing in grace and goodness by degree?"⁸² Wesley answers simply that false imagination is spiritual pride. "But true Christian perfection is no other than humble love."⁸³

The second question is also highly perceptive. Bishop Gibson has picked the issue which Wesley adroitly passed over-whether there is a difference between Christian perfection (a state achieved after sanctification) and gradual sanctification. Wesley responds in two parts. First, he notes that persons who only imagine they have attained perfection despise others. Second, growing in grace and goodness by degrees, he says is no mere mark of the low and perfect way. "Those who are fathers in Christ grow in grace by degrees as well as the new born babes."⁸⁴

Gibson again presses Wesley on the conditions of salvation. Faith, holiness, or universal obedience is the ordinary condition of final salvation, Wesley responds. But the condition of present salvation is faith alone. Faith implies that (1) persons are saved from their sins and can be inwardly or outwardly holy, and (2) that whenever faith is given, holiness commences in the soul.

The Minutes of 1746 address the issue of salvation once again. By asserting salvation by faith Wesley means the following: That pardon (salvation begun) is received by faith producing works; that holiness (salvation continued) is faith working by love; that heaven (salvation finished) is the reward of this faith.

The question of doctrine changing arises in the 1746 Minutes a second time. How is what you now preach different from your Oxford days? Can some degree of love of God go before a distinct sense of justification? This question addresses Wesley's early years sharply. He answers, "We believe it may." But this response raises the sticky question of sanctification or holiness in degrees before justification. Wesley affirms outward holiness may come before sanctification, but qualifies the statement"- . . . they do not spring from Christian principles. For the abiding love of God cannot spring but from faith in a pardoning God, and no true Christian holiness can exist without that love of God for its foundation."⁸⁵

The Minutes of 1747 are special in that they clarify some important aspects of Wesley's writing on the doctrine. Wesley affirms that assurance comes in degrees. He then turns to the Church of England's doctrine of sanctification. They grant:

1. That everyone must be entirely sanctified in the article of death;
2. That till then a believer daily grows in grace, and comes nearer and nearer to perfection;
3. That we ought to be continually pressing after this, and to exhort all others so to do.⁸⁶

Wesley agrees that (1) the greater part of those who have died in the faith were not sanctified throughout until a little before death; (2) that the term "sanctified" is continually applied by Paul to all that were justified-were true believers, (3) that by this term alone he rarely (if ever) means saved from all sin; (4) that it is not proper to use it in this sense, without adding the word "wholly," "entirely," or the like; (5) that the Biblical writers very rarely spoke of those wholly sanctified, either of themselves or those to whom they wrote; (6) that consequently we must speak almost continually of the state of justification, but rarely, and in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

The difference between Wesley's view and the Church of England's view is that Wesley believes God will save us from all sin before the article of death. It is a clear scriptural promise. Wesley believes perfection and entire sanctification are used interchangeably, but he does not include the former in his six points above regarding the latter.

Issues surrounding sanctification die down for a decade after 1747. The Minutes deal with the problems of discipline. Little is written on this subject during this period. In 1753 Wesley publishes *A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity*, "his vision of the Christian ideal."⁸⁷ The ideal Christian is one who cannot think of God without abasing himself/herself before God; one who has a continual sense of dependence on God, one who has the strongest affection for the fountain of all good, one who remembers that God above all is generous and disinterested love. This love is productive of all right affections and constrains one with a strict regard for truth, with artless sincerity and genuine simplicity. This same love is productive of all right actions. The Christian is happy knowing there is a God and that God loves her/him. This is the plain naked portraiture of a Christian, Wesley believes. Christianity describes this character, especially in 1 Corinthians 13 and the Beatitudes. Christianity promises this character will be mine if I will not rest till I attain it. Christianity tells me how I may attain, namely by faith. "So Christianity tells me and so I find it . . . And Christianity, considered as an inward principle, is the completion of all those promises. It is holiness and happiness, the image of God impressed on a created spirit; a fountain of peace and love springing up into everlasting life."⁸⁸

Three years later Wesley penned two of his clearest accounts of perfection in his letters to William Dodd. They were both later published in 1779 in *The Arminian Magazine*. Nevertheless, nothing new appears in them. They simply reaffirm Wesley's concept of Christian perfection in his middle years.

Wesley's letter to Thomas Olivers in March of 1757 brings a new situation to light. People are claiming a "second blessing" experience. Two other things appear related as well to Christian perfection. One is Wesley's claim that without Christian perfection no one can be happy on this earth. Such a claim is reminiscent of Lucas. The other is that one fruit is given at the same instant as a positive, direct testimony of the Spirit that the work of perfection is done.

The following year was also a troubled one for Wesley's doctrine of sanctification. In a letter to Elizabeth Hardy, April 5, 1758, Wesley indicates some of his preachers are propounding new doctrines.⁸⁹ The doctrines are one, if you die without attaining perfection, you will perish. And two, a believer is under the curse of God and in a state of damnation till he or she

receives perfection. Such radicalness leads Wesley in his letter to define perfection solely as "perfect love" or "loving God with all our heart." Wesley is convinced every believer may attain this, yet no damnation exists for those who do not. Nevertheless Wesley still holds it is fit or necessary in the nature of things that a soul should be saved from all sin before it enters glory. It is written "no unclean thing shall enter into it."⁹⁰

A new dimension of Christian perfection emerges out of this conflict in the 1758 Minutes. It is a discussion of the need that the "perfect" have for the merits of Christ. They also have a need for forgiveness, Wesley says, because even a mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Every such mistake, were it not for atonement, would expose one to eternal damnation. With this move, Wesley succeeds in demonstrating that even the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ.

Once again, Wesley takes up his pen in defense of his doctrine. This time it is 1759. The pamphlet *Thoughts on Christian Perfection* was published in *Sermons On Several Occasions* in 1760. Using loaded questions, his critics had tried to force Wesley to admit that he had modified his earlier teaching. Instead, Wesley wisely gathered all the objections into a series of questions at the London Conference of 1759, and soon after published *Thoughts*.⁹¹

Wesley adds a preface to *Thoughts for the Christian Reader*. In it he states his purpose for writing *Thoughts* is not to gratify curiosity, to prove the doctrine in opposition to those who ridicule it, or to answer the numerous objections by serious persons to his doctrine of Christian perfection. Rather, Wesley intends to declare his sentiments, which he has entertained for the last twenty-five years, as to what Christian perfection includes, what it does not, and to add a few observations.

What then is Christian perfection in 1760 for John Wesley? His stock answer is-"The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength." He first defined it in this fashion in the preface of *Hymns and Sacred Poems* in 1739. Next he quotes from the 1758 Minutes a list of mistakes and the need for perfect Christians to depend on the merits of Christ. This is then elaborated in *Thoughts*. In every state we need Christ: for grace, for all blessings-temporal, spiritual, and eternal-and for atonement of all our omissions, shortcomings, and deviations.

Wesley also approaches the topic from another vantage point very similar to Law's. Christian perfection is the subject of every desire to obedience of Christ. "The will is entirely subject to the will of God and the affections wholly fixed on him."⁹² If a person is in such a state, what motive could induce a person to a transgression of the law? Wesley's answer is that no evil can induce a "perfect" person to do any act that is "formally evil," though materially through infirmity the person may be condemned by the perfect law. Some people do not make this distinction between formal and material. Therefore they misunderstand Wesley's claims that Christians may be perfect.

But can a person be deceived about being perfect? Wesley believed that even if one is deceived, it is a harmless mistake because the person feels nothing but love in his or her heart. His point is that as long as one feels love and is animated by love in all one's actions, thoughts, and words, anyone else can call this whatever they like. At the same time, nevertheless, Wesley recognizes that this is not a permanent state of being. Love can die. He

stresses though, that simply because some lose entire sanctification, that does not mean the doctrine is false. Such logic would demand that all persons are deceived who experience entire sanctification.

The next year, Wesley extended his previous work by writing *Farther Thoughts On Christian Perfection*. In his *Journal*, he wrote, "Had the cautions given herein been observed, how much scandal had been prevented! And why were they not? Because my own familiar friend [Thomas Maxfield] was even now forming a party against me."

In *Farther Thoughts* Wesley introduces for the first time, in his discussion of Christian perfection, the concept of the Adamic covenant. The purpose is clearly to make sense of the notion of material evil that he had introduced in *Thoughts*. When Adam fell, he not only lost the original powers allowing him to act, speak, and think rightly, but in addition, his incorruptible body became corruptible. "It is as natural for a man to [make a] mistake as to breathe; and he can no more live without one than without the other . . ." ⁹³ Consequently, no person is able to serve this law. But Christ brought an end to the Adamic law. The new law is faith in Christ as our Prophet. And even the holiest of persons constantly needs Christ, due to Adam's sin. Wesley then reiterates his previous position from the Minutes of 1745 explaining again the meaning of Prophet, Priest, and King. ⁹⁴

A subtle change occurs here in Wesley's idea of perfection. In the 1747 Minutes, he stated that generally Christians have been entirely sanctified right before death. One senses that he is referring to non-Methodists. By 1761, Wesley sees Methodists there, too. However, he says, "I believe this is the cast of most, but not all." ⁹⁵

By 1762, things have progressed to the point where Wesley felt compelled to write *Cautions and Directions Given to the Greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies*. The "enthusiasts," as Wesley called them, were led by George Bell and Thomas Maxfield. They developed a doctrine of entire sanctification to compensate for what they viewed as Wesley's compromise in allowing a preacher who had not experienced entire sanctification to teach those who had. Wesley responded to the situation with six pieces of advice: Watch and pray continually against pride; beware of enthusiasm, antinomianism, sins of omission, desiring anything but God, and of schism.

In summary, John Wesley's understanding of "sanctification" and "perfection" during his middle years should be bisected into two segments. The first segment, from 1739 to approximately 1744, is characterized by stressing "sanctification" and "perfection" as meaning sinless living. Although he does see people at different levels of maturity, these levels are stages of regeneration, not sanctification or perfection. This understanding of the terms explains why he can equate sanctification and perfection: they both mean the absence of sin. The identical meaning also explains how Wesley can claim them both to be synonymous with holiness. Even "perfect in love" means sinless living during this segment. The other segment of this middle period runs from 1745 to roughly 1763. Wesley is developing some sophistication in understanding what it means to become a mature Christian. Sanctification begins simultaneously with justification and continues to death. Perfection is an instantaneous experience after sanctification where the believers ceases to sin. Sin is still the constitutive element of his concept

of Christian perfection. However, is this very point that initiates the last period of John Wesley's understanding of Christian perfection.

IV

Gradually over the second segment of the middle years, Wesley had been moving away from the position that sin has a direct correlation with those "perfect in love." Characteristic of the late period is the constant reminder that the "perfect" can fall from grace. Another aspect Wesley energetically stresses is the works of sanctification. It is as if he has reverted back to a pre-1738 emphasis on works as his concept of sanctification, except for the dimension of faith. These new aspects mark the maturation of Wesley's thought, and thus bring us to the final section of this paper.

The restatement of sin relating to love can be seen in the letter Wesley wrote to Mrs. Maitland, in May of 1763. Is there not sin in those Christians that are perfect? she asks. Wesley answers, "I believe not; but be that as it may, they feel no temper but pure love, while they rejoice, pray, and give thanks continually. And whether sin is suspended or extinguished, I will not dispute; it is enough that they feel nothing but love."⁹⁶

Wesley, in his Journal on March 28, 1763, writes that the sermon "On Sin In Believers" was to correct the notion that there is no sin in any who are justified. This notion of "sinless perfection," Wesley says, springs up from Count Zinzendorf's influence; and although Zinzendorf has given up the notion, it lives on in England.⁹⁷ Hence we have the problem of sinless Christians.

The problem is one that has already been discussed. However, Wesley illumines us with his response. The question is this: Are the justified freed from all sin at their justification? At that time they are sanctified and washed, and have power over both inward and outward sin. But Wesley does not believe that the person is freed from sin at this point, for Paul says the contrary. Moreover, the "position 'there is no sin in a believer, no carnal mind, no bent to backsliding,' is thus contrary to the Word of God, so it is to the experience of his children."⁹⁸ Christians continually feel a heart bent to backsliding, a natural tendency to evil. Daily they sense this. Yet at the same time, they know that they are of God, and feel the witness of God's Spirit with theirs. "They are equally assured that sin is in them and that 'Christ is in them the hope of glory.'"⁹⁹

But the question arises: Can Christ dwell in the same heart with sin? Wesley answers yes. Christ, however, cannot reign where sin reigns. "But he is and dwells in the heart of every believer, who is fighting against all sin. . ."¹⁰⁰

Wesley lays out twelve arguments used to support sinless perfection, and counters each one skillfully. The sum of all this is:

there are in every person, even after he is justified, two contrary principles, nature and grace, termed by St. Paul the flesh and the Spirit. Hence, although even babes in Christ are sanctified, yet it is only in part. In a degree, according to the measure of their faith they are spiritual; yet in a degree they are carnal.¹⁰¹

From experience, Christians know this struggle.

Let us, therefore, hold fast the sound doctrine, 'once delivered to the saints,' and delivered down by them, with the written word,

to all succeeding generations: that, although we are renewed, cleansed, purified, sanctified, the moment we truly believe in Christ, yet we are not then renewed, cleansed, purified altogether; but the flesh, the evil nature, still remains (though subdued), and wars against the Spirit. So much the more let us use all diligence in 'fighting the good fight of faith.'¹⁰²

"The Scripture Way of Salvation" was occasioned in 1765 by the controversy of the antinomian teachings of John and Robert Sanderman (who had gained the following of two of Wesley's most gifted preachers, Thomas Maxfield and George Bell). More than any other single statement, this sermon clarifies Wesley's concept of sanctification, placing it in the context of his overall theology.

Some who have forsaken sanctification made the mistake of assuming that all sin was gone. Macarius, fourteen hundred years ago, described this very situation.

The unskillful [inexperienced], when . . . grace operates, presently imagine they have no more sin. Whereas they that have discretion cannot deny that even we who have the grace of God may be molested again . . . For we have often had instances of some among the brethren who have experienced such . . . grace as to affirm that . . . they had no sin in them, and yet, after all, when they thought themselves entirely freed . . . from it, the corruption that lurked within was stirred up anew and they were well nigh burnt up.¹⁰³

The aspects Wesley clarifies are helpful. One is sanctified in the same manner that one is justified: faith is the condition. There must be good works for both, though good works are not the condition for faith. Good works of sanctification are bifurcated into works of piety and works of mercy, both of which are in some sense necessary for sanctification, just as the fruits of repentance are in some sense necessary for justification. This means there are good works that come before sanctification and good works that follow it; without these works, one is not sanctified. Such is the case with justification. This point is at the heart of the controversy with antinomianism.

In *The Scripture Way*, Wesley draws heavily from his previous sermon "On Sin in Believers" to stress that sin remains, though it does not necessarily reign. Experience produces a conviction of our helplessness, our utter inability to think one good thought, or to form one good desire. It is only through God's free, almighty grace, first preventing us and then accompanying us every moment that we do any good.

But contrary to "On Sin In Believers," Wesley now speaks of entire sanctification forcefully. It is full salvation from all our sins. It is equivalent to perfection defined as "perfect love." But what is that faith whereby we are sanctified, saved from sin, and perfected in love? This faith Wesley says is first promised in Scripture. What God promised, second, He is able to perform. God can bring the uncleanness out. Third, God is ready to do it now. Fourthly, God does it instantaneously. This progressive movement is identical with Genuine Christianity.

In 1765, Wesley published the first of six editions of *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection as Believed and Taught by the Rev. John Wesley*

from 1725 to 1765. The tract, a collection of his writings on the subject,¹⁰⁴ is a defense once again of his movement. The writings that appear in *A Plain Account* have been discussed, with the exception of a short account of the life and death of Jane Cooper, an unidentified tract, and Wesley's own conclusion. The first two exceptions add little to our understanding of Christian perfection. But the conclusion is helpful.

In the conclusion, two things are noteworthy. Wesley says in 1764 he summed up Christian perfection in the following propositions. (I mention what is not repetitious.)

4. It is not absolute. Absolute perfection belongs not to man, nor to angels, but to God alone.

6. Is it sinless? It is not worth while to contend for the term. It is 'salvation from sin' (my emphasis).

7. It is 'perfect love.' This is the essence of it; its properties, or inseparable fruits, are rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks.

9. It is amissible, capable of being lost; of which we have numerous instances. But we were not thoroughly convinced of this till five or six years ago (my emphasis).¹⁰⁵

The other thing is this: Wesley now sees Christian perfection from at least three vantage points.

In one view, it is purity of intention, dedication of all the life to God . . . In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked . . . In yet another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves.¹⁰⁶

In the same year Wesley wrote an important sermon-"The Lord Our Righteousness." The important and controversial point of the sermon is that Wesley argued "must we not put off the filthy rags of our own righteousness before we can put on the spotless righteousness of Christ?"¹⁰⁷ He says certainly we must. The implication here appears to be that (1) there are works of justification and sanctification that come before being justified and sanctified. And (2) our works are an integral part of salvation.

In *Brief Thoughts On Christian Perfection*, written in 1767, Wesley says he needs to "retract several expressions in our Hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such an impossibility"¹⁰⁸ as never falling from perfection. Wesley is referring to the 1740 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. In his second edition of *A Plain Account*, he admits overstating the case regarding the following: not desiring ease of pain, having no thoughts when coming before God except of Him; having no doubt or fear as to any action; relying on the Holy One for what to speak or do, and thus having no need for reason.¹⁰⁹

The Minutes CF 1768 are also insightful. Wesley castigates the preachers for the societies' laxity, for formality creeping into singing, and for neglecting fasts. He complains that

few are convinced, few justified, few of our brothers are sanctified. Hence more and more doubt, if we be sanctified at all till death: I mean sanctified throughout, saved from all sin, perfect

in love. That way we may speak the same thing. I ask once more, shall we defend this perfection or give it up?¹¹⁰

The Minutes are also helpful in clearing up ambiguous terminology. "Sanctified throughout," "saved from all," "perfected in love," "perfection," and "entire sanctification" all mean the same thing—an instantaneous experience in the gradual movement of sanctification.

In the 1770 Minutes Wesley's concern is reviving the work of God. Visitation has slacked. Idleness and loitering abound. Such a condition is not compatible with growth in grace. "Without exactness in redeeming time," he says, "it is impossible to retain even the life you received in justification."¹¹¹ He refers back to the Minutes of 1768 for suggesting the place to begin is dispersing books, preaching in morning services, singing, fasting, and experiencing instantaneous deliverance from sin.¹¹²

At the end of the 1770 Minutes, Wesley says those of us accepted now by God are those that believe in Christ with a loving obedient heart. Those who have never heard Christ, fear God and do works of righteousness according to the light they have. This raises the controversy of salvation by works. Wesley affirms salvation "not by the merit of works but by works as a condition"; of merit itself we have been afraid, but "we are rewarded 'according to our works'; yea 'because of our works.'"¹¹³ Such a view seems to diverge from the earlier position that faith is the only condition of justification and sanctification.

In a sermon entitled "On Perfection," written in 1784, Wesley exegetes Hebrew 6:1, "Let us go on unto perfection." If we do not go on to perfection, we are in danger of falling away. Wesley says, "and if we do fall away, it is 'impossible,' that is, exceedingly hard, 'to renew us again to repentance.'"¹¹⁴ He then clarifies what perfection here means. It is neither the perfection of angels, nor Adamic perfection. It is not perfection from ignorance, error, infirmities, or some affections. Rather "the sum of Christian perfection . . . is all comprised in that one word, love."¹¹⁵ In addition to this definition, Wesley produces eight scriptural quotations for what he understands as perfection.¹¹⁶ Only one of the definitions mentions sin.

Two sermons, written in the last years of Wesley's life, reinforce the common thread that weaves throughout the last section of this paper. In "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," a sermon written in 1785, Wesley is developing the idea that "it is God who works in you both to will and to do his good pleasure." First he affirms this "grand truth." He then creates tension by saying

. . . work out your own salvation. The original word, rendered work out, implies the doing a thing thoroughly. Your own, for yourselves must do this, or it will be left undone for ever.¹¹⁷

He goes on to say salvation begins with preventing grace which includes wishing to please God, discovering His will, and discerning our sin against Him. "All these imply some tendency toward life, some degree of salvation."¹¹⁸ Salvation is carried on by convincing grace—repentance. It is then that we experience the proper Christian salvation, that is, justification

and sanctification. This tension of both God and humans working out our salvation is brought together by Wesley's averring "first God works: therefore you can work. Secondly, God works, therefore you must work."¹¹⁹

The other sermon, "On the Wedding Garment" was written on March 26, 1790, only months before his death. It is based on the parable of Matthew 22:12. The parable is about the banquet a king throws for his son. When the king greets his guests, he notices one guest has failed to wear the proper wedding garment. When asked why, the friend is speechless. So the king has him thrown into the outer darkness. Wesley interprets the wedding garment as that "holiness without which no one will see the Lord." The righteousness of Christ and the holiness of the person are both necessary. The former entitles us to heaven: the latter qualifies us for it. But what is this holiness? "In a word, holiness is the having 'the mind that was in Christ' and 'the walking as he walked.'"¹²⁰

To sum up Wesley's understanding of "sanctification" and "perfection" in the late period, we need to recognize several shifts. From his mounting years of experience, Wesley seems to be taking sin more seriously, as seen in his sermon "On Sin in Believers." He speaks of perfection in terms of "perfect love" which is not necessarily related to not sinning. In fact, Wesley says he will not contend for the term "sinless." A shift is also seen in the stress laid upon the works of sanctification. Wesley seemingly goes to the extent of equating works with faith as the condition of salvation-the beginning of sanctification. A third shift occurs in the way Wesley speaks of perfection being lost. Experience again has shown him too many examples to deny this. And lastly, Wesley speaks on several occasions of different vantage points for understanding perfection. But when these points are boiled down to essentials, the essence of Christian perfection for John Wesley is love.

