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THE "MUCH-CONTROVERTED POINT OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH" AND THE SHAPING OF WESLEY'S EVANGELISTIC MESSAGE

by

David Lowes Watson

By Wesley's own account, the watershed of his involvement in the Eighteenth Century Revival was his decision to go to Bristol at the invitation of George Whitefield. As Whitefield put it, a "glorious door" had opened among the colliers, and what God had enabled him to plant now required watering.¹ Wesley's experience with the nurturing ministry of societies and bands was badly needed. Yet his decision to go was not a spontaneous response; so much so, that the final outcome, as we have it recorded in the published Journal, was decided by lot.²

Immediately following this account, Wesley includes in the Journal a letter which he had sent to his father in 1734.³ The letter had been written, painstakingly and with much heart searching, to explain to Samuel Wesley why his son did not feel it his calling to accept the living at Epworth. The arguments fall into two categories: those which "conduce to [his] own self-improvement"; and those which concern the application of his God-given talents to the "social life, to which academic studies are only preparatory."⁴

While the arguments on both counts read well enough, and evince an objectivity, which, in a late twentieth century context, might provide a quite passable self evaluation of skills, goals and objectives, this is not Wesley's purpose in reproducing such a letter. He makes clear that, with his response to Whitefield's request, he was entering into a "new period" in his life, and that the reasons which led him to decline a parish living five years earlier remained no less compelling. He found the academic life stimulating and fulfilling in every way, and he wanted to make the point forcefully that his venture into field preaching, with all that followed from it, was nothing less than an irresistible call from God to take the gospel "into the highway and hedges, which none else will do;" to "go out in God's name into the most public places, and call on all to repent and believe the gospel."⁵

The evangelistic question which immediately follows from this confes-

sion is, What made him do it? And following close on this is the corollary, Why did he continue to do it? The answer does not lie in the Aldersgate Street experience. Not only do we have instances before May 24th, 1738, of his preaching the gospel in such a way as to be banned from pulpits for so doing.⁶ We also have, in the weeks and months following Aldersgate Street, a clear demonstration that he was not sufficiently sure of what had happened that evening to make it the center of a message which he could take to the keel men of Newcastle, the harlots of Drury Lane, to say nothing of the mobs which were soon to threaten him and his assistants.⁷ However much the assurance he received that evening might have empowered him as a leader of the eighteenth century Revival, it does not explain his particular strength as an evangelist, nor that of the early Methodist societies.

If we are to learn from Wesley the evangelist, we must take the word evangelism at its face value, and ask what was the good news which God commissioned him to take to the people of eighteenth century England. For of one thing all true evangelists quickly become convinced: that the only sustaining motivation for reaching out to people with the gospel is the impelling power of the Holy Spirit. And this comes most readily when the evangelist fulfills the proper role of messenger, handing over to the world that which has been entrusted to all evangelists from the very beginning. By thus honoring the proper evangelistic calling, the evangelist is in turn honored by the God who has commissioned the task. Put differently, when the true gospel is truly proclaimed, the evangelist finds an indwelling and outpouring of spiritual power which render questions of evangelistic motivation — and method, for that matter — altogether secondary.

Such, at least, is the inference we can draw from the formative years of Wesley's evangelistic ministry; for such is the implication of his own edited narrative of that period of his life. The Journal for these months leaves us with an overwhelming sense, not only of a personal search for faith, but also of a theological quest, which matched and then superseded his inward spiritual inquiry. With the true instinct of an evangelist, it quickly became his concern to render the gospel which had so changed his own life into plain truth for plain people, by discerning its essential message of good news, and then proclaiming it far and wide.

Significantly, the question which occupied Wesley during this formative theological quest was the doctrine of justification by faith. It is interesting first of all to note that, in his conversations in Georgia with Spangenberg and Toltschig, and in the summary of his pilgrimage leading to May 24th, 1738, the word which is used almost exclusively to describe his spiritual quest is faith, not justification. Indeed, justification does not appear until the closing paragraphs of the Georgia Journal:

This, then, I have learned in the ends of the earth — that I'm fallen short of the glory of God': that my whole heart is 'altogether corrupt and abominable'; and consequently my whole life (seeing it cannot be that an 'evil tree' should 'bring forth good fruit'): that, 'alienated' as I am from the life of God, I am 'a child of wrath,' an heir of hell: that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God. so far from making any atonement for the least

of those sins, which 'are more in number than the hairs of my head,' that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves, or they cannot abide His righteous judgment: that 'having the sentence of death' in my heart, and having nothing in or of myself to plead, I have no hope, but that of being justified freely, 'through the redemption that is in Jesus'; I have no hope, but that if I seek I shall find Christ, and 'be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.'⁸

As Martin Schmidt observes, the "problem of justification, having been 80 clearly stated, could not again be avoided."⁹ Not yet clear in Wesley's thinking, however, and not altogether clarified by Schmidt, is the distinction between justification as that which God does for us in Christ, and faith as the sole condition of that justification. At this juncture it was faith, defined in the words of the Anglican tradition as "a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favor of God," which remained Wesley's primary concern. But we should note that, even as he described the anguish of his personal faith crisis, he stated the issue circumspectly:

I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it (though many imagine they have it, who have it not) . . . [by which] he is freed from doubt, 'having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him'; which 'Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God.'¹⁰

As Albert Outler has suggested, Wesley's preoccupations with 'holy living' and 'the means of grace' before 1738 had probably obscured the priority of justifying faith as antecedent to, and the ground of, 'the faith that works by love.'¹¹ What may further obscure the issue in viewing Wesley the evangelist, however, is that his understanding of this *ordo salutis* came initially through German Pietism rather than his own Anglican or Puritan traditions.¹² He was searching for an inward assurance of faith which, when he finally received it, he rightly identified as a gracious work of divine initiative. But this faith, which was the condition of his justification, was not his justification *per se*, and as we follow his reflections through these early years, we shall observe that this was precisely the distinction he first had to establish for himself, and then make clear to his Anglican and Calvinist critics alike, in order for him to proclaim it with assurance as the good news of salvation for all.

We receive the first indication that Wesley the theologian began to supersede Wesley the convert at an early point in the *Moravian Journal*, where he contrasts Zinzendorf's distinction between justification and the assurance of faith with Bohler's position that knowledge of justification is necessarily part of justification.¹³ The contrast is not labored; but, as with so much in the *Journal*, the words should be measured carefully. For Wesley proceeds to expound the point by citing from several sermons he heard at Herrnhut concerning the "state of those who are 'weak in faith,' who are justified, but have not yet a new, clean heart; who have received forgiveness through the

blood of Christ, but have not received the constant indwelling of the Holy Ghost.¹⁴ One of the sermons made such an impression on him that he transcribed it in detail:

You grieve for your sins. You are deeply humble. Your heart is broken. Well: but all this is nothing to your justification. The remission of your sins is not owing to this cause, either in whole or in part. Your humiliation and contrition have no influence on that. Nay, observe further, that it may hinder your justification; that is, if you build anything upon it; if you think, I must be so or so contrite.... The right foundation is, not your contrition (though that is not your own), not your righteousness, nothing of your own, nothing that is wrought in you by the Holy Ghost; but it is something without you, viz. the righteousness and blood of Christ.¹⁵

The remaining testimonies transcribed by Wesley from his Herrnhut conversations focus, in one way or another, on these distinctions. First, the radical nature of the doctrine of justification by faith, which he never ceased to affirm thereafter: that sinful human nature is deeply alienated from God, and of itself has no capacity at all for reconciliation. Atonement is wholly God's initiative in Christ, and it is complete. It is not the beginning of salvation — it is salvation. All sins are forgiven; all alienation is resolved. Because of Christ's atoning passion, the sinner is completely forgiven and restored to favor in the sight of God.

The condition of justification, however, is not as radical as its work. The work of justification is Christ's and Christ's alone. The condition of justification is faith, and faith alone, which also comes directly from God as a gift — a sure confidence in the merits of Christ's passion. Yet there are degrees to this condition, and the justified sinner may not receive the full assurance of faith for quite some time, even though the condition might be evidenced to others by the fruits of the Spirit in a person's life. While the gift of full assurance should be expected, and indeed sought in prayerful expectancy, it should not therefore be confused with the work of justification, which is God's radical reconciliation in Christ of human beings radically alienated in sin.

All of which points to the third dimension of the doctrine, namely the importance of working out the salvation bestowed on the sinner by the justifying work of Christ. A radical doctrine of reconciliation can easily be abused by neglecting the good works which necessarily must follow from the condition of justifying faith. In the account which Wesley gives in the Herrnhut Journal of his conversation with Christian David, we find this dimension of the doctrine brought sharply into focus as the issue of faith and works. As David described the problem,

We found a great remissness of behavior . . . among us. And indeed the same was to be found in most of those round about us, whether Lutherans or Calvinists; so insisting on faith as to forget, at least in practice, both holiness and good works. Observing this terrible abuse of preaching Christ given for us, we began to insist more than ever on Christ living in US.¹⁶

David went on to describe the extremes to which the Moravian community had then taken this principle, to the point of excluding from the Lord's Supper any who could not testify to a full assurance of the indwelling Christ. By contrast, he had subsequently modified his own view to one of affirming "that Christ in us, and Christ for us, ought, indeed, to be both insisted on; but first and principally Christ for us as being the ground of all." In other words, what is felt by a potential believer is no more a prerequisite for justifying faith than the good works such a person might do. Moreover, as David went on to observe, the sort of preaching which proclaimed Christ given for us was found always to "be accompanied with power;" for, if "rightly believed," it assuredly led to Christ being "formed in us."¹⁷

As we have noted, this was not as yet a major issue for Wesley; though by the time this section of the Journal was published, it had emerged with some cogency as a practical antinomianism in his societies, and in the form of Quietism had been the occasion of his rift with the Fetter Lane Society.¹⁸ We can note, therefore, that even as he was wrestling with the existential implications of a radical doctrine which proclaims sinners wholly justified by Christ *coram Deo*, he remained theologically objective — an important foundation for authentic evangelism.

At this early stage of his evangelistic ministry, as the Journal narrative makes clear on almost every page, Wesley wants us to be aware that his spiritual journey and his theological instincts provided him with a constant tension. On the one hand, he was forging some quite pivotal theological distinctions. On the other hand, he had many questions about his inward assurance of faith. In October of 1738, for example, after reading Jonathan Edwards' Faithful Narrative, he records that he was thrown "into great perplexity" by some correspondence with a friend over those who are "weak in the faith," and was driven to a further self-examination. As a result of this, while affirming some signs of the new birth in his life, he concludes that he did not have the full assurance of faith. Though even with such a "measure of faith," he trusted that he was reconciled to God through Christ.¹⁹ In a letter to his brother, Samuel, later that month, he described this measure of faith as a mustard seed, and exhorted those "who have not received joy in the Holy Ghost, the love of God, and the plerophory of faith . . . Christians in that imperfect sense wherein I call myself such . . . to pray that God would give them also . . . to feel his love 'shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them.' "²⁰

And significantly, in a Journal entry dated October 29th, 1738, we find the following reflection:

In the evening being troubled at what some said of 'the kingdom of God within us,' and doubtful of my own state, I called upon God, and received this answer from His word: 'He himself also waited for the kingdom of God.' 'But should not I wait in silence and retirement?' was the thought that immediately struck into my mind. I opened my testament again on those words 'Seest thou not how faith wrought together with his works? And by works was faith made perfect.'²¹

The distinctions continue to develop: justification as God's work; faith as the condition of justification in the believer, also a gift from God, and

received by degrees; and good works as the condition of faith, thereby affirming it as true and lively.

We then come to a pivotal Journal entry, dated November 12th, 1738, where Wesley the editor makes clear that the preceding references have been leading to a decisive moment in the narrative:

I preached twice at the Castle. In the following week I began more narrowly to inquire what the doctrine of the Church of England is concerning the much-controverted point of justification by faith; and the sum of what I found in the Homilies I extracted and printed for the use of others.²²

This twelve page pamphlet went through numerous editions in Wesley's lifetime, and was included in the Pine edition of his collected works. It is a masterly piece of editing, and became a standard component of Methodist instruction, thereby linking the members of the early societies to the tap-root of the English Reformation and its via media which was so agonizingly forged through the political and religious minefield of the sixteenth century.

The language is almost certain that of Thomas Cranmer, a theologian not unlike Wesley, in that the exigencies of his task rendered the form of his writing plain truth for plain people. Wesley's extract begins with the clear statement that all persons are sinners and therefore in no way can be justified by their works.²³ We receive our justification, or righteousness, "of God's mercy, and Christ's Merits embraced by faith." This great mystery of our redemption comes from the wisdom of God, and God alone, who has "tempered his Justice and Mercy together." With Romans 3 and 8 as referents, justification is identified as three-fold:

Upon God's Part, his great mercy and Grace; upon Christ's Part, the Satisfaction of God's Justice . . . ; and upon our Part, True and Lively Faith in the Merits of Jesus Christ.... And therefore St. Paul declareth nothing on behalf of Man, concerning his Justification, but only a True and lively Faith, which itself is the Gift of God.²⁴

Then comes the critical distinction:

And yet that Faith doth not shut out Repentance, Hope, Love, and the Fear of God, to be joined with Faith in every Man that is justified. But it shutteth them out from the office of justifying. So that altho' they be all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not altogether.²⁵

And to make the point completely clear:

And the true Sense of this Doctrine, *we are justified freely by Faith without Works, or we are justified by Faith in CHRIST only*, is not, That this is our own Act, *to believe in CHRIST*, or this our Faith in Christ, which is within us, doth justify us (for that were to account ourselves to be justified by some Act or Virtue that is within ourselves) yet we must renounce the Merit of all, of Faith, Hope, Charity, and all other Virtues and Good Works, which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as far too weak to deserve our Justification . . . Therefore in that

respect we renounce as it were, again, Faith, Works and all other virtues. For our Corruption thro' Original Sin is so great, that *all our Faith, Charity, Words and Works cannot merit or deserve any Part of our Justification for us.*²⁶

It is clear in these Homilies that Cramner wanted to stress the place of good works in the order of salvation; though in Wesley's editing, this is not given as much prominence. As we have noted, his major theological concern at this stage was the distinction between justification and faith. Yet his theological instincts hold true, and this further dimension of the doctrine is given its due:

Neither doth Faith shut out Good Works, necessarily to be done afterwards, of Duty towards God: (For we are most bounden to serve God, in doing Good Works, commanded in Scripture, all the Days of our Life). But we may not do them to this Intent, to be justified by doing them. For all the Good Works we can do, are not able to deserve our Justification.... For that Faith which bringeth not forth Repentance, but either Evil Works, or no Good Works, is not a right, pure and living Faith, but a Dead and Devilish one, as *St. Paul* and *St. James* call it.... Let us then by our Works declare our Faith to be the Living, Christian Faith.... Let it be daily increasing more and more by Good Works; so shall you be sure, that you shall please God, and when his Will is, *receive the End of your Faith, even the Salvation of your Souls.*²⁷

Perhaps most significant about this theological publication (apart from the fact that he found it necessary to publish it at all — an indication of the extent to which eighteenth century Anglicanism had departed from its own roots) is that Wesley placed it in juxtaposition with persisting questions about his own religious experience. The Journal narrative — edited, we must remember, for publication — continues to give indications of his own self doubt.²⁸ Likewise, he continues to evaluate the evidence for "degrees of faith." On January 25th, 1739, for example, he baptized five persons, and noted that of all the persons he had baptized recently, only one was born again "in the full sense of the word.... Most of them were only born again in a lower sense; that is, received the remission of their sins. And some (as it has since too plainly appeared) neither in one sense nor the other."²⁹

The evangelistic issue is already emerging: that there is certainty in proclaiming what God has done for us in Christ; but that proclaiming what has happened in us provides much less certainty. In his correspondence, he is ready to affirm the reality of an inward assurance of faith, even as an instantaneous change. But he is also at pains to distinguish this from the central truth of the gospel.³⁰

To understand Wesley's concern for this evangelistic clarity, we must place it in the context of an ongoing dispute in Anglican and Puritan theology over the proper cause of justification, a dispute which had abated somewhat in the eighteenth century, but which had its origins in the late decades of the sixteenth. And in this regard, we continue to be indebted to the seminal article by Albert Outler, "The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition."³¹ The issue was whether Christ's atoning death was the formal or

meritorious cause of justifying faith, a dispute which had ensued from the formulations of the Council of Trent. The Tridentine position was that Christ's passion was the meritorious cause of justifying faith, the formal cause being the conferred justice of God; while the Calvinist position, leading inexorably to the TULIP formulation, was to stipulate that Christ's atoning death was the formal cause, lest there should be any hint of human participation in a justification that was the work of Christ and Christ alone. Since a formal cause is by definition efficacious, this necessarily connoted an imputed righteousness which rendered good works altogether secondary in the *ordo salutis*. By the same token, it required a doctrine of limited atonement, since clearly not all persons found Christ's atonement efficacious in their lives.

Perhaps most important of all, at the level of practical Christian experience, it rendered the assurance of faith synonymous with justification. According to this view of atonement, there could be no affirmation by degrees of faith, no vindication of faith by virtue of one's good works or disposition, no waiting for the assurance of faith in the knowledge that the merits of Christ's atoning death had accomplished one's pardon and reconciliation with God, no "sure trust and confidence" in what Christ had done as the bedrock of "a true and lively faith." Rather, since atonement was limited, grace was perforce irresistible, and assurance of faith indispensable to justification itself. Little wonder that this led to the excesses of enthusiasm which so many Anglicans found to be theologically abnormal, morally suspect, and emotionally quite distasteful.

It has been argued by C. F. Allison that the dispute shaped Anglican theology during the seventeenth century into an "ineluctable movement . . . towards a moralism masquerading as faith."³² The problem was that Anglican theology, instead of working through the originative position of the Articles and Homilies, which essentially left unresolved the question of formal or meritorious cause of justification, attempted to synergize faith and works, thereby robbing both words of their distinctively Christian usage and power.³³

Wesley had to have been aware of these issues, which is why the years we are presently considering must be regarded as theologically and evangelistically highly formative. And the issue with which he was wrestling most acutely was how to reappropriate for the purposes of evangelistic proclamation a theological position which had become well-nigh de-traditioned. It was not that Anglican theologians denied the merits of Christ's atoning death. But in order to moderate the "enthusiasms" which seemed to accompany the popular expressions of *sola fide*, they stressed the importance of the virtues which preceded justification. Take, for example, the following passage from the conclusion to George Bull's *Harmonia Apostolica*, a standard work in Wesley's day:

When the first Protestants taught that we were justified by faith alone, they did not therefore mean, that by this faith, other virtues, and other good works were excluded, as by no means necessary unto the obtaining of justification, or that faith had in the work of justification a greater effect than other virtues. But . . . that the word faith denotes such an obedience as is united

with confidence in the merits of Jesus Christ, and a perfect rejection of all merits of our own, and which therefore excludes all those works which are performed with any confidence in, or opinion of, our own merits.³⁴

It is difficult not to interject the anguished *cri de coeur* of the evangelist, that such a theology will not preach. It is a theological attempt, not to close the stable door after the horse has bolted, but rather to close the door on a stable which does not have a horse. It is precisely why Wesley, in the General Rules of 1743, described Methodists as those who, having the form of godliness, sought the power.

Not that we should deny all validity to this Anglican synergism. There was a legitimate fear of the practical antinomianism which, as we have noted, Wesley was quickly to encounter in his societies. Once again, the words of George Bull:

Neither is it undeserving of notice, that of the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, thirty-eight are laid down without any explanation; but this one, on the Justification of man, is not given without this express caution, that a fuller and more complete explanation of it must be sought in the Homily on Justification. For the revered Fathers of our Church were very anxious lest any man, too superstitiously adhering to the words of the article, should twist them into some dangerous sense, which alas! we see this day to be done by many.³⁵

Wesley's concern, by contrast, was to formulate the power of this foundational gospel message without losing its doctrinal soundness; and it is highly significant that the issue was brought to a head with his decision to preach in the open air. Indeed, this was not only the watershed of his evangelistic ministry, but of his evangelical theology also, since thereafter his doctrinal thinking was shaped by the honing of his theological reflections into evangelistic proclamations. Evangelism is the "headlining" of the gospel, the pointed communication of the essentials of the Christian message. And there is nothing better suited for this than the frequent presentation of the gospel to plain people who, neither having a church background, nor caring to have one, require plain truth. This is what renders Wesley not only a major evangelist in the history of the church, but a considerable theologian also.³⁶

As he began to find his stride in this new ministry, the power of a message which had the justifying work of Christ at its center became very evident. The subsequent refinement of the doctrine, expressed variously in the correspondence with the pseudonymous John Smith,³⁷ the Minutes of 1745,³⁸ the sermon "Justification by Faith," published in 1746,³⁹ and definitively in the sermon "The Lord Our Righteousness," in 1765,⁴⁰ did not depart from the position of the Anglican Homilies. Wesley merely sharpened the distinctions: between justification as that which is earned for us by the merits of Christ; faith as the condition of justification, likewise a gift from God, a supernatural *elenchos*, a regeneration of will, a new birth; and the assurance of faith, which comes to some at once, and to others by degrees.⁴¹ Then, in answer to Anglican objections, he linked good works necessarily to faith, but as the condition of sustaining, not obtaining justification. In answer to

Calvinist objections, he stressed the radical nature of sin and divine initiative alike, affirming imputed righteousness as the condition of faith, just as faith was the condition of justification. This was not, however, a divine self-deception.⁴² Imputed righteousness was the beginning of a real transformation, to which Wesley gave full doctrinal integrity as the equally gracious divine initiative of sanctification.⁴³

This left the doctrine of justification not only distinct, but sufficiently radical for Wesley to state that, in proclaiming God as all things and humankind as nothing, Methodist came to the very edge of Calvinism.⁴⁴ And we might add, to the edge of Lutheranism also. For in the latter part of 1739, as a further component of these doctrinal clarifications, Wesley published an edited version of two treatises by the early English Reformation scholar, Robert Barnes.⁴⁵ It is as if Wesley, having made all theological allowances for the proper grounding of justification by faith in the *ordo salutis*, needed to emphasize one more time the radical nature of this cutting edge of the *evangel*.

In Robert Barnes, we find not only England's first Lutheran scholar of note, but also one of the most colorful characters to emerge from those early decades of the sixteenth century, when "the life-giving airs of the Renaissance seemed to be blowing upon England."⁴⁶ For the English Reformation at the outset was more an outcome of Renaissance humanism than religious protest — an intellectual movement which was carried through by political events rather than a popular following of a religious leader.⁴⁷

Cambridge proved to be a lively center for this atmosphere of intellectual inquiry, and fertile ground for the Lutheran theology infiltrating from the continent. In particular, an informal group who met at the White Horse Inn were noted from their open discussion of the new scholarship.⁴⁸ A Barnes, who had joined the Augustinian Friars at the University in 1514, and rapidly advanced to become head of the house, was an acknowledged leader of this group, and soon became marked as one whose criticisms of ecclesiastical practices could not be ignored. Tried on charges of heresy, he agreed to do public penance; but hearing that his life was in danger, he fled to Wittenberg, where he was warmly welcomed by the theological community. Writing under the name of Antonius Anglus, he published a series of treatises during the early 1530s, of which the two edited by Wesley are among the most mature: "Onely fayth iustifieth before God;" and "Free will of man, after the fall of Adam, of his natural strength, can doe nothing but sin before God."⁴⁹

In the first of these, Wesley's editing for the most part serves merely to clarify.⁵⁰ The treatise is allowed to make its own case, and powerfully so. At the outset, it is the work of Christ which is affirmed as the sole cause of our justification:

Now if we will truly confess Christ, then must we grant with our Hearts, that Christ is all our Righteousness, all our Redemption, all our Wisdom, all our Holiness, alone the Purchaser of Grace alone the Peace-maker between God and Man. Briefly, all Goodness that we have, that it is of him, by him and for his sake only. And that we have need of nothing towards our Salvation, but of him only, and we desire no other Salvation, nor no other Satisfaction; nor any help of any other Creature, either heavenly or earthly, but of him only;⁵¹

Justification is freely given, by grace:

But let us go to our Purpose, *St. Paul* saith, *All Men be sinners, and fallen short of the Glory of God, but they are justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* Rom. iii.23, 24. What is this, that all Men have sinned, yea and are justified freely? How shall a sinner do good Works? How can he deserve to be justified? What call you freely? if there be any deserving, less or more, then is it not freely. What call you by his Grace? if it be any part of Works, then it is not of Grace. For as *St. Paul* saith, *Then Grace were not Grace,* Rom. xi.6. Here can be no Evasion, the Words be so plain. If you bring in any help of Works, then for so much is not our Redemption freely, nor yet is it of Grace, as concerning the Part that cometh of Works, but partly of Works, and then do you destroy all *St. Paul*, and his whole Disputation.⁵²

If it is faith alone that justifies, it is not, however, a prerequisite for justification; for the faith which justifies is itself a gift from God, and not the result of human reasoning:

The very true Way of Justification is this: First cometh God, for the Love of Christ Jesus, only of his mere Mercy, and giveth us freely the Gift of Faith, whereby we do believe God and his holy Word, and stick fast unto the Promises of God; . . . This is not such a Faith as Men dream when they believe that there is one God, and believe that he is eternal, believe also that he made the World of nought, yea, and believe that the Gospel is true, and all things that God speaketh must be true and fulfilled, with other such things. This, I say, is not the Faith that we be justified by, for Devils and Infidels have this Faith; and also we may attain to these things by Strength of Reason: But the Faith that shall justify us, must be of another manner of Strength, for it must come from Heaven, and not from the Strength of Reason. It must also make me believe that God the Maker of heaven and Earth is not only a Father, but also My Father; . . . that he is not only My Father, but also a Merciful Father; yea, and that unto me Merciful, and so merciful, that he will not impute my Sins into me, though they be never so great, so long as I hang on the blessed Blood of Christ Jesus, and sin not of Malice, but of Frailty, and of no Pleasure.⁵³

It is interesting to note that the only major excision in Wesley's editing of this treatise is a somewhat confusing section near the end, concerning justification and works of repentance. Barnes has argued that the injunctions in the Epistle of James on good works must be expounded in light of what Paul has to say on justification. The weight of his argument is that good works which follow from justification are incumbent on the Christian, and will be rewarded accordingly.⁵⁴ But in no way are they to be regarded as part of justification; nor yet are works of repentance to be regarded as efficacious for remission of sins. Wesley omits some vigorous, but highly questionable, exegesis of scriptural paradigms of faith, thereby leaving the force of this argument intact.⁵⁵

His editing of the second treatise on Freewill likewise serves to clarify the main argument. Omitting Barnes' polemics on the technicalities of contrition and attrition, which, while familiar to sixteenth century scholars, would make little sense to those who had probably never heard of "Duns men,"⁵⁶ the result is again a powerful statement of the position that there is absolutely nothing in the human will which can initiate atonement with God. Our faith is wholly a gift:

Where now is our good Desire, and good Endeavor, and Application to good? For our Spirit can do nothing but evil, and is of himself but a damnable Servant. What good can a damnable Servant do of himself? So that here it is openly proved, that the Freewill of Man, of his own Strength, of his own Power, can do nothing but sin.⁵⁷

Unlike the edition of the Anglican Homilies, the Barnes extract was published only once. But it does much to clarify the outcome of this formative period of spiritual and theological tension in Wesley's ministry. In short, the much-controverted point of justification by faith became the touchstone for his evangelism. It ensured that Christ, and Christ alone, was the center of what was proclaimed in and through the early Methodist movement. As Wesley put it in his early masterpiece, "The Principles of a Methodist," citing Cranmer almost word for word:

In strictness, therefore, neither our faith nor our works justify us, that is, deserve the remission of our sins. But God himself justifies us, of his own mercy, through the merits of his Son only.⁵⁸

The implications remain no less significant for evangelism today. With Christ as the center of our *evangel*, the message is proclaimed without the handicap or obstruction of self-conscious or self esteeming messengers. Christian witness assumes its proper role, namely a testimony to what Christ has done for us, rather than a recounting of what the Holy Spirit has done in us. There is of course a place for the latter, but not as the cutting edge of our evangelism; rather as the substance of Christian development, the *oikodomē* of the body as we grow in grace and are nurtured in the faith. The evangelistic challenge, on the other hand, is the call, first of all to salvation in Christ, and then to service for Christ. What that does in us, as the fruit of justification, can easily distract from the immediate power and challenge of Christ's justifying work, and should therefore not be at the forefront of what we proclaim as the *evangel* to the world.