V

In reviewing the three periods of Wesley's life we have seen, contrary to his own claims, that his concept of Christian perfection changed in some ways, and yet it remained the same in other ways.

We will deal first with the unchanging aspect of the doctrine. In reference to his reading of Taylor and Kempis, Wesley saw that every part of his life must be dedicated to God, to simplicity of intention and purity of affection coupled with love. This should govern all speech, desires, and tempers. In this sense Wesley consistently maintained his doctrine of sanctification, for these aspects consumed his entire life.

I say sanctification here instead of perfection intentionally. This is due to Wesley's own usage over the last six decades of his life. He came to understand sanctification as the entire gradation of Christian maturity, beginning Simultaneously with justification and extending to the moment of death. Perfection, however, should be limited to the instantaneous work of the Spirit whereby one is cleansed, as in Wesley's early understanding, or whereby one's entire being is consumed with the love of God and neighbor, according to Wesley's later understanding.

It becomes difficult to grasp this distinction clearly without first discussing how Wesley's doctrine of sanctification changed. Herein lies the historical confusion. He began his "serious religion" with sanctification as the condition for justification. In 1738 he reversed his order and faith became the condition of both. Wesley disregarded any works prior to sanctification for the next twenty-five years. But gradually he gravitated back toward his pre-1738 position to the extent of incorporating works as necessary along with faith for sanctification. Put most strongly in the 1768 Minutes, Wesley claims works joined with faith is the condition for sanctification-but not the merits of it.

Another change occurred in how the doctrine of perfection was proclaimed. In Wesley's middle years, the absence of sin usually, if not always, was juxtaposed to love. This created the constant tension of "sinless perfection." In his later years, he stressed love reigning in the whole heart, at times even disparaging the notion of absence of sin. Such a state of "perfect love" is always temporary. That is, Wesley emphasized that this state could be lost. But it could also be regained. Wesley was emphatic at this point. No person is ever so secure in grace that he or she can never fall from it.

And finally, Wesley's notion of "perfection" within his doctrine of sanctification was first and foremost a practical doctrine. One could argue that it evolved out of Wesley's own need to keep his Methodists ever pressing on toward inward and outward holiness. For if perfection is only possible in the next life, why press on in this life? Yet if perfection is attained simultaneously with justification, why do any good works at all?

Not only is his doctrine practical, as it steers between extremes, it is also logically necessary. If he rejects the two extremes, there must be a middle position. Yet such a middle position cannot have any degree of absoluteness or else the position becomes one of the extremes.

Notes

1. Wesley makes this claim in *A Plain Account* in *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1979), (hereafter Jackson: *Works*), 11:369.

2. Martin Schmidt, *John Wesley: A Theological Biography*, trans. Norman R. Goldhawk (Nashville: Abingdon, 1960), 1:77-80.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 67. It is said of King, Schmidt avers, that he "always carried about with him a copy of *The Imitation of Christ*."

4. Schmidt says Wesley reasoned that God made humans to be happy, and gave them the physical ability to enjoy little pleasures.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

6. *John Wesley: A Christian Library* (hereafter *A Christian Library*) (Bristol n.p., 1749-1755), 24:60-430.

7. Lucas in *A Christian Library*, 24:283.

8. Ibid, p. 283.
9. Ibid., p. 283.
10. This is Wesley's interpolation.
11. Ibid, p. 308.
12. Wesley published parts of it in 1748.
13. William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1955), p. 18.
14. However she knew the book under the title *Spiritual Conflict*, by the Benedictine Juan de Castaniza, who published Scupoli's work with his own. Schmidt, p. 48.
15. Ibid, p. 53.
16. Ibid, p. 48.
17. From *Spiritual Combat* in Albert C. Outler's *John Wesley* (London: Epworth Press, 1964), p. 252.
18. Henry Scougal, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, ed. W. S. Hudson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958), p. 30.
19. Ibid, p. 48.
20. Ibid, p. 49.
21. Wesley says he read both of Law's works before 1730. See *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock (New York: Eaton and Mains, n.d.), (henceforth *Wesley: Journal*), 1:467.
22. R. Newton Flew, *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology* (London: Oxford, 1934), p. 294.
23. Ibid, p. 295. I am indebted to Flew for my discussion of Law's *Christian Perfection*.
24. Cited in Fogg's *Journal*, December 9, 1732-quoted in E. H. Sugden (ed): *Wesley's Standard Sermons* (hereafter *The Standard Sermons*), (London: Epworth Press. 1921). 1:264.
25. *A Plain Account* in Jackson: *Works*, 11:367-68.
26. Most of the quotations Wesley used in "The Circumcision of the Heart" I suspect come from the above writers. When the new *Works* come out this can be verified.
27. Molinos, *The Spiritual Guide Which Disentangles the Soul*, ed. Kathleen Lyttelton (London: Methuen and Company, 1950), p. 199.
28. de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, trans. and ed. J. K. Ryan (New York: Harper and Row, 1952), p. 3.

29 *John Wesley*, ed. Albert C. Outler (London: Oxford, 1964), 47. (Journal entry for January 24, 1738).

30. Ibid, p. 47.

31. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 252.

32. Ibid, p. 252.

33. R. Newton Flew, *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology*, p. 180. I have drawn extensively from Flew on Macarius.

34. *The Homilies of Macarius in A Christian Library*, 1:88.

35. Ibid., p. 88-89.

36. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 12-13.

37. See *Wesley: Journal*, 1:151.

38. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 14.

39. *The Standard Sermons*, 1:40f.

40. Frank Baker, gen. ed., *The Works of John Wesley*, 42 vols. (London: Oxford, 1975-), (hereafter Baker: *Works*) 11:176-77: *The Appeals*, by Gerald Cragg.

41. *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences* (London: John Mason, 1872), (henceforth *The Minutes*), 1:55.

42. Ibid, p. 55.

43. Ibid, p. 55.

44. Wesley acknowledges some verses were written upon the scheme of the Mystic divines. "But we are now convinced that we therein greatly erred: not knowing the Scripture, neither the power of God," *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, 1st ed., coll. and arr. in George Osborn, *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley* (London: Wesleyan-Methodist Conference Office, 1868), (henceforth Osborn: *Poetical Works*), lxix.

45. Ibid., p. xiv.

46. Ibid., p. xx.

47. Ibid, p. xxii.

48. Ibid., p. XXii.

49. Ibid, p. xxii.

50. *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, 2nd ed., in Osborn: *Poetical Works*, 1:199.

51. Jackson: *Works*, 8:374.

52. Ibid., p. 365.

53. Ibid, p. 371

54. Ibid., p. 373.

55. *A Plain Account* in Jackson: *Works*, 11:374.

56. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 254.

57. Ibid, p. 254.

58. Ibid, p. 254.

59. Ibid, p. 259.

60. Ibid, p. 267.

61. Several scriptural references Wesley repeatedly uses to round his doctrine are: Matt. 7:17-18; 21:12-33; Mark 7:12; Luke 6:40; and 2 Cor. 10:4.

62. Jackson: *Works*, 8:342.

63. Gerald Cragg, in the "Introduction" to *A Farther Appeal* in Baker: *Works*, 11:95, notes that Wesley assigned this writing together with the *Farther Appeals* a distinctive role. In his Journal, on January 5, 1761, he writes, "I have again communicated my thoughts on both heads to all mankind I believe intelligibly, particularly in the "Appeals To Men of Reason and Religion."

64. Romans 6:12.

65. 1 Peter 4:12.

66. 1 John 3:8-9.

67. 1 John 5:18.

68. Baker: *Works*, 11:66.

69. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 135.

70. Here I mean sometime after his 1738 reading and before or during writing *Farther Appeals*.

71. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 160.

72. Ibid., p. 151.

73. Ibid, p. 152.

74. Ibid, p. 152.

75. Ibid, p. 152-53.

76. 1 John 4:17.

77. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 151.

78. Baker: *Works*, 11:106.

79. Ibid., p. 106.

80. The full title is Observations, upon the Conduct of a Certain Sect usually distinguished by the name of Methodists.

81. The Bishop's remarks strongly resembled the terminology of the sermon "Christian Perfection."

82. Baker: *Works*, 11: 126.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

85. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 160.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

89. *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, ed. John Telford, (London Epworth Press, 1931) (henceforth Wesley; *Letters*), 4:10.

90. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

91. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 283.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 286.

93. Jackson: *Works*, 11:415.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 417.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 423.

96. Wesley: *Letters*, 4:213.

97. Wesley's confrontation with the Count can be found in Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 353-76.

98. *The Standard Sermons*, 2:368.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 369.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 369.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 377.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 378.

103. Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 274.

104. Here is a list of writings Wesley reprinted in *A Plain Account*: (1) "Circumcision of the Heart," (2) the preface to Hymns and Sacred Poems, 1739 edition, (3) The Principles of a Methodist (which he mistakenly entitled The Character of a Methodist), (4) "Christian Perfection," (5) the preface to Hymns and Sacred Poems, 1740 edition, (6) the preface to Hymns and Sacred Poems, 1742 edition, (7) the Minutes of Conference; 1744-47, 1758, (8) Thoughts on Christian Perfection, (9) Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection, (10) a short

account of the life and death of Jane Cooper, (11) Cautions and Directions Given to the Greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies, (12) and an unidentified tract.

105. Jackson: *Works*, 11:442.

106. *Ibid*, p. 442.

107. *The Standard Sermons*, 2: 433.

108. Jackson: *Works*, 11:446.

109. *Ibid*, pp. 379-80.

110. *The Minutes*, 1:80.

111. *Ibid*, p. 95.

112. In the 1744 Minutes he said, "We have leaned too much toward Calvinism," with regard to human faithfulness, and with regard to working for life. Our Lord expressly commanded us to "labor," literally "work" for the meat that endures to everlasting life.

113. *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences* (London, 1812), 1:96. This has its rationale in "The Lord Our Righteousness." "The Lord Our Righteousness" draws from the first reference to this in *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, the 1739 edition.

114. Jackson: *Works*, 6:411.

115. *Ibid*, p. 413.

116. (1) "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (2) It is the one undivided fruit of the Spirit: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance." (3) "Putting on the new man" and "the new man renewed after the image of him that created him." (4) "As he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." (5) "the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly and may the whole of you, the spirit, the soul, and the body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (6) "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God." (7) "Ye are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." And (8) He will "save his people from their sins."

117. Jackson: *Works*, 6:509.

118. *Ibid*, p 509

119. *Ibid*, p. 511.

120. Jackson: *Works*, 7:317.

THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION IN THE THEOLOGY OF KARL BARTH

by

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Preface

Historically, the differences between Reformed-Calvinistic theology and Wesleyan-Arminian theology have been sharp and pronounced. From the traditional five points of 'Tulip' Calvinism, the Wesleyan-Arminian response has provided a distinct alternative at every point. Radically diverse emphases have been placed on the sovereignty of God and the freedom of human will. Sin has been defined and understood in sharply contrasting ways. The meaning and extent of sanctification, as well as the possibility of realizing an experience of entire sanctification as a completed work in this life, have all provided hotly-debated differences between the respective theologies.

Presently, however, the great gulf fixed between the proponents of each theological tradition appears to have narrowed significantly. In practical and functional terms, evangelical churches within both traditions currently have far more in common with each other than they hold in distinction from one another. Theologians from both traditions have exercised greater freedom in expanding and broadening their particular theological horizons and have become more open to ideas from differing points of view.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the doctrine of sanctification in the theology of the great Reformed theologian Karl Barth, particularly as developed in his massive *Church Dogmatics*. While Barth rarely addresses Wesley or Wesleyanism in his work, the results of his exegetical and theological enterprise are interesting and illuminating. It is hoped that this effort may give a broader exposure of Barth's thought to Wesleyans, who may be surprised by some of his conclusions.

Introduction

"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." That truth is the central affirmation of Karl Barth's massive development of the doctrine of reconciliation in the three volumes (4/1, 4/2, 4/3) of the *Church Dogmatics* that he devotes to the understanding of reconciliation. Viewing reconcilia-

tion as the work of God 'from first to last,' Barth unpacks the meaning of God's atoning work in Christ under three distinct headings.

The first deals with Christ's priestly work, the fact that He, though very God, humbled Himself by becoming flesh and as the Son of God went off into the 'Far Country,' there to be judged in our place, to suffer the death penalty of our sin in His crucifixion. This objective work of Christ as priest provides the basis for the justification of man, despite his proud sinfulness and rebellion against God. It is on the basis of this objective justification and forgiveness that the Holy Spirit gathers into community the newly created people of God, whose existence has come into being by faith. Faith is then the subjective realization of the objective reality.¹

The second deals with Christ's kingly work, the fact that He, though very man, was resurrected from the death that He died to sin and that He, the Son of Man, has been exalted as servant to be the Lord, the new and true and royal man of God, the representative and savior of all other men. This objective work of Christ as king provides the basis for the sanctification and conversion of mankind, despite the misery and sloth of their sinfulness. It is on the basis of this objective work of Christ that the Holy Spirit can edify, uphold, and build up the Christian community that comprises the Church, whose existence and being are characterized by love. Love is the subjective approbation and expression of the objective reality of sanctification and conversion.²

The third deals with Christ's prophetic work, in which Jesus Christ is attested as the one Word of God, the guarantor and witness of the atonement, who equips and calls Christians into special service as witnesses of His prophetic work. Thus He objectively calls into partnership with Himself a covenant people, despite their falsehood and tendency toward untruth in their thought. On the basis of this objective reality, the Holy Spirit sends forth the community, in hope enlightening and directing the community toward their final and future hope in Him, even while enabling the subjective appropriation of hope in the present.³

This paper will be focused primarily on the kingly work of Christ in reconciliation, and most particularly on the doctrine of sanctification. There will be a pronounced emphasis on the relationship of sanctification to justification for two reasons. First, Barth begins his paragraph on sanctification (66) with a significant discussion of the relationship of justification to sanctification. Second, sanctification can only be properly understood as it is rooted and grounded in a prior understanding of justification. The implications of Barth's view of a radically objective and substitutionary atonement find significant development and expression in his doctrine of sanctification. The scope of the paper will be limited primarily to the doctrine of sanctification itself; time and space will not permit as detailed an examination of the ethical and practical implications that follow from the doctrine.

Consideration of Barth's Theological Methodology

Prior to developing Barth's doctrine of sanctification within the sphere of reconciliation, it may be helpful to summarize in general terms some of the key components of Barth's theological method which certainly have an imprint on the way that Barth unfolds his doctrine of sanctification.

Barth begins the theological task with the understanding that the revealed Word of God must be the starting point for doing theology. Whatever doctrine is to be examined must be understood exegetically. What matters most is what is revealed about God by Himself, a theology from above. This theology will necessarily be objective, and it is the object of this theology that will shape it at every point: Jesus Christ, the Word of God, became flesh. He alone is the true object of theology for Barth, and therefore his theology will be Christocentric through and through. Even when Barth moves on to the subjective appropriation of the work that God does in us, he will always begin with, point back to, and constantly remind of the prior work that God has done for us.

God's revealed Word has been and even now again is being spoken in this world, and the result of its being spoken is that it is being heard in our world.

In Jesus Christ our human nature and kind were adopted and assumed into unity of being with the Son of God. . . . There are among the men whose nature and kind were met by this occurrence in Jesus Christ those who live in this adoption and assumption. They are the children of God because, in spite of the sinfulness of their nature and kind, they are justified and sanctified by that which meets their nature and kind in Jesus Christ.⁴

This theology is revealed to man by God, and though it may indeed come all the way down to man, it is still first and foremost a divine activity that is so apprehended. Whether the subject is predestination, creation, reconciliation, justification, or sanctification; it is still a description of a divine activity.⁵ As a theology that is revealed from above to below, it retains always an objectivity, even in its extension to the very depths of the subjective human condition. The subjective knowledge of Jesus Christ that has been entrusted to the church throughout history is based on the objective basis of the event of revelation embracing the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.⁶

Two things are still required for revelation to be revealed to men, for Christ to become the Savior of men. First something which is again objective, if you like, a special presentation of revelation on man's behalf, so that it may find and reach him, so that his heart may be pure, open, ready for it-and only then something subjective, in the narrower sense that he now really receives and possesses the Holy Spirit and with it receptivity for Christ, the actual power to listen to the Word spoken to him.⁷

This emphasis on the objective nature of revelation is not intended to exclude the subjective reality of revelation for Barth. He says, "Real revelation puts man in God's presence." He then goes on to say, "We speak of real revelation only when we speak of the revelation which is real for us. It is the revelation which is attested to ourselves."⁸ He cites the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing the Word of God all the way to man.

The act of the Holy Ghost in revelation is the Yes to God's Word which is spoken by God Himself for us, yet not just to us, but also in us. This Yes spoken by God is the basis of the confidence with which a man may regard the revelation as applying to him.⁹

Barth nicely ties the objective to the subjective saying, "Because there is a way of God downward to man, there is also a way of man upward to God."¹⁰

That Jesus Christ is Himself the object that makes Barth's theology objective provides a definite Christological influence on the entire doctrine of sanctification. "We must not forget that it was positively our salvation, our sanctification, that God willed and accomplished as the mighty direction to us all in the existence of the Son of Man, the free and royal man Jesus."¹¹ It is the reality of Christ that gives reality and life to men and that calls into being the Church as the people of God. "In Him and through Him the Church is the wholly concrete area of the subjective reality of revelation. Within this area the justification and sanctification of men may become an event."¹²

The sanctification of man, the fact that he is claimed by God, the fulfillment of his predetermination in his self-determination to obedience, the judgment of God on man and His command to him in its actual concrete fulfillment-they all take place here in Jesus Christ.¹³

Exegetical Foundations

By the very nature of Barth's theological method, his whole theology basically will stand or fall on the basis of its exegetical foundation. To do justice to Barth's theology, his exegesis must be taken seriously. Couched in the fine dense print of the Church Dogmatics are the exhaustive and extensive Biblical references, from which he will draw his primary understanding and upon which he will construct his doctrine. It is therefore essential to be aware of the key texts for Barth's understanding of reconciliation, justification, and sanctification.

The first set of texts gathered here helps us to see Barth's Biblical understanding of the meaning of sanctification in relationship to the holiness of God.

In the Bible God Himself is the One who is originally and properly holy. . . . He demonstrates Himself as the Holy One in the fact that He sanctifies the unholy by His action with them, i.e., gives them a derivative and limited, but supremely real, share in His own holiness. . . . To use the classical definition of Lev. 19:2 (cf. 11:44, 20:7) quoted in I Pet. 1:16: "ye shall be holy: for I . . . am holy." The holiness of this God demands and enforces the holiness of His people. . . . He sanctifies men. His sanctifying involves a modification of their situation and constitution. . . . "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (I Thess. 5:23). "I am the Lord which sanctify you" (Lev. 20:8)¹⁴

In the second set of texts to be examined, Barth brings together the prominent thrust of the New Testament view of Christ's death explicitly in relationship to sin. Initially, he cites Jn. 6:51, Rom. 5:9, II Cor. 5:15, and Acts 20:28, all of which deal with the positive result of Christ's atoning death.¹⁵ But the negative result is far more broadly developed.

The direct end of the passion is a negative one-the overcoming of the rift which has come between God and man, of the enmity

of man against God. Jesus Christ was delivered "for our offenses" (Rom. 4:25), or "for our sins" (Gal. 1:4). . . . More concretely He is the "Lamb of God which removes, takes away, overcomes the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29, I Jn. 3:5). . . . Even more pointedly: "God sent his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, and condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). . . . "He died unto sin once" in such a way that Christians can and should reckon themselves dead unto sin (Rom. 6:10f.). . . . In His putting off of the body of the flesh, they too have put it off (Col. 2:11).¹⁶

The next set of texts demonstrates conclusively the Christological basis of the reconciliation, justification, and sanctification that Barth develops.

The life which he (Paul) now lives in the flesh, as he tells us in Gal. 2:20, he lives "by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." The old has passed away in Him, and he is a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15). "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). These statements have a typical and not merely an individual significance. They are the necessary self-declaration of all Christians. . . . This "in Christ" or "with Christ" determines their past and present and future; their whole history. They are crucified with Him (Gal. 2:19,6:14), dead with Him (Rom.6:8, Col. 2:20, 3:3), buried with Him (Rom. 6:4- Col. 2:12), made alive with Him (in the bold anticipation of Col. 2:13 and Eph. 2:5), and even made to sit together with Him in heavenly places (in the even bolder anticipation of Eph. 2:6).¹⁷

According to I Cor. 1:30 Jesus Christ Himself is made unto us sanctification as well as justification. . . . In Jn.10:36 He calls Himself the One "whom the Father hath sanctified." But being man as the Son of God He can equally well say: "I sanctify myself" (Jn. 17:19). For according to Heb.10:29 it is He Himself who in the first instance is sanctified by His blood as the blood of the covenant. . . . And He prays: "Sanctify (thou) them through thy truth" (Jn. 17:17). . . . He is the One of whom it is said (I Pet. 1: 15): " He which hath called you is holy." Heb. 2: 11 is even stronger: He is the *hagiazon*, the One who sanctifies, by whose existence and action there are also *hagiazomenoi*, saints. Everything that follows flows from this source and is nourished by this root. It is on this basis that the call goes out to others that they can and should and must "be holy in all manner of conversation" (I Pet. 1:15).¹⁸

The number of texts that support the reality, actuality, and objectivity of man's sanctification is staggering.¹⁹ Virtually all of the 'classical holiness texts' quoted regularly within the American and British holiness movements²⁰ are cited by Barth, and several of them repeatedly. The selection given below is provided from the most frequently recurring citations in Barth.

"Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:11); "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26); or: "The Spirit beareth witness . . . that we are the children of God" (Rom.8:16); . . . These are the indicatives which describe

the human situation as altered by that first time present in the second.

But the imperatives, too, derive from the human situation as it is altered in this dimension: "Walk worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil.1:27); "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead" (Eph. 5:14); "Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). . . . "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25). "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above" (Col.3:1). It is a matter of putting on the new man, which "after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24).²¹

Those who are in Christ have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts (Gal. 5:24). With it their old man is crucified to the destruction of the soma of sin (Rom. 6:6). They are buried with Him (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2: 12). According to Rom. 6: 11 they are to regard themselves, in the light of the death of Jesus, as those who are dead, or have died (Col. 3:3), to sin. They have put off the old man (Col. 3:9). They are purged of the old leaven (I Cor. 5:7). . . . They are washed and sanctified and justified (I Cor.6:11), for Jesus Christ is their justification and sanctification (I Cor. 1:30). . . . They have put on the new man (Col. 3:10). . . . They are the temple of God (I Cor.3:16; 2 Cor.6:16); the body of Christ; and individually His members (I Cor. 12:27); "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a people of possession" (I Pet. 2:9).²²

One of the most difficult aspects of any doctrine of sanctification is the relationship of sin to the sanctified. The tensions between the old and new man, the flesh and the spirit, the already but the not yet; all these must be considered Biblically. The texts that follow are the most important in Barth's approach to this crucial issue.

Jesus Christ died for sin once, is the highly compressed form in which it is stated in Rom. 6:10. And it is from this that in v. 11 there is derived the necessity to reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin. According to Rom.5:6f. it happened at a particular time. It was indeed when we were still without strength, sinners (v. 8), even enemies (v. 10), that He died for us (*hyper hemon*, v. 8), that we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son (v. 10). . . . In that He fulfilled the will of God we are sanctified once and for all by the sacrificial offering of His body (Heb. 10:10,14), again in contradistinction of the Old Testament order, within which there can be no question of a cleansing of man once and for all (Heb. 10:2).²³

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). For there is a conflict against the flesh. There can be no question to which side the Christian belongs in this conflict. . . . The *locus classicus* for this differentiation, demarcation, and separation of that which is radically impossible for the Christian (in view of His Lord) from the one thing which is

alone possible is the sixth chapter of Romans with its answer to the vexed question: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" (v. 1). "Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?" (v. 15). The twofold and emphatic *me genoito* reflects the horror with which Paul starts aside from such questions. Those who are dead to sin cannot live any longer therein (v. 2). . . . They are set in a movement which is opposed to sin (vv. 3-5). They recognize that the soma (the subject) of sin, the old man, is done away in the death of Christ, so that they can no longer serve sin (v.6). . . . They can therefore regard themselves only as those who are dead to sin but live to God in Jesus Christ (vv. 7-11). . . . A categorical assurance is given in v. 14 that it shall not have dominion over you. . . . They should not yield their members as instruments of unrighteousness, of sin (v. 13); an alternation between the one and the other is completely excluded (vv. 16, 19). . . .

The formulations of the First Epistle of John sound like a very short and concise summary of this chapter of Paul. He who is born of God, who abides in the One who was manifested to take away sin, does not commit sin (3:5f.9, 5:18).²⁴

Barth's understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in the doctrine of sanctification is likewise based on a rich exegetical foundation. Citing frequently both Old and New Testament passages, certain texts are mentioned again and again.

Ac. 2 cannot be understood without Ac. 1. . . . The gift of the Holy Spirit is thus imparted to men who expect it with a quite definite awareness and by a quite definite method. They are already on Christ's side, since their existence is to be given them from Christ's side. . . . Ps. 51:10: "Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Ezek. 36:25f.: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean. . . . A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you . . . and will make of you people that walk in my statutes and keep my judgments to do them." . . . Above all we have to think at this point of the fact which is expressly recalled in Ac. 1:5. Christ baptizes us with the Holy Spirit.²⁵

Very generally and formally, the word "baptism" denotes an act of cleansing which is effected on a man and which he thus undergoes. Whatever else it may mean, it is thus a new determination of the one baptized. "Baptism with the Holy Ghost" *pneumati* or *en pneumati hagio(i)* (Mk. 1:8 par.; I Cor. 12:13; Jn. 1:33; Ac. 1:5; 11:16; 19:2f.) is, in sharp distinction from the baptism with water which men give, the cleansing and reorientation of a man by the endowment and work of the Holy Spirit. . . . Baptism with the Spirit is concretely the divine cleansing and reorientation of men, in which, as in Ac. 2, and in analogy to what happened to the prophet according to Is. 6:7, they are appointed public witnesses of Jesus and are authorized and equipped as such.²⁶

The Meaning of Sanctification

Speaking in volume 1/1 of the Church Dogmatics about the Holy Spirit, Barth makes a connection between the holiness of the Spirit and the purpose of the Spirit in sanctifying the men who receive Him. He there defines sanctification as 'the setting apart, the seizing, the appropriating and distinguishing ' of the men who receive the Holy Spirit. They are distinguished by their becoming "that which in and of themselves they neither are nor can be, men who belong to God, who are in real fellowship with Him, who live before God and with God."²⁷

In the thesis statement that begins paragraph sixty-six, which is titled "The Sanctification of Man," Barth links man's sanctification with his exaltation, the creation of a new form of existence as the faithful covenant-partner of God. The sanctified are understood to be a people who have been elected and called to discipleship, awakened to conversion, whose subsequent works are to reflect and render praise to God, who take upon themselves the mark of the cross, who have the freedom even as sinners to render obedience to God and to be established as the saints of God.²⁸ Barth gives a cogent definition of the terms he uses.

What is meant by sanctification (*sanctificatio*) might just as well be described by the less common Biblical term regeneration (*regeneratio*) or renewal (*renovatio*), or by that of conversion (*conversio*), or by that of penitence (*poenitentia*) which plays so important a role in both the Old and New Testaments, or comprehensively by that of discipleship. . . . The term sanctification includes already the idea of the "saint."²⁹

The concept of sanctification as conversion, a turning away from sin and self and a turning to God, is especially important for Barth's doctrine of sanctification. It is in this conversion that man is elevated and exalted to become a true covenant-partner with God.³⁰ And this conversion for Barth is not merely a renovation, a reformation, or a cosmetic change; it is a making new, the creation of a new life.

Conversio and *renovatio*, applied to the actual sanctification of man are nothing less than *regeneratio*. New birth! The man involved in the act of conversion is no longer the old man. He is not even a corrected and revised edition of this man. He is a new man.³¹

This profound change penetrates to the very heart and center of man. "It must be an inner change in virtue of which he himself becomes a different man, so that as this different man, he freely thinks and acts and conducts himself otherwise than he did before."³² In this profound change that God works within man, there comes a liberation of man. God takes this new man seriously as a free and independent creature, as a man with a new history, a history that is his own thanks to the work of God that provided it.³³

There is a close relationship in Barth's theology between sanctification and justification, and this linkage needs to be kept in mind when dealing with either of these concepts. At the point of faith, this mutual relationship can be readily noted.

It is true that faith in its [the New Testament's] message is both our justification and also our sanctification, both our new status in the sight of God and also our new life. And it is both, because it is simply faith in Jesus Christ.³⁴

Despite the truly subjective nature of sanctification as it reaches all the way down to man, in Barth's treatment of the doctrine, the Christological basis of our sanctification not only takes logical and temporal priority, but remains throughout the objective basis for its reality in man.³⁵ That is why Barth begins the volume in which he develops the doctrine of sanctification (4/2) with an extensive look at the exaltation of Christ as the Son of Man; it was and is only in His exaltation that the possibility exists for the exaltation of our human existence.³⁶

All that we know of man's exaltation derives from what we know of the return of the Son of Man as the act which took place in and with the way of the Son of God into the far country, of the exaltation of our human essence as it is an event in Him.³⁷

Thus it is that Barth contends that Christ's exaltation is not merely His own, but also that of those for whom Christ gave Himself in death. It is in Him, His exaltation, that we who are not intrinsically holy and righteous are made the saints of God.³⁸ It is in this Christocentric understanding that the actuality and objectivity of sanctification are seen to extend into the life and realm of subjective man. Yet as such it is and remains the act of God. There is no self-sanctification here, no enlightened man pulling himself up smartly by his own boot-straps.

It is as God gives man His command, as He gives Himself to man to be His Commander, that God claims him for Himself that He makes His decision concerning him and executes His judgment upon him. It is as He does this that He sanctifies him, and the good enters into the realm of human existence.³⁹

The final point to consider in the meaning of sanctification for Barth is that of extent. Barth does not see sanctification as something of momentary or periodic significance; he views man's sanctification as the affair of the "whole life-movement of man," involving the entirety and totality of life.⁴⁰ He rightly notes that while there may be particularly prominent moments and experiences within the flow of life, these do not in themselves comprehend the totality of the forward movement that is indicated in man's conversion and sanctification.⁴¹ "The divine change, man's baptism with the Holy Spirit, is not half-grace, or half-adequate grace; it is whole grace and wholly adequate grace."⁴²

Justification and Sanctification

Barth says of Luther that he oriented his whole theology by the reality of the justification of the sinner; he says of Calvin that he oriented his whole theology by the reality of the sanctification of the same sinner.⁴³ It could be added that Barth oriented his whole theology by the reality of the reconciliation of the whole world in Jesus Christ. In that reconciliation, Barth sees the justification, sanctification, and calling of mankind. Yet to see that is not to deprecate Barth's appreciation for real and radical justification.

Indeed, he builds a powerful and sweeping case for a meaningful and dynamic justification of sinners on the basis of the objective justification provided for all in Jesus Christ. In order to provide for man's justification, Jesus Christ put Himself in man's place, the 'Judge judged in our place,' and took upon His sinless self the sinfulness of our sin so that we might be set free from it. Therefore our justification becomes an objective reality in Him.⁴⁴

With the divine No and Yes spoken in Jesus Christ the root of human unbelief, the man of sin, is pulled out. In its place there is put the root of faith, the new man of obedience. . . . Faith [has become] an objective, real and ontological necessity for all men and for every man. In the justification of the sinner which has taken place in Jesus Christ these have both become an event which comprehends all men.⁴⁵

Despite the powerful understanding that Barth has of justification (or perhaps, more accurately, because of it) he does not in turn neglect to attend to the doctrine of sanctification. He in fact states that sanctification is no mere appendix to justification any more than Jesus' exaltation was a mere addendum to his humiliation.⁴⁶ Because of the breadth of his view, he sees justification and sanctification as different aspects of the one event of salvation. " 'I will be your God' is the justification of man. 'Ye shall be my people' is his sanctification."⁴⁷

The human response to the divine act of God in providing reconciliation shows the distinction Barth makes between justification and sanctification. There is a difference between faith grasping the righteousness promised to sinful man in Jesus Christ on the one hand, and on the other the response of obedient love corresponding to the holiness imparted to that man in Jesus Christ.

Justification is not sanctification and does not merge into it. Sanctification is not justification and does not merge into it. Although the two belong indissolubly together, the one cannot be explained by the other. It is one thing that God turns in free grace to sinful man, and quite another that in the same free grace He converts man to Himself.⁴⁸

Barth is greatly concerned that an improper understanding of the relationship between justification and sanctification will lead to a defective understanding of soteriology and ultimately reconciliation. He wants neither of them "swallowed" nor distorted by the other, but both to be given their rightful place.⁴⁹

The other side of the truth that Barth stresses equally in examining the relationship of justification and sanctification is that, while they are distinct and different aspects, they have a unity and belong together because they are aspects of the very same action. "Justification and sanctification are acts of this divine Subject precisely as this Subject makes Himself ours."⁵⁰ Barth is especially concerned to stress that sanctification is not a work of God that precedes or follows the work of justification; he views the entire work of God in reconciliation as unitary. Thus the reconciling work provided by Jesus Christ in His atonement accomplishes both the justification and the sanctification of man. "The God who in His humiliation justifies us is

also the man who in His exaltation sanctifies us. He is the same there and than as He is here and now."⁵¹

What is the forgiveness of sins if it is not directly accompanied by an actual liberation from the committal of sin? . . . What is a liberation for new action which does not rest from the very outset and continually on the forgiveness of sins? . . . As God turns to sinful man, the conversion of the latter to God cannot be lacking. . . . The doctrine of sanctification has to show that it is really with man that God is on this way as He reconciles the world with Himself in Jesus Christ.⁵²

One final point remains for consideration in this relationship. Barth wants to make certain that his position in terms of the *ordo salutis* is clearly understood. In the temporal sense, Barth will not admit to a *Prius* and *Posterius*, a superiority and subordination; he prefers to see both justification and sanctification in the *simul* of the one redemptive act of God in Jesus Christ.⁵³ Yet in his own treatment of reconciliation, Barth has treated justification first, and he has done so because in structure the occurrence of justification takes priority. It is justification that takes place initially in execution, and sanctification that takes place based upon that execution. Yet speaking formally, Barth says that sanctification is the formality prior reality in faith⁵⁴ and that in intention, sanctification is teleologically prior and superior to justification.⁵⁵

In the *simul* of the one divine will and action justification is first as basis and second as presupposition, sanctification first as aim and second as consequence; and therefore both are superior and both subordinate. . . . The one grace of the one Jesus Christ is at work, and it is both justifying and sanctifying grace, and both to the glory of God and the salvation of man.⁵⁶

The Christological Basis of Sanctification

For Barth, Jesus Christ is the acting subject in the work of reconciliation from first to last.⁵⁷ At no point can a proper understanding of sanctification obscure this reality. In man's religious appropriation of the grace of God, it is always tempting to endeavor to justify and sanctify oneself apart from the work of Christ, and that is the one thing that Barth will not allow. In the paragraph titled "The Revelation of God as the Abolition of Religion," he asserts boldly that revelation contradicts religion and religion opposes revelation. Thus he reminds us that "the revelation of God in Jesus Christ maintains that our justification and sanctification, our conversion and salvation, have been brought about and achieved once and for all in Jesus Christ."⁵⁸ The possibility and the reality of our sanctification are rooted and grounded firmly in the objective reality of His sanctification, and have no basis or existence whatsoever apart from His work.⁵⁹ "Jesus Christ for us as a supremely objective happening is the word of reconciliation on the basis of which there is a ministry of reconciliation."⁶⁰

Yet Barth realizes that within the one reality of atonement and reconciliation, there is both an objective and subjective dimension since there is within this one work both a divine act and offer but also an active human

participation in it as response to it.⁶¹, Christ's death is the actual basis for man's life, as Barth points out, and it is only on the basis of the knowledge of the former which comes to us in revelation that the possibility of the latter can be perceived.⁶² "The Christian life is founded, not when man takes the place of Jesus Christ as his own liberator, but when Jesus Christ takes the place of man to liberate him there."⁶³ The point of departure must always be and remain that Christ has come down to us and drawn near to us and become one of us because of who He is, not because of who we are! "He does not need our faith, but our faith needs Him."⁶⁴ Christ came in fact to liberate man from the pull and drag of sin and to free him for a better way of life in fellowship with Him, but that can only become reality in what He Himself is and has done. "Our sanctification consists in our participation in His sanctification as grounded in the efficacy and revelation of the grace of Jesus Christ."⁶⁵

The Objectivity and Actuality of Sanctification

The work of God in Christ took place in history. This historical work had and has an ongoing significance. What God did once and for all in Jesus Christ reaches into the present of all mankind. What happened to Christ as man has forever altered men.

In the most concrete sense of the term, the history of this One is world history. When God was in Christ He reconciled the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:19), and therefore us, each one of us. In this One humanity itself, our human essence, was and is elevated and exalted.⁶⁶

Now that Barth has thoroughly anchored and rooted the doctrine of reconciliation, justification, and sanctification in Christological objectivity, he is prepared to consider in depth what this means for the reality of the man who is apprehended by this great event.

Looking back, we may well ask with amazement how it was that the Reformation, and (apart from a few exceptions) the whole of earlier and especially more recent Protestantism as it followed both Luther and Calvin could overlook this dimension of the Gospel which is so clearly attested in the New Testament-its power as a message of mercifully omnipotent and unconditionally complete liberation from death and wrong as the power of evil.⁶⁷

With Calvin, Barth views our being in Christ, the *participatio Christi*, as that which makes our justification and sanctification a concrete event.⁶⁸ Christ creates saints, giving them direction and purpose, imparting to man a share in His own holiness. Thus man in Christ cannot be the same man that he once was apart from Christ. He becomes a 'new man,' a truly different man, with a new character; the 'old man' is passed away. For Barth, the figure of the 'old man/new man' may well be metaphorical, but the metaphor itself points to the reality of the event. The old man is passed away.⁶⁹ "The Christmas message speaks of what is objectively real for all men, and therefore for each of us, in this One. Primarily and finally we ourselves are what we are in Him."⁷⁰

Barth unfolds the Christmas message thoroughly, and declares that it does not tell us we are Christians and something else, but that we are Chris-

tians.⁷¹ In making that statement, he contends that false assurance would only occur if the Christmas message addressed to us is missed. In the exalted Jesus Christ, the second Adam, there has taken place and is actualized the sanctification of all men.⁷² The truth of this assurance is not merely set in our head; it is written directly on our hearts and laid upon our lips: we are indeed His own.⁷³ The upshot of this actuality is that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5:1), and we really do have it.

Because we are what we are in Jesus Christ before God and therefore in truth, it can be said of us that we are righteous before God and that we are also holy before God.⁷⁴

The actuality of the Christian's sanctification is not merely existential, something that he thinks or feels and therefore is; it is being, being in Christ. "In Him we have both our justification and sanctification. All this has been done and is in force. It is true and actual."⁷⁵ And this is not merely something that has been imputed to man by a God who really knows better; it is imparted to man in the actuality of human existence.

What He imparts to man when He gives him His direction is not a possibility but the new actuality in which he is really free in face of that bondage; free to lift himself up in the sense described. . . . The imparting of this capacity is the liberation of man-his sanctification.⁷⁶

Man's sanctification in Jesus Christ is not just potential. It is not just figurative. It is not a mask nor a costume that he can put on to hide his true identity. In man's baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ he becomes a new creation, a new spiritual man with a circumcised heart. There takes place a new objective actuality in his existence.