There remain two questions to be addressed, both of which point to further implications of Wesley's evangelism; though the scope of this paper permits only their brief consideration. The first concerns the fullness of God's grace as it was proclaimed in the early Methodist *evangel*. It is not surprising that this should have become an issue shortly after Wesley took to the fields with the gospel, since the preaching of Whitefield had preceded him so thoroughly in and around Bristol. The Calvinist message of salvation by absolute decrees carried an evangelistic power by virtue of its critical challenge to the human will. Yet Wesley, steeped in a tradition which stressed the catholicity of grace, could not and would not concede either a limited atonement or the irresistibility of a grace which was gracious precisely in

its bestowal of a freedom to resist grace. His message was one of salvation for all, by free grace, and with only one condition: a sure and confident trust in the merits of the Christ who had obtained that salvation for the whole human race through his atoning passion.

As he was to note some forty years later, in "Thoughts upon Salvation by Faith," it was very much a surprise to him and his brother, that, in preaching free grace for all, they should have thereby been accused of preaching salvation by works.⁵⁹ If those who held to a doctrine of absolute decrees wished to infer that such a faith was a rejection of God's sovereignty, and thus a salvation by works, he did not have time to argue the point.⁶⁰ For in practice, the preaching of salvation for all carried no less evangelistic power at the critical moment of invitation to the sinner. Indeed, it was precisely because the message of free grace reached people with cogency and with evident results that he affirmed it as an integral part of what God had called him to preach:

Thursday, 26 [April 1739]. Preaching at Newgate on those words, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life', I was led, I know not how, to speak strongly and explicitly of predestination, and then to pray that if I spake not the truth of God he would stay his hand, and work no more among us; if this was his truth, he would 'not delay to confirm it by signs following'. Immediately the power of God fell upon us. One, and another, and another, sunk to the earth. You might see them dropping on all sides as thunderstruck.⁶¹

Friday, 27 [April 1739]. All Newgate rang with the cries of those whom the word of God cut to the heart; two of whom were in a moment filled with joy, to the astonishment of those that beheld them.⁶²

Wesley's disputes with the Calvinists of his day were not limited to this issue, of course;⁶³ but in terms of his evangelism, it was the most important. Which is why it is so noteworthy that, precisely as an evangelistic issue, it proved altogether moot. For in proclaiming Christ as the savior of all, there was no blunting of the cutting edge of justification by faith. The response was just as dramatic as that which was evoked by a proclamation of salvation by decrees. The essential difference was the fullness of the evangelistic message. The gospel preached by Wesley was a call to discipleship no less than an invitation to salvation. Put differently, his evangelism made clear that there was a purpose to the justification of a sinner beyond the immediate gift of forgiveness and reconciliation.

This constitutes the second of our concluding points, namely that the Christ who reconciles us to God is also the Christ who calls us to service. The transforming grace of Christ was well understood by Wesley as a process of sanctification, leading to the maturity of Christian perfection. But how could this be proclaimed as a message of God's salvation, when perforce it was a message which tended to focus on the forgiven sinner, albeit in a context of grace? It would surely tend to fall into the evangelistic trap which Wesley was at such pains to avoid in clarifying the distinctive doctrine of justification.

The answer lay in the immediacy of the relationship with Christ, not

only initiated, but also sustained at any given moment by justifying faith. Inasmuch as sanctifying grace works at all times through the immediacy of justifying grace, the transforming relationship of sanctification could therefore be proclaimed evangelistically as *obedience*. In this way, rather than a message of what Christ does in us, which would tend to draw attention to the messenger rather than the message (and thereby disempower the gospel), the necessary good works which follow upon justification were proclaimed as that which Christ calls us to do in the world, a call just as gracious and just as critical as the invitation to forgiveness and reconciliation.

This evangelistic paradigm still holds true for the church of today. The gospel entrusted to evangelists for all the world must be proclaimed as the fullness of a salvation which is wholly Christ-centered.⁶⁴ Martin Schmidt puts it well, commenting on Peter Bohler's advice that Wesley should preach faith until he had it:

In this pregnant statement lies the deep truth that the task of the preacher is not to bring before his hearers himself or his own spiritual attainment, but the authoritative Word, the greater reality of God.⁶⁵

Justification may not be the whole of salvation,⁶⁶ but it is the fullness of God's salvation at any given moment for the sinner who repents and is reconciled to God in Christ. It was this which Wesley came to see as he examined that "much-controverted point." Our sanctification or our backsliding, our perfection or our immaturity, our obedience or our disobedience, our assurance or our doubts, our faith or our lack of faith, all become as nothing at the very moment — at *any* moment — we throw ourselves on the mercy of God through the merits of the One who is our Judge, but also our Redeemer. And that, no less for us than for those who heard Wesley in person, is most assuredly a message of good news.

NOTES

1. The Works of John Wesley, Oxford Edition, Editor in chief, Frank Baker, Volume 25: Letters I, 1721-1739, ed. Frank Baker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 605.

2. The Journal of The Rev. John Wesley, A.M., Standard Edition, ed. Nehemiah Curnock, 8 vols. (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1909-1916), 2:158.

3. Journal, 2:159-66. This version is edited and abbreviated. For the fullest available text, see Letters, ed. Baker, 1:397-410, where the editor's detailed textual comments provide much additional information.

4. Journal, 1:160ff. It should be noted that Wesley's use of the word "social" connotes Christian discipleship in a social context.

5. Minutes of the Methodist Conference, from The First Held in London, by the Late Rev. John Wesley, A.M., in the Year 1744, Volume 1, p. 10. Cf. The Works of John Wesley, 14 vols. (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872; reprint ed., Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1979), 8:300.

6. Journal, 1:436, 438-

7. See John Walsh, "Methodism and the Mob in the Eighteenth Century," in *Popular Belief and Practice*, ed. G. J. Cuming and Derek Baker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

8. *Journal*, 1:423f.

9. Martin Schmidt, *John Wesley: A Theological Biography, Volume 1* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, n.d.), p. 221.

10. *Journal*, 1:424-

11. *The Works of John Wesley, Bicentennial Edition*, Editor-in-Chief Frank Baker, Volume 1: *Sermons 1, 1-33*, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), p. 181.

12. This was quickly tempered by the writings he had long since imbibed from his native traditions. Out of these, "and with his Eastern pneumatology as his key, Wesley . . . developed a soteriology . . . [in which] . . . therapeutic metaphors tend to outweigh the forensic ones that had dominated Western traditions since Anselm" (*ibid.*, p. 80).

13. *Journal*, 2:13f.

14. *ibid.*, p. 25.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

17. *Ibid.*, &f.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 312 &ff.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 83ff.

20. *Letters*, ed. Baker, 1:576f.

21. *Journal*, 2:97.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

23. *The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works, Extracted from The Homilies of the Church of England, The Sixth Edition* (London: Printed by W. Strahan, 1744), p. 2.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 3f.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 6.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 6, 10.

28. *Journal*, 2:103, 115f., 125f.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

30. *Letters*, ed. Baker. 1:622f.

31. In *The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition*, ed. Kenneth E. Rowe (Metuchen, N.J): The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1976). See also Wesley, *Sermons*, ed. Outler. 1: 181.

32. C. F. Allison, *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1966), p. 192.

33. I have examined this issue further in *The Early Methodist Class Meeting Its Origins and Significance* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1985), pp. 49ff.

34. George Bull, *Harmonia Apostolica. Or Two Dissertations; in the Forms of which the Doctrine of St. James on Justification by Works is Explained and Defended in the latter the Agreement of St. Paul with St. James is clearly shown*, Second Edition. Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology, Volume 24 (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1844), p. 206. See also Wesley, *Sermons*, ed. Outler, 1:191, n55; *Journal*, 2:470.

35. *Harmonia Apostolica*, p. 207. See also *Journal*, 2:470; *Sermons*, ed. Outler, 1:50.

36. On this, see M. Douglas Meeks, "John Wesley's Heritage and the Future of Systematic Theology," in *Wesleyan Theology Today: A Bicentennial Theological Consultation*, ed. Theodore Runyon (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1985), pp. 43ff.

37. *Works*, Oxford Edition, Volume 26: *Letters II*, 17W1755, ed. Frank Baker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), beginning on page 138.

38. *Works*, 14 vols., 8:281ff.

39. *Sermons*, ed. Outler, 1:181ff.

40. *Ibid*, pp. 444ff.

41. *Letters*, ed. Baker, 2:254f.

42. *Sermons*, ed. Outler, 1:188.

43. *Journal*, 1:275f. See also Harald Lindstrom, *Wesley and Sanctification: A Study in the Doctrine of Salvation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, Francis Asbury Press, 1980), pp. 74f.

44. *Works*, 14 vols., 8:284f.

45. *Journal*, 2:282-

46. J. D. Mackie, *The Earlier Tudors 1485-1558* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 235.

47. N. S. Tjernagel, *Henry VIII and the Lutherans: A Study in Anglo-Lutheran Relations from 1521-1547* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), PP- 34f.

48. *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed. Stephen Reed Catley (London: L. & G. Seeley, 1838), 5:415.

49. The Whole workes of W. Tyndall, John Frith, and Doct. Barnes, three worthy Martyrs, and principal teachers of this Church of England . . . (London: John Daye, 1573), pp. 226-42; 266-82.

50. Two Treatises, The First On Justification by Faith only, according to he Doctrine of the Eleventh Article of the Church of England The Second On the Sinfulness of Man 's natural Will, and his utter Inability to do Works acceptable to God, until he be justify'd and born again of the Spirit of God, according to the Doctrine of our Ninth, Tenth, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Articles.... To which is prefix'd A Preface, containing Some Account of the Life and Death of Dr. Barnes: Extracted from The Book of Martyrs. By john_wesley, A.M. Fellow of Lincoln-College, Oxford (London: Printed and Sold by John Lewis [Printer to the Religious Societies], 1739), pp. 25-76.

51. Ibid., pp. 26f.

52. Ibid, p. 32.

53. Ibid., pp. 57f.

54. Works, ed. Daye, pp. 240f.

55. Treatises, ed. Wesley, pp. 74f.

56. Compare, for example, the Daye edition, pp. 272f., with the Wesley edition, p.98. For a definitive survey of Scotism, which flowered after the premature death of Duns Scotus in 1308, and which continued to be influential at the time of the Reformation in England, see Meyrick H. Carre, *Phases of Thought in England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), pp. 144ff.

57. Treatises, ed. Wesley, p. 90.

58. Works, 14 vols., 8:362.

59. Ibid., 11:493.

60. Ibid., p. 494.

61. Letters, ed. Baker, 1:639f.

62. Journal, 2:185.

63. See Robert E. Cushman, "Salvation for All-Wesley and Calvinism," in his volume, *Faith Seeking Understanding: Essays Theological and Critical* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1981).

64. I have given this detailed treatment in "Christ Our Righteousness: The Center of Wesley's Evangelistic Message," *Perkins Journal* 37.3 (Spring, 1984).

65. Wesley, 1:237.

66. "The Scripture Way of Salvation," in Works, Bicentennial Edition, Volume 2: *Sermons II*, 34-70, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), pp. 157ff.

JOHN WESLEY AS CHURCH GROWTH STRATEGIST

by

George Hunter

The foundational conclusions from the Church Growth movement's first half century of research are as true as we thought, but not as new as we thought. Church Growth people have, largely, rediscovered what Christian history's greatest apostolic leaders knew and practiced (though the current body of lore is now more extensive than any one of them knew).

It is not fashionable today to regard some of history's greatest Christian leaders as "strategists" who conceived, planned, led, and achieved "the impossible." We usually see them as desk theologians, or church reformers, or parish preaching models, or models of spirituality, or evangelists. However, some of them were also *master strategists* of powerful movements who planned great achievements, knew what they were doing, mobilized people and resources to attain their goals, and could show this generation how trails are blazed.

One such strategist was John Wesley. Indeed, Wesley can show some ways forward for today's Christian movement, and his wisdom can illuminate today's "Church Growth" discussion. His achievements are fairly well known such as 140,000 converts in his lifetime, the establishment of Methodism as an apostolic (and reform) movement within Anglicanism and (after his death) as a distinct Church, the planting and care of a vast network of "classes" and "societies" governed by an annual "conference," and the out posting of a growing movement in America. But his objectives are less well known, and his strategies virtually not at all.

In terms of his objectives, some folks recall that Wesley wanted to "renew the Church," and "spread scriptural holiness," and "reform the nation." But his more *apostolic* goals are not as widely recognized. He also sought no less than the *recovery* of the truth, life, and power of earliest Christianity, and the *expansion* of that kind of Christianity. He singlemindedly managed the movement for fifty years primarily by that objective. He communicated this objective to the growing ranks of Methodists. He wrote and spoke frequently of the "increase," the "spread," and the "advancement" of this apostolic movement and believed that its expansion was expressing

"the design of God." As the *apostolic* Protestant Reformer, Wesley did not assume that the Great Commission was intended for the original apostles only. Rather, that Commission points the way for the whole Church, in every generation, until the peoples of the earth are reached.

Wesley regarded his growth objective for mission as no innovation. Indeed, he believed he had rediscovered the driving force of the earliest Church. He championed basic "Scriptural Christianity, as beginning to exist in individuals; as spreading from one to another; as covering the earth." (Thomas Jackson edition of *The Works of John Wesley*, 1872, [reprinted by Baker Book House, 1958] volume V, p. 38). He believed that the expansion of true faith is "the work of God"-an oft used phrase which, he assures us "is no cant word," but means "the conversion of sinners from sin to holiness," a work he saw as *both* "widening and deepening" (*Works*, XIII, 329). He believed this work of God was so crucial that the leaders of Methodism in future generations must maintain a "single eye" in the service of its advancement.

This objective of the Methodist mission lodged in people's hearts through Charles Wesley's hymnody:

When He first the work begun,
Small and feeble was His Day:
Now the word doth swiftly run,
Now it wins its widening way.

(In Franz Hildebrant, *Christianity According to the Wesleys*, Epworth Press, 1956, p. 43).

A leader's *motives* relate, of course, to his or her objectives. So, why would church leaders desire the growth of the Church? In *his Short History of the People Called Methodists* Wesley clarifies this issue for the Christian mission in all ages and cultures: In traveling 4,000 to 5,000 miles per year by horse, by now (1781) he has company: "About a hundred and thirty of my fellow-labourers are continually employed in the same thing. We all aim at one point (as we did from the hour when we first engaged in the work), not at profit, any more than at ease, or pleasure, or the praise of men; but to spread true religion through London, Dublin, Edinburgh, and, as we are able, through the three kingdoms." (*Works*, Vol. XIII, pp. 380-381.) Charles Wesley "comprises in a few lines . . . the whole purpose of the brothers' mission" (Hildebrandt, 1956, p. 46):

When first sent forth to minister the word,
Say, did we preach ourselves, or Christ the Lord?
Was it our aim disciples to collect,
To raise a party, or to found a sect?
No; but to spread the power of Jesus' name,
Repair the walls of our Jerusalem
Revive the piety of ancient days,
And fill the earth with our Redeemer's praise."

John Wesley informed an evangelistic movement with a sophistication that, perhaps had not been seen for a thousand years. And his approach to informing the ministry of evangelism was remarkably close to that of the today's Church Growth movement. For instance, he was an unapologetic *prag-*

matist in the choice and development of strategies, models, and methods. The supreme standard for evaluating any evangelism approach was its outcomes, i.e., whether or not the approach helped to achieve apostolic objectives. He wrote "I would observe every *punctilio* or order, except when the salvation of souls is at stake. Then I prefer the end to the means." (Quoted in Francis Gerald Ensley, *John Wesley: Evangelist*, Tidings, 1958, p. 39).

To be more specific, Wesley was a man of one Book, the Bible, and from that Book he received his message, the objectives of the mission, and the ethical guidelines for its expression, i.e., he would employ no approach prohibited by Scripture. But he parts company with other would-be restorers of Primitive Christianity who try to imitate the forms and methods the early church used in *its* age and culture. Wesley developed (or borrowed) approaches that fit his target culture and were attended by God's clear blessing. He did sometimes discover as in Methodism's "class meetings," that "*without any design of so doing*, we have copied after another of the institutions of the Apostolic age." (*Works*, VIII, 265, emphasis added.)

Wesley probably came to this pragmatic stance through experience, consistent with his acceptance of "experience" as one source (with Scripture, tradition, and reason) of the theological truth. For instance, in 1739 Wesley observed George Whitefield's experiment in field preaching to miners at Kingswood, near Bristol. In the first meeting Whitefield preached to about 100 miners. By the fifth meeting, only a week later, he was addressing about 10,000! The two men perceived the approach as a clear winner! They did not cast about for additional warrants, Biblical or theological.

Both Wesleys sacrificed personal preferences and aesthetic tastes for the sake of their "sanctified pragmatism." Charles was a cultured poet and musician with high church aesthetic tastes, but he shelved his preference, condescending to write hymns in the "low-brow" music genre being sung in England's public houses! And John, after 33 years of open-air field preaching to the unchurched, confessed that "To this day field preaching is a cross to me. But I know my commission and see no other way of 'preaching the gospel to every creature.' " (*The Journal of John Wesley*, ed. N. Curnock, Epworth Press, 1938, Volume 5, p. 484.)

Wesley's pragmatism corresponded remarkably to today's Church Growth movement. Wesley's approach was even "research based," employing rudimentary versions of what became "qualitative behavioral science research methods." For instance, Wesley practiced rigorous *observation*. His power for observing crowds (even while preaching) astonishes. He observed classes, societies, towns, hecklers and detractors, leaders, human behavior parish churches, etc. He also gathered data through thousand of *interviews* with local Methodist leaders, converts, new Methodists, local opinion leaders, people with needs, etc. He welcomed, received, and sometimes solicited *reports* from Methodist leaders from across the movement. Over the years Wesley *recorded*, in a Journal, his observations and what he learned from others in interviews and reports. These recorded studies stretched into multiple volumes. He *reviewed* his Journal from time to time, to assimilate the data, to analyze trends in various towns and regions, to perceive where people were becoming more responsive, to prepare for return visits, to make mid-course corrections, to map itineraries, to inform strategy. Wesley took data seriously, and on crucial matters he took no one's word for it and checked

on the accuracy of data. So, for instance, when his 1748 itinerary took him to Dublin

"I inquired into the state of the society. Most pompous accounts had been sent me, from time to time, of the great numbers that were added to it; so that I confidently expected to find therein six or seven hundred members. And how is the real fact? I left three hundred and ninety-four members; and I doubt if there are now three hundred and ninety-six! (March 16, 1748.)

I returned to Norwich, and took an exact account of the society. I wish all our preachers would be accurate in their accounts, and rather speak under than above the truth. I had heard again and again of the increase of the society. And what is the naked truth? Why, I left in it 202 members; and I find 179." (March 21, 1779.)

Wesley's field research was intended to answer such basic questions as the causes of growth, decline, and stagnation in churches. At times he even employed a very McGavran-like *historical analysis* to discern causes of both growth and decline.

Mr. Wesley brings needed depth and perspective to a current controversy in the Church, a discussion on the relation between "quantity" and "quality" in church membership strength. One camp insists "the more members the better," that an increasing membership correlates with an increasing quality. The other camp, the "remnant" folks, insists that a church gets better as it gets smaller, that quantity and quality are *inversely* correlated.

Mr. Wesley, for the most part, sides with the first camp and challenges the second. Of course, some cases may support the quality through decline thesis; his Journal even records one such case in his first twelve years of itineration and analysis (the society in metropolitan Mount-Mellick, Ireland, May 26, 1750)! However, Wesley observed that *normally* a persistent correlation exists between quantity and quality. As a church grows it becomes stronger and better, as a church declines it becomes weaker and less healthy. He also found a correlation between growth and depth; the societies in which members thirsted for and expected their own sanctification were also experiencing growth. To be sure, Mr. Wesley had no interest in puffed statistics and he tolerated no "numbers games." In reflecting upon a case of the society in Dublin, he interpreted it as

a warning to us all, how we give in to that hateful custom of painting things beyond the life. Let us make a conscience of magnifying or exaggerating any thing. Let us rather speak under, than above, the truth. We, of all men, should be punctual in what we say; that none of our words may fall to the ground. (*Journal*, March 16, 1748.)

His 1761 observation of the work at Bristol notes the correlation of membership growth and of quality growth, and typifies many such observations:

Here likewise I had the satisfaction to observe a considerable increase in the work of God. The congregations were exceedingly large, and the people hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and every day afforded us fresh instances of per-

sons converted from sin, or converted to God. (*Journal*, October 1, 1761.)

To be sure, Wesley perceived *problems* in the experiences of growing churches. For instance, in London "I found the work of God swiftly increasing here.... Meantime, the enemy was not wanting in his endeavors to sow tares among the good seed. I saw this clearly, but durst not use violence, lest, in plucking up the tares, I should root up the wheat also." (*Journal*, August 22, 1761.) In cases where the tares took over or had pathological influence in a society, Wesley knew and exercised appropriate interventions, frequently including the removal of unfaithful or unserious members from membership. But Wesley saw that *declining* churches and societies have problems too, and his wide experience persuaded him that the problems connected with growth were far preferable!

Mr. Wesley strongly preferred growth to decline, and saw that quality and depth typically accompany growth, because God is at work in "the work of God."

I observed God is reviving his work in Kingswood: The society, which had been much decreased, being now increased again to near three hundred members; many of whom are now athirst for full salvation, which for some years they had almost forgot. (*Journal*, October 11, 1761.)

Wesley observed that, at different times and places, God varies His work. He observed in Bristol, 1740, that The Work of God "Last Spring . . . poured along like a rapid flood, overwhelming all before him. Whereas now,

*"He deigns his influence to infuse,
Secret, refreshing as the silent dews."*

Furthermore, sometimes the stream is wider, sometimes deeper. (*Journal*, Nov. 18, 1742).

I began speaking severally to the members of the society, and was well pleased to find so great a number of them much alive to God. One consequence of this, is, that the society is larger than it has been for several years: And no wonder, for where the real power of God is, it naturally spreads wider and wider. (*Journal*, April 7, 1760.)

Wesley rejoices wherever he finds that "The word of God runs indeed; and loving faith spreads on every side." (*Works*, XII, 122.) He perceived a society's membership decline as a "sore evil" that needed "remedy." (*Works*, XIII, p. 329). In much of his itinerant ministry, he analyzed struggling or declining societies and he applied the needed "remedies." Furthermore, Wesley defends Methodism's very right to exist by pointing to its growth. In a challenging letter to the Anglican Bishop of Exeter, he asks:

When hath religion, I will not say, since the Reformation, but since the time of Constantine the Great, made so large a progress in any nation, within so short a space? (*Works* IX, p. 22.)

As the knowledge-leader of Methodism, John Wesley anticipated every major universal "mega-strategy" that I have identified from existing Church

Growth research. He especially practiced and advanced three of them, and taught them to other Methodist leaders.