When we look at the divine change, at the baptism of the Spirit, we can and should say no less than that it is the active and actualizing grace of God, establishing a new beginning of existence; it is the totality of salvation, the full justification, sanctification and vocation of man brought about in Jesus Christ.⁷⁷

The Subjective Appropriation of Sanctification: The Work of the Holy Spirit

"Jesus Christ Himself is pro me, just for me. I myself am just the subject for whom He is. That is the point. That is the newness of being, the new creation, the new birth of the Christian. Everything else follows from this."⁷⁸

Anyone who has read much of Barth would realize that the above quote could only come after many, many pages that make clear the objective undergirding and Christocentric independence that is presupposed (there are more than 700 such pages in that volume alone!). But the point is that even one as deeply concerned from first to last with theocentrism and Christocentrism as is Barth must acknowledge the subjective appropriation that makes this reconciliation a personal reality. "What we have said about the objective content of truth of the reality of Jesus Christ, which includes our own reality, presses

in upon us, from its objectivity to our subjectivity, in order that there should be in us a correspondence."⁷⁹

In the midst of his 375-page chapter on the exaltation of the Son of Man, Barth gives a fascinating description of the results of the objective reality of Christ pressing in upon our subjectivity.⁸⁰ God gives the power to be free in Him and the freedom to appropriate as our own the conversion of man to God that has taken place in Jesus. The Christian has already come into being, but in himself and his time he is always in the process of becoming. He knows the source of this power is not self-derived but is a power graciously extended from the One greater than himself. It is the power of light. "It is light from the darkness of the cross of Jesus Christ into the darkness of our existence." Its character is that of liberation; it enables us to see the reality of our freedom in Jesus Christ. It has the character of knowledge. It has the character of peace, the peace that can remove the antitheses between God and man, man and man, man and himself. Its character is life; genuine, true, in harmony with God, undefiled and indestructible: eternal life. "The work of this power is not to destroy our earthliness, but to give to it a new determination." The power is the outgoing and receiving and presence and action of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁰

"A power is at work which makes these men free, able, willing and ready to give this event a place, the central place, in their willing and thinking. . . . The divine change and act in virtue of which this happens is the work of the Holy Spirit."⁸¹ The Holy Spirit, who is Himself the subjective reality of God's revelation, is the Spirit who makes Christians-Christians! It is His work to make the transition from Jesus to us that enables us to participate in His exaltation as covenant partners.⁸² To receive and have the Holy Spirit is to have direction,⁸³ to be quickened and called into being as a part of the Church.⁸⁴ "By the outpouring of the Holy Spirit it is possible for God's revelation to reach man in his freedom."⁸⁵ The Holy Spirit is the effective agent of God that enables the Good News of the Gospel to reach down and in to the very core of the existence of man, that the reconciling work of Christ might meet him there and transform him in the process. "The Holy Spirit is the living Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the work of the sanctification of His particular people in the world."⁸⁶ And that which is impossible with man becomes possibility with God, and therefore reality. "The possibility of God consists in the fact that man-eye of a needle or not-is enabled to participate not just passively but actively in God's grace as one who may and will and can be set to work, too."⁸⁷ It is the work of the Holy Spirit to call men to active acceptance of discipleship, to obediently respond to the "follow me!" with a life-long commitment that includes a denial of self and the taking up of one's own cross. That response will therefore have profound ethical implications.

The Purpose and Goal of Sanctification: Christian Ethics as an Ethic of Love

Reconciliation, Justification, Sanctification, Conversion, Salvation: All of these point to the change, from sin to holiness, from alienation to sonship, from rebellion to submission, from enmity to peace, from nothingness to meaning. In reconciling the world to Himself in Jesus Christ, God not

only provided remedial action for man's sin and failure but also progressive action for man's present and future in fellowship with Him and with his fellow man. Beyond the indicatives lies the challenge of the imperatives.

As the one Word of God which is the revelation and work of His grace reaches us, its aim is that our being and action should be- conformed to His. 'Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect' (Mt. 5:48). The truth of the evangelical indicative means that the full stop with which it concludes becomes an exclamation mark. It becomes itself an imperative.⁸⁸

The imperative: "Ye shall be holy," is simply the imperative indication of the irresistible dynamic of the indicative: "I am holy," i.e., I am holy and act among you as such, and therefore I make you holy-this is your life and norm.⁸⁹

Theological ethics asks to what extent the sanctification of man in Jesus Christ has taken place, and the question of ethics becomes in fact a question as to the validity of the existence of the 'new man' in Christ.⁹⁰ Right conduct for man is determined absolutely by the right conduct of God as His Word becomes the subject that claims us. Thus the Christian life begins and ends with love.⁹¹

The sanctified have been called for a purpose and this purpose is to give praise to God with their good works, which have no saving merit in and of themselves. God gives the sanctified work to do, and these works are done because they are a reconciled people.⁹² There is a diametric difference between doing good works because one has been reconciled and doing good works in order to become reconciled; the good works of the sanctified are only the former. And as the sanctified render obedient service to the God who has reconciled them, they come into intimate contact with the cross of Christ and realize that in order to save their own lives they must surrender to His life and lose their own. "In the cross laid upon the Christian we really have to do with the fulfillment of his sanctification."⁹³ It is precisely at the cross that the reconciled discover (even in the midst of their own discouragement, doubt, and despair) the true solidarity of Christ with man in His cry of dereliction.⁹⁴

It is also at the cross that man finds the fullest expression of love in the sense of self giving. The act of faith is the act of agape love and the whole life act of the Christian is determined by this reception of self giving love which in turn characterizes the life of the recipient.⁹⁵

What we have here-in Christian love-is a movement in which a man turns away from himself. . . . In the continuation love turns wholly to another, to one who is wholly different from the loving subject. Christian love turns to the other purely for the sake of the other. It does not desire it for itself. . . . In Christian love the loving subject gives to the other, the object of love, that which it has, which is its own, which belongs to it. . . . It does so with a radically unlimited liberality.⁹⁶

When man turns to God in love, he becomes free to obey and serve and to put into practice in all of his relationships the quality of self giving love

with which he has been first loved. What he is by the grace of God will make a difference in what he does and the way that he does it by the same grace of God.

Sanctification and Sin: The Dialectic Tension

To this point, very little has been said about the relationship of sin and sanctification. This issue has been left until the end deliberately. It is not placed here because Barth fails to deal seriously with the sinfulness of sin! On the contrary, even a casual survey of the development of the three volumes on reconciliation makes very clear the fact that Barth took the sinfulness of sin so seriously that he incorporated a paragraph in each volume detailing specifically the multiple and nefarious aspects of sin that threaten to undermine and destroy the reality of the reconciliation that has been provided for mankind in the atoning work of Jesus Christ. The primary reason for placing this section in this location was to allow the positive and even radical implications of Barth's understanding of reconciliation and sanctification to be seen as they are with full force. In this way the strength of the positive and objective work of God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself can be seen clearly. But there does in fact remain a dimension of dialectical tension that must be examined in all fairness to Barth, to scripture, and indeed to the human situation that meets us in the reality of life.

How can Barth put together opposites like sinners/saints, and refer at the same time to the same person? How does the spirit relate to the flesh in the same person? How can one man be at one and the same time the old man and the new man?

There are numerous references in Barth's work that state emphatically that man, even as he is apprehended in the reconciling, justifying, sanctifying work of God in Christ, is still a sinner.⁹⁷ Yet there can also be set beside those statements at least as many equally emphatic statements that declare that the reconciled, justified, sanctified man is dead to sin and alive to God as a new creation in whom sin no longer reigns.⁹⁸

In the paragraph on sanctification, Barth details a progression that must be observed.⁹⁹ Initially, these saints are disturbed sinners. Their sanctification sets a limit to their being as sinners. Though they are still sinners living in the flesh, definite limits have been set to their sin. Their being as sinners is "pushed into a corner," and though it still is intruding into the present, it belongs to the past. Disturbed in their slothful sleep, they are awakened. In this awakening they are given the power to lift themselves up. As a result, their sanctification comes to them here below and provides a real alteration in their being. Their being as sinners is "radically assailed, but not destroyed."¹⁰⁰

These awakened sinners experience an ongoing awakening.¹⁰¹ There is a rising from the sleep of death, a true conversion, the death of the old man. This experience creates new beings, those who are renewed in their whole life-movement. Yet within this movement there is a warfare. In this newly created man there exist in tension two mutually exclusive determinations. It is at this point that Barth refers to the *simul justus, simul peccator* of Luther. Yet precisely at this point of tension there is a dynamic at work, a turning. While there is no present where we can look beyond this simul, it nevertheless cannot remain.

What in this simul is still present in conjunction as a twofold determination of one and the same man cannot by its very nature remain in this conjunction. Its whole will and movement and impulse is to fall out or to fall apart. . . . He who is still wholly the old and already wholly the new man-he has not fallen out with himself partially but totally, in the sense that the end and goal of the dispute is that he can no longer be the one he was and can be only the one he will be.¹⁰²

Barth contends that in the New Testament the real dying of the old man is matched by an equally real rising of the new man. He says of the new man that he must pass from "a well known past to a future which is only just opening up," leaving those things which are behind and pressing forward toward those things which are ahead. "In the exercise of this freedom still as the man he was, already as the man he will be-he fulfills his conversion."¹⁰³ All of this 'impossible possibility' is comprehended in, and only in, his *participatio Christi*. In that reality, the old man dies and the new man arises. "It is an actual, event only in Him."¹⁰⁴

Part of this tension no doubt derives from the Biblical tension that exists between the 'already' and the 'not yet.' The temporal distinctions among past, present, and future are not always clear, but at times ambiguous, even in scripture. Yet Barth refuses to hide here; he does not merely push the effects of reconciliation into eschatology but in fact brings them into a real present that is dynamically moving into the future based on a break with the past.¹⁰⁵

Barth begins with Luther's *simul justus, simul peccator*, and takes it seriously, but he advances beyond it.¹⁰⁶ He faults Calvin for too great an emphasis on the *mortificatio* with a correspondingly inadequate emphasis on *vivificatio*, a shortcoming that Barth rectifies in his treatment of the subject.¹⁰⁷ Taking Calvin's concept of *participatio Christi*, Barth develops it in dimensions far beyond Calvin.¹⁰⁸ Ultimately, Barth's doctrine of sanctification takes seriously the sinfulness of sin and its impact upon man; but it takes equally (and technically even more seriously since it demands prior consideration) seriously the implications of the justifying and sanctifying work of God in Jesus Christ. For Barth, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." That is the truth above all other truth. In the *participatio Christi*, there is *justificatio, regeneratio, vivificatio*-there is in fact the *sanctificatio* of mankind!

Conclusion

The thesis of this paper is that Barth holds at the center of his doctrine of reconciliation the truth that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." It is this objective revelation of God to man that has taken place historically in the incarnational enfleshment, sinless life, sacrificial death, triumphant resurrection, and exalted ascension of Jesus Christ that forms the concrete basis for the reconciliation of rebellious, slothful, and deceitful sinners.

What God has faithfully revealed through His Word is that in Jesus Christ, He has come all the way down into the core of human existence to redeem and reconcile us to Himself. On the basis of God's activity and work,

a changed reality of existence for all of us becomes not only a possibility but an actuality. Thus reconciliation includes our justification as an objective fact. It also includes our sanctification, the subjective appropriation in our own lives of the experience of the grace of God come all the way to us in Jesus Christ. It further includes our calling and vocation, giving a new direction and purpose to the totality of our being 'in Christ.'

Barth's doctrine of sanctification is a natural correlative of his doctrine of justification, with its definite and positive implications carried forward to the next step. It is a positive and triumphant doctrine in Barth, with radical implications. The death knell has already sounded for the power of evil and sin. Their dominion and rule of terror and agony has been overcome.

Exegetically, it is extremely difficult to fault Barth. The extensive and intensive scope of his exegetical foundation is thorough. He is aware of and takes seriously all of the crucial texts. The only area of challenge exegetically would come at the point of emphasis. Has he properly understood the most significant texts and given them due priority?

It would appear that there was a development in Barth's theology over a long period of time that can be noted by a shift in emphasis from certain texts to other texts, although this shift is clearly one of degree, not of kind. In Barth's commentary on Romans, there seems to be more emphasis on the perpetual condition of Romans 7 than the condition of Romans 5, 6, and 8. Some of the early volumes of the Church Dogmatics sound that same refrain of the 'wretched man' as a dominant theme. Yet in volumes 4/1 through 4/4, while that note is not dropped, it tends to diminish in force and emphasis. Correspondingly, there tends to be an increasing emphasis upon the force of Romans 6 and the 'newness of life' that has become in fact our new reality as we participate in life "in Christ."

This shift in emphasis appears to be the result of Barth's taking seriously the implications of the theology that he has developed. On the basis of a radical, complete, objective, and substitutionary atonement, Christ has really and actually brought about the present reality of reconciliation. We can be and in fact are justified freely "in Christ." As truly justified creatures we do in fact become a new creation, new beings, in Christ. Despite our historical solidarity with sin as the actuality of our past, we are washed; we are sanctified; we are placed in motion toward our ultimate goal of glorification "in Christ."

By utilizing scripture as the starting point for doing theology, and taking seriously the classic texts on holiness and sanctification, Barth shares common ground with Wesley and the Wesleyans. Barth's understanding of the meaning and extent of sanctification, and the ethical implications he draws out from it are all quite acceptable to Wesleyans. His location of the objective basis of sanctification in the atoning work of Jesus Christ, his willingness to speak of sanctification as the impartation of righteousness to man, his strong emphasis on the death to sin accompanied by a rising to the newness of life in Christ: all of these concepts are remarkably compatible with the Wesleyan point of view.

Nevertheless, we must not attempt to 'Wesleyanize' Karl Barth. There still remain sharp diversities on many points. Barth finds it perfectly natural to continue to speak of the Christian as a sinner in the present tense. With his strenuous emphasis on the objective basis of sanctification, he would

be extremely uncomfortable with the heavy emphasis on the subjective appropriation of sanctification common in most Wesleyan circles. His monergistic view of sanctification would seem quite alien to the synergistic approach of the Wesleyans, and theirs would seem just as alien to him. His view would give no tolerance at all for the view of entire sanctification as a work of grace subsequent to justification; he views the entire work of justifying, sanctifying, and calling mankind as a unitary work of God. Perhaps the greatest problem with Barth's doctrine of sanctification for Wesleyans [and indeed for many other evangelicals as well] is the totally inclusive nature of his doctrine of reconciliation. Seeing the total work of justification, sanctification, and the calling of mankind as a *fait accompli* in the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus Christ once and for all, Barth contends that it therefore extends to all men everywhere, raising a further series of questions.

What are the ultimate implications of this radically objective view? Does his view force the conclusion that all are universally justified, universally sanctified, universally called? Is there no real and objective differentiation between the 'whosoever will' and the 'whosoever will not'? How then do we explain the ethical implications of this radical reconciliation in those for whom it is effective yet not apparent? What do we do with the seeming variety of responses in the present human situation?

"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." For Barth, this reconciliation encompasses our justification, our sanctification, our calling. Our subjective appropriation of the objective work of God in Christ is no mere charade or masquerade; it is the actualizing of our changed reality. It is the putting off the old man that is accompanied by the putting on the new man "in Christ." Barth can therefore say with the Wesleyans: "This is the will of God, your sanctification."

Notes

1. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1936-1981), Vol. 4/1, pp. 740-743. Hereafter this reference will be cited as *CD*

2. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 727-733, especially p. 731, p. 733.

3. *CD*, 4/3, p. 3.

4. *CD*, 1/2, p. 215.

5. *CD*, 2/2, p. 184.

6. *CD*, 4/2, p. 142.

7. *CD*, 1/2 pp. 222-223.

8. *CD*, 1/2, p. 237.

9. *CD*, 1/1, p. 453.

10. *CD*, 4/2, p. 118.

11. *CD*, 4/2, p. 464.
12. *CD*, 1/2, p. 220.
13. *CD*, 2/2, p. 517.
14. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 500-501.
15. *CD*, 4/1, p. 255.
16. *CD*, 4/1, p. 255.
17. *CD*, 4/2, p. 277. See his extended development of Romans 8 on pp. 278-279.
18. *CD*, 4/2, p. 515.
19. See the following sections of *CD*: 4/1, p. 321; p. 749, 4/2, p. 365, pp. 561-563; 4/4, pp. 9-10.
20. This assessment is based on personal observation and is demonstrated in the numerous lengthy citations.
21. *CD*, 4/1, p. 321.
22. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 365-366.
23. *CD*, 4/1, p. 224.
24. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 370-371.
25. *CD*, 1/2, p. 222.
26. *CD*, 4/4, p. 30.
27. *CD*, 1/1, p. 450.
28. *CD*, 4/2, p. 499.
29. *CD*, 4/2, p. 500.
30. *CD*, 4/2, p. 291.
31. *CD*, 4/2, p. 563.
32. *CD*, 4/4, p. 18.
33. *CD*, 4/4, pp. 22-23.
34. *CD*, 1/2, p. 313,
35. *CD*, 2/2, p. 540.
36. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 69-70.
37. *CD*, 4/2, p. 103.
38. *CD*, 4/2, p. 294. See also 4/2, p. 274.
39. *CD*, 2/2, p. 548.

40. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 566-569.
41. *CD*, 4/2, p. 567. Note the significance of this view for those who stress the crisis moment in sanctification.
42. *CD*, 4/4, p. 35
43. *CD*, 1/2, p. 208.
44. *CD*, 4/1, pp. 236-243. This section provides as unsurpassed exposition of the totality of this objective reality of justification in Jesus Christ.
45. *CD*, 4/1, p. 747.
46. *CD*, 4/2, p. 35. See also 4/2, p. 503.
47. *CD*, 4/2, p. 499.
48. *CD*, 4/2, p. 503.
49. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 503-505.
50. *CD*, 1/1, p. 489.
51. *CD* 4/2, p 503.
52. *CD*, 4/2, p. 505.
53. *CD*, 4/2, p. 507.
54. *CD*, 1/2, p. 313.
55. *CD*, 4/2, p. 508.
56. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 508-509.
57. *CD*, 4/1, p. 197.
58. *CD*, 1/2, p. 308.
59. For a thorough treatment of this subject, see 4/2, pp. 514-515.
60. *CD*, 4/1, p. 224.
61. *CD*, 4/1, p. 643.
62. To see how Barth develops his line of thought, see *CD*, 4/2, pp. 289-293.
63. *CD*, 4/4, p. 21.
64. *CD*, 4/1, p. 228.
65. *CD*, 4/2, p. 517.
66. *CD*, 4/2, p. 269.
67. *CD*, 4/2, p. 233.
68. *CD*, 4/2, p. 522.
69. *CD*, 4/4, p. 10. This is the language that he uses in 4/4, pp. 3-16. The other side of this issue will be explored in the section on "Sin and Sanctification" later.

70. *CD*, 4/2, p. 270.
71. *CD*, 4/2, p. 272. This is his phrase. See 4/2, pp. 269-273, for full development of this idea.
72. *CD*, 4/2, p. 155.
73. *CD*, 4/2, p. 266.
74. *CD*, 4/2, p. 273-274.
75. *CD*, 4/2, p. 369.
76. *CD*, 4/2, p. 531.
77. *CD*, 4/4, p. 34.
78. *CD*, 4/1, p. 755.
79. *CD*, 4/2, p. 303.
80. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 3-377. The remainder of this paragraph is a free paraphrase of pp. 302-319.
81. *CD*, 4/4, pp. 26-27.
82. *CD*, 4/2, p. 360.
83. *CD*, 4/2, p. 362.
84. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 614-616.
85. *CD*, 1/2, p. 246.
86. *CD*, 4/2, p. 522.
87. *CD*, 4/4, p. 6.
88. *CD*, 2/2, p. 512.
89. *CD*, 4/2, p. 501.
90. *CD*, 2/2, p. 540. See also 2/2, p. 516, p. 535.
91. *CD*, 1/2, p. 371.
92. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 585, 596-598.
93. *CD*, 4/2, p. 607.
94. *CD*, 4/2, p. 612.
95. *CD*, 4/2, p. 731.
96. *CD*, 4/2, p. 733.
97. For example, see 1/1, p. 466, 1/2, p. 373; 4/2, p. 396; 531.

98. For example, see 2/2, p. 125; 143; 4/1, p. 252; 253; 296; 236-238; 4/2, p. 93; 225; 576.
99. The remainder of this paragraph is a free rendering of 4/2, pp. 524-531.
100. *CD*, 4/2, p. 531.
100. What follows in this paragraph is a free rendering of 4/2, pp. 553-584.
102. *CD*, 4/2, p. 573-574.
103. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 578-579
104. *CD*, 4/2, p. 582.
105. 4/1, p. 316; 4/2, p. 574
106. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 572-574.
107. *CD*, 4/2, pp. 574-577.
108. *CD*, 4/2, p. 581.

WESLEYAN THEOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENTAL STRUCTURALISM: AN EVALUATION

by

Donald M. Joy

Some theological traditions solve the earthly and heavenly dimensions of reality by creating categories of "sacred" and "secular." They are divided another way by one system which refers to "God's right hand," and "God's left hand."

In the Wesley tradition especially and within the Anglo-Catholic line of descent in general, there is quite another magnet at work. Its thesis, over simple in statement, holds that all of life and experience is "one." Seen this way, the so-called "sacred" and "secular" are intrinsically related and must eventually be made accountable to each other. Wesleyan theology is thus "systemic," in the sense that nothing lies outside of theology: all reality is rooted in Creation (or in Fall), and is under the call of Grace (though choosing to reject that Grace).