I. Wesley observed that "The Lord of the Harvest" is almost continually moving among some people to prepare a "harvest" for His Church to gather. He thereby discovered the principle of priority outreach to receptive people while it is "harvest time." He pursued the principle even more avidly than McGavran. For Wesley and the early Methodists, there were always "fields white unto harvest," because, in every season, the Holy Spirit (by His "prevenient grace") moved through the events and circumstances of *some* people's lives to open their hearts to the gospel. Wesley learned to perceive whether people were hostile, resistant, indifferent, interested, or receptive. Even before the 1738 experience at Aldersgate Street, which assured him of his justification and empowered him for apostolic ministry, Wesley had attempted to communicate the Christian religion to Native Indians in Georgia but found them unreceptive and came home. So he learned early to appreciate, and respond to, receptive people wherever he found them. He also learned to expend disproportionate time and energy where there was harvest to be gathered.

Of course, Wesley sometimes "looked a mob in the face" and ministered to other resistant populations. He knew that people are "softened by degrees," so by design he intentionally planted seeds that would later flower into an openness to the gospel. He also knew that, like flowers, people do not remain open forever. He thereby discovered a new source of evangelistic urgency-reaching receptive people while they are receptive, lest we miss the day of their visitation.

The principle informed his practice and his itinerary. In the cities, he reached out to the receptive new urban working peoples more than to resistant long time urban dwellers. In the countryside, mining peoples were found to be more receptive than farming peoples. The people of the South of England were less receptive than in the North-"where one Preacher is increased into seven." (*Works*, XII, 309.) But in the South, Bristol, Cornwall, and some of the populations of London also proved receptive. Wesley knew (as McGavran would rediscover) that "the masses" are generally more receptive than "the classes." Furthermore, Wesley knew why this had to be so:

I preached at Haddington, in Provost D's yard, to a very elegant congregation. But I expect little good will be done here, for we begin at the wrong end: religion must not go from the greatest to the least or the power would appear to be of men." (*Journal*, May 21, 1764, emphasis added.)

Mr. Wesley taught the Methodists to identify and reach out to receptive people. This strategy became a standard principle of Methodist evangelization. Excerpts from the Minutes of Several Conversations Between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and Others are especially memorable:

Q. Where should we endeavor to preach the most?

A. 1. Where there is the greatest number of quiet and willing hearers. 2. Where there is most fruit....

Q. Ought we not diligently to observe in what places God is pleased at any time to pour out his Spirit more abundantly?

A. We ought; and at that time to send more laborers than usual into that part of the harvest. (*Works*, VIII, 300-301.)

II. From their pragmatic philosophy, the Wesley brothers developed an 'indigenous' approach to ministry more than a century before anthropologists could tell us what to call it! Wesley sensed that a people's culture is the medium of God's revelation to them. He sensed that when the cultural form of ministry "fits" the people, they have the best chance to understand the possibility and respond. The Wesleys did not act on this principle without *kenosis*, or self emptying, of their own "Oxbridge" cultural tastes. However, they felt called to reach the working peoples of England, who never went to church, whom the established Church had written off. The Wesleys demonstrated that the forms of outreach which "fit" a people make it more possible for them to respond than do cultural forms which are alien to them.

So Wesley, and other Methodist preachers, typically engaged these unreached pagans in the open air-on their turf, perhaps a market square, or a church yard, or a park, or a wide city street, or a crossroads, or beside a mine, or a natural amphitheater. The approach became known as "Field Preaching." Wesley exclaimed that

I could scarcely reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields.... I had been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relative to decency and order that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church. (*Journal*, March 31, 1749.)

As an astute student of Rhetoric, Wesley considered the role of effective language in public communication, and he championed language with transparent meaning to the target audience. He attempted to rivet this value into *The Character of a Methodist*:

The most obvious, easy, common words, wherein our meaning can be conveyed, we prefer before others, both on ordinary occasions, and when we speak of the things of God. We never, therefore, willingly or designedly, deviate from the most usual way of speaking; unless when we express scripture truths in scripture words, which, we presume, no Christian will condemn. (*Works*, VIII, 340.)

And Wesley warned Methodists against "refining" the Christianity they had received which he saw as an inevitable temptation in Christians who experience what McGavran calls "redemption and lift," i.e. raised self-esteem, education, and upward mobility. With this comes, typically, some embarrassment about one's roots and some reach for greater "sophistication." Wesley, though learned himself, took a dim view of self-conscious sophistication and, especially, of new theologies that presume to improve upon classical Christianity. He declared that "to refine religion is to spoil it." (*Works*, XIII, 165.)

We have seen that Charles Wesley wrote an extensive indigenous hymnody for England's common people, an achievement of enduring Methodist pride, though this legacy is not as unique as chauvinistic Methodists fancy. Dr. Eugene Nida reminds us that "*all* creative and extensive periods of church growth have been characterized by an appropriate indigenous hymnody."

(in "Dynamics of Church Growth," Donald A. McGavran, ed. *Church Growth and Christian Mission*, Harper, 1965, p. 182.) Wesley, in addition, developed the Tract and the (somewhat longer) Pamphlet as indigenous forms of getting the Word out to people and instruction to the Methodists.

III. John Wesley pioneered and mastered the church growth principle called today (for want of a better generic term) "the multiplication of units." He was instrumental in the spawning of many hundreds of classes, bands, societies, and other groups with their distinct agendas, and he labored to develop the indigenous lay leadership this growing vast network of groups would need. He was driven most to multiplying "classes," for these served best as recruiting groups, ports of entry for new people, and for involving awakened people with the gospel and its power. Much of his entire strategy can be summarized in four maxims: 1. Preach and visit in as many places as you can. 2. Go most where they want you most. 3. Start as many classes as can be effectively managed. 4. Do *not* preach where you cannot enroll awakened people into classes.

You see how important class multiplication was in Wesley's thinking by observing how he concluded a field preaching session. Most often, he invited people to join a class sometimes a new class, that would meet that evening. He explained the *one condition* that people had to meet to *join a class simply* the *desire* "to flee the wrath to come," to know God's acceptance, and live a higher life. (See A. Skevington Wood, *The Burning Heart: John Wesley, Evangelist*, London, 1967, ti. XIV.) An entourage traveled with Wesley, and during open air services they scattered among the crowd, studying faces, conversing with persons, and inviting them to join a class. The salient objective in much of the field preaching was the starting of classes.

Wesley's rationale for this practice is rooted in his understanding of the process, by stages, in which people become Christians, and upon which he based his practice of evangelism. In brief, he believed that you

1. *Awaken* people-to the fact of their lostness, their sins, their need for God.
2. *Enroll* awakened people in a class, (and, in three months, in a Methodist Society).
3. Teach awakened enrolled people to *expect* to experience their *justification*.
4. Teach justified people to *expect* to experience their *sanctification*, in this life.

This four stage process is consistent with his theological design (which Albert Outler refers to as Wesley's "*Ordo Salutis*"). The stages served as distinct objectives for evangelistic ministry to assist the Spirit to achieve in the lives of unchurched pagans.

In eighteenth century Methodism's evangelical ministry, the ministries of field preaching and Christian witnessing pursued the first two objectives: 1) to awaken people, and 2) to enroll awakened people into a "class," i.e., a lay-led redemptive cell. From the experiences of the class meeting, most of the awakened people experienced, in time, their acceptance and reconciliation to God; and some of the justified people, in time, experienced the completion of the work God began in their initial acceptance.

For Wesley, evangelism (in, the focused sense of the spiritual obstetrics" that makes new birth possible) primarily took place in the class meetings and in people's hearts in the hours following class meetings. In Lord Soper's words, Wesley believed that Christianity is "more caught than taught." Moreover, Wesley observed that awakening people without folding them into redemptive cells does more harm than good! In a *Journal* entry of 1743 he inferred that

The devil himself desires nothing more than this, that the people of any place should be half awakened and then left to themselves to fall asleep again. Therefore, I determine by the grace of God not to strike one stroke in any place where I cannot follow the blow.

So, in the *Minutes of Several Conversations*, Mr. Wesley is asked

Q. Is it advisable for us to preach in as many places as we can, without forming any societies?

A. By no means. We have made the trial in various places; and that for a considerable time. But all the seed has fallen as by the highway side. There is scarce any fruit remaining. (*Works*, VIII, 300).

In other insights, Wesley would help today's Church Growth community of scholars find some new ways forward.

For instance, Wesley would challenge today's "comity" arrangements in missions and inter church relations, arrangements in which, say, the Methodists do not minister among the Native American Indians of the Dakotas because historically the government assigned the Dakotas to the Episcopalians, who aren't doing anything! It would remind him of the Anglican Church's counter-productive "parish" System and of the time he was scolded for "preaching in another manes parish." Mr. Wesley believed that *all* church policies and structures should be judged by whether they facilitate or frustrate "the work of God" and the "spread of true religion." He saw the parish system as frustrating the Great Commission, and therefore declared that, as one called into apostolic ministry, "I look upon all the world as my parish."

Wesley would have the ordination standards for clergy serve the apostolic mission of the Church as, indeed, the Church's *whole organization* is supposed to serve that mission. He used four criteria for discerning the persons who "are moved by the Holy Ghost" to enter vocational ministry: a) "Do they know God?" b) "Have they gifts?" c) "Have they graces?" d) "Have they fruit? Are any truly converted of sin, and converted to God, by their preaching?" Contemporary Methodist conferences generally take the first for granted, and have eliminated the fourth, thereby producing many clergy who are, at best, competent chaplains for people who are already Christians.

Wesley, as a student of Rhetoric, was aware of how vital is the "ethos" and credibility of the preachers and laity in the spread of faith. It matters, supremely, that Christians live by the faith they commend, that they understand it, be growing in it, and feel compassionate good will for the lost who have not found The Way. Among his dozens of allusions to this principle,

his "Short Method" for the conversion of Ireland is most memorable. He declared there to be "one way" to achieve this bold proposal

and one only; one that will (not probably, but) infallibly succeed. If this way is taken, I am willing to stake my life upon the success of it. And it is a plain, simple way, . . .

Here, therefore is the short and sure method. Let all the clergy of the Church of Ireland only live like the Apostles, and preach like the Apostles, and the thing is done. (*Works*, X, 130.)

The worth of John Wesley's church growth ideas is demonstrated in Methodism's experience. British Methodism's period of greatest growth came in the generation *after* Wesley's death, when the leaders were soaked in his normative writings and ideas. Wesley had few (if any) Church Growth secrets. In his voluminous writing he shared, piecemeal, virtually everything he knew.

Wesley's general diffusion of Church Growth principles enabled Francis Asbury to emigrate to America and duplicate Wesley's achievement in the new country. Indeed, by Wesley's death American Methodism had already grown to the strength of British Methodism. Though Asbury is commonly thought of as Wesley's "apprentice," there is no evidence of any extensive tutorial relationship. The achievement was informed by Asbury's having become "possessed of Mr. Wesley's writings, and for some years almost laid aside all other books but the Bible, and applied himself exceedingly closely in reading every book that Mr. Wesley had written." (Quoted in Frank Baker, *From Wesley to Asbury: Studies in Early American Methodism*, Duke University Press, 1976, p. 116) Indeed, Asbury's sophisticated grasp of Wesley's ideas enabled him strategically to adapt them to the different challenge the American mission field presented.

The day for John Wesley's strategic wisdom is not over, for many of his principles have perennial validity. As Wesley's "strategic genius" is rediscovered, he will become one of the strategic fountainheads of the Christian movement facing the twenty-first century.

EGOCENTRIC EVANGELISM

by

Richard E. Howard

It seems like the Christian Church has always been faddish. In a sense the Crusades of the Middle Ages were a fad. To use a modern expression, it became the "in thing" to raise an army to attempt to wrestle the Holy Land out of the grip of the "Muslim infidels." How often today do we run after some new and exciting enterprise that offers great possibilities? But how many times does it prove to be a dead-end street or run out in a desert wasteland? Most of us are sorely tempted by that which captures the fancy of the multitudes. We want to be where the action is and get on the "spiritual bandwagon." More than any of us want to admit, we are greatly impressed by that which "works" or produces results that are dramatic and highly visible.

Today one such emphasis has pretty well moved to center stage. From every side we are urged to think positively. The development of self-esteem, or a sense of self worth, is given the number one priority. We are told that only this can produce the self-confidence one must have to succeed in life. For some time this basic philosophy has been prominent in the market place. Well paid motivators are kept busy selling this sales' psychology (and I use the term loosely) to both gigantic corporations and small promotional gatherings. Let's be candid! It does work! It sells cars, insurance, Amway, and an endless list of products.

What should concern us is that it has invaded the church. The Gospel must be positive! There is no place for a message about man's sinful needs. Instead, we must emphasize the "worth of the human person" and not "damage his positive self-esteem." If we do, it will result in "destroying a fundamental part of a person's very being."¹

Again, we should face the fact that such positive thinking does work. It builds super churches — even glass ones! A modern high priest of this cult has even identified original sin as the lack of self-esteem. It is put into these words:

But we feel too unworthy. So one layer of negative behavior is laid upon another until we emerge as rebellious sinners. But our rebellion is a reaction, not our nature. By nature we are

fearful, not bad. Original sin is not a mean streak; it is a no-trusting inclination.

But core of original sin, then is LOT — Lack of Trust. Or, it could be considered an innate inability to adequately value ourselves. Label it a "negative self-image," but do not say that the central core of the human soul is wickedness. If this were so, then truly, the human being is totally depraved. But positive Christianity does not hold to human depravity, but to human inability. I am humanly unable to correct my negative self-image until I encounter a life changing experience with nonjudgmental love bestowed upon me by a Person whom I admire so much that to be unconditionally accepted by him is to be born again.²

Did you hear it? Original sin is "the innate inability to adequately value ourselves." Wayne Sawyer, the author of the article mentioned above, concludes that Robert Schuller, in his book *Self-esteem: The New Reformation*, reaches this position: "When a person finds self-esteem through Christ, then his need to sin will be removed" and "he (Schuller) has equated gaining self-esteem with Christian salvation."³

Of prime importance to this segment of our program is that this emphasis on the "self" is increasingly tied to evangelism. We win the lost to Christ by building up their self-esteem. It has even been suggested that this is an identifying mark of Wesleyan evangelism as distinct from Lutheran, Calvinistic and Reformed traditions. "In fact, the Arminian-Wesleyan perspective has always had a theological open door to Schuller's new direction."⁴

I am convinced that, at least in part, this emphasis on self-esteem, is due to a reaction to what is often facetiously called "worm theology." The Psalmist wrote: "But I am a worm, and not a man..." (Ps. 22:6).⁵ From this, Isaac Watts asked the question in one of his hymns: "Would He devote that sacred head for such a worm as I?"⁶ It is understandable why such a caricature might develop from the Augustinian view of total depravity.

Certainly another facet of the emphasis on self worth is semantic. It is argued that the great value of self-esteem is that it results in self-confidence. But what is meant by self-confidence? This is a good example of how the most dangerous heresy lies closest to the truth. Self-confidence can mean that I as a "self," or person, face life with confidence. In a proper sense it is feeling good about *life*. Certainly such is a vital part of victorious living. In fact, a life of victory is impossible without it. However, self-confidence can also mean that I have confidence in *myself*. The second meaning is the one most often held and is closer to the common dictionary definition: "Belief in or reliance on oneself or one's abilities."⁷ Right here is the crucial difference. Self-confidence is generally understood as feeling good *about myself* and not about *my life*. This is particularly so when self-confidence (I can do it) is closely associated with self value (I am worth something) and self appreciation (I like myself).

It seems to me that there is a basic conflict between this emphasis on self-esteem and the general tenor of the New Testament, especially in Jesus and Paul. How can you reconcile the building of self worth with Jesus' penetrating warning: "He who has found his life shall lose it, and he who has lost his life for my sake shall find it?" (Matt. 10:39, cf. Matt. 16:24).

Jesus' identification of self-denial with discipleship can hardly be interpreted as the building up of self. ". . . If any one wishes to come after me, let him deny himself...." (Matt. 16:24). Richard Foster's treatment of the true meaning of self-denial is shared by many of us. ". . . Jesus called us to self-denial without self-hatred. Self-denial is simply a way of coming to understand that we do not have to have our own way."⁸ When Jesus spoke of the last being first and the first last or the one who serves (Matt. 20:27; 23: 11; Mk. 10:44), He was not speaking of how to gain power or influence on others,⁹ but certainly had reference to how one views himself. What did Jesus mean when He stated: "For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted?" (Lk. 14:11, cf. Lk. 18:14). When Jesus rebuked Peter as the tool of Satan, He went on to say: ". . . for you are not setting your mind (*phroneo*) on God's interests, but man's" (Matt. 16:23). I have sometimes facetiously asked: Can't you hear Jesus advising Peter — "What you need, Peter, is to think more of yourself"?

Paul, like his Lord before him, no less emphasized the very opposite of the building of self-esteem. What else can Phil. 2:3, 4 mean?

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself, do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Romans 12:3, especially as translated by J. B. Phillips, has often put me on my knees.

As your spiritual teacher I give this piece of advice to each one of you. Don't cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance, but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities by the light of the faith that God has given to you all.

Could it be that today's emphasis on the self is the "mind of the flesh" (*phronema*) that Paul so vividly contrasted with the "mind of the Spirit" (Cf. Rom. 8:5-7)?

One of the most often used scriptures to support the building of self-esteem is a reference to Jesus' interpretation of the commandments. ". . . YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF" (Matt. 22:39). Does this mean that Jesus commanded us to love ourselves? Such a conclusion is an interpretation at best, and I personally don't think it is a good one. Rather, I think Jesus meant that we should love others *as persons* like ourselves.¹⁰

But beyond these observations let me suggest a few areas of concern that ought to raise some basic questions. Dr. James Dobson, the renowned psychologist and family counselor, because he is a deeply committed Christian, faced head on the question of the relationship between the emphasis on self worth (which he strongly advocates) and the teaching of scripture. He writes: "May I stress, further, that the quest for self-esteem can take us in the direction of unacceptable pride."¹¹ He then proceeds to identify some varying concepts of pride and defends his treatment of self-esteem as not being in conflict with Biblical perspectives. Unfortunately, the objections to the emphasis on self-esteem are much greater than his treatment of pride.

1. The Pauline Concept of Sin.

I certainly realize that the New Testament teaching on sin is much more extensive than that found in Paul's letters. I am reminded of the time, several years ago, when my department head facetiously stated in chapel that the religion department was praying that I would discover that Jesus was in the New Testament. Although I admit to prejudice, it is in Paul that we find the most extensive treatment of hamartiology. Further, any competence I might possess would be in Pauline studies. It is striking that in spite of his extensive treatment of *hamartia*,¹² Paul does not formulate a definition of sin per se. Burton writes: "Yet he (Paul) nowhere clearly indicates that even after his conversion he worked out for the generic idea of sin a definition corresponding to that which he found for righteousness in the idea of love."¹³

Certainly most of us are aware that *hamartia* was originally not an ethical term. It simply indicated the missing of the mark, often in athletic contests such as the javelin throw, archery or boxing.¹⁴ It is my opinion, although I can't prove it, that *hamartia* is one of several Greek words that were given an enlarged or even totally new meaning by the earliest Christians.¹⁵ Consequently, a study of the use of *hamartia* in pre Christian Greek does not reveal its essential meaning. Through a succession of Greek cases, Paul increasingly personified sin in Rom. 5:12 to 8:10. First sin is the sphere, even the *personal object* of man's action,¹⁶ then it is viewed as a *possessing agent*,¹⁷ and finally as a ruling power that reigns over man as his master.¹⁸ It is interesting that Paul never called Adam's transgression *hamartia*, but *paraptoma* (6 times), *parabasis*, *parakoe* and *hamartano*. Instead he pictures *hamartia* as being let loose in the world through Adam's transgression.

It is important that we not confuse definition (what it is) with description (what it does). When New Testament scholars attempt to define *hamartia* there is a striking relationship to "self." Barclay says: "Sin means listening to oneself instead of listening to God."¹⁹ Bultmann defines sin as "self-delusion" and "self-reliance."²⁰ Paul Tillich states that "sin is the turning toward ourselves, making ourselves the center of the world of ourselves."²¹ In Kittel, Walter Grundmann uses such phrases, while treating *hamartia*, as: "active hostility to God and resistance to His will on the part of man who wills to be independent and to rule his own life" (309), "Sin is the rejection of God by self-assertive man" (310), "(Sin is) the failure to acknowledge God which is for Paul the original sin." (311)²² In *Newness of Life* I attempt to briefly explain my rationale for defining original sin as "self-sovereignty."²³ Perhaps Oscar Reed's definition of sin as "self idolatry" is more Biblical and Millard Reed's identification of sin as the "*delusion* of self sovereignty" is truer to the facts of experience.

What troubles me is that the modern emphasis on self-esteem, self worth (personal or human worth), and self-confidence can only result in a self-centeredness that makes one vulnerable to sin. It is only a hair's breadth between self-confidence and self-sufficiency-which Paul clearly considers sin. When I am sufficient in myself, I have no need of God. Does that not lead directly to what Paul calls not "honoring" God (Rom. 1:21), not giving to Him "thanks" (Rom. 1:21) and refusing to "acknowledge" God (Rom. 1:28)?

2. The Pauline Concept of Grace.

Closely tied to the question of sin and self-esteem is the relationship of the emphasis on self worth to Paul's doctrine of grace. For him, sin and grace are always inseparable. A commonly used appeal for the development of self worth is the argument that we must be worth something if God was willing to send Jesus to the Cross for us. This misses the whole truth about grace. It wasn't because we were worth something that Christ died for us. It was while we were "helpless" (*astheneo*, Rom.5:6), "sinners" (*hamartolos*, Rom. 5:8) and "enemies" (*echthroi*, Rom.5:10) that Christ died for us. But I don't need to trace the condition of the recipients of grace to you. Christ died for us in spite of what we are.

In his excellent little book, *The Message of the New Testament*, F. F. Bruce shows how grace was at the heart of the message of Jesus and Paul.²⁴ One statement beautifully applies to what we are examining:

In fact, we need have no illusions that to the end of the chapter we shall be anything more than unprofitable servants, but we know whom we have believed, and our confidence is in him. And how can such a grace be accepted otherwise than in childlike trust, grateful faith? For Paul, as for Jesus, "religion is grace, and ethics is gratitude."²⁵

I would suggest to you that today's emphasis on "self" fails to appreciate what grace means. It substitutes the humanistic acceptance of self instead of a total dependence on grace. How is it possible to experience grace while we are convincing ourselves of what I call a "Jack Horner mentality?" "He stuck in his thumb and pulled out a plum and said: 'what a good boy am I.' "

3. The Threat of Humanism

Although I have never researched it, I strongly suspect that the modern emphasis on self worth is directly related to the widespread influence of psychology even on the gospel. Without a doubt there are areas of expertise in which this relatively modern scientific discipline makes an essential contribution. Unfortunately, the parameters of these areas are not clearly defined. As a result, counseling, based on psychological and psychiatric investigation, at times exceeds its proper function. By very definition, psychology is limited to the examination and understanding of the human psyche. Psychology is defined as: "a. The science dealing with the mind and mental process, feelings, desires, etc. b. The science of human and animal behavior."²⁶ Of greatest significance to a group such as ours is the fact that when a counselor psychologist seeks to offer therapy for spiritual need he is limited, if he is true to his discipline, to human resources. It is most commonly stated as having within ourselves the resources for the solution of our problem and needs.

It is grossly unfair to view all professional psychologists as practicing the same therapy. There are psychologists who deny any valid experience of the supernatural and are obviously agnostic. Based on such a premise, their therapy must be humanistic. With no basis of Christian ethics, the extremes of this humanistic therapy can be unbelievable.

During the past decade, for example, we've seen the rise of the "Me" generation, nurtured carefully by humanistic psycholo-

gists, who accept no scriptural dictates. One of the best-selling books of this era was entitled *Looking Out for #1*, which instructed its readers to grab the best for themselves. Widely quoted mottos reflect the same selfish orientation, including IF IT FEELS GOOD, DO IT and DO YOUR OWN THING. This philosophy of "me" first has the power to blow our world to pieces, whether applied to marriage, business, or international politics.²⁷

Dr. Dobson, himself a professional psychologist, further states: "Believe it or not, one of the major areas of controversy at psychiatric conferences a few years ago involved the wisdom of female patients having sexual intercourse with their male therapists."²⁸ If, as I have projected, the emphasis on self worth is tied to the influence of psychology, then such humanistic presuppositions are very important to our consideration of self-esteem.

But, thank God, there are Christian psychologists and psychiatrists! However, we must realize that not every psychologist or psychiatrist, who is a committed Christian practices Christian therapy. It is subtle! Because of predominantly humanistic and behavioristic training, it is easy to practice such therapy — without seeming to realize that it is non Christian. I have great personal appreciation for Dr. James Dobson, from reading his books and viewing his films. He clearly states: "My purpose has been to help mothers and father preserve an inner physical, mental and spiritual health. And I believe that objective is in harmony with Biblical perspectives."²⁹ This is what he identifies as developing a sense of self-esteem.

Jesus did not leave His throne in Heaven to die for the "worms of the world. His sacrifice was intended . . . for me and all of His followers, whom He is not embarrassed to call brothers. What a concept! If Jesus is now my brother, then that puts me in the family of God, and guarantees that I will outlive the universe itself. And that friends, is what I call genuine self-esteem.... I'm equally convinced that the Bible does not condemn an attitude of quiet self-respect and dignity. Jesus commanded us to love our neighbors as ourselves, implying not only that we are permitted a reasonable expression of self love, but that love for other is impossible until we experience a measure of self-respect.³⁰

I repeat again that this is subtle! Jesus *also* said: "For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted" (Lk. 14:11). In the same book Dr. Dobson, after describing the causes for inadequacy and lowest, likening them to a long chain, states: "You can free yourself from the weight of the chain if you turn it loose.... The sooner *you can accept the transcending worth of your humanness*, the sooner you can come to terms with yourself."³¹ That sounds very humanistic to me, with no mention of a need for God's help. It is shocking how easily we can be influenced by such teaching, and a startling number of our people are!

A leader in my church, not too long ago, gave me a booklet. I will not mention its name and author. He encouraged me to read it, writing in the front: "Here's a book that I've enjoyed. Hope you like it." When I read it,

I was stunned by its blatant humanism. It never mentioned God once! Let me share just a few of the statements from it.

They (men) themselves are makers of themselves (7) . . . Man is made or unmade by himself (12) . . . By the right choice and true application of thought, man ascends to the Divine Perfection (13) . . . As a being of Power, Intelligence, and Love, and the lord of his own thoughts man holds the key to every situation, and contains within himself that transforming and regenerating agency by which he may make himself what he wills (13, 14) . . . The "divinity" that shapes our ends is in ourselves; it is our very self (21) . . . The weakest soul knowing its own weakness and believing this truth — that strength can only be developed by effort and practice — will, thus believing, at once begin to exert itself, and, adding effort to effort, patience to patience, and strength to strength, will never cease to develop, and will at last grow divinely strong.(42)

Is this where the pursuit of self worth and self-esteem leads? At the very least such an obsession makes one vulnerable to humanism.

4. Does It Work?

I might be sadly mistaken, but in my opinion the great majority of us do not take seriously the teaching that equates the gaining of self-esteem with salvation. I hope that we are agreed that:

And there is salvation in no one else (Jesus); for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

Only through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, the forsaking of our sins through repentance, and faith in the shed blood of Christ can we find forgiveness of our sins and new life in Christ. We don't believe we can win the lost by building up their self-esteem. What troubles me greatly, however, is that I am seeing evidence that many are convinced *that a healthy sense of self worth is the key to victorious living*. In fact, they are seeking spiritual health through counseling where the basic objective is to develop such self-esteem.

My last question for us to consider is — *does it work?* If we are totally honest with ourselves, there is a certain amount of pragmatism in all of us. We are interested in that which will work and meet men's needs. Is a sense of self worth the secret to victorious living? When our world crashes down around us, does it help very much to feel good about ourselves? In the hour of sudden tragedy or calamity, do we find strength in the fact that we have a sense of self worth? When temptation attacks us with sudden fury, are we able to overcome it by depending upon our self-confidence? Or, as we face the strains and demands of everyday living, does this sense of self-esteem bring peace and victory? I seriously doubt it! Only a vital, continuing relationship of dependence on the Holy Spirit can bring the spiritual triumph that God has promised to all of us.

It does no good to set up a straw man, and then with smugness knock it down. Those who advocate the development of self-esteem as the answer to meeting life's needs are dealing with real needs — often needs that we have

failed to minister to! Sadly, there are too many defeated Christians! What is the answer to life's demands and surprises? Let me suggest what I think is the alternative to inadequacy, inferiority and fear on one side — and the pursuit of self worth, that offers little more than human help, on the other. I am convinced that this is the scriptural answer. We need to face life with confidence and trust! Certainly we all know the destructive effects of the opposite — inadequacy, whether from humiliation, failure, embarrassment, rejection and a score of other causes. The answer is certainly not a pseudo humility of self-effacement, self negation or self-hatred, let alone self mortification. Where can we find peace and assurance? I am convinced that the peace we need is God's peace (cf. Phil. 4:7). But, to pursue it further, where does God's peace come from? Too often we forget that God's peace is a *fruit* of the Spirit and not a *gift* of the Spirit. In more modern terms, peace is a by-product and not directly bestowed.

What is it that brings God's peace into our lives? Sometimes it takes my patient Lord a long time to teach me very elementary things. I am beginning to learn that *it is God's Presence that brings His peace*. In the context of that glorious promise of God meeting our needs (Phil. 4:19), Paul wrote: "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; *and the God of peace shall be with you*" (Phil. 4:9, italic added). We have the peace of God as the God of peace is with us. But isn't God always with us? Right there is the "rub." Sometimes we are conscious of God's Presence, and then His peace abounds. But what about those times when we are not conscious of His Presence? One of the cutting edges of my devotional life is trying to learn that "in times like these," when I am not conscious of God's Presence, I can be *confident* of His Presence. Consciousness is based on feeling while confidence is based on faith — in His promises and provisions. Feelings are intermittent, but faith can and must be constant. A confident faith can bring a sense of God's Presence — even when we are not conscious that He is with us.

But, I am learning that this is a life-long discipline. Two personal experiences last summer vividly illustrate this. For some time I had been specifically praying about living with a sense of God's Presence, and thought I was making progress. We were preparing for an overseas assignment, and while driving east I discovered my Visa card was missing. I confess that I panicked! There is more than one way to lose your cool! I didn't want to put my "credit guard" into action because I needed that Visa card over-seas. My wife tried to assure me that as we prayed it would be all right. But again I confess that I really didn't have peace until, after some frantic phone calls, the missing card was located. Then I felt ashamed and rebuked. Later, when we arrived in Johannesburg, South Africa for a six week stay, not one of our four pieces of checked baggage could be found. Looking back on the situation now, I am amazed and grateful that at the time of stress I had a wonderful sense of God's peace. Even more up-to-date, I would like to testify that since I received the "sudden curve" that keeps me from being here today, God's peace has been constant! Still, I realize that it is a lesson that I must continuously learn through prayer.

I would like to close with some searching questions that we all need to face. Don't we need to feel bad about ourselves in order to experience true conviction? Is not such conviction the only basis for the true repentance that

brings forgiveness. I remember well my renowned seminary professor, Nels Ferre', repeatedly saying: "God has two faces. We must see His face of wrath (and is that not because of my sin and what I am?) before we can see His face of love" I seriously wonder if the insistence upon developing self worth is the Devil's plan — and I do believe in a personal Devil — to discredit genuine conviction. Can I depend upon myself and at the same time depend upon God? One of the meanest tricks of the Devil is to get us to depend upon *anything but God*. Do I have to feel good about myself to feel good about life? Dr. Dobson even sees some value in inferiority.

Inferiority can either crush and paralyze an individual, or it can provide tremendous emotional energy which powers every kind of success and achievement. Remember that the same boiling water that hardens the egg will soften the carrots. Everything depends on the individual's *reaction* to stressful circumstances.³²

There are basically three *human* bases for assurance — pleasant circumstances, pleasing other people and self-confidence. Could not any circumstance, even a feeling of inferiority, be overcome by a fourth reaction — trust in God? This is what I call "Christ-confidence."³³ Is not Christ confidence the New Testament alternative to either a destructive inferiority or a fragile self-confidence? Can I not have full confidence in Christ, while feeling personally inadequate?

Finally a question that troubles me most. Is today's popular emphasis on the building of self-esteem and self worth, as the basis for facing life with assurance and confidence, a cheap substitute for the "costly" life of the Spirit? In one of his books A. W. Tozer, whom I call the "Pastor Prophet," wrote a searching article entitled: "Are There Shortcuts to the Beauty of Holiness?"³⁴ I wonder, if he were alive today, would he not identify the modern obsession with self worth as a crucial part of the "cult of peace" that he so forcibly attacked?

NOTES

1. Cf. the article by Wayne Sawyer, entitled: "A Wesleyan Looks at Schuller's New Reformation"; The Preacher's Magazine, Dec.-Feb., 1984- 85, 49.

2. Robert Schuller, Self-esteem: The New Reformation (Word Books, Waco, 1982), 66, 67.

3. Op. cit., 50.

4. Ibid, 49. Sawyer seems to moderate this position by terming the Wesleyan theological perspective as "an in-between position" later in his article.⁵⁰

5. Unless otherwise indicated all scripture quotations are taken from the N.A.S.B.

6. "At The Cross."

7. Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, College edition (The World Publishing Co., Cleveland and N.Y., 1966).

8. Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (Harper & Row, N.Y., 1978), 99.

9. This was well stated by Anthony Compolo in a chapel address entitled: "The Christian's use of Power" at Bethany Nazarene College on April 25, 1985. There are excerpts in the BNC alumni Magazine *The Perspective*, Spring-Summer, 1985.

10. This phrase ("as yourself," *hos seauton*) is the same in all Biblical references — Lev.19:18 (LXX), Matt.19:19; 22:39; Mk.12:31; Lk.10:27; Rom. 13:9; Gal.5: 14; James 2:8. "Hos" is either a comparative particle or conjunction. In A. & G.'s long treatment of "hos" the references above are not mentioned. It is strictly interpretative to use it in an elliptical manner ("love your neighbor as you love yourself"). The context does not support such an interpretation or comparison.

11. James Dobson, Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Ill., 4th Printing, 1984), 312.

12. In Rom. 5:12 — 8:10 hamartia is used 40 times, which is twice as much as in all the rest of Paul's writings.

13. E.D.W. Burton, ICC, Galatians (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1962), 442.

14. William Barclay, *The Plain Man Looks at the Lord's Prayer*, (Collins Clear-Type Press, London, 1964), 100.

15. Cf. Paul's new and veritably exclusive, use of nous. Cf. Richard Howard, *Newness of Life* (Nazarene Publishing House, Kansas City, 1975), 23, 24.

16. The dative case is used in 6:1, 2, 6(c).

17. The genitive case is used in 6:6(b), cf. also 6:17, 20, 22, 23.

18. The nominative case is used in 6:12, 14; 7:8, 9, 13 (3), 17, 18.

19. *The Mind of St. Paul* (Harper & Row, Pub., New York, 1958), 187.

20. *Theology of the NT*, Vol. 1 tr. by Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), 232.

21. "The Good I Will, I Do Not," *Religion in Life*, 28 (1958/59), 545.

22. Gerhard Kittel, Editor, *Theological Dictionary of the NT* (tr. By Geoffrey W. Bromiley), Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1964, Vol. 1. 309-311.

23. *Op. cit.*, 35-44.

24. F. F. Bruce, *The Message of the NT* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1973), 29ff.

25. *Ibid*, 31 (*italic added*).

26. Op. cit.
27. Dobson, op. cit., 312.
28. Ibid, 308.
29. Ibid., 312.
30. Ibid, 311, 312.
31. Ibid, 309, (*italic added*).
32. Ibid, 179.
33. Cf. Phil.4:13 — "I can do all things through him who strengthens me."
34. A. W. Tozer, *Who Put Jesus On The Cross?* (Harrisburg: Christian Publications, Inc., 1975) 18ff.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

by

Alex R. G. Deasley

INTRODUCTION: THE POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF QUMRAN TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In turning to the Qumran Scrolls in the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit one must first seek to define their potential contribution in general terms. Qumran studies, soon to enter their fifth decade, are assuming a degree of maturity that could scarcely have been looked for hitherto.¹ Assumptions once accepted without demur are being subjected to severe testing, where they are not abandoned altogether; and questions are being pressed which go to the heart of the description of the thought of the community. For example, of all of the documents in their varying degrees of completeness found in the Qumran caves, which may be taken as representative of the mind of the sect? Even if one works with the assumption — and it is no more than an assumption — that they preserved chiefly books which they valued, did they value them all equally? This is hardly probable, since some of these texts — notably some of the Pseudepigrapha such as the Book of Jubilees, and some of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs — were used elsewhere than at Qumran; while on the other hand some texts have been found only at Qumran and were evidently produced there. From this perspective it would seem that the most one could expect would be a central heart of light fading into a surrounding penumbra of shade the further one moves from the center.

Or to pose another question: to what extent have we the right to expect homogeneity of thought in the Dead Sea documents? To the Western mind discontinuities of thought are largely unacceptable as being illogical, and illogicality is self condemned. But we need to remind ourselves that the Judaism of the New Testament period comprehended at least two groups which held widely disparate views about matters such as spirit beings, resurrection, the life to come without finding it necessary to anathematize each other.

To ask yet one more question bearing on our interest: in investigating Qumran teaching about the Holy Spirit are we investigating the mind of a group that occupied a central place on the stage of Jewish thought or merely

that of an extremist and somewhat fanatical splinter sect? Accepting that there was some kind of connection between the Qumran community and the Essenes — they have too much in common for that to be credibly denied — they nonetheless cannot be equated without remainder. Thus the legislation of the Damascus Rule seems clearly to presuppose family life in camps but in a setting where association with non-members for business purposes is a possibility (cf. CD X 14-XI 6; XII 6b-11, 19); whereas the legislation of the Rule of the Community seems clearly to be directed to a group that was both self-contained and isolated (cf. IQS I 11-13, V 1-24, VI 2-23, etc.).² However this problem be resolved: either by the expedient of difference in dating, the Qumran sect being regarded as a later form of the Damascus Community; or by the suggestion of difference in function, the Qumran settlement being seen as the training center or seminary for leaders in the Essene sect;³ the fact remains that the sectarians inhabited the fringes of Jewish society, the claims of Josephus to the contrary notwithstanding.⁴

These questions are raised here not to be answered directly, but rather to provide a framework within which to approach the subject, and in particular to evaluate the evidence that may be gleaned from the Qumran Scrolls. Before turning to that, however, a prior task claims our attention. Wherever and whenever the precise origins of the Qumran sect are to be located, they did not appear from nowhere. Whatever we may or may not know about them, they stood within the tradition of Judaism at the close of the Old Testament period. Our first question must therefore be to ask: whatever they made of the materials with which they began, what were those materials with which they had to work as they began their own thinking about the Holy Spirit?

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

This leads us directly to the holy spirit in the Old Testament. Without doubt this was where the Qumran covenanters began. "There shall never lack a man among them who shall study the Law continually, day and night," says the Community Rule (VI 6b);⁵ and the presence in at least fragmentary form in the caves of every book of the Old Testament with the exception of Esther bears witness to their seriousness, as the Pesharim bear witness to their diligence. What then would they be likely to have learned of the holy spirit from their study? To summarize the Old Testament evidence is not easy, but at the risk of oversimplification one may set it down in the following statements.⁶

First, the word *ruach*, with which we may begin, denotes fundamentally "movement of air," and comes in consequence to carry derivative denotations such as "wind" or "breath." Inevitably it was associated with Yahweh, as the expression of His power at the Red Sea (Exod. 14:21) for example. Thereby it came to represent God's power in contrast to human feebleness: "The Egyptians are men and not God; and their horses are flesh, and not *ruach*" (Isa. 31:3).⁷

Second, it is but an extension of this idea into the personal realm for *ruach* to be associated with persons. For man also has breath or spirit. So it is that the term *ruach* comes to be used for "person" or "self" as in Ps. 31:5: "Into thy hand I commend my *ruach*;" or Ps. 32:2: "Blessed is the man in whose *ruach* there is no deceit." This is indeed an aspect of Old Testament psychology more commonly denoted by the term *nephesh*.⁸ but it seems

as though the place of that term, which denotes the life man shares with all things living including animals, is progressively taken over by *ruach* as attention is focused increasingly on the *ruach* of man as the center of his personal self.⁹ Yet a third application of the term is found in reference to aspects of personality such as emotions and moods, the intellect and the will. Unhappiness is described as "trouble of spirit" (I Sam. 1:15); depression or despair as "faintness of spirit" (Isa. 61:3); anger is "disturbance of spirit" (Prov. 1:23); understanding is the "spirit of wisdom" (Deut. 34:9); the intent or will to harm is the "spirit of a destroyer" (Jer. 51:1). The term *ruach* is thus used to describe personal quality.

A fourth use is that of "spirit" to refer to quasi personal beings. Such uses are not common in the Old Testament but they are there. Micaiah ben Imlah, explains how Ahab is lured to his doom thus: "Then a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, 'I will entice him.' And the Lord said to him, 'By what means?' And he said, 'I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets' " (I Kings 22:21f). Akin to this are passages in which the spirit of Yahweh comes upon Saul (I Sam. 10:6, ·10) or Samson (Judg. 14:6, 19) or the Seventy Elders (Num. 11:24ff), inducing ecstasy or prophetic utterance. It is, indeed, difficult to distinguish clearly between this fourth use and the third; at the very least it is a more vivid way of describing the spirit, and borders on attributing to it independent status, albeit under the control of Yahweh.¹⁰

Now underlying these four usages is a common assumption: that man, being himself spirit, is thereby open to the power of Yahweh who is the Lord of spirit. Indeed, the mark of Yahweh's Servant par excellence is that Yahweh has put his *ruach* upon him (Isa. 42:1); and the goal of Old Testament expectation is that Yahweh will pour out his *ruach* upon all flesh (Joel 2:28, 3:1, Heb.). Nowhere is this possible interaction expressed more vividly than in Ps. 51:10-12:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from thy presence,
and take not thy holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit."

C. F. D. Moule comments: "What is specially significant here . . . is that the psalmist sees *ruach*, spirit, as within him and as part of him — almost as an attitude or character; and yet, the same word stands for something that belongs to God and may even be taken away by God. This suggests that even what may be called a man's spirit is not necessarily his own, or inherently his: it may be God's spirit in him."¹¹

If one reviews this evidence of Old Testament usage with a forward looking eye toward Qumran one may make three further observations. First, and deriving from the immediately preceding point: a feature that is in conspicuously short supply in the Old Testament is mention of the holy spirit. Apart from the example in Ps. 51:11 just cited, there is but one other. Isa. 63:10-12 reads: "But they rebelled and grieved his holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy.... Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses his servant. Where is he who brought up out of the sea the shepherds of

his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his holy Spirit, who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses?" Second, in the Old Testament a particular sphere of the spirit's activity is prophecy. As we have already seen, the coming of the spirit upon the Seventy Elders makes prophets of them (Num. 11:24ff) as of others (I Sam. 10:6, 10-13; 19:20-23), an outcome which Moses wishes would be true of all of the people of Yahweh (Num. 11:29). A related point is that the giving of the prophetic spirit, whether in the form of charismatic seizure characteristic of the early period (e.g. Saul), or in the more restrained and permanent form typical of the later prophets (Ezek. 2:2; 3:24; Neh. 9:30; Zech. 7:12), appears to occur at critical moments in the history of God's saving dealings with His people. That is to say, the operation of the spirit, particularly the prophetic spirit, was seen as being connected particularly with the saving activity of God. This leads directly to a third observation. The spirit is intimately connected with Israel's future hope, in whatever form that hope may be cast. Whether the light of expectation is focused on the Davidic king, the point of emphasis is that he will be endowed with the spirit (Isa. 11:2). Or if the searchlight falls on the people of God as a whole, they are seen to be a people of the spirit (Isa. 44:3); a people moreover, in whom the spirit becomes the instrument of renewal of heart and obedience to Yahweh (Ezek. 36:26ff). In the words of Eichrodt: "now it was only as a fruit of the spirit, that is to say, as a product of a new and deeper communion with God, that they dared to hope for the right performance of God's will in religious humility and moral obedience. . . . To a growing extent, therefore, the activity of the spirit was shifted to the communication of religious and moral power.... In this way there is an advance from a picture of power working externally to one involving the innermost foundations of the personal life; man's relationship with God is no longer left to his own efforts, but is given him by the spirit. Because, however, all this is seen as *the central miracle of the new age*, the spirit as the living power of the new creation finds its proper place in eschatology."¹²

Such are the leading concepts the sectaries of Qumran are likely to have gleaned about the holy spirit from their study of Scripture. We may turn now to inquire as to what they did with them, looking next in a general way at the Qumran data and their basic significance.

THE QUMRAN DATA AND THEIR BASIC SIGNIFICANCE

The data themselves may be set down swiftly. According to Kuhn's *Konkordanz*¹³ the vast majority of examples of the term *ruach* are concentrated in four texts: the Rule of the Community (IQS): thirty-eight; the Rule of the War (IQM): thirteen; the *Hodayot* or Thanksgiving Hymns (IQH): sixty; and the Damascus Rule (CD): nine; with a few scattered in some smaller documents.

The Qumran Data and the Old Testament

When these data are analyzed they yield a picture that is broadly consonant with that found in the Old Testament. One may summarize it thus.

First, on occasion *ruach* is used in its literal sense of "wind" or "breath," as for instance in IQH VII 23: "My enemies are like chaff before the wind." Such literal uses are comparatively rare in comparison with their frequency in the Old Testament, though the explanation of this may be no more sinister

than difference of subject matter, as A. A. Anderson has suggested.¹⁴ It probably implies however, that the Qumran idea has the same point of departure as the Old Testament.

Second, the term is also used to denote man's inner nature or self. According to J. Pryke's analysis more than twenty-five percent of the examples carry this sense.¹⁵ Translation frequently obscures this. For example Vermes renders CD III 2f: "Abraham . . . was accounted friend of God because he kept the commandments of God and did not choose his own will;"¹⁶ the Hebrew text reads "did not choose his own *ruach*." Likewise in CD III 8 referring to the Israelites in the wilderness: "They chose their own will (*ruach*) and did not heed the voice of their maker."¹⁷ Or again, in the first of the *Hodayot* which celebrates God's action in creation, the author writes: "[And] to the spirit of man which thou hast formed in the world, [thou hast given dominion over the works of Thy hands] for everlasting days and unending generations" (IQH I 15. Cf. IQS VII 18, 22f). Here "spirit" is a virtual synonym for "man." But notable in this connection is the insistence — also implied in the last quotation — that man's spirit is the gift of God. "The way of man is not established except by the spirit which God created for him to make perfect a way for the children of men" (IQH IV 31).

A third emphasis conveyed by the Qumran use of *ruach* — again consonant with the Old Testament usage — is the employment of the term to denote the *kind* of self, *quality* of self. Thus, IQS XI 1 speaks of the "erring spirit," and the "haughty spirit;" IQS VIII 3 of a "spirit of meekness;" and so on. Of particular interest are some examples in the Rule of the War. Referring to the warriors who will participate in the battle, the Rule says: "They shall all be freely enlisted for war, perfect in spirit and body and prepared for the Day of Vengeance" (IQM VII 5). The context of lines 1-7 makes it clear that perfection in flesh refers to conformity to the ritual regulations for the holy war; this makes it probable that perfection of spirit refers to spiritual qualifications: a conclusion supported by the further description of the warriors as "freely enlisted for war . . . prepared for the Day of Vengeance." In short, perfection of spirit is whole-souled commitment to the final battle for the extirpation of evil.¹⁸ Of equal interest is IQM XIV 7 which reads: "By the poor in spirit . . . and by the perfect of way all the nations of wickedness have come to an end." There are textual problems at this point which cannot be discussed here,¹⁹ but the use of the phrase as an effective parallel to "perfect in spirit" just discussed, and to "perfect in way" which follows, suggests that it denotes the weak who have been raised up by God's power.²⁰

A fourth type of example found in the texts used the word *ruach* to refer to supernatural beings. In IQS III 24 the phrase "the God of Israel and his Angel of Truth" is explicated by the words: "For it is he who created the spirits of Light and Darkness." CD XII 2 speaks of "the domain of the spirits of Satan." IQM XIII 1-2 describes how the High Priest and his brethren "shall bless the God of Israel and all his works of truth, and shall execrate Satan there, and all the spirits of his company." Remarkably, the text proceeds to speak of God and Satan in parallel ways, attributing to both the quality of purpose and speaking of both as objects of service. "Blessed be the God of Israel for all His holy purpose and for His works of truth! Blessed be all those who [serve] Him in righteousness and who know Him by faith!

Cursed by Satan for his sinful purpose and may he be execrated for his wicked rule! Cursed be all the spirits of his company for their ungodly purpose and may they be execrated for all their service of uncleanness!" (2-5).²¹ Similar examples are found in the Thanksgiving Hymns (e.g. IQH I, 10,11; X 8; XI 13).

It will be seen readily that this evidence from Qumran exhibits usages that, at least in a phenomenological sense, parallel broadly the usages found earlier in the examination of the evidence from the Old Testament. It would be misleading to stop at this point, however, for even from the viewpoint of phenomenology, the Qumran usages represent advances beyond those of the Old Testament which prove to be significant in the fashioning of Qumran pneumatology as a whole.

Differentiate of Qumran Usage in Relation to the Old Testament

What then are these usages which advance beyond the Old Testament? Four may be mentioned. First, note was taken in discussing the Old Testament evidence of the rarity of the expression "holy spirit" — twice, to be precise, and both of them referring to God. In the texts under review there are seven examples of the phrase "God's holy spirit," or words conveying that sense.²² In these the holy spirit is variously represented as the source of revelation to the prophets (IQS VIII 16, CD II 12); as the source of the psalmist's joy: "Thou has delighted me with Thy Holy Spirit" (IQH IX 32); as the source of the psalmist's strength: "Thou hast shed Thy Holy Spirit upon me that I may not stumble" (IQH VII 6b-7a);²³ as the means of the psalmist's purification: "I implore Thee . . . to purify me by Thy Holy Spirit" (IQH XVI 11-12); as the source of the psalmist's guidance: "I, the Master know Thee, O my God by the spirit which Thou hast given to me, and by Thy Holy Spirit I have faithfully hearkened to Thy marvelous counsel" (IQH XII 11-12). It is surely noteworthy that more than three times as many examples of this usage are found in four of the Qumran Scrolls than in the much greater bulk of the Old Testament; and it is not without significance that five of the seven examples are found in the Thanksgiving Hymns specifically in description of religious experience.