Wesleyan theologians, therefore, take "all of the data" seriously. And when a social psychologist announces that he has "empirical data" about unfolding stages or seasons of advancing moral reasoning, Wesleyans are attentive. They cannot ignore social science research by simply calling it "secular." And they will not dismiss research simply by "labeling" the researcher a heretic. As a devoted researcher who gladly embraces the Wesley perspective, I have been, for many years, both following and replicating certain aspects of the work of Jean Piaget and of Lawrence Kohlberg. Together they represent a third force in psychology: developmental structuralism.

Cognitive structural theory grounded in the research of Piaget reported in *The Moral Judgment of the Child*¹ did not quickly make its way into religious education. Goldman's experimental studies of children's perceptions of religious material in the public schools of England were a major application of Piaget's findings.² It was not until Sholl's graduate thesis was reflected in 'The contributions of Lawrence Kohlberg to religious education,'³ that American religious education looked seriously at structural development. My own research⁴ was rooted in Piaget's conception of 'subjective responsibility,' and was published within a year of Sholl's article in *Religious Education*.

Today religious educators are virtually all aware of structural development and of efforts to appropriate it to their work. For many, their awareness is indicated only by the briefest knowledge of 'Kohlberg stages.' Others have weighed Piaget and Kohlberg research and theory and rejected it entirely. Still others have offered critiques on and modified both Piaget and Kohlberg, and continue to rely on cognitive structural developmental theory as a source in creating and sustaining ministries of religious education.

In this paper I wish to summarize the critical responses of representative researchers and theologians to the work of Lawrence Kohlberg. These will include Dykstra, Moran, Gilligan and Vitz. Elsewhere I have edited a symposium in which Reimer, Chazan, Philibert, Rowen, Schmidt, Moore and Sholl have set down their responses to Kohlberg and have indicated how they carry forward their work building on structural development research and theory.⁵

Following that summary, I will suggest some unique foundational contributions for religious education which lie embedded in structural development research. Over against this agenda for the future modifications of religious education research and theory, I will then place my non-negotiable foundational concerns and charges against Kohlberg's work. These concerns revolve around (1) what is moral reasoning? (2) the 'naturalistic fallacy,' and (3) who is the 'reasoner,' a subject, an object, or an agent?

Representative Critics of Lawrence Kohlberg

Dykstra, chiefly in *Vision and Character: A Christian Educator's Alternative to Kohlberg*⁶ rejects Kohlberg's work. He does so on the grounds that it is not enough for moral psychology to 'investigate the development of cognitive structures.'⁷ Dykstra insists that Kohlberg has carved out too much territory and that he cannot deliver the goods because 'moral growth is not developmental.' Furthermore, Dykstra concludes, religious faith and belief have been collapsed into human psychological structures which are incapable of adequately dealing with issues of transcendence.⁸ Elsewhere Dykstra chronicles Kohlberg's failure to deal honestly with human sinfulness.⁹ The Dykstra 'alternative' to Kohlberg is 'cognitive-experiential.'¹⁰ He labels it thus because 'it involves the attempt to know and perceive, and because it is concerned with experience.'¹¹ Dykstra sees the cognitive as consisting of 'conceiving, imagining, reflecting, and judging.'¹² 'Experience' consists of doing, performing, and 'causing to happen.' Dykstra criticizes Kohlberg for his theological/philosophical presuppositions, but lays on Kohlberg the burden of his own philosophical demands: that Kohlberg abandon his empirical studies and generate a full-blown theory of moral philosophy. Dykstra does not hesitate to invent a speculative theory based on theological/philosophical work easily accomplished in his office.

Moran, in *Religious Education Development*, cuts loose from Kohlberg on several grounds: (1) Kohlberg is not as seriously grounded in Piaget as he claims to be; (2) he arbitrarily separates religion and morality, seeing religion rooted in morality, but not the other way around; (3) Kohlberg equivocates: on the one hand he says a core of values exists which is universal; on the other hand he advocates moral relativism in specific cases; (4) Kohlberg's stage system virtually eliminates the first six years of life as belonging to his moral system, thus undercutting both Piaget's work on moral development and the religious tradition by which the early years are

prized for the cultivating of honesty and integrity in all relationship.¹³ Moran then evaluates the work of Dykstra, then that of Fowler, both of whom he regards as set over against Piaget, Kohlberg and 'moral development.' Finally, Moran offers grammars of religious development and of educational development, closing with his own theory of religious education development. Here, as with Dykstra, we encounter yet another religious education specialist who ventures to formulate a theory without first verifying and validating the foundational perceptions upon which the theory rests. It is one thing to criticize an empiricist; it is quite another to imagine that Kohlberg can be supplanted by theological philosophical speculation or by fusing a collage of parts from other people's experimental work without replicating and expanding the base.

Gilligan, In *Another Voice: Women's Conceptions of Self and Morality*, reports her own research. She did clinical interviews with women contemplating abortions. Her findings led her to challenge Kohlberg, her colleague/mentor on two grounds: (1) the research of Kohlberg dating back to the University of Chicago experiment has been mostly with boys and men; (2) women, it appears, organize issues clustered around a core of attachment / affection rather than around issues clustered around justice.¹⁴ Unlike the theological / philosophical evaluation and speculative alternatives of Dykstra and Moran, the Gilligan data urge an expansion of moral development value structures, and they assume the importance of continuing empirical verification and validation.

Vitz, Associate Professor of Psychology at New York University, mounts a massive attack on Kohlberg's theory in *'Christian Perspectives on Moral Education: From Kohlberg to Christ.'*¹⁵ Vitz doubts whether Kohlberg's stages exist, and he marshals evidence against Kohlberg by citing Kohlberg's own internal revision of his theory across the last twenty years. Then, with incisive flair, Vitz moves in to destroy with a series of critiques. (1) The empirical critique: the stage scale has not been standardized; moral development scores do not predict moral action; the data offered to support the idea of invariant stage sequence reveal 'no clear support.' (2) The rational critique: cognitive moral, reasoning is competent apart from specific moral, content to the reasoning: Kohlberg's system is profoundly relativistic; Kohlberg's 'Stage 6' is Kohlberg's own canonizing of a preferred way of doing moral reasoning. (3) The ideological critique: this is leveled not only against Kohlberg, but against social psychology as a whole, and indeed against all social, science. 'It is,' Vitz says, 'part of the now rapidly growing awareness within social, science that there is no neutral or objective theory, nor is such theory in principle even possible.'¹⁶ The critique charges Kohlberg with (1) rationalism, no concern with the will or with affect; (2) individualism, all resources are within the person, hence the self, not a transcendent Source, is primary; (3) liberalism, the assumption that all reality is in transition toward undefined and relativistic ends; and finally, (4) atheism, most consistently visible within Kohlberg's scoring manual where any transcendent affection or value is categorically locked in at Stages 3 or 4, even though the value is otherwise clearly within Kohlberg's highest principled expressions. Vitz joins Dykstra and Moran in offering his own synthetic/speculative model in the theological / philosophical tradition. In the section of his paper entitled *'Toward a Christian Model of Moral Development,'* Vitz disclaims

that he is willing only to sketch out some basic principles and concepts which any such theory would . . . have to include.¹⁷

Vitz calls his present proposal "essentially an innate phenomenological model in terms of the origin of moral affect and cognition."¹⁸ So his theses are: (1) morality is acquired; (2) morality is mostly learned; (3) moral action depends upon the will. Looked at theologically, Vitz sees his model resting upon seven axioms: (1) the assumption of revelation; (2) the principle of love; (3) Christ as the model; (4) following Christ derives from loving Him; (5) prayer is central to the development of love; (6) the Christian moral life helps to create the Christian virtues whose foundation is humility and whose flowering is love; (7) Christian morality requires Christian behavior.¹⁹ Here again is a theological/philosophical collage which deserves to be verified. It is perhaps striking that one researcher tending his protocols and computers could provoke such creativity on the part of religious educators, none of whom seems to be on the way to testing hypotheses against the real world of how people actually develop and how they experience moral sensitization.

Constructs Rooted in Cognitive Structural Development

Every language contains terms for expressing ideas and metaphors of reality which differ from those in other languages. We encounter a similar phenomenon when we examine research and theory. Terms are coined or appropriated and invested with technical meanings which are essential to convey a description of that which must be described. No religious educator dare approach the agenda of our times armed with a single research theory. Whether Kohlberg is worth salvaging may be less important than whether we are wise enough to appropriate the constructs essential to describe what structuralists have been observing in human development. Here I want to comment briefly on three of the crucially variable terms: adaptation, hierarchical integration, and perspectivism. Elsewhere I have elaborated on the unique empirical underscoring of the Hebraic construct of 'justice' as I identified 'common ground' with Kohlberg.²⁰

Adaptation

To the extent that Kohlberg is rooted in Piaget, he brings forward the observation that the person is not trapped in the environment as a victim. Behaviorism places dominant weight on the environment as the shaper of the person. Psycho dynamic theory places that dominant weight on early environment and family. Structuralism holds that the person impacts the environment and that each is changed; the result is a high view of the freedom of persons to respond to external events and environments in ways that enhance self worth and predict diversity. Both behaviorism and psycho dynamic theories tend toward determinism; structuralism offers us, with the adaptation process, a way of describing freedom and unpredictability. Adaptation consists of two alternating modes: assimilation of new content into existing structure in such a way that the present structure shapes the content, distorting it. However, given a cycle of assimilation, accommodation follows when the previous structure collapses with the impact of the assimilated content and the living person constructs 'a bigger box' to house the now fermented and expanding content. Assimilation and accom-

modation taken together constitute the adaptation process, sometimes called the equilibration process by Piaget.

Hierarchical integration

Every theory which takes into account the developmental changes which occur must find terms to describe what happens to earlier experience when it meets current and future experience. Erikson in his psycho dynamic 'eight stages of growth' theory coins the term 'epigenetic' to describe how a person who is confronted by the polarities of 'identity versus identity diffusion' will move ahead into the 'intimacy crisis' with built-in predictions about its resolution. The 'seeds' of each solution are to be found planted in the solution of the previous crisis, hence 'epi-genetic' (embedded in the genes). There is a sense in which a 'bad start' seeds each future planting. Maslow, in a similar hierarchy of human needs, sees each of the early needs as so consuming the person's attention that no need will emerge into the person's consciousness until the previous, more primary, need has been fully met. He uses 'pre potency' to stress the urgency of primary needs. Structural language gets at quite a different phenomenon: hierarchical integration suggests that the person is both constantly changing and constantly transforming the past and all past experience into a new construction. Childhood is never lost and must be transformed in order for adolescent, adult and mature life to be whole and healthy. Repentance, then, is not denying previous guilt, but owning it, 'coming home' to it and allowing grace to transform it into the maturity of present honesty and integrity.

Perspectivism

Piaget's discovery that young children cannot imagine any perspective different from their own demanded a label. He called it egocentrism. By this he meant nothing negative or immoral, only the naive confusion of the self with the non self and the belief that there is only one way of viewing reality. At the maturer end of the continuum lies perspectivism-the ability to take the perspective of persons, to feel what they feel, hear what they hear and to make judgments based on that objective, external ground. the self viewing the self from a non self perspective.

These pieces of language are inherited from cognitive structural development. Our path to life and ministry will no doubt be both easier and richer if we do not abandon them.

Some Foundational Flaws in Kohlberg's Work

I come now to the critical analysis of what I have called my nonnegotiable concerns and charges against Kohlberg's research and theory. These judgments are made within the structural arena and in some cases lay demands upon that emerging system. The judgments are also made from my own partial/imperfect perspective-as one human agent toward another. Structural development is not an 'endangered species,' and Kohlberg is making a significant contribution to its richness. These non-negotiable concerns and charges represent another structuralist's dream that structural development might reconstruct itself in the late twentieth century and serve all humanity more effectively than it will be able to do in its present form.

What is moral development?

When Piaget discovered the core of moral reasoning and its movement from 'objective' to 'subjective' responsibility, he saw it organizing spontaneously around issues of 'justice.'²¹ Critics who neglect to trace Kohlberg back to that Piagetian source rarely show sensitivity in evaluating Kohlberg's preoccupation with justice.²² Those who examine Piaget's 'Cooperation and the Idea of Justice,'²³ on the other hand, find there an almost complete spectrum of justice. That justice construct is significantly richer than traditional Greek or other Western systems, but matches Hebraic understandings of righteousness and justice in amazing ways.²⁴ If Kohlberg had been faithful to the Piagetian structures of justice and had protected his work from his own political biases, his research and theory might not have so quickly fallen into obvious distortions of 'what is moral'? The notion that justice when applied as the principle of wholeness or completion of all things brings about the perfect realization of all human ends in harmonious accord with one another is an elegant one. With that understanding, justice is a type of relational network which must be developed and maintained so that all interpersonal relationships may go on in an orderly way. Justice is thus not something that one gets or keeps as a personal possession; instead, it characterizes all of a person's ways and relationships.

Justice, however, is not a one-directional, hierarchically motivated system. Piaget reported aspects of its negative or mirror image, but regarded the lack of advancing justice only as a retardation of the one-directional, upward moving system. Yet one has only to live in the present world for about five minutes to find that injustice is as easy to chronicle in the morning news as is justice. Isaac cautioned: 'If you cease to pervert justice, to point the accusing finger and lay false charges, if you feed the hungry from your own plenty and satisfy the needs of the wretched, then your light will rise like dawn out of darkness and your dusk will be like noonday' (58:9-10). A full spectrum justice must run all the way from morality through immorality.

I have little concern that moral theologians, ethicists and philosophers nibble away at Kohlberg because his definition of moral development does not put forward a complete and viable system of morality, universally applicable. By definition of his task, he never claimed to be doing so. But I am terrified at the myopic presupposition that moral development is inevitably linked to vertical progress through advancing stages of increasingly sensitive justice perspectives. The opportunities abound in which to test hypotheses about the downside of moral reasoning. Since each of us is capable of fantasizing enormous evil as well as enormous good, the possibilities which lie even within the limited sphere of 'hypothetical moral reasoning' are as close as Heinz or Faust under the negative magnet of Mephistopheles. Even more useful studies might chronicle famous or ordinary trajectories into immorality and destructive patterning of moral choice. Gilligan has opened the Harvard doors to the use of Piagetian clinical interviews with persons facing real, not hypothetical, moral choices.

Nor am I particularly concerned with the possible narrowness of justice as the core of morality. Kohlberg may be wrong. My students consistently leap to criticize him because the core is not 'love.' But the core of morality

is continually open to expansion as new empirical evidence emerges. Again, Gilligan's study of women facing the abortion choice seems to suggest that women, at least, may organize moral choices around issues of attachment more than around issues of justice. Heschel's elaborations on justice suggest that the Hebraic notion of justice may indeed be more intrinsic to the divine nature than any other characteristic.²⁵ And Kohlberg nicely places love within justice.²⁶ If moral theologians and philosophers are impatient with Kohlberg for holding justice as the core of morality, then it would be courageous for them either to (1) suggest a way of expanding the conception of morality in empirically verifiable ways, or to (2) go on about their business of doing speculative and non verifiable systematizing of the epistemologies of morality.

While I was not trained as a moral philosopher or moral theologian, still I sense an obligation as an educator and evangelist²⁷ to contribute to Kohlberg's work by suggesting ways of expanding the conception of morality consistent with his kind of investigation. I find the entire structural development base useful in enlarging my understanding of historical and biblical material. In the Matthean record of Jesus' 'Sermon on the Mount,' for example, the 'beatitudes' unfold in a hierarchically integrative trajectory:

- 8 Advocates of 1, 2, 3
- 7 Peacemakers
- 6 Pure in heart
- 5 Merciful
- 4 Righteous/just
- 3 Meek/abused
- 2 Mourners/grieving
- 1 Poor

One way of searching for the 'mirror image' of morality might be to look for descending lists. Another would be to infer the negative side of the trajectory from the gradients on the positive side which is put forward. An interesting inversion occurs when we infer from the eight beatitudes, since the first three appear to be negative. This will require what appear to be positive conditions for the first three of the potentially negative set:

- 1 Wealth
- 2 Ecstasy
- 3 Exaltation
- 4 Confrontation/demands for rights
- 5 Exploitation
- 6 Conspiracy/evil imagination
- 7 Anarchy
- 8 Terror

We would hypothesize that both the beauty set 1, 2 and 3, and the ugly set 1, 2 and 3 are contained in a primal matrix of both original sin and original grace. If so, we might expect that there is no guarantee of upward or downward progression in any sort of 'epigenetic' or 'pre potency' sense. In Jesus' words in Matthew 5, it is striking that the first three are unilateral statements requiring no action or no response, suggesting that the condi-

tion itself demands the full energy of the person at that time.²⁸ Items 4 and 5 are oriented toward reciprocal action in a community setting-what Piaget calls 'heteronomy.' So in a thoroughly 'adaptive' sense, the person engages destiny deliberately in a corporate milieu. In the positive trajectory the midsection, then, appears to correspond easily with the theological categories of justification and community participation. In the negative trajectory the descending egomania moves further toward ultimate absolute isolation and in the mid-section establishes true moral guilt and culpability; sin is now defined in terms of those choices and actions which are destructive to persons, self and others. The final three, 6, 7 and 8, appear to be analogical to Kohlberg's Level C on the upper projection: all are motivated out of internal holiness expressed by increasingly effective living on behalf of the highest values known among humans in community. Theologically, the flowering of social and community holiness, inward sanctification of which reorganizes the affective center of human motivation, and the targeted affection denoted by agape love are consistent with the final three. The negative trio, in predictable contrast, moves the potential of human destructiveness into a cosmic crescendo. The trajectory has apparently moved from original sin into culpable sin, and finally into unpardonable sin-calling evil good and good evil, hence is hopelessly abandoned to the eternal pursuit of destruction which leads to the ultimate isolation: isolation in the tomb of 'self.' The elegant contrast of the higher trajectory is its movement toward relationship and toward intimacy through shared life, pain and the lifelong pursuit of righteousness and mercy. Thus original grace is followed by justifying grace and sanctifying grace, all leading to the ultimate intimacy: to 'know as we are known.'

I have wanted, here, to caution all of us that Kohlberg has not followed Piaget's first evidence about the mirror side of justice. It may be assumed by the non-religious philosophical and educational community that any such negative trajectory of destructive injustice or non love is important only to the religious community. Such constructs as 'original sin,' for example, may be thought to be only the esoteric concerns of historians and theologians. The fact is, all of us are living in the context of depravity and are endangered by human destructiveness every waking moment. If we do not generate ways of thinking and dealing with non-grace-filled aspects of the human community, and do it quickly, we may not long have opportunity to exist as humans. At the same time, I have here underscored the potentially useful way with which structural development provides us of thinking about morality and moral reasoning. These concerns have led me both to warn and to encourage in this discussion about the future of our understanding about the core of morality and the patterning in moral reasoning.

The 'naturalistic fallacy.'

Kohlberg thinks of himself as an objective, unbiased researcher and theorist. It has not occurred to him that, as Toynbee once quipped, 'Every person has a theology, and one is never more at the mercy of that theology than when one denies that it exists.' Perhaps the nearest Kohlberg ever comes to admitting his bias is in his claim that he has committed the naturalistic fallacy and got away with it. In that confession, Kohlberg defines the 'fallacy' as 'that of asserting that any conception of what moral judgment ought to

be must rest on an adequate conception of what it is.' He continues: 'By this we mean first that any conception of what adequate or ideal moral judgment should be rests on an adequate definition of what moral judgment is in the minds of men.'²⁹ I wish in this discussion to explore both some obvious risks taken in indulging the fantasy of the naturalistic fallacy and to trace the history of the philosophical distortion and deformity which have given us the phenomenon of naturalism and the naturalistic fallacy. I will trace that history in the hope that we may, in our generation, find a way to return human history to a holistic way of looking at the universe, including ourselves and our moral options.

The risks of inferring from what is, what ought to be, seem to me to be obvious. (1) Taking humans as they are as the norm for evaluating humans as they ought to become makes two errors: one, assuming health and vitality is irreducibly omnipresent to establish the norm; and two, assuming that existence itself is the credential for value and survival. (2) Any 'drift,' whether upward or downward, has the effect of changing the norms by which human direction and destiny are programmed.