Second, not only is the phrase "holy spirit" applied to God; it is applied to man also: directly, in three instances, and implicitly in three others. That is the probable reference in IQS III 7b where it is said of the true member of the community: "He shall be cleansed from all his sins by the spirit of holiness uniting him to His truth," since the parallel phrase reads: "and his iniquity shall be expiated by the spirit of uprightness and humility" (IQS III 8). In CD V 11 and VII 4 members are enjoined against breaking the laws of the community because this would "defile their holy spirit." The three remaining instances are in the Thanksgiving Hymns. In each of them the spirit of man is spoken of in association with God's holy spirit in such a way as to imply that the purity of the latter is transferred to the former. Thus IQH IV 31: "The way of man is not established except by the spirit which God created for him to make perfect a way for the children of men." Even more directly IQH XII 11: "I, the Master, know thee O my God, by the spirit which Thou hast given to me, and by Thy Holy Spirit I have faithfully hearkened to thy marvelous counsel." And most clearly of all IQH XVI 11-12: "And I know that man is not righteous except through Thee, and therefore

I implore Thee by the spirit which Thou hast given [me] to perfect Thy [favours] to Thy servant [forever], purifying me by Thy Holy Spirit, and drawing me near to Thee by Thy grace according to the abundance of Thy mercies." What this amounts to is that the notion of the openness of the human spirit to the divine spirit, already present in the Old Testament, is found at Qumran on a greatly increased scale, and with far-reaching implications for religious experience. Indeed, it is implied that the human spirit is so open to interpenetration by the divine, holy spirit that a kind of perfection — "perfection of way" — is open and available to the children of men (IQH IV 31).

Third, the use of *ruach* terminology to refer to supernatural spirit beings is cultivated to a greater degree than in the Old Testament. There is no need to repeat the evidence cited earlier from both the Old Testament and Qumran. Suffice it to observe that there is a distinct advance from ambivalent references to "an evil spirit from YHWH" to "the Angel of Truth" and "Belial and the Spirits of his lot." That is to say there is a marked advance towards hypostatization

Fourth, at the same time there is also in some cases a certain ambivalence, so that it is difficult to tell whether the spirit man has received from God is man's or God's; there is difficulty in knowing whether "spirit" is being used in a psychological or cosmological sense.

Even now we are still at the stage of collecting relevant data. Before we can turn to the task of integration and interpretation it remains to consider the most celebrated spirit passage in Qumran literature, deliberately avoided thus far because it deserves extended, independent treatment: the Discourse on the Two Spirits (IQS III 13 - IV 26).

The Locus Classicus: The Discourse on the Two Spirits

It is a fair inference that the Qumran Community saw in this section the exposition of one of its leading interests: the mechanics of the spiritual life. The section is introduced thus: "The Master shall instruct all the sons of light and shall teach them the nature (*toledoth*) of all the children of men according to the kind of spirit which they possess" (III 13-14). Likewise, it concludes with a summarizing statement: "For God has established two spirits in equal measure until the determined end, and until the Renewal, and he knows the reward of their deeds from all eternity. He has allotted them to the children of men that they may know good [and evil, and] that the destiny of all the living may be according to the spirit within [them at the time] of the visitation IV 25-16).²⁴ Brownlee therefore writes aptly when he entitles the section: "The Instruction of the Community Concerning the Moral Nature of Man."²⁵

The matter with which we are chiefly concerned is the meaning of the term *ruach*. The precise difficulty is that it is used in two apparently distinct senses. While it is used in IV 2-10, 23b-26 in a psychological sense to denote the inner moods and attitudes of men, in III 18-26 it equally plainly carries a metaphysical significance: the "two spirits" are the Prince of Light and the Angel of Darkness (20-21).²⁶ How these meanings are to be related or reconciled has been widely debated. Osten-Sacken holds that the psychological anthropological elements represent a chronologically later development, after the metaphysical dualistic view, which he links with IQM I and the earliest thought of the sect, had been de-eschatologized.²⁷ In other

words, he solves the problem by *Traditionsgeschichte*. It is questionable, however, whether the underlying assumption of this view, namely, that the metaphysical and psychological interpretations are irreconcilable, is valid; at least, it is questionable whether they could not be contained within the same mind. A. A. Anderson, who concedes the presence of both, observes that it is not divulged how the influences of the spirits are exercised and adds that "it is possible that the author of IQS III-IV may have thought of something *approximating* to the rabbinic doctrine of good and evil inclinations."²⁸ Apparently the final redactor of IQS found no incongruity between the two views; and the material point is that, on any view — including Osten Sacken's, the overriding emphasis of the section is anthropological rather than cosmological.²⁹ Accordingly, one may seek to interpret the passage as a whole, while remaining sensitive to shifts and variations of thought and expression.

The main thrust of the passage in terms of our interest is that the human condition is accounted for in spirit terms. The chief constituents appear to be as follows. First, from his creation man is appointed by God to live his life under the influence of one of two spirits: the spirits of truth and falsehood (III 17b-19a). The thought has predestinarian overtones. "All that is and ever was comes from a God of knowledge. Before things came into existence He determined the plan of them; and when they fill their appointed roles it is in accordance with His glorious design that they discharge their functions. Nothing can be changed. In His hand lies the government of all things. God it is that sustains them in their needs" (III 15-17a).³⁰ It is in this context that God is said to have appointed two spirits in which man is to walk. Since it is said that the sons of light are shown how to identify "the nature of all the children of men according to the kind of spirit which they possess" (III 13-14), the assumption appears to be that each man is controlled by one of the two spirits.

Second, under one aspect the two spirits are conceived metaphysically so that humanity is viewed as divided between them. "All the children of righteousness are ruled by the Prince of Light and walk in the ways of light but all the children of falsehood are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness" (III 20-21a). Logically, this would lead one to conclude that mankind was divided into two water-tight categories, each controlled by one spirit. However, such an inference is at once ruled out by the statement that "the Angel of Darkness leads all the children of righteousness astray" (III 21-22), all their sins being attributed to "his dominion in accordance with the mysteries of God." Conversely, the God of Israel and His Angel of Truth succour all the sons of light.

Third, the metaphysical or cosmological depiction of the two spirits is supplemented by a further aspect under which they are perceived psychologically or anthropologically. It is not accidental that this shift takes place at precisely the point at which the discourse moves to considering how the two spirits exert their influence on humankind. The language makes a significant change from speaking of the spirits as powers to speaking of their ways in the heart of man (IV 2). Here the Spirits of Light and Darkness who respectively succour the sons of light or lead them astray are interiorized in the human heart as the spirit of humility, discernment, charity (see IV 2-8), or greed, pride, deceit and ill temper (see IV 9-11). Equally significant

is the insistence that both spirits battle within the hearts of all men. The word used in III 13 (*toledoth*) to denote the nature of man is resumed in IV 15: "The nature of all the children of men is ruled by these (two spirits), and during their life all the hosts of men have a portion in their divisions and walk in (both) their ways.... For God has established the spirits in equal measure ... And their struggle is fierce for they do not walk together" (IV 15, 16, 18a).

Fourth, it is affirmed that in the final age the spirit of falsehood will be destroyed (IV 18b). The fullest description of this occurs in contexts where the psychological or anthropological use of "spirit" is prominent. "[God] will refine for Himself the human frame by rooting out all spirit of falsehood from the bounds of his flesh. He will cleanse him of all wicked deeds with the spirit of holiness; like purifying waters He will shed upon him the spirit of truth (to cleanse him) of all abomination and falsehood. And he shall be plunged into the spirit of purification.... For God has chosen them for an everlasting Covenant and all the glory of Adam shall be theirs" (IV 20-21, 22b).

If we seek to harvest the yield of IQS III 13 - IV 26 for the understanding of the Qumran doctrine of the spirit several things stand out. To begin with the two spirits are certainly personified and virtually hypostatized. The spirits of Light and Darkness, otherwise referred to as the Prince of Light and the Angel of Darkness, are created by God (III 25). They "rule" men (III 20,21), "lead" men (III 21b), "succour" men (III 24b). In Hengel's words: "The two spirits appear as mediators between God and man, though they are only executive powers of the divine plans."³¹ At the same time the writer of the discourse is not satisfied with an account which suggests that the two spirits are merely external to man; on the contrary, they are within him, controlling his behavior not simply from the outside in, but from the inside out. The cosmic aspect of the struggle is but the backdrop of the psychological aspect which clearly predominates as the opening lines of the discourse (III 13-14) show.³² The relationship between the two spirits viewed cosmically and metaphysically and the two spirits viewed anthropologically and psychologically is not clearly worked out. A. R. C. Leaney has drawn attention to the implication of the consecutive statements in IQS III 17, 19 that God "set in man two spirits" (17) and that from a "dwelling" of light and a "well" of darkness arise the generations of truth and deceit respectively (19).³³ He writes: "If we attend carefully to the last two sentences of this remarkable passage we see the language change into metaphor. It is not easy to show the logical connection between the spirits "set in" man and the sources ("dwelling" and "well") from which the two "generations" of men respectively arise. Perhaps there is here an example of thinking which at the logical level is confused; and the reason for this confusion is that the writer is not clear whether he wishes to teach that man as such is a combination of a good and a bad spirit or that mankind is divisible into the good (arising from light) and the bad (arising from darkness). The main doctrine at Qumran appears to have been that every individual man is a mixture of the two spirits . . . but the thought certainly oscillates between two sets of terms, truth/perversity, light/darkness."³⁴ The problem appears never to have been fully resolved at Qumran, receiving its clearest elucidation in Judaism in the Rabbinic doctrine of the Two Inclinations or *yetzers*.³⁵

A final point to be gleaned from the Discourse on the Two Spirits is that the eschaton is there viewed as a turning point in spirit activity and experience. The data have been outlined above in the discussion of IQS IV 18-22, attention being drawn particularly to the psychological use of "spirit" in that context. Two matters are of particular moment. The first is that this is the only passage in the entire Qumran literature in which "spirit" carries eschatological significance.³⁶ It is "at the time of the visitation" (IV 18) that "all spirit of falsehood" will be rooted out of man's flesh (IV 20), "for God has established the two spirits in equal measure until the determined end, and until the Renewal" (IV 25). Second, the function which is attributed to the holy spirit is that of cleansing: "like purifying waters He will shed upon him the spirit of truth (to cleanse) of all abomination and falsehood. And he shall be plunged into the spirit of purification" (IV 21-22). It is this eschatological act which results in the recovery of the lost glory of Adam (IV 23).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SPIRIT AT QUMRAN

A representative selection of the Qumran data regarding the spirit is now before us. We may seek next to interpret and integrate it so as to achieve an understanding of the overall scale and significance of the spirit in Qumran thought. The evidence surveyed thus far has at the most demonstrated that the spirit occupied an important place in the thought of the Qumran sectaries; it has also shown something of *how* the spirit was understood to work in human life, even if ambiguities remain. What has not been shown is the content of the spirit's work in Qumran understanding. That is to say, our investigation thus far has dealt chiefly with the *components* of the Qumran view of the spirit; what now remains is to fit the components into their *framework*.

References to the spirit in the Qumran scrolls may be said to congregate around three main themes. Although these themes are distinguishable, they nevertheless have mutual connections, hence there is a degree of overlap among them, and therefore, in the treatment of them here.

Revelation

First, the holy spirit is connected with the idea of revelation. There are two aspects to this. To begin with there is the (unsurprising) acknowledgment that the holy spirit was at work in the writing of the Law and the Prophets. IQS VIII 15-16, in reference to the "highway for our God" mentioned in Isa. 40:3, reads: "This (path) is the study of the Law which He commanded by the hand of Moses that they may do according to all that has been revealed from age to age, and as the Prophets have revealed by His Holy Spirit." To the same effect are CD II 12 and VI 1 where the prophets are described as "those anointed with the holy spirit."³⁷ That is, the holy spirit is the agent of divine revelation through the Law and the Prophets.

However, there is another dimension to this. A distinction appears to be made between the transmission of revelation to the prophets, and its reception by their readers. The correlative of revelation is understanding, and it is the insistence of the Qumran community that the same spirit who inspired prophetic writers was at work in themselves as the true interpreters of the Law and the Prophets. This is hinted at in IQS VIII 15-16 (just quoted): a passage which may well describe the founding of the community,³⁸ and

which defines its task as the study of the Law. It is significant that the description of the prophets in CD II 12 as "those who were anointed with the holy spirit of his true community"³⁹ is similar to the language used to describe the Qumran community elsewhere (e.g. IQS III 7). It is not surprising then that the long rehearsal of Israel's faithlessness addressed to those entering the Covenant (CD II 2) should culminate in the contrasting account of the faithful remnant, which is none other than the sect itself: "But with the remnant which held fast to the commandments of God, He made His Covenant with Israel forever, revealing to them the hidden things in which all Israel had gone astray. He unfolded before them His holy sabbaths and His glorious feasts, the testimonies of His righteousness and the ways of His faith, and the desires of His will which a man must do in order to live" (CD III 12b-16a). The import of this appears to be that the sectaries were inspired by the same spirit as the prophetic writers, but not as sources so much as interpreters of revelation.⁴⁰

But there was one figure in whom this role was exemplified supremely: the Teacher of Righteousness. Although mentioned specifically only in the Damascus Rule and the Biblical Commentaries or *Pesharim*, there can be no doubt of his central role. As CD I 9-10 vividly expresses it: "for twenty years they were like blind men groping for the way. And God observed their deeds, that they sought Him with a whole heart, and He raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart." A still more exact definition of the Teacher's function appears in the Habakkuk Commentary in the comments on Hab. 2:1-2: "and God told Habakkuk to write down that which would happen to the final generation, but He did not make known to him when time would come to an end. And as for that which He said, *that he who runs may read it speedily*, interpreted this concerns the Teacher of Righteousness, to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of His servants the Prophets" (IQpHab. VII 1-5a).

The passage just quoted is instructive in at least two ways. First, it demonstrates that in the sect's understanding, the prophets did not themselves know everything regarding the fulfilment of their predictions. In particular, while they might know the content of their predictions, they did not know the timing of their fulfilment. Second, what was hidden from the prophets in this regard had been revealed to the Teacher of Righteousness "to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of His servants the Prophets" (IQpHab. VII 4-5a). The passage employs two key terms in this regard: the term "mystery" (*raz*) and the term "interpretation" (*peshet*). These constituted the two elements in the message of God, each being conveyed by God to a different person; and only when both halves were brought together was the message known.⁴¹ In the Qumran view the "mysteries" were conveyed to the prophets, the "interpretations" to the Teacher of Righteousness.⁴² This highlights the crucial role of the Teacher of Righteousness in Qumran history, fully justifying the passage quoted earlier from the Damascus Rule. Until his advent, they were like blind men groping in the dark; after his arrival they had the key to unlock the prophetic literature.

The question immediately presents itself: what status is the Teacher viewed as holding? Various answers have been given. Dupont-Sommer identifies him as a prophet: "This interpreter versed in all the Mysteries of Knowledge was the great Doctor of Essene Gnosis, the Hierophant *par excellence*."

But he was also the Prophet, in the Biblical sense of the word. The Spirit of God was in him."⁴³ However, nowhere is the Teacher of Righteousness called a prophet, and — still more interestingly — nowhere is he stated specifically to be endowed with the spirit unless the Thanksgiving Hymns are held to be from his hand: an opinion which is less confidently held now than it once was.⁴⁴ Even Gert Jeremias, who both argues for the Teacher's authorship of some of the Hymns,⁴⁵ and explicitly calls him "a prophet of God," nevertheless is compelled to add: "But there is a difference between the Teacher and the old Prophets. The task of the Teacher is to explain the words of the Prophets."⁴⁶

Still less cogent is the suggestion that the Teacher of Righteousness is a "new Moses" or "the Prophet like Moses" (Deut. 18:18).⁴⁷ For all the similarities that he can find between the Teacher and Moses: that with both a new period of revelation begins, both are leaders, and so on, Otto Betz is still forced to conclude that only with strong reservations can the Teacher be described as a second Moses. He brings no new Law. God does not speak with him mouth to mouth. His message is from the Law of Moses.⁴⁸ The conclusion the data appear to point to is that the Teacher of Righteousness was viewed as a divinely and uniquely inspired interpreter of the Law and the Prophets. It has been contended above that the community as a whole was endowed in this way. The uniqueness of the Teacher lay in the fact that he was the first to lay down the lines of interpretation which came to characterize the community. His primacy is constituted by both time and insight. To him — in the community's belief — had been vouchsafed understanding to interpret the Law and the Prophets.⁴⁹ In the words of Vermes: "Knowledge of the authentic teaching of the Prophets was the supreme talent of the Teacher of Righteousness . . . the Scrolls directly impute to the Teacher a particular God-given insight into the hidden significance of prophecy."⁵⁰ If it be asked how he came by this insight there is only one answer: by the inspiration of the holy spirit. It is true, as has been acknowledged above, that this is nowhere stated in so many words. But inasmuch as the community is viewed as being corporately gifted with the spirit for the task of prophetic interpretation, as has been shown already; and inasmuch as the speaker in the Thanksgiving Hymns claims repeatedly to have received knowledge by the spirit God has given him (IQH XIII 18-19; XIV 25); it is impossible to explain the secret of the Teacher's work in any other way.

But the answer to one question is but the formulation of another. If the Teacher has been uniquely endowed with the spirit in the sense and for the purpose defined, what does this say regarding the sect's eschatology?

Eschatology

"Eschatology" is a slippery term, and not least in reference to Qumran thought. In Christian theology it has customarily been used to refer to the events contingent upon the end of the world and the future life ("final" or "futurist" eschatology). Twentieth century Biblical studies has contributed its own nuances to the concept in the form of "consistent eschatology," "realized eschatology," "inaugurated eschatology" and so on. It is fatally easy to transfer such concepts into the Qumran context without considering whether the Qumran data will support them. Still more potent is the temptation to arrange the features of Qumran eschatology such as the War, the

Coming of the Messiahs and so on, in some kind of schema or sequence without inquiring whether such a "historicizing" fell within the Qumran conceptual mentality. Such issues are too large to be pursued here.⁵¹ What may be pursued here is the narrower but not less germane point: how do the Qumran texts view the relation of the spirit and eschatology?

It is sometimes argued that the Qumran texts see no connection. Referring to IQS IV 18-23 which affirms the purification of man by the spirit of holiness at the time of the final visitation Gerhard Krodel writes: "It is important to note that this seems to be the only text in the Community Rules and in the Hymns which assigns an eschatological function to the Spirit. Furthermore, nowhere is it stated that the presence of the Spirit in the Community is the eschatological fulfillment of prophetic promises. This is all the more surprising because Qumran does understand itself to be the eschatological community of the sons of light. The reason for the lack of emphasis on the Spirit's eschatological function lies in the fact that the Spirit is understood primarily as the mediator and enabler of esoteric truths in the present. Since in other apocalyptic texts the Spirit played no role, we can conclude that the Qumran community did not understand the Spirit's presence as anticipation and sign of the eschaton."⁵² Does the evidence bear this out?

There can be no doubt that the scrolls show unambiguously that the sectaries believed that the spirit was at work among them in the present. As has been argued above, for all that the ministry of the Teacher of Righteousness is not explained directly or explicitly in terms of the spirit, it is difficult to see in what other terms it is to be accounted for. Does this mean then that the Teacher was viewed as an eschatological figure? Attempts to show that he was seen as a *particular* eschatological figure cannot be said to have been successful. Reference was made earlier to the suggestion that he was the Moses like prophet, but the evidence will not sustain this. No more persuasive is the contention that he was regarded as a messianic figure. Even if he is the "Interpreter of the Law" mentioned in association with the "star of Jacob" predicted in CD VII 15-20 and the "Branch of David" of 4Q Florilegium I 11-12 this can mean no more than that the historical Teacher of CD I 10 occupied and foreshadowed a role which would be filled by his successors, and supremely by his successor in the messianic age.⁵³ It does not abolish the distinction between the pre-messianic and messianic eras which is plainly made in CD XIX 35 - XXI distinguishing "the day of the gathering in of the Teacher of the Community" and "the coming of the Messiah out of Aaron and Israel."⁵⁴ Even to say that the Teacher was a forerunner of the messianic age risks saying too much, with its overtones of Elijah-like figures.⁵⁵ What seems to be justifiable is to say that, since the giving of the interpretation of the prophets to the Teacher indicated the time of the coming of the end (IQpHab. VII 1-5), his appearance was a sign that the last days were approaching.⁵⁶ That his insight is most readily explained as a gift of the spirit seems true, though it cannot be claimed that this is stressed or stated explicitly.⁵⁷

If however, the Teacher's work is not accounted for explicitly in terms of the spirit, the same cannot be said of the work and existence of the community. To cite but one illustration of this: of the seven occurrences of the phrase "God's holy spirit" in the texts, six refer to the spirit as having been given in some sense by God to the sectaries. "He made known his holy spirit

to them by the hand of his anointed ones" (CD II 12). "Thou has shed thy holy spirit upon me" (IQH VII 7, XVII 26). "Thou hast delighted me with thy holy spirit" (IQH IX 32). "By thy holy spirit I have hearkened to thy counsel" (IQH XII 12). The sixth example includes the unqualified term "the spirit" but the parallelism shows the meaning is the same: "I implore Thee by the spirit which thou hast given [me] to perfect Thy [favours] to thy servant [forever], purifying me by Thy Holy Spirit" (IQH XVI 11-12). Other passages refer to man's spirit as sanctified by God's grace,⁵⁸ thus expressing the same idea from a slightly different perspective. That almost all of these instances occur in the Thanksgiving Hymns does not mean that the experience of the spirit was an — essentially pietistic or privatistic matter. On the contrary the whole organization and ethos of the community is predicated on the assumption that the community is a community of the spirit. In the annual Covenant Renewal ceremony, members are ranked "according to the perfection of their spirit" (IQS II 20, cf. V 24). Admission to the community means participation in the spirit with all its consequences. "For it is through the spirit of true counsel concerning the ways of man that all his sins shall be expiated that he may contemplate the light of life. He shall be cleansed from all his sins by the spirit of holiness uniting him to His truth, and his iniquity shall be expiated by the spirit of uprightness and humility" (IQS III 6b - 8). Indeed, in what may well be the oldest part of the Community Rule,⁵⁹ it is said in reference to the foundation members: "When these became members of the Community in Israel according to all these rules, they shall establish the spirit of holiness according to everlasting truth" IIQS IX 3).

Alongside of this indubitable evidence that the Qumran Community saw itself as a community of the spirit may be placed the equally indubitable fact that it regarded itself as having eschatological significance. If it has been argued above correctly that the work of the Teacher of Righteousness signified that the last days were approaching, it follows a fortiori that the same must be true of his followers who perpetuated his work. Indeed, in the Habakkuk Commentary, the interpretation of Hab.2:3b: "If it tarries, wait for it, for it shall surely come and shall not be late" is referred to the members of the community: "Interpreted, this concerns the men of truth who keep the Law, whose hands shall not slacken in the service of truth when the final age is prolonged" (IQ p Hab. VII 10b-12). Not only so, but the organization and liturgical practices of the sect appear to indicate that it regarded itself as anticipating the community of the end time. Thus, the Rule of the Congregation (IQSa): "the Rule for all the congregation of Israel in the last days" (IQSa I 1), after describing the protocol for the common meal when the Priest Messiah comes (IQSa II 11-21b), concludes: "It is according to this statute that they shall proceed at every [meal at which] at least ten men are gathered together" (IQSa II 21c-22). But this is precisely the number specified in IQS VI 3-5 for regular partaking of the common meal. As F. M. Cross concludes: "The common meal of the Essenes is hereby set forth as a liturgical anticipation of the Messianic banquet."⁶⁰ But most of all, in the essay on the Two Spirits (IQS III 13 - IV 25) the God of Israel and His Angel of Truth, otherwise the Spirit of Truth, are said to "succour all the sons of light" (IQS III 24b) in their present struggles, although at the end of that same section the coming of the spirit at the end of the age is looked

for as the only possible hope for recreating the glory of the original creation (IQS IV 18b-23a). K. G. Kuhn therefore concludes: "Thus the Now and the Then, the life of the pious here in this world and the apocalyptic end, are not at all separated from each other, in terms of the weight of the divine interference. The Now develops into the Then continuously. In this sense the sect knows itself to be an eschatological company of warriors, the People of God of the last days."⁶¹

The remarkable fact is that these two features: the present working of the spirit in the community, and the eschatological significance of the community, do not appear to be brought into direct connection, although the reverse is the case with the prophetic revelatory work of the Teacher and the community. It is true that some scholars have affirmed otherwise. Herbert Braun contends that the new thing in Qumran teaching is the full presence of the spirit, on account of which it is the community of the end-time.⁶² Gert Jeremias, referring to IQH VII 7, where the psalmist gives thanks that God has shed the holy spirit upon him, comments: "The presence of the spirit is an eschatological gift.... This gift the psalmist has according to this psalm here and now."⁶³ But these claims outrun the evidence. Undoubtedly, in Old Testament expectation the spirit is seen as the gift of the age to come. In the Qumran texts this is the case explicitly only once: at the conclusion of the discourse on the Two Spirits (IQS IV 18-26), and the eschatology is emphatically futuristic. If anything, the judgment of W. D. Davies that "the scrolls do not *emphasize* the spirit as a sign of the End"⁶⁴ is too cautious. The fact is that, for all its preoccupation with prophetic scripture in regard to other aspects of its activity — notably its claim to a special role in the impending time of the end — the sect makes no appeal to Old Testament passages which foretell a spirit-endowment as a sign of the end, despite the fact that it lays repeated claim to the activity of the spirit among its members, even regarding this as a *sine qua non* of membership. As to why the scrolls are reticent in this regard, Kroll has already been quoted for the opinion that it is because the sectaries saw the spirit more as the communicator of esoteric truth.⁶⁵ In view of the large number of passages already cited in which the spirit is credited with moral and spiritual functions, this seems less than persuasive. The *prima facie* evidence would suggest that the solution is more probably to be sought in the sectarian soteriology, and the question will be taken up again under that heading.

In the meantime we may go on to observe that, if the sect did not construe the present work of the spirit in eschatological terms, there can be no doubt that it made the connection regarding the expected work of the spirit at the final end. The conflict depicted in the Rule of the War is not merely between the sectaries and the Kittim; it is between the Prince of Light and the spirits of truth who come to the support of the sectaries, and Belial and all the spirits of his lot (IQM XIII 10-11). Indeed, it is the intervention of the Prince of Light which gives victory to the sectaries in the final battle (IQM XVIII 1 3).⁶⁶ It is hardly surprising that it is in contexts such as these that the spirits are spoken of most plainly as distinct *personae*. As such the phenomenon belongs to (in Eichrodt's phrase) that "momentous refashioning" of prophetic teaching about the spirit in which "the spirit of God is made markedly independent, so that it can now be portrayed as a so-called hypostasis, that is to say, a separate entity which acts of its own motion,

and is of itself concerned with human affairs."⁶⁷ Again, however, it is to be noted that this work of the spirit at the final end is cosmic and apocalyptic rather than individual or national and prophetic. Indeed, it is as noteworthy regarding the future work of the spirit as its present work that no appeal is made by the Qumran writers to the forecasts by the great prophets of a singular coming of the spirit in the end time. This is equally the case in the one passage already adverted to (IQS IV 18-26) in which the coming of the spirit is spoken of in avowedly futuristic terms for the eradication of the spirit of falsehood from the human heart (IQS IV 20). But with this one reaches the boundary between eschatology and soteriology, and to this latter subject as understood at Qumran we must now turn.

Soteriology

The sect believed that in the impending eschatological convulsion Israel would be saved because the Qumran community would be saved. But the community was composed of members admitted individually, and permitted to remain as members only so long as their individual performance was satisfactory. How was admission to the community of salvation achieved? And — to turn to the specific focus of this essay — did the holy spirit play any part in it? In seeking answers to these questions it will be useful to divide our treatment into two parts, looking first at the saving work of the spirit in the present; and second, at the work of the spirit yet to come.

It is widely conceded that the Qumran community stands out as an exception in an era which confessed that in general, the spirit was no longer at work.⁶⁸ Enough evidence has been surveyed already to demonstrate that the community believed the spirit to be actively at work in its midst. Its functioning rested on that assumption. But more than that. The sect believed itself to be a community of the spirit in the further sense that in and through it, and through it alone, the spirit could be received. *Extra communitatem nulla salus*. The community was the community of the spirit in the sense that to it the spirit had been given. In a crucially important section of the Community Rule which describes the meaning of membership (IQS III 6-9), the holy spirit is referred to as "the holy spirit of the community" (3:7).⁶⁹ The same idea is expressed in CD II 12; while in the Thanksgiving Hymns the reception of the spirit is interpreted in terms of belonging to the covenant (IQH XI 9-14; XIV 13 (probably); XVI 7) or other terms such as knowledge of the divine mysteries (IQH XI 9-14; XII 11-13) or loathing the ways of perversity (XIV 25-26) which amount to the same thing. In short, the spirit is received through joining the community.

Is it possible to define this with more precision? It is well known that admission to the community involved several probationary stages, extending over at least two years. This process, with its constituent stages, is defined in IQS VI 13-23. Less important than the mechanics of the process⁷⁰ are the object and principles which underlie it. Regarding itself as a replacement Temple⁷¹ since the Jerusalem Temple was defiled, the sect sought to reproduce the purity required for the Jerusalem Temple. This purity was an amalgam of correct ritual observance and moral conduct, defectiveness in either producing impurity.⁷² This meant that the sect must — and did — take strong measures to maintain purity within its ranks. Nowhere was this more seriously threatened than when new members were admitted, and the

probationary period was designed to construct safeguards at this very point. As Newton summarizes the process: "We shall see the new member pass from being an impure outsider through an intermediate stage during which he has limited contact with the sect and its property to a time when he is considered pure in all things and can enjoy full participation in the atoning activity of the sect."⁷³

The question is: at what point in the process did the candidate receive the spirit? The progress of the initiate from first examination to full admission is traced in IQS VI 14-23. First, he is examined by the Overseer (paqid) who was concerned to establish four things: that he was a born Israelite; that he was applying voluntarily; that his intelligence and deeds were of an acceptable character; and fourth, that he was suited to the discipline of the life of the community (IQS 13-14). If he satisfied the Overseer on these counts, the Overseer brought (bo) him into the covenant.⁷⁴ However, the admission was no more than preliminary and tentative, as the text makes clear: "he shall admit him into the Covenant that he may be converted to the truth and depart from all falsehood: and he shall instruct him in all the rules of the Community" (IQS VI 14-15). At least two more stages followed. At the end of one full year, during which his participation in community affairs — especially those involving purity⁷⁵ — was restricted, he was examined by the Council of the Community "concerning his spirit and his deeds" (IQS VI 17), a phrase which parallels partially but also goes beyond the phrase "his understanding and his deeds" (IQS VI 14, 18); the latter refers to his comprehension of the law of the sect, the former to his acceptance of it. At the end of a second year, during which his participation in sectarian affairs involving purity was still restricted, though less so than in the first,⁷⁶ he was again examined, and if approved, was admitted to full membership, involving full participation in all the rites and responsibilities of the community (IQS VI 21-23).

In the description of the stages of admission in IQS VI 14-23 the spirit is not mentioned. This is hardly surprising in a section of legal regulations. Further, since the successive stages mark progress in purity and the spirit is repeatedly associated with cleansing, it would be surprising if no role were found for it during the period of initiation. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that, in the liturgy of admission to full membership (IQS I 16 - II 25), the chief disaster to befall those who turn back at the critical moment is that they will not receive the spirit (IQS II 25- III 12). Exclusion from the Community is exclusion from the spirit, and exclusion from the spirit is exclusion from cleansing.

It would seem therefore that the sectarian soteriology distinguished sharply not only between those outside the sect and the sect itself, but also between provisional members and full members. The basis of this latter divide was the spirit. Admission to provisional membership depended on understanding of sectarian teaching and amenability to discipline, and progress toward full membership depended on progress in the same. When the Council of the Community was satisfied with the progress at the end of the second year, the initiate was admitted to full membership which was another way of saying he received the spirit. Whether B. E. Thiering is correct in positing a separate initiation rite for each stage, her conclusion appears to be sound that "at the final stage the Spirit of holiness was given, as the

decisive purification of the soul and the privilege of membership of the community in which the Spirit of holiness dwelt."⁷⁷

The Qumran sect therefore appears to have believed that sin kept the spirit away, and only by increasing purification through obedience to the law was it possible to become fit to receive the spirit, that is, to enter the community. But the spirit that is received on entry into the community is itself a cleansing agent, and the language of IQS III 6-9 with its explicit emphasis on uprightness, humility and submission of soul suggests that the spirit is the agent for the cleansing of *inward* sin. That is to say, the sect distinguished between inward and outward sin⁷⁸ and affirmed that water alone could not remove the former, but only the spirit. But the inward spirit was given only to those who had separated themselves from outward defilement: that is, had passed through the preliminary stages of membership. The implication of this for Qumran soteriology is that there is a fundamental ambivalence at its core as to how salvation is achieved. For all classes of members it involves obedience to the covenant law; but whereas full members have received the inward spirit and observe the law with the aid of the spirit, probationer members must observe the law without that aid and assistance.⁷⁹

However, Qumran soteriology had a horizon beyond the present to which they looked also for the saving work of the spirit; they looked also for a decisive saving work of the spirit at the Visitation at the end of the days. "God has ordained an end for falsehood, and at the time of the visitation He will destroy it forever.... God will then purify every deed of Man with His truth; He will refine for Himself the human frame by rooting out all spirit of falsehood from the bounds of his flesh. He will cleanse him of all wicked deeds with the spirit of holiness; like purifying waters He will shed upon him the spirit of truth (to cleanse him) of all abomination and falsehood" (IQS IV 18b-19a, 20b-21). Reference has been made above to the way in which the sect distinguished inward from outward sin, even though they saw the two as connected, inasmuch as inward sin incurred outward defilement. It would appear however, that they also made a distinction between sin in the form of specific acts and sin as the source of sins; that is, they appear to have entertained a concept of innate sin which was resistant to any purification available in the present. This comes to expression particularly in the Hymns in which the psalmist repeatedly bewails not merely the sins which he has committed, but even more the sinful state which has given rise to them. "What is a creature of clay for such great marvels to be done, whereas he is in iniquity from the womb and in guilty unfaithfulness until his old age?" (IQH IV 29f). Or, in the psalm at the conclusion of the Community Rule: "As for me, I belong to wicked mankind, to the company of ungodly flesh. My iniquities, rebellions and sins, together with the perversity of my heart, belong to the company of worms and to those who walk in darkness (IQS IX 9b-10)."⁸⁰

While individual sins may be cleansed, the only cure for the sinful state which underlies them is purgation by the spirit at the Visitation. This point is clear from IQS IV 18-23 (partially quoted above), and is confirmed by some of the *Hymns* which show every sign of being eschatological in reference (e.g. IQH III 19-36; XI 15-34; XVII 9-15).⁸¹ Indeed, the last of these is linked by language as well as thought, with IQS IV 22: "For the bases

of the mountains shall melt, and fire shall consume the deep places of Hell, but thou wilt deliver all those that are corrected by Thy judgments.... Thou wilt cast away all their sins. Thou wilt cause them to inherit all the glory of Adam and abundance of days" (IQH XVII 13, 15). The Qumran expectation for the end time was of the abolition of innate sin and the recovery of the creation glory of Adam. This also was the redemptive work of the spirit. In the words of Michael Newton: "This eschatological cleansing would involve the whole man both body and soul. There could be no purification of the body unless the soul was directed towards fulfilling God's will."⁸²

Conclusion

In conclusion, we may attempt to estimate the place of pneumatology in Qumran thought as a whole. Reference has already been made to Krodell's judgment that the spirit has virtually no eschatological significance for the community, being regarded rather as the conveyor of esoteric truths in the present; and that accordingly "the Qumran community did not understand the Spirit's presence as anticipation and sign of the eschaton."⁸³ Alongside of this one may place the conclusion of W. D. Davies that "the Scrolls do not *emphasize* the spirit as a sign to the End;"⁸⁴ and also his verdict on the eschatological function attributed to the spirit in IQS IV 20f: "the reference to the Spirit here somehow lacks that connotation of empowering energy which we associate with the eschatological gift of the Spirit in both the Old Testament and the New."⁸⁵ The striking omission of any reference to prophetic promises of the eschatological spirit appears to bear this out. This would suggest that the spirit has little eschatological impress in Qumran thought.

On the other hand, it has been seen that the spirit plays a decisive role in Qumran soteriology, so that without the holy spirit there would be no community. Moreover, the function of the community thus established in the spirit of holiness (IQS IX 3) is to offer atonement for the land "until there shall come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel" (IQS IX 11). In other words, the soteriological function of the sect, which is made possible only by the spirit, is set squarely in an eschatological framework.

Nor is the case greatly different with the role of the spirit in the revelation of truth for as has been seen, the truths revealed concern directly the coming of the end: both the fact of, and the preparation for it. Indeed, Otto Betz goes so far as to say that the reason why the sect concerned itself so much with God's dealings with His people in the past was that in them was contained the clue as to what was about to happen in the future. "There is a consistency in the history of salvation. That is why the understanding of the past and the knowledge of the future belong together: the latter is built on the former, it depends on a correct evaluation of God's mighty deeds of the past."⁸⁶ If this is so, and the unveiling of the meaning of the past for the future is the work of the spirit, then in yet another sphere the spirit's role is eschatological.

It would seem fair to conclude, therefore, that while eschatology was the overarching and encompassing preoccupation of the sect, yet their perception of their role as the indispensable nexus between the present and the eschaton led them to focus primarily on their soteriological function. This did not prevent them from speculating about the events of the end as the

War Rule testifies. But it does mean that their chief concern was to preserve themselves as a holy community which could serve as the vehicle of God's purpose at the end of the days. Since the holy spirit alone could make and keep them fit for this purpose, the aspect of his activity which chiefly engaged their attention was the soteriological.

NOTES

1. For a recent, superb review of the present state of Qumran studies see M. Delcor, E. M. Laperrousaz, P. W. Skehan: art. "Qumran et Decouvertes au Desert de Juda," in H. Cazelles et Andre Feuillet (edd). *Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplement, Tome Neuvieme* (Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1979), cols. 737-1014.

2. The system of designating the Qumran texts employed here is that proposed by J. T. Milik in D. Barthelemy and J. T. Milik: *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert: I, Qumran Cave I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 46-8; further explained and elaborated in J. A. Fitzmyer: *The Dead Sea Scrolls, Major Publications and Tools for Study* (Sources for Biblical Study, 8, Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1975), 3-8. The expanded form of the symbols for the documents chiefly referred to in this essay are: The Community Rule (IQS); the Damascus Rule (CD); the War Rule (IQM); the Hymns (or Hodayot) (IQH).

3. For an examination of the difference between the communities presupposed in the Community Rule on the one hand and the Damascus Rule on the other see Geza Vermes: *The Dead Sea Scrolls, Qumran in Perspective* (Cleveland, Ohio: Collins - World, 1978) (henceforth Vermes: DSSP), Ch. 4, "Life and Institutions of the Sect;" as well as the concluding section of Ch. 5 on the Essenes (pp. 125-30). Allowing that some of the discrepancies may be explained as representing different stages of development (p.128), Vermes favors the view that the Qumran sect was Essene (p.130), and that "Qumran . . . was the seat of the sect's hierarchy and also the center to which all those turned who professed allegiance to the sons of Zadok the Priests, the Keepers of the Covenant" (p. 109).

4. That Josephus' representation of the Essenes in *Antiquities* xiii 171 as one of the three parties of Judaism involves a degree of stylization following the Greek pattern is highly probable. See Vermes: DSSP, 129.

5. All quotations from the Qumran texts are in the translation of G. Vermes: *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, Second edition 1975) (henceforth Vermes: DSSE) unless indicated otherwise. The passage cited is from DSSE, 81. A convenient edition of the Hebrew of the Qumran texts is that of Eduard Lohse: *Die Texte aus Qumran* (Munchen: Kosel-Verlag, 1964). References to the lines are based on this edition.

6. For summary and interpretation of the Old Testament evidence see F. Baumgartel: art. *pneuma* in G. Friedrich: *Theological Dictionary of the New*

Testament (henceforth TDNT), Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, volume VI, 1977, 359-67; Norman H. Snaith: *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (New York, Schocken Books, 1973), Ch. 7; David Hill: *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings* (Cambridge, 1967), 205-17; and most recently Alasdair I. C. Heron: *The Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia: the Westminster Press, 1983), Ch. I. For an impressive account of the development of the concept in the Old Testament see W. Eichrodt: *Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: the Westminster Press, 1967), Vol. II, Ch. XIII.

7. All Biblical quotations are from the Revised Standard Version unless indicated otherwise.

8. Cf. E. Jacob: "Nephesh is the usual term for a man's total nature, for what he is and not just what he has. This gives the term priority in the anthropological vocabulary, for the same cannot be said of either spirit, heart or flesh." *Art. psuche*, TDNT IX, 620.

9. While noting that nephesh, ruach and leb were "so close that they could be viewed as interchangeable," Jacob (TDNT IX, 617 F) nonetheless concedes that ruach took over the functions of nephesh (*ibid.*, 629). The reason appears to be that ruach lies behind nephesh. Cf. Jacob: "One might say that ruach is the condition of nephesh and that it regulates its force. Without nephesh an individual dies, but without ruach nephesh is no longer an authentic nephesh" (*loc. cit.*). See also Heron: *The Holy Spirit*. 6f.

10. Cf. Baumgartel, TDNT VI, 364, 366f; Eichrodt: *Theology of the Old Testament*, Vol. II, 52. David Hill demurs (rightly) at the suggestion that the ruach Adonai is "an agent with its own existence and actions," insisting that language appearing to imply this is figurative (*Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 212 together with note 1). However, with regard to "evil spirits" he appears to allow (with A. R. Johnson) that Yahweh could act "not only through the instrumentality of his own ruach, but also through the agency of some subordinate ruach who, as a member of his immediate entourage, may be thought of as an individualisation within the corporate ruach of Yahweh's extended personality" (Appended Note, 217).

11. C. F. D. Moule: *The Holy Spirit* (London: Mowbrays, 1978), 8.

12. Eichrodt: *Theology of the Old Testament*, Vol. II, 58-9.

13. K. G. Kuhn (ed): *Konhordanz zu den Qumrantexten* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1960), art. ruach, 200-2.

14. A. A. Anderson: "The Use of 'Ruah' in IQS, IQH and IQM," *Journal of Semitic Studies* (henceforth JSS) 7, 1962, 303.

15. J. Pryke: "'Spirit' and 'Flesh' in the Qumran Documents and Some New Testament Texts," *Revue de Qumran* (henceforth RQ) 5, 1965, 345, together with n.l.

16. Vermes: *DSSE*, 99.

17. *Ibid.*

18. The phrase rendered "perfect in spirit and body" by Vermes (*DSSE*,

133) is literally "perfect in spirit and flesh (basar)." For detailed examination of this striking expression see A. R. G. Deasley: *The Idea of Perfection in the Qumran Texts* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Manchester, 1972), (henceforth Deasley; Perfection 293-9.

19. For proposed restoration of the text see Y. Yadin: *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness* (Oxford University Press, 1962), 327.

20. For a full consideration of the text and its interpretation see Deasley, *Perfection*, 299-303.

21. W. S. Lasor comments: "In the easy transition from God to Belial throughout this passage, and in the attribution of will to Belial and his angels, there are evidences that the people of Qumran looked upon Belial and his angels as true beings." *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Faith* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), 100f. A full-scale treatment of Qumran angelology in the *Rule of the War*, where it reaches a high degree of elaboration may be found in Y. Yadin: *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness* (Oxford University Press, 1962), 229-242. If the suggestion of P. R. Davies is sound: that IQM XIII 1-13 is a hymn used in a covenant ceremony, this would reinforce the suggestion that God and Satan are described in parallel terms. IQM, *The War Scroll From Qumran, Its Structure and History*. (Biblica et Orientalia, 32, Rome: The Biblical Institute, 1977), 104-110, esp. 109f.

22. IQS VIII 16, CD II 12, IQH VII 7, IX 32, XII 12, XVI 12, XVII 26.

23. The text of IQH XVII 26 is fragmentary, but the language is akin to that of IQH VII 6b-7a and may have the same reference: "[I thank Thee, O Lord, for] Thou didst shed [Thy] Holy Spirit upon Thy Servant."

24. Wernberg-Moller's observation that there are overtones of Gen. 1 in the section is worth noting: "the origin and history of mankind, told on a metaphysical basis, is exactly the gist of the following essay. The echo of Biblical phraseology is not confined to the word *twldwt* (Lambert), but the use of words like *myn* (1:14), *br'* (1:17), and *Idt twb lwr I* (IV 26) suggests that the whole essay is based on Gen. 1. In these chapters, which deal with the Creation and Fall, our author found a basis for his metaphysical speculations." P. Wernberg-Moller: *The Manual of Discipline, Translated and Annotated with an Introduction* (Leiden: E. J. Brill. 1957). 67 n 42.

25. W. H. Brownlee: *The Dead Sea Manual of Discipline, Translation and Notes*. Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Supplementary Studies, 10-12, (New Haven, Conn. 1951), 12. Cf. J. Licht for the statement that *toledoth* = *phusis*: "An Analysis of the Treatise on the Two Spirits in DSD," *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, IV (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1958), 89.

26. So H. G. May: "Cosmological References in the Qumran Doctrine of the Two Spirits and in Old Testament Imagery," *Journal of Biblical Literature* (henceforth JBL), 82, 1963, 1-14.

27. Peter von der Osten-Sacken: *Gott und Belial, Traditionsgeschichtliche*

Untersuchungen zum Dualismus in den Texten aus Qumran (Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments, 6, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1969), 116-120. It should be pointed out that Osten-Sacken does not find pure metaphysical elements in IQS III, adding that these have been interpreted anthropologically, even in III 20-25, with the assistance of the creation tradition derived mainly from IQH (op. cit. 131-139). He believes that III 13 - IV 14 stand at the middle rather than the beginning of the dualistic development (119f).

28. A. A. Anderson: TSS 7. 19fi2 299

29. So Wernberg-Møller: The Manual of Discipline 67, n 43. Cf. M. Hengel who though speaking of the Two Spirits as "mediators between God and Man," concludes: "an exclusively psychological and anthropological interpretation of the two spirits is unjustified, though it is unmistakable that the struggle of the two 'powers' finds its climax and its decision over and in man: the apocalyptic drama concentrates on anthropology, without the cosmic aspect being lost." (Judaism and Hellenism, Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period, E. T. Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1974, Volume I, 220). Again: "Essene teaching was concentrated on two apparently divergent focal points, which are, however, in reality closely associated and indeed condition each other: 1. an apocalyptic dualistic interpretation of history which has now-immediately-before the end-entered upon its decisive crisis, and 2. an anthropology and ecclesiology directed at the redemption of the individual, according to which God gives man knowledge of his true situation and introduces him into the *vita communis* of the Essene 'community,' where alone the Torah is fulfilled: *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*" (224).

30. Translation of Theodor H. Gaster: The Dead Sea Scriptures (New York: Anchor Books, Third Edition Revised and Enlarged, 1976), 48.

31. Judaism and Hellenism, I, 220.

32. Cf. Hengel: Judaism and Hellenism, I, 220.

33. The translation here is Leaneys: The Rule of Qumran and Its Meaning, Introduction, translation and commentary (The New Testament Library, London: SCM Press, 1966), 144.

34. The Rule of Qumran, 37.

35. Cf. J. Pryke: "The doctrine of the two yetzers of the Rabbinic schools has affinities with the Two Spirits of Qumran. The Rule of Community suggests a stage in the development of the good and evil 'desires' when the doctrine has not been logically worked out" (RQ 5, 1965, 350). It is interesting that IQS V 5, which echoes Deut. 10:16, substitutes yetzer for lebab in the latter. O. J. F. Seitz comments: "It would appear that the compilers of the Manual were already well on the way to a kind of exegesis which discovered in Deut. 10:16 'uncircumcised' as one of the seven Biblical names for the yaser ha-ra." "Two Spirits in Man: an Essay in Biblical Exegesis," New Testament Studies (henceforth NTS) 6, 1959-60, 94.

36. Cf. W. D. Davies: "it must be doubly emphasized that it is only here that the spirit is ascribed a strictly eschatological function at all in the Scrolls." In Krister Stendahl (ed): *The Scrolls and the New Testament* (New York: Harper, 1957), 173. The same point is made by David Hill: *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 238.

37. For discussion of the problems of translation in these passages see Chaim Rabin: *The Zadokite Documents* (Second revised edition, Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1958), 8, 21; A. Dupont-Sommer: *The Essene Writings from Qumran*, trans. G. Vermes (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1973), 124, 131. For an ingenious reconstruction of the text of CD II 12, V 21 - VI 1 which takes "those anointed with the holy spirit" to refer to the members of the Qumran community see Wernberg-Moller: *The Manual of Discipline*, 61-64.

38. See J. Murphy O'Connor: "La genese litteraire de la Regle de la Communauté," *Revue Biblique* (henceforth RB) 76, 1969, 528-549, especially 529-532; Jean Pouilly: *La Regle de la Communauté 'de Qumran, Son Evolution Litteraire* (Cahiers de la Revue Biblique, Paris: J. Gabalda, 1976), 17-25.

39. Accepting the proposed emendation of Wernberg-Moller referred to in n 37. The context forbids Wernberg-Moller's suggestion that the immediate reference in CD II 12 and VI 1 is to the Qumran sectaries. The real point of importance is that the same language is used (in different parts of the texts) to describe both the prophets and the sectaries.

40. The distinction is a fine one (as will become even more evident when the role of the Teacher of Righteousness is considered), yet it is fundamental to the whole basis of the thought of the Sect, which may be summarized thus. (a) The Law is the foundation of the community, but the Law requires correct interpretation, and it is the correct interpretation which is the final rule. (b) The spirit who inspired the writing of the Scriptures also inspires their interpretation, and this spirit has been given to the Qumran community alone, in consequence of which their interpretation alone is correct. (c) Since the interpretation of Scripture brings to light things previously hidden, interpretation is a form of revelation. (d) This revelation takes place by the interpretation or study of Scripture, which implies in turn, that to the sect their ongoing practice of exegesis was inspired. On the whole subject see Otto Betz: *Offenbarung und Schriftforschung in der Qumransekte* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1960); G. Vermes: "The Qumran Interpretation of Scripture in its Historical Setting" in Vermes: *Post-Biblical Jewish Studies* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), 37-49, especially 39-41; and H. Gabrion: "L'interpretation de l'Ecriture dans la litterature de Qumran" in W. Haase (ed): *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, II Principat, 19, 1 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1979), 779-848, especially 818-21.

41. The two terms are used with precisely this force in Daniel Ch. 2 where Nebuchadnezzar receives the "mystery" (*raz*) in the form of a dream (verses 1ff), and seeks its "interpretation" (*pesher*) (verses 4, 5, etc.) from his astrologers. In the outcome, the meaning of the "mystery" (i.e. its *pesher*) is revealed to Daniel (verses 18, 19, 25-28, 30. I.e. A "*pesher*" is a decoded *raz*). See F. F. Bruce: "The Book of Daniel and the Qumran Community,"

in E. Earle Ellis and Max Wilcox (edd): *Neotestamentica et Semitica* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1969), 225-7

42. This is not contradicted by the statement in IQpHab VII 5a that God had made known the "mysteries" of the Prophets to the Teacher of Righteousness. This is but another instance of the usage observed in Daniel Ch. 2 (see note 41) that an "interpretation" is a "mystery" made known. The "mysteries" were communicated to the Prophets, but not made known i.e. explained to them. They were revealed to the Teacher of Righteousness, thereby becoming "interpretations." For an account of the theory see F. F. Bruce: *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts* (London: Tyndale Press, 1960), 7-11.