I wish to suggest that Kohlberg does not, in fact, avoid the naturalistic fallacy in his research or in his theory. It is evident in reading Kohlberg that a 'phantom' human morality exists. Its pinnacle seems to be represented by *Rawls' A Theory of Justice*, which Kohlberg regards as 'the newest great book of the liberal tradition.' Kohlberg espouses it partly because it 'systematically justifies' his Stage 6. Rawls holds, for example, that persons who truly apply the Golden Rule, will not be distracted by their own preferences or the natural human tendency to put one's own interests ahead of corporate or other person's interests. The principles one will put forward, then, will be truly fair or just. Kohlberg illustrates Rawls' construct of justice by showing how it would process the issue of capital punishment. Eventually capital punishment would be negated as an option in the judgment of a Stage 6 person, because one of the perspectives the person would take would be that of the person convicted and sentenced to die. At that point the perspective would inform the judging person with the issue of what it would be like to face death. The judge would then conclude that since the condemned criminal wishes to live, the death penalty is not just. But such a fantasy sort of justice value would not hold up in the face of the smallest offense: sleeping in instead of going to classes, flunking out for not studying, for example. The 'most mature' judgment would be to suspend any consequence, since from the perspective of the offender, there is a preference for no consequence. I cite this instance simply to illustrate that Kohlberg either (1) has a morally flabby image of the universal principle of justice in human relationships and responsibilities, or (2) he is willing to throw the human race back to the stone age, in which every person does that which instrumentally satisfies the self, and those who could act for the group are obligated to indulge criminals by thinking flabbily about their danger to the general community. What I suspect is that Kohlberg is in touch with an inner vision of justice which is increasingly known to him, but which is largely out of his reach. Piaget empirically studied that inner vision as it is expressed in cognitive judgments. Kohlberg, with significantly less care, arbitrarily defines justice to match his vision of justice in his own current partial understanding of it. We are confronted with a dilemma of how to break with the

naturalistic fallacy. We might choose to create a mythology of the ideal morality, constructed from the collective vision. Since such an inner vision seems to be universally present in humans, we could do worse: we could continue to reflexively resort to the naturalistic fallacy. But we might choose to embrace an objectively defined, historically documented structure of justice and adopt it, however tentatively, as the global ideal by which to compare our empirical findings along the way.

We are prevented, however, from appropriating 'revelation' in the Judeo-Christian sense largely by significant moments of error in the history of human thought. I will offer a rough chronicle of some of those moments of error, but I do so only in the hope that by evaluating long swatches of human history we may discover ways to correct the trajectory through which we move.

My basic premise is that the quality of human existence is directly proportional to the balance that we are able to maintain between (1) the material concrete reality as measured by human sensations and (2) the affective subjective reality as known by human intuitions. The first is commonly called the 'phenomenal' domain and the second the 'noumenal.'

Philosophers who share my concern for healing the breach between the phenomenal and the noumenal tend to lay the original blame at the feet of Descartes. The Cartesian error, expressed in the famous assertion, 'I think, therefore I am,' leads to the abandonment of the non material aspect of human reality and to regarding one's material existence as both the highest good and the only mode of experience. Polanyi³⁰ and Gill³¹ are both working to close this part of the Cartesian gap.

Bassett points to Augustine who, he says, constructed the 'Augustine bypass' around the affective, noumenal vision.³² Augustine's response to the aspiration to Christian holiness, nicely integrated in the earlier church fathers, is delayed following Augustine to 'the next life.' The grim realities of human existence evoke Augustine's splitting away of inward holiness on the basis that 'what is,' namely human failure to perform, 'is what ought to be,' and we will have to wait until another time and place for being made perfect in love and justice. The Augustinian and Cartesian errors have in common the lopping off of that softer, affective dimension of human reality. What remains is cognition, and the hard concrete material reality.

Ellul pushes the curtain ever further back and lays the blame at the feet of the serpent and of Cain. 'Yea, hath God said, . . .' was the first wedge between fact and faith. And Cain's turning toward the 'city,' Ellul sees as a deliberate blocking off of affect in favor of building technology.³³

Hampden-Turner describes Descartes' motive as 'probably reverential' when he separates 'mind from body, subject from object, knower from known in a lethal split which has yet to heal.'³⁴ Descartes regarded the Roman church as the proper guardian of the soul and wished, no doubt, to escape the wrath of the Pope for tampering in 'spiritual matters.' The operating field for science was *res extensa*-objects located in material space. *Res cogitans*, the domain of thought, belonged in private space, and was known only inwardly and in conversation with God. So Hampden-Turner documents this major moment of error, with considerable fault resting on the religious side for inviting the dichotomy of science and faith. But, he proceeds, the avalanche had only begun. Before long the 'mind' was subjected to the same scrutiny as

the *res extensa*. A materialistic and mechanistic view of humanity was now established and science was flourishing-albeit as a systematic examination of only partial reality.³⁵

Calvin, heavily influenced by the affective cognitive dichotomy, and losing trust in the Roman church, set out to systematize theology. Calvinism established a bi-polar universe in which persons are subjects, the Bible is object and thought about the religious realm is Christianity. Doctrine is all-important; affect is untrustworthy and dangerous. Hampden-Turner sees Calvinism as the necessary precursor of 'modern doctrines of scientism, positivism, and behaviorism.' What is more, those doctrines have borrowed from Calvinism 'even its most objectionable characteristic, a devastating lack of self-awareness.'³⁶

Bassett notes that a thin line of survivors avoided the Augustinian bypass. They include Francis of Assisi, Bernard of Clairvaux, Count Zinzendorf and John Wesley.³⁷ Hampden-Turner cites the contrast between the two lines of descent by labeling the Cartesian distortion 'Puritan, atomistic individualism,' and the more holistic alternative 'Anglo-Catholic organicism.'³⁸ Outler, in a lectureship on John Wesley, posed the question, 'How do you explain the fact that it seems never to have crossed John Wesley's mind to construct and publish a systematic theology, large or small, and that every attempt to transform Wesley's ways of teaching doctrine into some system of doctrine has lost something vital in the process?'³⁹

I furnish this historical summary in the belief that moral development research and theory is unwittingly resting on the one-eyed distortion commonly associated with Descartes. My final concern is intrinsically continuous with the review of the origin of naturalism and the omniscience attending it, which by obliterating self-awareness invents the 'naturalistic fallacy.'

Who is the reasoner: subject, object or agent?

Macmurray, in his Gifford Lectures of 1953 and 1954, places the focus upon philosophical aspects of naturalistic individualism.⁴⁰ He traces the decline of religious influence and of religious practice. He notes that 'ideals of sanctity or holiness . . . begin to seem incomprehensible or even comical. Success will tend to become the criterion or rightness, and there will spread through society a temper which is extroverted, pragmatic and merely objective, for which all problems are soluble by better organization.'⁴¹ The root of these and other problems lies in the fact that 'modern philosophy is characteristically egocentric.' By this he means that it takes the self as its starting point-not God, nor the world, nor society. What is even more tragic is that the self is an individual in isolation, always an 'I' and never a 'we' or a 'thou.' In short, the self is the subject, and it acts on all material reality: the object. But since the self is also composed of elements and existing in material reality, the only way of knowing the self is through the same 'object' examination the self uses on the non self. 'Substance' is the product of the self thinking about objects. The relation between the subject and object determines what is substantive. 'The objective is valid: the subjective is unreal, illusory or imaginary.'⁴²

Modern philosophy broke down when it attempted to understand the self by using an analogy of the material world-the world of substantial objects. The 'spontaneity of inner self-determination and directed develop-

ment' characteristic of humans was not reducible to object status in material terms nor trustworthy in subjective status. The 'key concept is not substance but organism.' Macmurray sees 'the organism . . . as a harmonious balance of differences . . . a tension of opposites . . . a dynamic equilibrium of functions maintained through a progressive differentiation of elements within the whole.'⁴³ The self can no longer be conceived of as subject and as 'knower,' but must be regarded as 'agent.' This agent moves only in relationship, never in isolation: traditional distinctions between subject and object must be abandoned in contemplating human considerations. We are also obligated, Macmurray insists, to 'abandon the traditional individualism or egocentricity of our philosophy. We must introduce the second person . . . and do our thinking from the standpoint . . . of the "you and I."⁴⁴

Conclusion

In this essay I have reviewed a sample of critiques of the work of Lawrence Kohlberg and have responded to the main lines of their concerns. I have then affirmed three constructs which have been our legacy from the larger structural development field of study. Finally, I have set down three non-negotiable concerns which constitute an immediate agenda for those of us who have a stake in structural development and the empirically verifiable research/theory approach represented by Kohlberg. I am optimistic in the prediction that the minimal but radical adjustments called for here can be made within the lifetimes of both Kohlberg and myself. Should that fail, the future too belongs to us.

Notes

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23. Piaget (1932), op. cit., Ch. 3.
24. Joy (1983), op. cit., pp. 26-34
25. Heschel, A. (1962) *The Prophets*, Vol. I, New York, Harper and Brothers. See esp. Ch. 7, 'Justice.'
26. Kohlberg, L. in Beck (1971), op. cit.
27. Joy, D. (1983) 'The Formation of an Evangelist,' in Mayr, M., *Modern Masters of Religious Education*, Birmingham, Ala., Religious Education Press, Ch. 9.
28. The beatitudes came alive to me developmentally / hierarchically, when, in 1982, my son and pastor, the Reverend John M. Joy, posed a question early in his Sunday morning sermon: "Is it any wonder that the victims of poverty, grief, and abuse are not in church on Sunday morning? Yet Jesus tells us explicitly that they are covered 'carte blanche' by God's prevenient grace. The reciprocal conditions requiring our action do not begin until the fourth beatitude."
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JOHN WESLEY: SPIRITUAL GUIDE

by

Steven Harper

The contemporary renaissance in Wesley Studies is occurring at roughly the same time as the new emphasis on spiritual formation is taking shape within Protestantism. At first glance, these two phenomena might appear to have little to do with each other. But upon closer examination, one discovers an interesting connection between the two.

I have demonstrated elsewhere that spiritual formation concerns were central in the life of John Wesley and in early Methodism.¹ Subsequent study has further convinced me that Wesley was consciously drawing upon the historic principles of spiritual formation as he gave form and substance to the Methodist movement. His stated aim of reviving "primitive Christianity" and even his emphasis on holiness can be discussed in the light of his knowledge of historic spirituality, especially that of the Eastern fathers. Thus, it is not too much to describe John Wesley as an authentic spiritual guide. In this article, I want to show how this is so.

We must begin with Wesley's upbringing. Both Samuel and Susanna were products of home environments where the devotional classics had been known and used.² This was especially true in the Annesley home, where more is known about their devotional practices.³ When Samuel and Susanna both converted to High-Church Anglicanism, their spiritual heritage was enriched all the more. It is not too much to say that both parents, and especially Susanna, served as spiritual directors to their children.

Two instances show this to be the case. Writing nearly twenty years after his Epworth experience, John told his mother, "If you can spare me only that little part of Thursday evening which you formerly bestowed upon me in another manner, I doubt not but that it would be as useful now for correcting my heart as it was then for forming my judgment."⁴ And it is not without interest that we note that John chose Thursday evening to gather with the first Methodist society in London, to be something of a spiritual director for them.⁵

It was this kind of upbringing which instilled a spirituality in John Wesley which served as a formative example to those who followed him in the Methodist movement. It was an example which provided a realistic look

at the spiritual life. In his personal diary Wesley not only noted the various devotional activities of his days, but also the vitality of such activities. On page after page of the diary, we can see him reading Scripture, praying, taking communion, etc. whether or not such acts were moving or meaningless. We can fairly assume that Wesley did not hide this realism behind a mask of forced spiritual vitality. His "moodiness" on other occasions would argue rather for an approach to the spiritual life which by precept and example communicated a realism, i.e., a disciplined determination regardless of the emotion which attended it.

His example also provided a breadth of resources for spiritual formation. His reading lists reveal significant exposure to Anglican, Puritan, Non-Juror, Moravian, and Roman Catholic sources.⁶ Numerous works by noted Wesley scholars have shown how this breadth enriched his theology. The same is true for his spiritual life and the spiritual vitality of early Methodism as well. Throughout his lifetime, Wesley can be seen reading and recommending a wide range of devotional works.⁷ Using the Bible as his touchstone of truth, he felt a liberty to explore the devotional classics and even more obscure works for insights into the spiritual life. He emerged from such an enterprise clearly enriched in ways that no single tradition could have provided.

Finally, his example demonstrates the indispensable connection between spiritual formation and the church. It is tragic that Wesley has been caricatured as an ecclesiastical malcontent just looking for a chance to jump ship. Nothing could be farther from the truth. As a true reformer he endured misunderstanding and persecution precisely because he loved the church and could not conceive of a vital spirituality apart from it. In the best sense of the word, he was "a Church of England man" and he wanted his followers to be intimately and integrally connected with the church of Jesus Christ.⁸

All this is to illustrate the fact that if one is to be considered a spiritual guide, it is necessary that he or she be one who embodies and exemplifies the kind of spirituality being promoted. John Wesley certainly does this in ways described above and in numerous ways beyond this brief survey. People looked to him for spiritual counsel and guidance for exactly the same reasons as Christians across the centuries had turned to spiritual directors, i.e., he personified the life they wished for themselves.

And when they came, Wesley was ready as a good spiritual guide must be. Most importantly, he was ready with the offering of himself. Diary and Journal entries abound with references to personal conversations and occasions of extended guidance. Such personal giving must be seen in light of his long stated intention to enter into every situation asking how he could promote the glory of God and the spiritual welfare of those with whom he related.⁹ As a good spiritual guide, Wesley knew that what God had revealed to him was to be freely shared with others.

Wesley was also ready with a structure that facilitated spiritual formation. Through the United Societies, Classes, Bands, Select Societies, and Penitent Groups he provided for conversion,¹⁰ growth in grace through the use of the Instituted and Prudential Means of Grace, accountability,¹¹ and mission. Wesley knew there could be no legitimate formation except in community. His own experience in the Holy Club had convinced him that Christians grow best in groups. His remembrance of the "society" meeting in

Epworth was a further confirmation of this fact. And through sources like *The Country Parson's Advice to His Parishioners*, he believed he was offering a vital ministry in keeping with the primitive church.¹²

A further expression of Wesley's spiritual direction comes through the materials which he produced for the edification of his followers and any others who might read them. It is not accidental or insignificant that his first published work (1733) was "A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week."¹³ This was followed in 1735 with his own translation of Thomas á' Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*. Here was early evidence that Wesley would seek through publications to spiritually guide and enrich the lives of others.

The list continues with the publication of *A Christian Library* (1749-55), which was nothing more than a compilation of "the choicest pieces of Practical Divinity which have been published in the English language."¹⁴ In 1755 and 1765 respectively, his *Explanatory Notes Upon the New and Old Testaments* appeared, thus aiding the unlettered in their understanding of Scripture. And it would be scandalous to omit the hymnody of Methodism.¹⁵ which was clearly intended to be a spiritually formative resource in all the titles and editions between 1739-1786.

But even this does not exhaust the list of materials published for the spiritual enrichment of others. The sermons were selected and published to not only serve as doctrinal standards, but also to show the "way of salvation" from conversion to glorification. This is true of *Standard Sermons*, but is even further illuminated in the remaining sermons published in the *Works*. The *Journal* was itself a document intended to verify the validity of the Methodist movement, and as such is filled with spiritually insightful material. The manifold tracts and treatises are also evidences of Wesley's concern to reach and instruct a variety of people.

However, I have come to believe that it is the letters where we see the spiritual guidance of Wesley most personally demonstrated. There can be no doubt that Wesley knew that letters were a time-honored medium of spiritual direction. One cannot read his letters without thinking of those of Francois Fenelon—one of Wesley's own spiritual formation resources.¹⁶ The voluminous correspondence, which is now being given fresh emphasis in the definitive edition of *Wesley's Works*,¹⁷ is a largely untapped treasure house of insights into Wesley's functioning as a spiritual director.

As extensive as the above list has been, we have still not exhausted the examples of publications that Wesley used to provide spiritual formation. Even the *Minutes of the Annual Conferences* contain many directions and resources for enriching the faith of early Methodist clergy and laity. Furthermore, the publication of *The Arminian Magazine* provided for spiritual formation, especially through the biographical articles which provided real life testimonies to the faith. And even his abridgment of the *Order of Morning Prayer* into the *Sunday Service for American Methodism* may be considered an act by a spiritual director for the enrichment of his people.

So, we have seen that by example and by actual ministry Wesley functioned as a spiritual director for his followers. There is still one other point to be made, and that is his use of theology as a spiritual formation discipline. It has long been pointed out that Wesley did not "do theology" in the traditional, systematic sense of the term. Instead he utilized the *ordo salutis* which relates to spiritual formation both in form and content.

With respect to form, the "order of salvation" follows the human journey from birth to death. As such, it shows the operation of grace all along the way. By avoiding a topical approach, Wesley enabled a person to "locate" himself/herself on the birth-death continuum. And having thus been located, one was able to see how to grow, "going on to perfection." Structurally, Wesley's theology contributed to a spiritually formative approach.

This is reinforced even more when the content of his theology is remembered. As one steeped in the holy living tradition (with roots all the way back into the early church), and as one convinced that God had raised up the people called Methodists to "spread scriptural holiness across the land,"¹⁸ he approached the theological task with the heart of a spiritual guide. The roots of his doctrine of Christian Perfection are to be found in the spiritual formation tradition within Roman Catholicism, especially in the writings of the Cappadocian Fathers of the Eastern Church. He became an inheritor and a conveyor of that tradition as it found expression in his own native Anglicanism (e.g. Taylor & Law) and in his own exploration of the holy life tradition (e.g. a' Kempis & De Renty). In short, Wesley wanted a theology which made one increasingly conformable to the image of Christ and which produced holiness of heart and life.

As we come to the end of this all-too-brief survey of Wesleyan spirituality, several concluding comments are in order. First, the preceding survey is not a reading back into Wesley in order to make the story fit the presupposition. Rather, it is an attempt to show that Wesley's familiarity with historic spirituality and spiritual formation principles consciously informed much of what he believed, lived, and did. It is an attempt to present the data in such a way as to reveal the "mind" underneath it. And in this light, I am convinced that we see Wesley's "mind" to be that of a spiritual director of individuals and of a movement.

Second, viewing the Methodist movement from the vantage point of spiritual formation provides a wealth of options for future study. A casual review of what I have presented will reveal any number of "untapped resources" for fruitful scholarly research. It is remarkable, but true that the spirituality of Wesley and early Methodism has been virtually ignored by two centuries of Wesley scholars. It is my belief that studies along these lines can be as revealing as have been those dealing with theology, church growth, evangelism, etc. This will prove all-the-more true if we discover (as I suspect we shall) that it was the spirituality which was the "life blood" of these other dimensions.

Third, if we can recover a vision of Methodism as more of a "life" than an "ism," then it may be that we will find the genius of our perpetuation and interpretation of that portion of Christianity which we jointly hold dear as Wesley scholars. Perhaps one of our greatest contributions as Wesleyan scholars to the whole theological enterprise will be the ongoing reminder that what we are about pulsates with the life of Him who is THE Way, Truth, and Life. And I believe if we choose this way, we will be consistent with the spirit of Wesley who said. "I want to know one thing-the way to heaven."¹⁹

Notes

1. Steve Harper, "The Devotional Life of John Wesley: 1703-38," Ph.D. Dissertation (Durham, Duke University, 1981) and *Deuotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1983).
2. Maldwyn Edwards, "John Wesley," *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, Vol. I (London: Epworth press, 1965), p. 37.
3. Samuel Annesley, ed., *A Supplement to the Morning Exercise at Cripplegate*, 2nd ed. (London: For Thomas Cockerill, 1674), pp. 4-5.
4. Frank Baker, ed., *The Works of John Wesley, (Letters: I)*, Vol. 25 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 329. (February 28, 1732).
5. John Wesley, *The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Printed by John Gooding on the Side, 1743), p. 1. (cf. Jackson, *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. II (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), p. 269.)
6. Harper, "The Devotional Life of John Wesley: 1703-38," pp. 323-335.
7. The Minutes of the Annual Conferences as well as the letters of Wesley contain frequent recommendations of such materials.
8. The best single source for assessing the relation of John Wesley to the Church of England is Frank Baker's *John Wesley and the Church of England* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970).
9. This intention can be traced back to the end of 1729 or the beginning of 1730 in the list of "General Questions" for self-examination, which he wrote in the preface to his second Oxford Diary, pp. ii-x. The intention took on more public significance when he included similar questions in "A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week" (1733). As late as 1781, in the *Arminian Magazine* he was continuing to publish this scheme of questions for information and continued usefulness.
10. The Reverend Tom Albin has demonstrated in his forthcoming dissertation that most of the actual conversions came after "seekers" had been placed into the class meeting.
11. David Watson, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting* (Nashville: Upper Room, 1985) and *Accountable Discipleship* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1984).
12. *The Country Parson's Advice to His Parishoners* (London: For Benjamin Tooke at the Ship in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1680).
13. Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. II (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), pp. 203-259.
14. John Wesley, *A Christian Library*, Vol. I (Bristol: Farley, 1749), title page.

15. In the preface to *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, published in 24 editions between 1753 and 1786, Wesley refers to the contents as "prayers [and] thanksgivings." Cf. John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, 15th ed. (Bristol: William Pine, 1771), p. iv.

16. This devotional classic has gone through numerous editions. One of the most-recent and most readily available is Francois Fenelon, *Christian Perfection* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1975).