43. A. Dupont-Sommer: *The Essene Writings*, 361.

44. Cf. Bonnie P. Kittel: "Because of the eschatological and apocalyptic viewpoint of the scrolls, no identification of the Teacher as the author of the Hodayot is possible. He may have been the author of some or all of the psalms, but it is just as possible that another, or several others of the sect, could have composed them." *The Hymns of Qumran, Translation and Commentary* (Society of Biblical Literature, Dissertation Series, Chico: Scholars Press, 1981), 10. Contrast F. F. Bruce's early opinion that the personal note found in the Hodayot suggests "that they were first composed to express the experience and devotion of one man, and that one man could hardly have been anybody other than the Teacher of Righteousness" (*The Teacher of Righteousness in the Qumran Texts*, London: Tyndale Press, 1956, 15); with his later and more cautious view that the authorship is a "moot question," and that "it may be safest at this stage to think of the speaker in the Hymns as a representative or spokesman of the community, without being more specific (*Biblical Exegesis*, 14).

45. Gert Jeremias: *Der Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit* (Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments, Band 2, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1963), 168-180.

46. G. Jeremias: *Der Lehrer*, 141 (my translation).

47. So Dupont-Sommer: *The Essene Writings*, 363 (this may well be his meaning in the passage referred to in note 43 as well). Cf. H. Gabrion, concluding an examination of passages from the Thanksgiving Hymns: "Parces transpositions hardies, le Maître de Justice fait beaucoup plus que se comparer à Moïse : il se considère comme un nouveau Moïse, en tout point identique au premier." *Aufstieg und Niedergang* 19, 1, 801.

48. O. Betz: *Offenbarung*, 61-8, especially 67-8 for his conclusion.

49. Vermes points out that the repeatedly expressed commitment of the sect to "the Law and the Prophets" (e.g. IQS I 2-3a) taken together with their preoccupation with the interpretation of prophecy suggests that the sect subscribed to the view that "the Prophets served as an essential link in the transmission of the Law from Moses to the rabbis" (*IDSSP*, 167).

50. Vermes: *DSSP*, 168.

51. For valuable treatments of them see J. Carmignac: "La Notion d'Eschatologie dans La Bible et a'Qumran," RQ 7, 1969, 17-32; and John J. Collins: "Patterns of Eschatology at Qumran" in Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson (edd): *Traditions in Transformation, Turning Points in Biblical Faith* (Winona Lake: Eisenbraun, 1981), 351-75.

52. Gerhard Krodel: "The Functions of the Spirit in the Old Testament, the Synoptic Tradition, and the Book of Acts," in Paul D. Opsahl (ed): *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1978), 19.

53. For a statement of the view that the historical Teacher of Righteousness and the eschatological are to be distinguished see A. S. van der Woude: "Le Maitre de Justice et Les Deux Messies de la Communaute de Qumran," in J. van der Ploeg (ed): *La Secte de Qumran et Les Orzignes du Christianisme* (Recherches Bibliques, IV, Bruges: Desclee de Brouwer, 1959), 121-34, esp. 130ff.

54. This remains equally true of John J. Collins' view, which is by no means without cogency, that there were different dimensions of Messianism in the Qumran mentality in keeping with which the expectation of the two messiahs was actualized in the institutions of the sect, and in consequence of which the distinction between the historical present and the eschatological future was blurred. Art. "Patterns of Eschatology at Qumran" (as in note 51), 356-9.

55. F. M. Cross catches the correct nuance here, recalling the analogy of John the Baptist. "He is, a forerunner, to be sure, but who? The solution is to name him 'the Voice crying in the Wilderness.' So a new title for the forerunner is sought out to fit John's circumstances. Similarly, to the question, 'Is the Essene master the prophet, the Messiah of Aaron or Israel?' I think we must answer: 'No, he is the Righteous Teacher of Scripture.'" *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies* (Revised edition, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 225.

56. F. F. Bruce compares the conveying of the mystery to Nebuchadnezzar in Dan. 2:27ff. Art. "The Book of Daniel and the Qumran Community" (as in note 41), 226.

57. For a review and evaluation of the application of the various eschatological titles to the Teacher of Righteousness see G. Jeremias: *Der Lehrer*, Kapitel 7, esp. 295-307.

58. E. g. IQS III 6; CD V 11, VII 4; IQH IV 31.

59. See note 38.

60. The Ancient Library of Qumran, 90. The degree to which the organization of the community anticipates that of the end time may well extend much further, as has been argued by J. J. Collins: "Patterns of Eschatology at Qumran," (as in note 51), 356-9.

61. Art. "New Light on Temptation, Sin and Flesh in the New Testament," in Krister Stendahl (ed): *The Scrolls and the New Testament* (New York: Harper, 1957), 110.

62. Qumran und das Neue Testament (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, Band II, 1966), 252f.
63. Der Lehrer, 185 (my translation).
64. Art. "Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Flesh and Spirit" in Stendahl (ed): The Scrolls and the New Testament, 177; cf. 173f.
65. See note 52.
66. The angelology of the Rule of the War in the context of Jewish angelology as a whole, is analyzed in Y. Yadin: The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness (Oxford, 1962), Ch. 9.
67. W. Eichrodt: Theology of the Old Testament, Vol. I, 60. Some Qumran interpreters have hesitated to affirm that the spirit is hypostatized in the scrolls. Cf. H. Ringgren: "Thus the holy spirit is not as an hypostasis or a 'person in the Godhead' but simply a manifestation of God's saving activity." Again: "the evil spirits in the Dead Sea Scrolls rarely become quite concrete demon figures. The emphasis is on their activity as tempters and seducers, and hence it becomes quite difficult to distinguish them from such concepts as evil states of mind or temptations" (The Faith of Qumran, 89f, 93). This hardly does justice to the language of the Rule of the War. See the quotation from W. S. Lasor in note 21. Such a view is without prejudice to other aspects of Qumran usage which see the spirits as powers at work in men. Cf. H. Braun: Qumran und das Neue Testament, Band II, 251; O. Betz: Der Paraklet (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), Part B, Fursprecher und Furbitte in Der Qumransekte.
68. For balanced statements of the prevailing view in intertestamental Judaism see E. Sjöberg art. *pneuma*, TDNT VI 385f; J. Jeremias: New Testament Theology, Volume I (London: SCM Press, 1975), 80-2
69. The textual problem is discussed by B. E. Thiering: "Inner and Outer Cleansing at Qumran as a Background to New Testament Baptism," NTS 26.2.1980.267 n 5. The point is unaffected whichever rendering is adopted.
70. E. g. Whether it involves four stages spread over three years as held by B. E. Thiering: "Qumran Initiation and New Testament Baptism," NTS 27, 5, 1981, 616-23; or a two stage novitiate spread over two years, as contended by Michael Newton: The Concept of Purity at Qumran and in the Letters of Paul (Cambridge, 1985), 10-26, esp. 12f.
71. See IQS VIII 5-10; IX 3-7. Cf. B. Gartner: The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament (Cambridge, 1965); M. Newton-The Concept of Purity at Qumran, 1-9, 14-15.
72. It is impossible to discuss the concept of purity at Qumran with any thoroughness here. Suffice it to say that, in my judgment, the views at both extremes are probably overly simple. The contention of B. E. Thiering ("Inner and Outer Cleansing at Qumran," NTS 26, 1980, 266-77) that pollution of the flesh was sharply distinguished from pollution of the soul, and that each was cleansed in a different way: the former by washing with water, the latter by the spirit. depends on a forced interpretation of passages such as IQS

III 6-9, and ignores the fact that at Qumran moral defilement incurred ritual impurity, as the passage referred to more naturally implies. At the opposite extreme is the view, championed by J. Neusner (*The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), that no distinction was made between ritual and moral impurity at Qumran. Cf. M. Newton's conclusion: "Thus, we can see that it is inappropriate to put any weight on the distinction between 'moral' and 'ritual' purity at Qumran" (*The Concept of Purity at Qumran*, 46). This fails to explain why the penalties for moral offences are regularly greater than those for ritual offences, according to the provisions of the penal code (IQS VI 24 - VII 25). See Deasley: *Perfection*, 79-87.

73. M. Newton: *The Concept of Purity at Qumran*, 12.

74. Newton, following Lieberman, points out that *bo* is a technical term for conversion.

75. He was forbidden to touch "the purity (*taharah*) of the Many" and to share in the property of the Many. For a discussion of these phrases see Newton: *The Concept of Purity*, 20-6.

76. See IQS VI 18-21.

77. "Qumran Initiation and New Testament Baptism," NTS 27, 1981, 620.

78. See Thiering: "Qumran Initiation," NTS 27, 1981, 615f (with notes).

79. To quote the Qumran sect as an illustration of "covenantal nomism" as does E. P. Sanders: *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1977), (see p.320 for a summary statement) is therefore an oversimplification. The case is more complex than that, as has been shown. It is somewhat surprising, given his emphasis on the importance of "getting in" in determining the soteriological pattern of a religion, that Sanders offers no sustained treatment of the passages of IQS concerned with that subject. The same is true of the related theme of the spirit, to which there is not a single Qumran reference under the entry 'Spirit' in his *Index of Subjects*. For the lines of a more adequate understanding of Qumran soteriology in explicit contrast to that of Sanders see Paul Garnet: "Qumran Light on Pauline Soteriology" in Donald A. Hagner and Murray J. Harris (edd): *Pauline Studies*, (Grand Rapids, 1980), 19-23. Garnet concludes: "We can say that the term 'justification by works of the Law' was meaningful in second-temple Judaism. In spite of the emphasis on the covenant community, obedience was essential if either the community or the individual were to find acceptance with God" (22).

80. For an exegesis of these and kindred passages to this effect. see Deasley: *Perfection*, 91-3, 231-44. It is worth noting that E. P. Sanders, who is anxious to demonstrate that cleansing from transgression takes place within the covenant and who resists interpretations which assert otherwise (e.g. those of Becker and Kuhn), nevertheless concedes that "the covenanter's consciousness of present salvation did not extend to considering that they had already been saved from human frailty . . . One who is in the sect remains in human flesh and participates in the 'sinfulness' of humanity" (Paul and

Palestinian Judaism, 281. The entire section on 'Sin as Transgression,' pp 272-81. should be consulted.).

81. For a treatment of the eschatology of these passages see Deasley, *Perfection*, 244-53. Cf. The comments of E. P. Sanders: *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 279f.

82. Michael Newton: *The Concept of Purity at Qumran*, 48.

83. See note 52.

84. In Stendahl (ed): *The Scrolls and the NT*, 177. His discussion of IQS IX 3ff on 176 should also be noted.

85. Stendahl (ed): *The Scrolls and the NT*, 173.

86. Otto Betz: "Past Events and Last Events in the Qumran Interpretation of History," *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies*, 6, 1, (1977), 31. Cf. his statement that the combining of old and new explains a key principle of Qumran exegesis: that Israel's history shows how God will act with mankind in the eschatological future (33). Also: "At Qumran, the present has eschatological significance, but the new work of God was mainly the subject of hope and the near future. That is why the study of the past events and the prophetic word became so important; there was no other way leading to the future of God" (34).

PNEUMATOLOGY IN ROMANS 8: ITS HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

by

Roger L. Hahn

Romans 8 provides a rich and obvious resource for the development of a doctrine of the Spirit. Of the 35 appearances of the word *pneuma* in Romans 21 are in chap. 8. Nowhere else in the Pauline writings or in the entire New Testament does such a concentrated use of *pneuma* occur. Legitimate exploitation of this rich resource for Pneumatology requires sensitivity to the historical setting of Romans, the place of chap. 8 in the structure of the letter, the relation of the pneumatology of Rom. 8 to Paul's theology in general and the interplay of pneumatology with other theological themes in Rom. 8. This paper will attempt briefly to set the pneumatology of Rom. 8 within the historical context of the letter as a whole and to explore some of the relationships between pneumatology and christology and eschatology in the chapter.

The Historical Setting of Romans 8

The most recent generation of scholarship has seen a basic shift in the study of Romans. Older works tended to view the epistle virtually as a theological handbook providing in almost finished form the rudiments for a systematic theology. As such Romans was mined for its precious theological stones relatively unaffected by the insights of the historical critical method. In contrast recent years have seen Romans subjected to the basic historical questions that have formed the backdrop to the study of the other Pauline letters for decades. In particular questions of the setting, occasion and purpose of Romans have received intense investigation.¹ Unless one subscribes to a partition theory for Romans, a very minority position² the historical setting of chap. 8 will be that of the letter as a whole.

Several have found the occasion of Romans in Paul's situation rather than in the church at Rome. In 1948 T. W. Manson described the epistle essentially as a circular letter, "summing up the positions reached by Paul and his friends" after the whole process of dealing with problems in Corinth.³

Johannes Munck envisioned Paul writing Romans while sitting on the dock awaiting the ship that would take him to Jerusalem for the final time. In anticipation of rejection by the church in Jerusalem suspicious of the collection and of persecution by unbelieving Jews unhappy over Paul's pro-Gentile bias the apostle penned Romans as his "manifesto of faith" in the integration of Jews and Gentiles in the church.⁴ Manson and Munck fail to explain why Romans was written with the Roman church as its specific addressees. Jervell and Bornkamm also attempt to understand Romans as arising from the situation of Paul contemplating his final trip to Jerusalem and yet to make sense of the letter's destination in Rome. Bornkamm argues that Paul intends to present the same basic message in Jerusalem and in Rome. However, the expression of that message in Romans is expressed in eternally and universally valid terms that imply that the epistle is Paul's last will and testament.⁵ Jacob Jervell's article title, "The Letter to Jerusalem," shows where he believes the occasion for Romans lies. The letter is sent to the Roman church, understood by Paul as the representative congregation of Gentile Christianity in the West, to gain that church's partnership in the case for a Gentile mission that Paul will make in Jerusalem.⁶

While Paul's own circumstances would very naturally have affected the writing of Romans, methodological consistency would suggest that the epistle be understood in relation to specific circumstances in the church at Rome. Unless compelling evidence can be shown to indicate that the occasion of Romans was not in the Roman church, that occasion should be a controlling factor in understanding Romans. Such is the trend of recent scholarship.⁷

The issue of the relationship of Jew and Gentile in Christ forms a significant trend that moves through much of Romans (1:5, 13, 16; 2:9, 10, 14, 17, 24, 28, 29; 3:1, 29; 9:24, 30; 10:12; 11:11, 12, 13, 25; 15:9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 27; 16:4). The treatment of the strong and the weak Christians in chaps. 14 — 15 highlights differences between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians.⁸ The presence of both Jewish and Gentile Christians in the Roman church is clear. Much of the argument of the letter is Jewish in form and presupposes the issues concerning Jewish Christianity. Yet specific statements are addressed directly to Gentiles.⁹ Though the history of the church at Rome prior to the writing of this letter to the Romans is difficult to know with certainty, it is likely that the church was founded by Jewish Christians whose witness to Jesus in the Jewish community of Rome contributed to the expulsion of Jews from Rome by Claudius in A.D. 49. At that point leadership in the church would have been left with Gentile Christians. Some shift in perspective would have inevitably occurred with such a change of leadership. As Jewish Christians began returning to Rome in the 50's conflict between Jewish and Gentile Christians would easily have arisen.

Paul's letter to the Roman church addresses itself to both segments of the church. As Beker notes, "Paul's basic apostolic effort — to establish the one church of Jews and Gentiles — is jeopardized in Rome, where disunity threatens in the factions of the 'weak' and 'the strong.' " The problem of Jewish Gentile relationships in the church was as significant in Rome as it was in Jerusalem.¹⁰ Paul's treatment of the matter is not one-sided. The development of the argument of chapters 2 — 4 can only be understood as affirming the right of Gentile membership in the people of God based on faith rather than on fulfilling provisions of the Law. Jewish exclusivity is

attacked. The thrust of the argument and of the phrase, "both Jew and Gentile," is pro-Gentile. 9:30-31 concludes that Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness attained it, while Israel pursued righteousness futilely.

Though the apostle to the Gentiles makes his case for the place of Gentile Christianity, the letter to the Romans also defends Jewish Christianity against any Gentile Christianity.¹¹ Neither side escapes Paul's admonition.

The historical context of Romans 8 is thus a church threatened by disunity between Jewish and Gentile Christians. There is no denying that Rom. 5 — 8 do not obviously reflect the historical circumstances just described.¹² However, there is a flow of thought from chaps. 1 — 4 into 5 — 8 and chaps. 9 — 15 build on chapter 8. The very important uses of *phroneo* in 11:20; 12:3,16; 14:6 and 15:5 build on the use of same verb in 8:5 and of the cognate noun *phronema*, in 8:6,7 and 27. The wish prayer of 15:5-6 directly calls upon the Romans to set their minds on the same thing. They have been enjoined to not think too highly of themselves in 12:3 and 11:20, but the basis upon which they can fulfill those injunctions is Rom. 8:5-7 where they are told that the mind-set of the Spirit is life and peace. The role of the Spirit in witnessing to the sonship of the believer in 8:14-17 must be understood in relationship to chapter 4 which clearly reflects the historical situation.

If Rom. 8 is to be used as a resource for a doctrine of the Holy Spirit the fact of the historical context must not be forgotten. Paul was not writing a systematic treatment of the Spirit in Rom. 8. He was writing a letter to a church in which a fundamental problem of a theology of salvation history threatened the integrity of the church. He was writing to a church in which the appeal to live according to the Spirit, as opposed to living according to the flesh, appears to have been an important necessity. Whatever doctrine of the Spirit may emerge from Rom. 8, it must be recognized as applied theology and not speculative theology.

The Theological Context of the Spirit in Romans 8

The analysis of Paul's theology of the Spirit in Romans 8 must proceed along the structural lines of the chapter.¹³ Thus Paul's treatment of the Spirit will be investigated by sections: vv. 1-11, 12-17 and 18-39.

Life and the Spirit in Romans 8:1-11

Paul uses *nomos* and *katakrima-katakrino* to bind vv. 1-4 together as a unit to make his transition from chap.7 to his treatment of life in the Spirit in chap. 8. The sending formula in v. 3 stands at the center of this opening section.¹⁴ However, Paul's use of the sending formula here in Rom. 8:3 is quite different from its use elsewhere in the New Testament and from his own use of it in Gal. 4:4. Only here does the sending verb appear as a participle, which means that here alone Paul is making the sending concept subordinate to another thought, that expressed in the main verb clause, "he condemned sin in the flesh."¹⁵ In Galatians the sending formula is the main clause and its purpose is to describe the intention of God to save both Jew and Gentile. Redemption is from the Law and is part of the sustained invective against the Law that Paul developed in the main section of Gal. 3.¹⁶

In contrast, the development of thought in Rom. 7 — 8 is much more concerned with sin, and the Law is dealt with in relation to sin rather than alone as in Galatians. The conflict with the Judaizers in Galatia caused Paul to

treat the Law more negatively in Galatians than in Romans. Though sin played a curiously insignificant role in Galatians, it is bound up with the Law in Romans 7 — 8 and is especially important in the transition verses from chap. 7 to Paul's treatment of the Spirit in chap. 8. In 8:3 the condemnation of sin in the flesh is the main clause, and the sending formula describes the means of accomplishing that condemnation of sin — by God sending his Son. Vv. 1 and 3-4 declare that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus because God has condemned sin in order that the righteous requirement of the Law might be fulfilled.

Here the difference between Romans and Galatians is especially significant. The result of sending in Galatians was redemption from the Law; the Law was perceived in a negative way. In Rom. 8:4 the purpose of the sending of the Son was the fulfillment of the righteous requirement of the Law; the Law is perceived in a much more positive light. But the fulfillment of the righteous requirement of the Law is "in you who are not walking according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." The fact that the Law is fulfilled *en humin* is particularly significant. The Law is internalized which echoes the prophecy of Jer. 31:31-34, but here it is accomplished by means of the Spirit. It is those who are walking according to the Spirit who fulfill the Law. However, walking according to the Spirit is not the condition of fulfilling the Law but the manner by which it is fulfilled.¹⁷ The Spirit internalizes the Law so that its righteous requirement may be fulfilled.

Thus, the formula describing God sending Christ is subordinated to God's purpose of internalizing the Law by the Spirit so that the Law might be fulfilled. The primary factor that enables Paul to speak more positively of the Law in Rom. 8:1-4 is the role that he sees the Spirit playing. Christology and pneumatology are linked at this point by the apostle. The coming of Christ condemned sin in order that those who walk by the Spirit might fulfill the Law. The objective event of the Incarnation has a subjective purpose, and that purpose is fulfilled by the work of the Spirit in the lives of believers.

The phrase, "the Law of the Spirit," in 8:2 is best understood as the Spirit taking possession and control of the Torah to accomplish God's purpose for the Law.¹⁸ In light of the connection with II Cor. 3:16 and Jer. 31:31ff one should understand Paul to mean here that the Spirit takes control of the Law and internalizes it by writing on the hearts of the believers. This connection with II Cor. 3:6 is suggested by the description of the Spirit as the Spirit of life in Rom. 8:2. The genitive, "of life," functions as a shorthand way of saying, "the Spirit who gives life," as the *pneuma zoopoiei* of II Cor. 3:6 shows. The Law, internalized by the Spirit who gives life, sets one free from the Law controlled by sin and by death.

The connection of Christ with the Spirit in 8:1-4 develops an idea initiated earlier in Romans. The designation of the Spirit as the Spirit of life must be understood in terms of chaps. 5 — 6. The Spirit is the one who will apply the resurrection of Christ to believers, according to 5:5 and 5:9-11. The newness of life that is, according to 6:4, to be experienced by believers who have identified with the death of Christ is mediated by the Spirit who makes alive. However, that life derives from Christ as the full phrase in 8:2 makes clear; it is the "life which is in Christ Jesus," that characterizes the Spirit.¹⁹ Thus

Paul shows the Spirit to be the one who actualizes the life of Christ in the believers.

Vv. 5-8, as a unity, build upon and define what it means to "walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit," in v. 4. The flesh Spirit antithesis was a traditional christological motif in early Christianity, but Paul, here and typically, uses the antithesis anthropologically. It may be that Paul's understanding of the believer's identification with Christ enabled him conceptually to make the shift from a christological to an anthropological use. Whether or not that was Paul's conceptual process, the result is that readers familiar with the christological use of the antithesis (Rom. 1:3-4) find it being applied to their own lives. This has the effect of enhancing their awareness of the Spirit's making real in their lives what was true of Christ.

The language of vv.5-8 is primarily descriptive of two ways of life. There is no overt paraenetic function in the use of the antithesis at this point. The subject changes in v. 6 from the persons living according to either flesh or Spirit to the mind-set of the flesh and of the Spirit. The Spirit is portrayed as setting its mind on life and peace. The mention of life as the goal of the Spirit reflects that which was said in 8:2 where the Spirit is described as the Spirit of life. It also corresponds to the association of the Spirit and the verb, "to make alive," found in I Cor. 15:45 and II Cor. 3:6. The description of the mind-set of the spirit as life also connects the Spirit with the treatment of life in Rom. 5:9-11 and chap. 6.

The new development of v. 6 is the connection of peace with the Spirit as a parallel predicate with life. The reference to peace at this point ties back to Rom. 5:1, where *eirene* was last used in the letter.²⁰ Paul intends to connect the mind-set of the Spirit to the peace with God enjoyed by those who are justified. Since 5:1 predicates peace with God on being justified through Christ, the description of peace as the goal or mind-set of the Spirit portrays the Spirit as again actualizing in the believer's life the objective status provided for by Christ.

V. 9 places both members of the flesh Spirit antithesis as objects of the preposition *en*. This marks the first time in chap.8 that *en pneumatī* is used. The flow of the context suggests that *en* would have the same meaning as the *kata* which was used from v. 4 on with a primarily instrumental sense.²¹ However, the phrase, *en pneumatī*, was used in 2:29 and in 7:6 to present the Spirit eschatologically in terms of the two aeons. II Cor. 10:3 demonstrates that Paul is quite able to use *en* and *kata* in the same verse with contrasting meanings and the shift of prepositions here in Rom. 8 should be understood as an intentional shift to a locative use to focus on the eschatological age of the Spirit.²²

The re-introduction of the eschatological aeons at this point is particularly important in relation to the association of the Spirit with Christ that has been being developed by Paul. The eschatological age of the Spirit is not future as it was for the Old Testament and Judaism, but is present because of Christ. The work of the Spirit in actualizing the work of Christ in believers' lives is the consequence of the present nature of the age of the Spirit. This is the significance of the emphatic statement in v. 9, "But you, indeed, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit." The conditions by which one may experience the age of the Spirit are then developed in vv. 9-11.

It is significant that Paul brings together in v. 9 the statements that his readers are "in the Spirit" and that the "Spirit is in them." The combination of *en pneumati* and *pneuma en humin* reinforces the locative interpretation of *en pneumati*, more precisely defines the internalization of the Spirit, and is parallel to the similar use of *en christo* and *christos en humin* elsewhere in Paul. The internalizing ministry of the Spirit is not just the pouring of God's love into the believers' hearts as in Rom. 5:5, nor just the internalization of the Law by writing it on the heart as implied in 8:2, but it includes the actual internalizing of the Spirit himself. The Spirit dwells *en humin* and for that reason is able to perform its internalizing function mentioned elsewhere in Romans.

The importance of the indwelling Spirit is emphasized when Paul makes that presence the definition of being a believer by the introduction of the sentence of holy law in v. 9c, "if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him (Christ)." The language of "having the Spirit" cannot mean the possession of the Spirit as an object or even as a power, but in the light of the preceding clause it must refer to having the Spirit as an indwelling, internalized presence.