17. Thus far only two volumes of Wesley's letters have been published in the new edition of the Works. Both are published by Clarendon Press in Oxford, England and edited by Dr. Frank Baker of Duke University.

18. Jackson, *Works*, VIII, 299.

19. *Ibid.* V. 3.

WESLEYAN INFLUENCE ON WILLIAM AND CATHERINE BOOTH

by

Norman H. Murdoch

By the time William and Catherine Booth threw their enormous energies into making revivalism a practical solution to problems of spiritual poverty in the Victorian city, they had a firm grasp of Wesleyan ideology. William Booth had begun preaching in a tent in London's Whitechapel district in 1865, where he was concerned with winning the "masses" to the Christian gospel. However, the Booths had developed ideas on how to do this during their formative years in the late 1840s and 1850s when they became aware of English Wesleyanism and American Methodist revivalist techniques following their own conversions.

They matured in their abilities as evangelists on the pattern of such Americans as James Caughey, Charles G. Finney, and Phoebe Palmer, who conducted revivals in English cities of the Midlands and the North where Methodism was particularly strong. Combining English Wesleyan discipline with American revivalist methods, William demonstrated in the 1850s a capacity to convert thousands of working-class Englishmen to the gospel. American revivalism gave the Booths their methodology and spirit, but as Wesleyans, they found that it conflicted with Methodism's orderly discipline. These two ideologies aggressive, revivalistic Christianity, and bureaucratic, disciplined denominationalism-came into constant conflict. The Booths, and other English revivalists who bore the American stamp, increasingly felt this dilemma. In working out that conflict during the 1850s the Booths integrated aggressive revivalism and Methodist polity into an ideology which gave birth to a London home mission in 1865 that became the Salvation Army in 1878.

A complete picture of the Booths' developing ideas appears in their correspondence, which began shortly after they met in 1852. They wrote frequently during their 1852-55 engagement because William was often away from London on revivalist missions. They corresponded about topics reflecting tensions created by their dual affections for revivalism and Methodism.¹ They felt they could jettison neither freedom nor conformity, yet were in constant conflict to reconcile the two. They wrote about personal matters

reflecting this desire to integrate revivalism's spirit with Wesleyanism's discipline.

Each of the major themes of their correspondence during the early 1850s remained a part of their life-long intellectual baggage and showed a Wesleyan influence on their revivalism. Emotionalism was one theme which Catherine frequently discussed. She urged William to use restraint, to discipline his preaching. She warned him "against mere animal excitement" in his revival services and reminded him of James Caughey's "silent, soft, heavenly carriage." Caughey did not need to shout; his dignity was a more potent weapon than noise. If her views on revivals confused him, he could find them "exactly in Finney's Lectures on Revivals," which she considered "the most beautiful and common sense work on the subject I ever read." She also asked him to read Finney's directions on how to treat penitents. William shared her concern over excitement and confusion in meetings. It became "almost overwhelming" when he preached at Bursely in 1855, but he maintained control. His listeners compared him to Caughey, and he intimated that he sensed that someday he would "do something for this poor perishing world . . . to realize the big desires that have existence in my breast . . . to save thousands and tens of thousands." Catherine deplored William's revivalist ego, yet admired him for his aggressiveness. He sensed that she did not totally embrace his enthusiasm for revivals.²

During his evangelistic work in the 1850s, William expected an average of 20 converts nightly, approximately 600 a month. Fearing the ego this produced, Catherine warned him that driving ambition would prove to be his downfall. In December 1853 she wrote, "I see ambition to be your chief mental debasement." After their marriage in 1855 she saw that he was a man of as many doubts and insecurities as he was a man of pride, and that his boasts were a veneer for his persistent anxieties. She then became his champion and protector, believing, as she told her mother, "that if God spares him, and he is faithful to his trust, his usefulness will be untold, and beyond our capacity to estimate." She had just seen a "tremendous crowd" jam a chapel in Sheffield to hear him preach and he delivered "one of the mightiest sermons at night I ever listened to."³

A second topic in their correspondence was temperance. Prior to their marriage Catherine wanted to lead him away from the alcoholic remedies that William used for his dyspepsia. Such remedies were the common cure of the age, however. After he wrote that he "had to have brandy twice" for an unspecified illness, she responded that she had "lost faith in brandy." When he requested her opinion on port wine, commonly used by Wesleyan clergy at the time, she gave it: if he used wine she would "hear of [his] taking it with unfeigned grief." She wrote to William, "I abominate the hackneyed but monstrously inconsistent tale-a teetotaler in principle, but obliged to take a little wine for my stomach's sake." She constantly encouraged him to "wage war with the drinking customs." But only through persistent argument did she win him over to the position of a teetotaler.⁴ Catherine, an abstinence worker from her early childhood, was the force behind making the Salvation Army the largest abstinence organization in the world by the late 1880s. By then she had weaned William from "medicinal" use of the beverage.

Their health continued to be a theme in their letters, especially his dyspepsia and her numerous afflictions. Discussions of hydropathic treatments filled their correspondence as Catherine became the family theorist on physical as well as moral redemption. At times of physical exhaustion they retreated to Matlock on the Derwent for a hydropathic cure at John Smedley's spa. William commenced cold baths while at Spalding in 1853 and continued them even on his trip to America in 1886. The cold water cure, a favorite of Victorians, almost became the official medical treatment of the Salvation Army in the 1880s, when the Booths opened an Army officers' rest center at Matlock, Derbyshire, among woodlands and hills. Later, in writing to Salvationists, William proposed hydropathy as a remedy for fevers, scarlet fever, smallpox, rheumatic or gastric fever, inactivity of the liver, sore throat, feverish colds, inflamed eyes, bladder or urine difficulties, diarrhea, cholera, and abscesses. William's confirmed obsession with stomach dyspepsia may indicate a neurotic streak in his personality. Harriet Beecher Stowe claimed that it was nearly impossible for a confirmed dyspeptic to act like a good Christian, "but a good Christian ought not to be a confirmed dyspeptic."⁵

In personal life and family discipline the Booths were puritan Wesleyans. They denied themselves fancy clothes, jewelry, millinery adornments such as feathers, were strict Sabbath keepers, and avoided alcohol and tobacco for the sake of maximum health and productivity. They were avowed vegetarians. As for child rearing, children were to be whipped, as Susannah Wesley had taught, so as to break their wills and subject them to higher powers. But they must not be humiliated.⁶ Always more interested in practical living than in theology, the Booths followed their Wesleyan instincts and produced disciplines in the 1880s, which they renamed Orders and Regulations to fit the military metaphor.

The Booths particularly embraced the Wesleyan doctrine of holiness, salvation from all sin, a point at which traditional English Wesleyanism and mid nineteenth century American revivalism merged. Both accepted a two-step process toward salvation. First, they believed in the necessity of conversion as a remedy for basic human sinfulness; and second, they believed that one needed a perfecting and empowering experience to bring more godliness to human behavior. This experience they termed holiness, entire sanctification, Christian perfection, or (in Wesley's simple phrase) "perfect love." Although both William and Catherine had unremarkable, adolescent conversion experiences, they insisted on public, often ecstatic experiences for their converts. Their persistent pursuit of holiness compensated for their lack of experience at the beginning of their own quest for salvation.⁷

This Wesleyan emphasis on experimental salvation led them to be uninterested in contemporary "speculative" theology, formal education and intellectualism. Neither had attended school for long. Catherine's protective mother kept her from the corrupting influences of other children and Catherine would do the same for her own eight children. She attended a selective Methodist girls' academy for just two years, between age 12 and 14. An excellent student and teacher's pet, she favored history and geography over mathematics, but her mother's dictum was, "If you want your child well trained, train her yourself." Whatever William's early education and this is disputed as to quality by his two biographers-it was inferior to

Catherine's. His Wesleyan seminary experience was brief and had little effect on him. Still, both Booths agreed on the importance of study, at least in areas calculated to improve one's soul winning methods. Neither read novels, although William had read James Fenimore Cooper and Walter Scott as a boy. Novels were not necessarily bad as such, but Methodists, like their Puritan fathers, saw them as clouding a Christian's idea of the world as it was. Novels romanticized the human condition and desensitized the soul to its depraved condition. Theater, of course, had the same effect.⁸

These Wesleyan inhibitions led the Booths to adopt anti-intellectual attitudes. Biblical literalists, they took only passing notice of higher criticism or Darwinian evolution, even though they were contemporaries of Ernest Renan, Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. The Booths confined their interest to the moral universe, and even in that ethereal sphere they were only interested in redemption of the world to God. Harold Begbie, William's authorized biographer, loved to refer to Booth as "Hebraist," (in Matthew Arnold's word) to describe Booth's supposed Jewish ancestry and his puritanical habits. Booth, said Begbie, "had something of Carlyle's contempt for Art, Science had no vital attraction for him. The sports and amusement of mankind filled him with contemptuous impatience." After listing Booth's intellectual deficiencies, including his ignorance of textual criticism, historical criticism, German theology, psychology, philosophy, physical science, architecture, painting, and classical music, Begbie wrote, "Booth was born a provincial, and he remained a provincial. He was not born a Hebraist, but he made himself the most uncompromising Hebraist of his time." William would leave it to Catherine and their eldest son Bramwell to deal with ideological critics, both secular and ecclesiastical, while he kept to his purpose.

But Begbie went too far when he said Booth "must always be judged as a man who, for the sake of Christ, denied his period and lived without enthusiasm for human inquiry."⁹ William's sense of his time, at least in his own orbit of human reform, was the essential quality of his success. It was the age of the common man, and Booth adapted religion and expressions of social concern to fit his era. Booth did not lack curiosity, he simply lacked time. William grew up in poverty and lived most of his life with the threat of financial disaster hanging over his family and organization. Catherine did not preach out of simple religious motives; she preached to support their large family which could not have survived without her income.

The Booths had a Wesleyan sense of vocation. At times William indicated that he could have chosen to go into business, and if he had, would have been successful. After all, he had inherited "the grab, the get" from his speculative-builder father. But he chose to narrow his scope. Yet, when in 1876, he was preparing his son Bramwell to succeed him as Superintendent of his London mission, he advised: "1) Improve your mind; 2) Increase your intelligence; 3) Improve your gifts; 4) Add to your education. To be able to read a Latin sentence or your Greek testament I think desirable, although not necessary and all this may be done by moderate, and, to you, an easy amount of reading and study." While he held out the possibility of Bramwell going to College, William preferred "a modified amount of Mission work and a modified course of study at the same time," particularly studies in "systematic theology," or, as he later termed it, "controversial theology." One difficulty with college education was "the effect [on other missionaries]

of my son being at College." Later, however, after Bramwell was fully absorbed in Salvation Army administration, the Booths' other two sons, Ballington and Herbert, attended a theological institute run by Booth's Congregationalist friend Dr. J. B. Paton at Nottingham.¹⁰ In family life there were tensions between parent and revivalist. But while preparing for life's vocation, the Booths were not opposed to developing the mind.

Catherine's ideas on women's right to preach had Wesleyan roots. They first exploded in 1850 when she wrote to a Congregationalist pastor after he had demeaned woman as man's intellectual inferior. Her principal complaint concerning woman's inferior position was that nurture, not nature, had crippled the female intellect. Woman's training tended to "wither her aspirations after mental greatness rather than to excite and stimulate them." Seven months after their May 15, 1852 engagement she wrote to William that only when women are "educated as man's equal will unions be perfect, and their consequences blissful." William, a man of his era, held that woman had a fiber more in her heart and a cell less in her head. Catherine did not deny that "women's domestic position" was "part of the sentence of her disobedience" at the Fall, but she did denounce the argument that woman was inferior. A Christian husband's love for his wife, she insisted, nullified all but "the outward semblance of the curse."¹¹

In April 1855, Catherine faced William with the issue of equality in the pulpit. He responded: "I would not stop a woman preaching," but "I would not encourage one to begin. . . . I would not stay you if I had the power to do so. Although I should not like it." When she began to teach a Sunday school class at William's Brighthouse Chapel (Methodist New Connexion) in 1857-58, she wrote her parents: "If I get on well and find I really possess any ability for public speaking, I don't intend to finish with juveniles." She thought that if she had been "brought up among the Primitives [Primitive Methodists] I believe [I] should have been preaching now."

But the final stimulus to Catherine's preaching came from American Methodist, Phoebe Palmer. In December 1859, a pamphlet by the Rev. Arthur Augustus Rees of Sunderland, "Reasons for Not Co-operating in the Alleged Sunderland Revivals," attacked Mrs. Palmer's preaching. After reading the pamphlet Catherine wrote to her mother, "Would you believe that a congregation half composed of ladies could sit and hear such self deprecatory rubbish?"¹² She then composed a 32-page pamphlet, *Female Ministry: Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel*, in which she wrote that woman's "graceful form and attitude, winning manners, persuasive speech, and above all, a finely toned emotional nature" are ideal equipment for public speaking. Furthermore, if the Fall determined occupation, men should "till the ground and . . . dress it" as God commanded. But if men escape that drudgery to accept refined tasks, why should women be confined to "the kitchen and the distaff" on account of Eve's sin? She rejected Rees' charge that "female ministry is forbidden in the Word of God."¹³

On Whit Sunday, 1860, after she had published *Female Ministry*, Catherine preached her first sermon at William's Methodist New Connexion Chapel at Gateshead. Feeling "the Spirit come upon" her, she walked to the front where William was concluding his sermon and said, "I want to say a word." He introduced her and sat down. She gave her testimony concerning her struggle over a public ministry leading up to that moment. Many

wept as she concluded and William announced that she would preach that evening. This initiated thirty years of preaching in Britain which, many agreed, no man of her era exceeded in popularity or spiritual results.¹⁴

During the 1850s, out of a struggle between Wesleyan discipline and revivalist enthusiasm, the Booths fixed their Wesleyan ideological course and increased their love for the revivalism of Finney and Caughey. To the end of their lives they followed a Wesleyan discipline which included teetotalism, plainness of dress and habit, fear of worldly education, a concern for holy living, and a rigid sense of adherence to organizational rule. Catherine's apology for female ministry, a tradition that was nearly dead in mainline Methodism in the 1850s, grew out of a strong Wesleyan tradition which dated to John Wesley and was kept alive by women like Phoebe Palmer. After 1878 the Booths wove Wesleyan revivalism and discipline into rules for plain and holy living, including a ministry of women, into the fabric of their militant urban revival and social mission, the Salvation Army.¹⁵

Notes

1. St. John Ervine, *God's Soldier: General William Booth*, Vol. 1, New York: Macmillan, 1935, 110-14; letters from William to Catherine, n.d., in Harold Begbie, *The Life of General William Booth*, Vol. 1, New York: Macmillan, 1920, 210, 216, 224. On James Caughey, the Booths' American Methodist mentor see Richard Carwardine, *Transatlantic Revivalism*, London: Greenwood Press, 1978.

2. On revival emotion see: Catherine to William, 20 March 1853, Begbie, i, 162-5; Ervine, i, 78-9; William to Catherine, 1 February 1855, Begbie, i, 224-5; George S. Railton, *General Booth*, London: Salvationist Publishing, 1912, chapter iv. "Revivalism," 48-54; Catherine Bramwell-Booth, *Catherine Booth*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1970, 101-5; F. De L. Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth*, 3rd edn. Vol. 1, London: Salvationist Publishing, 1924, 152.

3. On revivalism see: Begbie, i, 149, 162-6, 178-80, 195, 204; C. Bramwell-Booth, 101-2, 104; Ervine, i, 78-9.

4. William to Catherine, 17 November 1852; Catherine to William, 27 December 1852, in Begbie, i, 149, 154-5; Ervine, i, 71-2; C. Bramwell-Booth, 79, 82, 86-7.

5. On illness and medicine see: Begbie i, 10, 189-91, 198, 174; C. Bramwell-Booth, 98, 152, 188f, 296; Ervine, i, 200-7; Appendix "Hints on Health and the Water Treatment," General William Booth, *Letters to Salvationists on Religion for Every Day*, London: Salvationist Publishing, n.d. Each morning William washed his chest with cold water, then rubbed it vigorously before eating two raw eggs in his tea, a meal he repeated in the evening with milk and oatmeal for his queasy stomach.

6. For the Booths' correspondence on family life see Begbie, i, 156, 161, 172; C. Bramwell-Booth, 87, 89, 105-6.

7. On holy living see the Booths' correspondence in Begbie, i, 158-60, 178, 195,200. Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century America*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957, has given credit to Wesleyan perfectionism for introducing the reform tendency in ante-bellum America.

8. On education see: Begbie, i, 61, 121f, 260-7; W. T. Stead, *Mrs. Booth of the Salvation Army*, London: James Nisbet, 1900, 29; Booth-Tucker, i, 27-33; C. Bramwell-Booth, 26-7; Ervine, i, 29-30; Ford C. Ottman, *Herbert Booth*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran, and Co., 1928, 59f.

9. Begbie, i, 260.

10. Begbie, i, 188-9, 217.

11. Catherine Booth, *Female Ministry*, New York: Salvation Army, 1975 (1859 original is unavailable), 22; C. Bramwell-Booth, 49-52; Stead, 96-103; Booth-Tucker, i, 117-23. January 1853-April 1855 correspondence in C. Bramwell-Booth, 88-9, 138-43, 176; Stead, 92.

See Norman H. Murdoch, "Female Ministry in the Thought and Work of Catherine Booth," *Church History*, 53, September 1984, 363-378; Fred D. Layman, "Male Headship in Paul's Thought," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Spring 1980, 46-47; Donald W. Dayton, "The Evangelical Roots of Feminism," in *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*, New York: Harper & Row, 1976, 88-95; Olive Anderson, "Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain," *Historical Journal* 12, 1969, 467-84; Paul K. Jewett, *The Ordination of Women*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982; Kathleen Bliss, *The Service and Status of Women in the Churches*, London, 1952, 145-6; Flora Larson, *My Best Men Are Women*, New York: Salvation Army, 1974.

12. Correspondence of April 1855 to 1857 in C. Bramwell-Booth, 142-3, 176, 181. Constance M. Coltman, "Post Reformation: The Free Churches," in A. Maude Royden, *The Church and Women*, London, 1924, 110-1, wrote that the English Primitive Methodist Church had 13 women preachers in 1823, "one of the factors in its success."

13. Catherine Booth, 5-7. See Layman, 56-60 on head-covering, and "Our View of Scripture," *War Cry*, 10 March 1883, 4, for Catherine's hermeneutics.

14. Stead, 214-6; C. Bramwell-Booth, 291.

15. The Wesleyan influence on the Booths is evident in the Salvation Army's Orders and Regulations they composed in the 1880s which show a dependence on Methodist Disciplines and conference rules of the 1850s-1870s.

BOOK REVIEWS

A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology, Biblical, Systematic and Practical, edited by Charles W. Carter. Two volumes (1178 pages), Francis Asbury Press, 1983. Reviewed by Daniel N. Berg, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Theology and Ministry, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, Washington.

Whenever a book appears produced by Wesleyan scholars there is cause for rejoicing, especially among academic types who are always looking for the perfect textbook and significant collateral reading. When two volumes appear, jam-packed with focused articles written by people many of whose names are regularly dropped in Wesleyan circles; and when the project announcement targets its readership as college and seminary students, ministers and interested Christian people, the rejoicing seems appropriate. *A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology: Biblical, Systematic and Practical* ought to be a reason for rejoicing.

The work is a production of the Francis Asbury Press, a part of Zondervan Publishing House, and was published in 1983. Charles W. Carter is a busy general editor, contributing three and co-authoring a fourth article of the twenty-four articles which comprise the work. R. Duane Thompson and Charles R. Wilson are listed as associate editors. Individual authors are introduced in a brief biographical statement preceding each article.

The presentation of the two volumes is appealing. Articles are almost always between forty and fifty pages in length. Each article is organized according to a visible outline that occurs first in a table of contents that immediately precedes the article. Copious and careful footnotes make tracking resources easy for the reader. A bibliography is appended to each article along with a series of discussion questions. The presence of both a general and a scripture index is a final evidence that the work is intended for use in scholarly settings.

The theological objectives of these volumes can be reasonably assessed in terms of the qualifiers in the title. Biblical, systematic and practical approaches and topics are evident throughout. The important question is whether the theology is either contemporary or Wesleyan?

Whether the material is Wesleyan is a matter of first order importance because presumably the need addressed by this publication is the need for a Wesleyan theology. One might be surprised therefore to discover that the shortest article in the collection is Richard Taylor's "Historical and Modern

Significance of Wesleyan Theology." Somewhere, the normative themes of Wesleyan Theology need to be stated and this would seem to be the logical place. But they are not here. Following Philip S. Watson, Taylor reduces Wesleyanism to four normative propositions and then reduces the four to the fourth one only-"all men can be saved to the uttermost" (p. 55). The rest of the article is a thematic study in the history of the Christian church which examines the possibility of holiness in human life.

Timothy Smith's article "A Historical and Contemporary Appraisal of Wesleyan Theology" is like Taylor's not only in its title (why two articles so similarly focused?) but in its format. The content of Smith's article differs from Taylor's in its effort to unite pneumatological language in Wesley especially, with the experience of entire sanctification. It does no better at defining for the reader any Wesleyan "norms" other than the doctrine of Christian perfection.

A person reading these two articles could wish for the clarity and breadth of appreciation for Wesley's work and the work of later Wesleyans that can be discovered in Langford's *Practical Divinity*. Christian perfection is not lacking from Langford's list of Wesleyan norms, but it stands defined with other, indispensable doctrines characteristic of Wesley's grace and genius, viz. justification, prevenient grace, assurance, the church, and the means of grace. One might add to the list Wesley's understanding of theological authority. The theological implications of these hallmark Wesleyan concerns are enormous for systematic and practical theology and require more definitive treatment in a theology that would be Wesleyan.

The chapters by Stafford, Truesdale, Shelton and to a certain degree, the chapter by Thompson go well beyond the limitations imposed by these introductory articles to deal with a wide range of topics in ways that are both current and explicitly Wesleyan. The failure however, to develop Wesleyan "norms" beyond the doctrine of Christian perfection is evident in much of the rest of the book where implied Wesleyanism is required to carry the weight of defined Wesleyanism.

The article "Christian Education: Instructional Theology" by D. Michael Henderson travels through a fourth of its material without any allusion to Wesley or Wesleyanism. The "The Theological Roots of Christian Education" are turned up in this article apparently without disturbing at all the soil of Wesleyanism inasmuch as there is no specific reference to anything that is both definitively Wesleyan and, at the same, essential to the theological rootage of the contemporary enterprise of Christian education. Rather, Wesley's importance to Christian education appears tacked on to the end of a general article on Christian education and the reader is left feeling that Wesley may be good for illustration, but there is no creative contribution in Christian Education dependent upon the theological insights of Wesley or Wesleyans.

For example, the author shares Wesley's interest in "maturity/holiness." He bemoans that "without adequate training in the tools of disciple building, many churches are left with only a 'paper Christianity'" (p. 844). Surely developmental theories are included among such tools! What ought Wesleyans who are interested in the crisis aspect of entire sanctification, to make of these gradualist theories? What would Wesley himself have done with them? The answers are not in the article.

Neither the recommendations for further reading nor the bibliography appended provide much hope for discovering answers to such questions that the article itself is missing. One might expect to find names such as Harold Burgess, Donald Joy, Wesley Tracy, James Garlow or Franklyn Wise, all Wesleyans and all published in the field of Christian education. They are simply not there. There is no hint of James Fowler's thematic contribution to the study of faith development.

The suspicion must arise when a theologian comments critically on Christian Education that a disciplinary imperialism is operating. I wish it were so simple. The unhappy fact is that most of the articles in these two volumes exhibit a similar lack of either Wesleyan content or contemporary concern, or both. Kenneth Grider's article on "The Holy Trinity" is delightfully readable and informative. It is as current as Karl Rahner. There is nothing in it however, of Wesley's own expositions of trinitarian theology. Wesley's distinction between the form and manner of the Trinity deserves at least a comment.

In my reading of the two volumes two undefended assumptions seem to control the content of most of the articles more than they should. These two assumptions cloud not only the Wesleyan quality of the articles, but also seriously undercut the "contemporary" quality of the theology presented.

The first assumption is that Wesleyan theology is primarily comprised of a doctrine of entire sanctification. This sanctification is to be viewed as a second work of grace granted in a momentary crisis experience. The assumption colors both Smith's introductory article and his article on "The Holy Spirit in the Hymns of the Wesleys" as he struggles to connect John Wesley's pneumatological language with his doctrine of Christian perfection. In the article on entire sanctification by Wilbur Dayton the assumption takes the form of standard arguments for both "secondness" and crisis. The name of Daniel Steele is invoked with the predictable argument for the "punctiliar" understanding of the aorist tense.

The disagreement is not about process in Christian experience; it is about event or crisis. The emphasis, then, in Wesleyan theology is on the fact that the key verbs concerning sanctification, holiness and perfection are so often in the aorist tense supposedly indicating specific action. (p. 547)

Perhaps the insertion of "supposedly" betrays a doubt that the function of the aorist is punctiliar rather than intensive. The argument, as Dayton supplies it, derives from Daniel Steele and a master's thesis from Marion College. Both of these must be read with the suspicion of a heavy bias in favor of a punctiliar usage. Dayton also cites A. T. Robertson (*A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of the Historical Research*, 1914). One wonders why he does not cite other, more objective scholars, and more recent scholars than Robertson. The work of Randy Maddox in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* ("The Use of the Aorist Tense in Holiness Exegesis," VI, 2, Fall, 1981, pp. 106-118) would combine Wesleyan commitment and currency. The work of Maddox, however, would require a softening of the case that Dayton wishes to construct.

A second, more disturbing, assumption that seems to be everywhere present is a rejection of higher critical approaches to the study of scripture as "unwesleyan." In the article on "Christology" by Charles Wilson modern Gospel study is characterized by a "failed" historical criticism and a "fact less" form criticism. Wilson opts for the "traditional method of orthodoxy" which has "approached the Gospels as historical and has viewed the history of the Gospels as reliable concerning Jesus Christ" (p. 351).

With regard to the Old Testament the treatment is similar. Nowhere is the composite quality of the Old Testament documents dealt with. Instead, it is as if there are no serious questions to be raised. Eugene E. Carpenter writing in the article "Cosmology" and noting the textured differences between Genesis 1 and 2 concludes: "just because of the necessary change in perspective and purpose of the writer and a resultant change in style of chapter 2 (and 3f.), there is no need to posit two separate accounts and two authors for the present account" (p. 156).

A more explicit treatment of a documentary hypothesis is provided by Charles Carter in the chapter on "Anthropology." "JEDP" he dismisses with another's judgment that "source criticism has had its day during the past fifty years with meager fruits to show in constructive interpretation" (p. 203). Mosaic authorship of Genesis is vindicated by its correspondence with "traditional, conservative scholarship" and on the grounds that "no reason has yet been produced which categorically requires that the belief in Mosaic authorship should be abandoned" (p. 203).

Apart from these two assumptions, much of the work in these volumes is seriously flawed by a kind of academic triumphalism that is, to say the least, premature. Serious but contested issues are presented as if settled; for example, "creation *ex nihilo* is a doctrine adhered to by most evangelical scientists" (p. 158); or "To my knowledge no definitive explanation of creation outside the Bible is available" (p. 167). What other, including Wesleyan, scholars might read as a serious issue (for example, the significance of pre historical anthropology for anthropology generally) can apparently be dismissed by the Wesleyan who is too clever to deal with the "hypothetical" because it is "unfruitful" (p. 197).

Certain authors also appear to have difficulty sticking to their subject. The entire discussion of the title "Son of God" (p.334) is completed without any reference to the relevant usage of the title in the Old Testament as a description of the king. Yet the same article, "Christology," devotes paragraphs to joining "the person of Christ with the distinctive Wesleyan teaching, namely, Christian perfection" (pp.348-350). A more annoying example occurs in Charles Carter's article "Hamartiology." For some inscrutable reason, to understand the concept of sin in neo-orthodoxy one needs also to know that certain theologians, Barth, Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr, were socialists of one sort or another (p. 274).

Whatever the relevance of the question, the fear is greater in Charles Wilson's question, "Can genuine authentic Christianity survive the radical transmutation that the modern mind requires for acceptability and understandability?" (pp. 356-357). Such a question betrays the simple fact that the theology generally represented in this text is late nineteenth / early twentieth century, American, holiness theology, selectively Wesleyan and decades from being contemporary. Thus the academic utility of these volumes

is reduced (with the exceptions noted above) if one wishes students to engage in current theological discourse on a wider Wesleyan basis. The work could have served a useful apologetic function, but its reverence to the recent past and its fear of the present and future create a whimper where Wesley would have written another irritating treatise to "men of reason."

Paul M. Bassett and William M. Greathouse, *Exploring Christian Holiness, II, The Historical Development*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1985, pp. 326, \$15.95. Reviewed by Leon O. Hynson, Ph.D., Professor of Theology and Church History, United Wesleyan College, Allentown, Pennsylvania.

The second volume in a series dealing with Biblical, historical, and theological developments in Christian holiness, this book fills, particularly well, a large gap in historical theology. Wherever the study of holiness in its historical context occurs, the student has been required to track the doctrine through many different sources. In this volume, Paul Bassett analyzes the literature from the Apostolic Fathers to Early Protestantism. (Also, see the forthcoming *Holiness Teaching New Testament Times to Wesley*, ed, Paul M. Bassett, Vol. I. *Great Holiness Classics*, a book of readings.) William Greathouse has traced the doctrine from Wesley to the American Holiness Movement.

Bassett's analysis is an excellent summary, and a typological delineation of the thinking and expressions of central personalities and movements. For example, Irenaeus of Lyons is correctly interpreted as a teacher of what the Eastern Church calls "divinisation" or godlikeness as the meaning of sanctification. Clement of Alexandria represents holiness as "essential to authentic humanness," a theme, incidentally, which needs and deserves extended research and dialogue in contemporary Wesleyanism. Our heritage is still too much influenced by Augustinian negations of humanness. Clement's "insistence that we have a moral responsibility for our own spirituality," (p.58) is an important expression of the self-disciplining which is central to our maturing in holiness.

In studying the development of sanctification, several movements prior to the Reformation call for consideration. Monasticism, mysticism, and the modern devotion (*devotio moderna*) of Kempis, the Brethren of the Common Life, and the Friends of God, are very important. Post Reformation Pietism, centered at the University of Halle, would nurture a decisive spirituality resulting in the early Protestant missionary efforts, the Moravian "one hundred year prayer meeting," and other significant holy life expressions.

This volume gives attention to monasticism and pietism. It provides a useful analysis of sanctification in relation to the ascetic styles of monasticism. Through Gregory of Nyssa, Bassett stresses sanctification in terms of limitless possibility. Augustine of Hippo establishes the ground upon which the Protestant doctrine of original sin, and righteousness as imputed to us rather than "authentic regeneration" (p. 107) (and sanctifica-

tion), is fashioned. Through Augustine many of the negations of monasticism are voiced and are furthered across the centuries.

Mysticism does not receive the attention it deserves in this volume. While Bernard of Clairvaux, an authentic representative of both the monastic and mystical traditions is discussed, mysticism's focus on union with the divine is largely absent. The absence of either Eckhart, John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, or Fenelon, illustrates this lacuna.

Pietism receives significant notice in Bassett's interpretation and rightly so. The Pietists developed Lutheran and Reformed teaching on sanctification toward a more sophisticated level. Sanctification (initiated in regeneration) has been described by Martin Schmidt as the *locus classicus* of Pietist theology. (See Dale Brown, *Understanding Pietism*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1978, p. 99.) It is scarcely possible to recognize the shape of Wesleyanism apart from the Pietist view of sanctification learned by Wesley. This volume, through a survey of Spener, Francke, and other pietists offers valuable perspectives on holiness of heart and life.

I could wish for a section dealing with Arminius' doctrine of sin and sanctification. Arminius' understanding of sin as privation should become part of the current dialogue which the Wesleyan Theological Society is energetically encouraging.

In summary, I strongly affirm the contribution of this first half of the volume. Its insights makes accessible many different streams of thought on sanctification from early church to early Protestantism.

The positive assessment of Bassett's contribution does not mean that a lesser value should be placed on William M. Greathouse's work: "From Wesley to the American Holiness Movement." The essential difference is that the latter is more readily available to pastors and teachers. Nevertheless, let the reader be cautioned. To gain the perspective of this second section by reading the available resources will still require scholarly commitment and time beyond the scope of a pastor's or student's ordinary circumstance. Herald Lindstrom's Wesley and Sanctification, John Peters' Christian Perfection and American Methodism, Charles Jones' Perfectionist Persuasion, Melvin Dieter's The Holiness Revival of the 19th Century, Thomas Langford's Practical Divinity, Timothy Smith's Revivalism and Social Reform, Robert Chiles', Theological Transition in American Methodism, and many more, are available for serious reading. Greathouse, in fact, uses most of these in his research, *Exploring Christian Holiness* helps us reach into the resources of Wesley, American Methodism, and the American Holiness movement. It carries us from the more Christological focus of Wesley through the pneumatology of Fletcher and Oberlin (with its Reformed tinctures) to the functionalism of Phoebe Palmer's "altar terminology."

The Methodist theologians of 19th Century America have usually been neglected. Greathouse brings Ralston, Foster, Raymond, Miley, and Olin Curtis to our attention. He builds upon the English theologian Watson, as well as Fletcher, Pope, and Clarke. Watson was a decisive force in shaping American Methodist theology, as a review of Ralston, Luther Lee, and others will show. Miley and Curtis represent transitional figures who apparently shift the Wesleyan emphasis on religious authority and original sin, respectively.

In conclusion, this volume summarizes, most helpfully, the doctrine of holiness in its historical development. It deserves wide use, not only in the Holiness movement, but in Methodism and as a resource for historical theologians everywhere. I will use it in my classes on the theology of holiness as the best text available in surveying the full range of holiness thinking in church history.

AFTER FUNDAMENTALISM: The Future of Evangelical Theology, by Bernard Ramm. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983. 225 pp. \$9.95.

THE COMING GREAT REVIVAL: Recovering the Full Evangelical Tradition, by William Abraham. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984. 120 pp. \$12.95.

Reviewed by Randy L. Maddox, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Religion, Sioux Falls College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

In American circles there is a widespread recognition of the distinction between "evangelical" and "fundamentalist" expressions of conservative Christianity (Cf. Richard Quebedeaux. *The Young Evangelicals*. Harper, 1974). Both of these books utilize and simultaneously nuance this distinction. Indeed, their shared thesis is that contemporary evangelical theology has inadequately distanced itself from its fundamentalist origins and, thereby, both limits its contribution to the present theological dialogue and stands in danger of regressing to a neo-fundamentalist stance. Where the books differ is in their recommendations for how to correct this situation.

Ramm writes as one of the primary advocates of the original move from fundamentalism to evangelicalism-an advocate who now despairs that the apparent gains of the past generation will be lost. In *After Fundamentalism* he presents a model of theological reflection that he argues is more adequate for a contemporary evangelical expression of faith than fundamentalism (or liberalism). The essential problem that Ramm discerns in the typical fundamentalist stance is that it refuses to come to terms with the Enlightenment; i.e., it takes an obscurantist stance in relation to the modern world. This is seen particularly in its inability to deal with the human side of Scripture made so evident by contemporary historical critical study of the Bible.

The model Ramm proposes has a clear precedent Karl Barth. Indeed, his book is essentially a passionate defense of Barth's theological method in the face of Barth's numerous fundamentalist and evangelical critics. It is Ramm's contention that Barth offers the best available model for holding in tension the traditional convictions of the Christian faith and the critical perspective of the Enlightenment. Ramm focuses on two major points in this regard. First, he praises Barth's distinction between the Word of God and the text of Scripture, a distinction which Ramm believes enables Barth to do justice to both the divinity and the humanity of Scripture. Second, he affirms Barth's judgment that all attempts at "natural theology" are ultimately a sell-out to the rationalism of the Enlightenment-whether constructed by liberals or conservatives.

What are evangelical Wesleyans to make of Ramm's prescription for the current problems of which we are all aware (sometimes painfully)? Is Barth the solution? It seems doubtful. In the first place, it is very debatable whether Barth really does justice to the Enlightenment or merely resorts to "revelational positivism," to use Bonhoeffer's phrase. Ramm's presentation of Barth in this regard is rather one-sided. (This and the "aphoristic" style of the book, limit its use as an introduction to Barth). We would agree fully with Ramm that evangelicals must find a way to understand Scripture that respects both its authority and its "humanness." However, Barth's model, while very instructive, merits more question than Ramm raises. Secondly, while Ramm claims that an Arminian (or a Dispensationalist!) can easily use Barth's method, this too seems questionable. Wesley's approach to theology made much more room for reason than Barth's. Likewise, Wesley's perspective of "responsible grace" provides a more helpful answer to universalism than Barth's reformed perspective of "triumphant grace," which Ramm defends. Ramm's book may be helpful in better understanding the problems of contemporary evangelicalism. It is not as likely to provide answers for evangelical Wesleyans.

Perhaps we will find more help from one of our own. William Abraham's most recent book also centers on the problems of contemporary evangelicalism. In general, his argument is that evangelicals have retained some undesirable aspects of our fundamentalist roots which are the source of our current tensions and limit our contribution to the life of the large Church. In particular, Abraham notes four inherited tendencies that he believes must be reformed in contemporary evangelicalism. First, there is the fundamentalist tendency to be overly "cerebral," locating the essence of faith in a set of beliefs which must be accepted and stressing orthodoxy as much more important than orthopraxis. Second, there is the typical fundamentalist need for comprehensive unquestioned authorities to be relied upon in doing theology and the resultant construal of Scripture as such an inerrant authority. Such definitions do not seem to do justice to either the nature or claims of Scripture and typically result in either fideistic defense or endless qualifications. As a corollary of the preceding point, fundamentalists also tend to be inadequately sensitive to the fallible nature of all doctrinal formulations and creeds. Finally, there is the classic fundamentalist rejection of the need for or value of significant diversity within their movement. It is almost always considered better to be separate and pure.

Against this background, Abraham calls for a revival of both vital spirituality and careful Biblical and theological reflection among evangelicals, so that they might overcome the distortions of their fundamentalist roots. Lest he be considered a utopian dreamer, he presents a model of such a twofold revival which he believes evangelicals as a group would do well to emulate—John Wesley and early Methodism. In particular, Abraham holds forth as exemplary Wesley's formulation of the theological quadrilateral, his holistic approach to Christian witness and his catholic spirit. In making this recommendation Abraham is not trying to claim that the Wesleyan tradition is the correct evangelical tradition and all others such join him. Rather, he is presenting Wesley as a model of one who refuses to make such narrow claims.

It is in this light that evangelical Wesleyans must read Abraham. His call is not merely a simplistic recommendation of evangelical Wesleyanism to the larger evangelical and mainstream Christian community. Rather it is a call for all Christians, including evangelical Wesleyans, to emulate Wesley's piety and characteristic approach to theology. Thus, it is very fitting that Abraham devotes his last chapter to calling evangelical Wesleyans to overcome the fundamentalist leavening that is so pervasive in our movement, so that we might be more true to the genius of our founder and more instrumental in the renewal of the whole Church.

Abraham's call for a purification of evangelical Wesleyanism is timely. Unfortunately, the proposal for how such a change might come about is sketchy at best. Undoubtedly, an essential factor in any such change will be a growing body of pastors, scholars, and teachers who model such an authentic evangelical Wesleyanism.

Christian Perfection and American Methodism, by John L. Peters. Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1985, 252 pp. *Arminius: A Study in the Dutch Reformation*, by Carl Bangs. Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1985, 388 pp. Reviewed by Harold E. Raser, Assistant Professor of the History of Christianity, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Missouri.

Zondervan's Francis Asbury Press is to be congratulated for rescuing these two "classic," but recently out of print, works. Both continue to be important treatments of their respective topics.

Since the original publication of John L. Peters' *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* in 1956 there has been a virtual "explosion" of Wesley and Methodist scholarship which has added considerably to our understanding of the Wesleyan tradition. Yet no one of the more recent writings has superseded Peters in describing the transplanting and development of the doctrine of Christian Perfection in America. Scholarship since Peters has shown that some of his exposition needs to be more carefully nuanced (his treatment of Phoebe Palmer, for example), and some needs correcting (e.g. his assertion that Wesley's "Doctrinal Tracts" remained unpublished in America for some twenty years after their omission from the Methodist Disciplines-and numerous studies have brought more sharply into focus the broader historical context in which Americans have thought, preached, and written about Christian Perfection-but on the whole Peters remains, in my view, a trustworthy and informative guide to the terrain he explores.

While the abundance of new works in related fields probably accounted for Peters' book being dropped from print, the fate of Carl Bangs' *Arminius* is almost inexplicable. Since it first appeared in 1971, it has gained a deserved reputation as the definitive biography of its subject. There really is nothing else to compare to it. The book is exhaustive (and sometimes exhausting!) in its attention to details surrounding the life and work of Arminius. Bangs leaves almost no stone unturned. The general student, I suspect, finds such deliberate spadework overwhelming and intimidating at times (a factor in the original publisher's decision to let the book go out of print?). The

specialist, on the other hand, cannot help but be instructed, and must marvel at Bangs' dogged pursuit and judicious handling of a wide array of historical sources. The book offers vital illumination of the most basic source of the Arminian component of "Wesleyan-Arminianism," as it clarifies a much misunderstood chapter in the Protestant Reformation.