The expression, *ei de christos en humin*, which begins v. 10 is so nearly to parallel to "if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you" of v. 9 that some have seen an identification of Christ and the Spirit here. It does not matter whether one supplies the verb "to be" as almost all English versions do or whether one brings forward the verb "to dwell" from v. 9, Christ and the Spirit are pictured in an almost identical way. However, in v. 9 the Spirit and Christ are distinguished in the genitive phrase, the Spirit of Christ, and Paul does not identify, or even functionally identify, Christ and the Spirit at this point. The indwelling Spirit in v.9 is the basis upon which Paul argues that the Romans are part of the new aeon of the Spirit, rather than the old aeon of the flesh. In contrast, the indwelling of Christ in vs. 10 is the condition upon which the Spirit may be life. The Spirit is the means by which Christ exerts His power in the believer's life and the means by which the believer is incorporated into Christ.²³ Because of this Paul can use Spirit and Christ in almost interchangeable ways in passages where it does not matter whether the reference is to the means or to the reality brought into being by that means. As Wikenhauser noted, Paul refers to Christ when he is speaking of salvation, but will use both Christ and the Spirit almost interchangeably when life in the church or "Christian" living is being discussed.²⁴

V.10 b and c is very carefully constructed in an antithetical parallelism.

"On the one hand the body is dead because of sin,

On the other hand the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

The change from the flesh Spirit antithesis to a body Spirit antithesis appears to be governed by Paul's content in vv. 10-11. He is moving from discussion of the believer's life in the context of the internalized Spirit to the Spirit's relationship with resurrection in v. 11. Resurrection implies death and Paul never speaks of death or mortality in terms of the flesh, but always in terms of the body.²⁵

Pneuma has often been understood anthropologically in v. 10c. The RSV even renders it "spirits." However, several considerations indicate that it should be understood as the Holy Spirit. First, the context has been dealing

with the divine Spirit throughout all of chap. 8 up to this point and with one exception all the subsequent references to the *pneuma* in chap. 8 are to the divine Spirit. Second, Paul has shown in I Cor. 2:11 that when he shifts from divine Spirit to human spirit or vice versa in a way that would be ambiguous he uses the appropriate modifying genitives to remove the ambiguity. Finally, Paul here states that the Spirit is life, not that it is alive. He is not contrasting the human body, which is dead, and the human spirit, which is alive. Rather, he is pointing to the divine Spirit which is the source of life.²⁶ The association of the Spirit with life in v. 11 also suggests that Paul referred to the divine Spirit in v. 10.

V. 11 spells out in more detail the meaning of v. 10. V. 10a, "If Christ is in you," is expanded by v. 11a, "If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you." V. 10c, "the Spirit is life," is expanded by the remainder of v. 11, "he who raised Christ from the dead will also make alive your mortal bodies through his Spirit which is dwelling in you." The conditional character of the sentences, the association of Christ and the Spirit, the concept of the Spirit as the source of life, and the *en humin* are all parallel features between the two verses. Two particular developments of v. 11 are strikingly apparent when the parallelism is seen. The first is the interchangeability of the terms Christ and Spirit with expressions for God. The second is the emphasis on the resurrection of Christ in this verse.

Though it is axiomatic that Paul did not think in terms of the later Christian doctrine of the Trinity,²⁷ one can certainly see a basis on which later theologians could construct that doctrine in the almost interchangeable use of the names and titles in vv. 9-11.²⁸ However, the titles are not totally interchangeable. Only God is said to have raised Jesus from the dead and God does not dwell in the believers, though the Spirit of God does. However, Paul's point was not to make ontological statements about the Trinity; rather he is wanting to relate the Spirit to the resurrection of the believers. The Spirit was described as life in v. 10 and that is further defined by the statement in v. 11 that God (He who raised Christ from the dead) will make alive the Roman readers through the indwelling Spirit. The condition for being made alive by the agency of the indwelling Spirit is the fact of the Spirit indwelling according to v. 11a. Thus the connection with the Spirit as the agency of resurrection life is not with the Spirit as external power, but it is with the internalized Spirit.

The role of the Spirit in the resurrection of believers points to a future aspect of Paul's understanding of the Spirit. The development of pneumatology throughout this section has been in terms of the present tense. *En pneumatī* in v. 9 refers to the age of the Spirit realized in Christ. Even in v. 11 where the future tense of making alive appears, the condition is expressed in the present tense. If the Spirit is a present internalized reality in the believers' lives, then at the consummation of the age God will make them alive by the agency of that same internalized Spirit. Just when Paul seems to have related his pneumatology to a realized eschatology, he incorporates a futuristic aspect. A similar interplay of pneumatology and realized and futuristic eschatology will also appear in v. 17 and v. 23.

Vv. 1-11 have especially focused on the role of the Spirit in internalizing the work of Christ in believers' lives. The Spirit has particularly been associated with life. The reference to the work of Christ for the believer in

Rom.5:10 and the reference to newness of life in 6:4 are explicated in 8:1-11. The internalized Spirit who gives life can enable believers to fulfill the righteous requirement of the Law if they live according to the Spirit rather than according to the flesh. Such a life reflects the mind-set of the Spirit and is life and peace, the subjective experience of the life and peace associated with Christ in chaps. 5 and 6. The indwelling of the Spirit is the condition of life in the aeon of the Spirit. Existence in the aeon of the Spirit is the life of Christ realized in the believer in the present. However, the indwelling Spirit also will be the agent for the resurrection life of the believers that lies yet in the future.

The Spirit and Sonship in Rom. 8:12-17

Though there is definite continuity of thought between vv. 12-13 and vv. 1-11, the *araboun* of v. 12 and the movement to new material marks a new paragraph. Paul continues the use of the flesh Spirit antithesis in vv. 12-13, but he shifts the emphasis. Vv.4-8 had used the antithesis completely in the indicative mood. Here Paul continues the indicative, but by means of *opheiletai*, he includes a tone of exhortation. The obligation is to live according to the Spirit which, according to v. 13, will result in life.

The direction of Paul's thought here in Rom. 8:12-14 is in sharp contrast to a somewhat parallel passage in Gal. 5:16-18. The Galatians passage places flesh and Spirit in complete antithesis to each other and demands a choice based on the incompatibility of the two spheres. Gal. 5:18 then contrasts being led by the Spirit with being under the Law as part of an appeal to the Galatians to abandon their shift toward Judaizing and to rely totally on the Spirit. However, Rom. 8:12-14 softens the antithesis somewhat by means of conditional clauses and uses the antithesis to move toward a definition of sonship as being led by the Spirit.

V. 14 makes the transition from the flesh Spirit antithesis to the concept of sonship which will occupy Paul's thought up through v.23. The unique development of Paul in this verse is the bringing together of the concepts of the Spirit, being led, and sonship. The Spirit may have been associated with sonship in a baptismal setting in pre Pauline Christianity and the motif of being led by the Spirit may have been traditional also. Whether these motifs were pre Pauline or not, Paul is the first, in v. 14, to bring them together. The first use of the plural, sons, also appears in v. 14. The singular, son, appeared in Rom. 1:3, 4, 9, 5:10 and 8:3, all in reference to Christ. Though the plural refers to the believers, its use, especially in connection to the Spirit, would have brought Christ to the Roman readers' minds. The connection of the sonship of Christ and the sonship of believers is made more explicit in 8:29. At v.14 the Spirit is again functioning in relation to Christ, making sonship, which is intrinsic to Christ, a potential reality in the lives of believers who are also led by the Spirit.

The concept of sonship which was introduced in v. 14 is further developed in v.15. To receive the Spirit was a traditional expression in early Christianity. Paul takes it up twice in v. 15 but modifies in two very different ways: the Romans did not receive a *pneuma douleias*, they did receive a *pneuma huiothesias*. The phrase, *pneuma douleias*, appears only here in the New Testament which has led several interpreters to conclude that it is the anthropological spirit being referred to here.²⁹ Some then took the *pneuma*

huiiothesias as parallel and thus also a reference to the human spirit,³⁰ while others felt that it must refer to the Holy Spirit because of the connection made between the Spirit and sonship in v. 14.³¹ In light of the identical "you received" with both instances of *pneuma*, both phrases should be understood in the same way. The traditional use of receiving the Spirit and the association of the Spirit and sonship suggests that receiving the *pneuma* of sonship should certainly be understood as receiving to the divine Spirit.

The difficulty is to explain how the *pneuma douleias* could possibly refer to the divine Spirit. Barrett is undoubtedly correct when he identifies the *pneuma douleias* as a "rhetorical formulation" based on the parallel Spirit of sonship. He paraphrases the expression, "The Spirit you received was not one which brings into bondage."³² The contrast between bondage and sonship in Gal.4:7 (*hoste ouketi ei doulos alla huios*) suggests that Barrett's analysis is correct.

The correct meaning of *huiiothesia* is important for understanding v. 15. The background of the word is less important than Paul's use of it for determining meaning and all five instances of the word in the New Testament are in the Pauline corpus (Rom. 8:15, 23; 9:4; Gal. 4:5; and Eph. 1:5). The word focused on the act or process of adoption in the Greco-Roman world. Paul's emphasis is usually on the resulting sonship rather than on the act of adoption. Thus the reference is to sonship based on an act of adoption.³³

In v. 15 sonship depends on the activity of the Spirit. V. 14 indicates that sonship is dependent upon being led by the Spirit. The relationship between sonship and the action of the Spirit can be past, present or future. The use of sonship in Rom. 8:23 is clearly future. Gal. 4:5 and Eph. 1:5 are clearly descriptions of the activity of God in the past. The aorist tense of *elabete* in v. 15 could be taken to indicate that Paul was referring to a past action and there is a sense in which the use of baptismal language here indicates just that, the past act of having received the Spirit. However, the present tense of vv. 14 and 16 indicates that the sense of sonship is also a present reality and not just a future hope as in v. 23 or the memory of a past act of adoption.³⁴

The reason sonship is a present experience is because it is experienced by means of the Spirit according to both v. 14 and v. 16. Those who are led by the internalized Spirit are constituted sons of God. It is the Spirit in v. 16 who bears witness internally that sonship is indeed a reality in the believer's life. V. 15 also indicates that it is the experience of the Spirit that makes sonship a subjective reality. It is the Spirit of sonship who enables the believer to cry *abba*. If Jeremias is correct in understanding *abba*³⁵ Paul is describing a relationship of acceptance, warmth and trust that the Spirit makes real for the believer.

The *abba* cry is not the witness of the Spirit to sonship; it is enabled by the Spirit's witness to sonship. Paul has no intention of making the Spirit's witness dependent upon the cry of acclamation.³⁶ The Spirit witnesses to the fact of sonship as v. 16 makes clear. It is noteworthy that Paul uses an emphatic *auto* with the Spirit in v.16, since 8:27 is the only other instance of his using such an emphatic construction with the Spirit. The construction suggests that Paul wants to especially stress the activity of the Spirit as the witness to sonship. The verb chosen by Paul to express the activity of the Spirit is *summartureo*, used only in the New Testament by Paul in

Romans, here and in 2:15 and 9:1. In its original sense, the word meant to bear witness with, as a witness along side other witnesses. However, it soon lost the implication of other witnesses and came to mean simply "to confirm."³⁷

It is the divine Spirit who confirms sonship to the human spirit. This is another instance in which Paul develops the Spirit in internalized terms. The Spirit en humin, or in the heart, or witnessing with the human spirit are all ways of describing the Spirit in its subjective ministry. External powers do not witness with the human spirit. An indwelling Spirit who brings life and peace and causes the believer to cry out to God in warmth and trust, *abba*, may witness to the human spirit that he or she is a child of God.

Though the word Spirit does not appear in v. 17 it provides an important conclusion to this section of Paul's treatment of the Spirit. The Spirit witnessed to the human spirit in v. 16 to the fact of being a child of God. Paul concludes that if one is a child, he or she is also an heir. Thus the Spirit witnesses to the believer's status as heir of God and co-heir with Christ. Again the Spirit and Christ are brought together by Paul in a relation in which the Spirit internalizes and makes real the believer's status with Christ. The relationship with Christ is emphatically presented with the three *sun compounds* used in v. 17.

The condition for being a co-heir with Christ is suffering with Him in order to be glorified with him. *Sumpascho* points back to the identification with Christ outlined in 6:2-4. The use of the aorist subjunctive of *sundoxazo* is exactly parallel with the aorist subjunctive of *peripateo* used in 6:4, in the phrase, "walk in newness of life." In both instances identification with the resurrection of Christ is intended, but because of the future nature of that identification it is expressed in the subjunctive. V. 17 here indicates that the Spirit's ministry confirms the believers status as co heir with Christ, conditional upon the believer's identification with the death and life of Christ.

The future participation in the glorification with Christ envisioned in the final clause of v. 17 closes the section of vv. 12-17 with a glance at the Spirit's place in a futuristic eschatology. This theme had also closed the section of vv. 1-11 with the use of the future tense, *zoopoiesei*. The emphasis on the future is more pronounced in vv. 12-17 since it appears in both v. 13 and v. 17 and thus forms somewhat of a parenthesis enclosing the section. The primary thrust of vv. 12-17 is still the present ministry of the Spirit internalizing the believer's status as son. However, the bracketing of the section with future references points to the development of a more futuristic concern in the following verses.

Vv. 12-17 make the transition in chap. 8 from an emphasis on the indwelling life of the Spirit in contrast to a life lived according to the flesh to the concept of the future expectation of the sons of God, the subject to be developed in the subsequent section. The concept of sonship is the major key in this transition paragraph. The paragraph focuses attention on the Spirit's ministry of internalizing the believer's status as son. This is done by connecting the Spirit to Christ and to both realized and futuristic aspects of eschatology.

The Spirit and Hope in Rom. 8:18-39

The number of references to the Spirit in Rom. 8:18-39 shows that Paul's

train of thought has passed from a major concern with the Spirit on to the consideration of hope in the Christian life. Spirit appears only four times in this section, once in v. 23 and three times in vv. 26-27. This reduced number of uses of the word does not mean that Paul is no longer interested in the Spirit, but his treatment of the future is not as intensely related to the Spirit as had been his treatment of the present life in the Spirit in the first seventeen verses of chap. 8.

The general thrust of vv. 18-25 is clearly shaped by the use of the following words: v. 18 — about to be revealed, v. 19 — eager expectation, revelation, eagerly expecting, v. 20 — hope (as a noun), v. 23 — eagerly expecting, v. 24 — hope (three times as a noun, once as a verb), v. 25 — hope (as a verb), eagerly expecting. When the future tense, *eleutherothesetai*, in v.21 is combined with the above mentioned vocabulary the strong future thrust of the section is inescapable.

In v. 23 Paul describes the expectation of final salvation as having the *aparche* of the Spirit. The future orientation of the context is sufficient to suggest that Oke's idea of translating *aparche* as "birth certificate," based on examples of such usage in the papyri, is incorrect. Both the context and the Pauline and New Testament use of the word confirm that the usual meaning of "first fruit" is correct. This word had a background in both the Old Testament and Hellenistic sacrificial language. The presentation of the first fruit was a pledge that the remainder would be given later. The use of first fruit here in v. 23 regards the present as an anticipation of a greater, future event.³⁸

The genitive, "of the Spirit," in v. 23 is not partitive — the believer has part of the Spirit now and will receive Him in entirety at the end — but exegetical, explaining that the Spirit is now possessed as a pledge of the future consummation of final salvation.³⁹ The relation of the participial phrase, "having the first fruit of the Spirit," to the main verb, "we are groaning," is also important. The emphatic nature of the sentence is attested by the double *kai autoi* and the emphatic *hemeis* following the participle. The *ou monon de*, which begins the sentence, sets it in a parallel relation to v. 22 where all creation groans. In v. 23 the believers groan.

The progression of thought moves from the groaning of creation to the groaning of believers. In v. 19 creation is said to be eagerly expecting the revelation of the sons of God. In v. 23 believers eagerly expect *huiiothesia* as they groan. The first fruit of the Spirit characterizes the groaning of the believers in a way that has no parallel in creation. Käsemann correctly identifies the participle, "having," as concessive — we groan also, like the creation, even though we have the first fruit of the Spirit in a way that creation does not have.⁴⁰

The two participial phrases, "having the first fruit of the Spirit" and "eagerly expecting sonship," stand in a parallel relationship with each other.⁴¹ Swetnam's suggestion that *apehdechesthai* does not have its regular meaning of "expect," but rather means "to infer" is strained and does not recognize the tension, characteristic especially in Rom. 8, between the present possession

and future full appropriation of the Spirit.⁴² Although the believer has received the Spirit of sonship, according to v. 15, now sonship is still future, being eagerly expected, and that future aspect is true even though we have the first fruit of the Spirit. Though sonship is a present possession according to v. 15, that sonship will be "unassailable and complete only in the *apolutrosis tou somatos*."⁴³ This tension between present sonship in v. 15 and future sonship in v.23 reflects the tension between present and future understandings of the Spirit by Paul throughout the chapter. A futuristic view of the Spirit had emerged in v. 11, v. 13 and v. 17 in the midst of a context focusing on the present work of the Spirit. It should not be unexpected to find a more powerful statement of a future understanding of the Spirit and of sonship in v. 23 even though it creates some tension with the concept of present sonship in v. 15.

Though the reference to sonship in v. 23 stands in some tension with the reference of v. 15, it gives a basic christological perspective to this section. There is no explicit mention of Christ from 8:17 to 8:34, which is somewhat unusual in Paul. The christological orientation of sonship in v. 15 will provide a context for recognizing Christ as still the model for the future sonship envisioned in v. 23.

The connection of the Spirit to the groaning of the believer provides the flow of thought from v. 23 to vv. 26-27. In v. 22 creation groans — in v. 23 the believers groan and in v. 26 the Spirit groans in a similar way, interceding *with stenagmois alaletois*. This means that for Paul the foundational clause is, "the Spirit himself intercedes with *stenagmois alaletois*," and the other clauses should be interpreted in relation to it. Though Käsemann has suggested that *stenagmois alaletois* refers to glossalalia, v. 26 does not say that believers use *stenagmois alaletois* but that the Spirit uses them in his intercession for believers.⁴⁴ This is important. The question of whether the groanings are "unspoken or unspeakable" is of little significance if it is the Spirit who does the groaning. To try to determine the content and phonetics of the *stenagmois alaletois* fails to recognize that these groans are metaphorically based on the parallel with the groanings of creation and of the believers. The intercessory work of the Spirit here is the way in which the Spirit "helps" as mentioned in the first part of v. 26. The *sun* prefix in the verb *sunantzlambanomai* appears to be intensive, rather than indicating that the Spirit helps along with the believer's help; Paul's purpose is not to stress the believer's cooperation with the Spirit but the Spirit's ministry to the believer.⁴⁵

Though the word *pneuma* does not appear after v. 27 in Rom. 8 it is likely that Paul intended it as the subject of v. 28. The subject of this verse has long been a problem for exegetes, but generally only two alternatives have been suggested. The alternatives, "God" or "all things" as subject of the verb "cooperate," have been present in the textual tradition from at least the fourth century. Recently, however, the suggestion has been put forward that the subject should be understood as the Spirit, which was the predominant subject in vv. 26-27.⁴⁶ The chief objection has been that it would create a difficult change of subject between v.28 and vv. 29-30 without any indication of subject change given in the text.⁴⁷ It is true that a difficult subject change would be required since God is obviously the subject of vv. 29-30, as the reference to "his son" in v. 29 indicates. However, the subject change from the Spirit of God will be difficult whether it is between v. 27 and v. 28 or between v. 28 and v. 29 since there is no indication of change until v. 29. To make the subject change after v. 28 solves the problem of the two unacceptable alternatives for the subject of v. 28 and makes the

Spirit the consistent subject of vv. 26-28. To make the subject change after v. 27 perpetuates the problem of the subject of v. 28.

In light of this it seems that Paul intends the Spirit to be understood as the subject of v. 28. In this way he understands the Spirit as active in the lives of believers in bringing good from all things. The "all things" reaches back to v. 18, "the sufferings of the present time," and forward to vv. 35-39, where they are listed in some detail. The Spirit again functions in its internalized role as the one who encounters the difficulties of the eschaton and enables the believer to find good.

Though no further references to the Spirit occur in vv. 29-39, Paul's understanding of the Spirit is still at work in these verses. V. 34 describes Christ as interceding for the believers and the same verb is used as appeared in v. 27 with the Spirit as subject. In this way Christ and the Spirit are again brought together performing similar functions. However, the intercession of Christ is from the right hand of God and thus quite external to the believer. On the other hand, the Spirit intercedes for the believer in the moment of prayer and thus is a much more internal reality. This is consistent with the pattern of the work of the Spirit in chap. 8 as internalizing the objective work of Christ.

Rom. 8 consistently presents the Spirit in relationship to christology and to eschatology. The Spirit takes the objective, external work of Christ and internalizes it in the believer. The Spirit makes the life of Christ real in the life of the believer. The Spirit can possess the Torah and internalize it so that the righteous requirement of the Law can be fulfilled. The Spirit gives witness to sonship for believers. The ability to cry abba is by means of the Spirit. For the most part Rom. 8 presents the work of the Spirit as a present work. Those who are in the age of the Spirit, now realized, experience the life of Christ made real in them. But Paul also holds out a future work of the Spirit. Even the present sonship vouchsafed by the Spirit awaits a future consummation. The Spirit is the first fruit, the present proof of the work of God yet to be accomplished at the end of the age.

Conclusion

Rom. 8 provides a rich resource for the development of a doctrine of the Spirit. It suggests that any doctrine of the Spirit may not be separated from christology. The Spirit is consistently portrayed in Rom. 8 as internalizing in the life of the believers the objective work of Christ. The Spirit may be the connecting link between christology and Christian Life or Ecclesiology. The fact that Paul makes the presentation of the Spirit that he does in Rom. 8, his most detailed treatment of the Spirit, to a church experiencing serious disunity is especially significant. Paul's pneumatology in Rom. 8 also impinges on eschatology. Though his eschatology is typical of the New Testament rather than unique, his emphasis on the present age and work of the Spirit could provide a needed corrective to some contemporary eschatological enthusiasm. The Spirit as first fruit provides an appropriate balance for relating realized and futuristic eschatology.

NOTES

1. See especially Karl P. Donfried, (ed.), *The Romans Debate* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1977). J. Christian Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), pp. 59-61, provides a summary of the difficulties in treating Romans as an "occasional" letter.

2. Mention of partition theories for Romans should distinguish between those dealing with the ending of the epistle, especially chap. 16, and those seeing Romans as a compilation of two or more original documents. The most complete recent treatment of the ending of Romans is Harry Gamble, *The Textual History of the Letter to the Romans: A Study in Textual and Literary Criticism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977). In a summary of recent interpretation of Romans W. S. Campbell, "The Romans Debate," *The Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 10 (January 1981): 24, notes that "the majority of recent writers . . . regard the original letter as comprising all of chapters 1-16." Compilation theories have been proposed by Junji Kinoshita, "Romans-Two Writings Combined: A New Interpretation of the Body of Romans," *Novum Testamentum* (1965) 258-277, and by Robin Scroggs, "Paul as Rhetorician. Two Homilies in Romans i-xi," *Jews, Greeks, and Christians: Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity, Essays in Honour of W. D. Davies*, ed. R. Hammerton-Kelly and Robin Scroggs, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), pp. 270-297. However, the difficulties of these proposals are greater than the benefits and they are rightly rejected.

3. T. W. Manson, "St. Paul's Letter to the Romans-and Others," *The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 31 (1948): 224-240, reprinted in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles*, ed. Matthew Black, Manchester, 1962, pp. 225-241, and in Donfried, *Debate*, pp. 1-16.

4. See Johannes Munck, *Christ and Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9-11*, trans. Ingeborg Nixon (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), pp. 8-13 and idem, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, trans. Frank Clarke (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1959), pp. 196-209.

5. Gunther Bornkamm, "The Letter to the Romans as Paul's Last Will and Testament," in Donfried, *Debate*, pp. 17-31. Robert J. Karris, "Romans 14:1 - 15:13 and the Occasion of Romans," in Donfried, *Debate*, pp. 75-99, similarly argues that the paraenesis of Romans 14-15 does not arise from a situation in the Roman church, but is simply generalized paraenesis in a letter that sums up Paul's missionary theology.

6. Jacob Jervell, "The Letter to Jerusalem," in Donfried, *Debate*, pp. 61-74. Jervell builds on the suggestion of Ernst Fuchs, *Hermeneutic* (Bad Cannstatt: R. Mullerschön, 1954), p. 191, that the "secret address" of Romans is Jerusalem.

7. Campbell, "The Romans Debate," p. 28. Evidence of the correctness of this analysis can be seen in Ernst Kasemann, *Commentary on Romans* trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans

Publishing Company, 1980), pp. 402-406; Beker, pp. 71-93; A. J. M. Wedderburn, "The Purpose and Occasion of Romans Again," *The Expository Times* 90, 5, (February 1979): 137-141; W. S. Campbell, "Why Did Paul Write Romans?" *The Expository Times* 85, 9, (June 1974): 268-269; and to some degree in C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* 2 vols. *The International Critical Commentary*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Limited, 1975, 1979), II: pp. 814-816.

8. The question of whether the seemingly Jewish Christian positions are in fact the positions of Gentile Christians who are fascinated or otherwise influenced by Judaism does not contradict this point. It should be granted that Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity are not antithetical positions of legalism and libertinism respectively. They both contained persons widely spaced along the spectrum of total adherence and total disregard for the Mosaic Law. Nevertheless, the terms Jewish Christian and Gentile Christian provide approximate indications of the direction of the emphasis on the Law rather than being a simple equation of ethnicity and theology.

9. See, for example, Scroggs, pp. 275-281, for details of the basic Jewish methodology of argument in Romans 1-4 and 9-11. Romans 7:1 indicates a basically Jewish audience while 1:5-6 and 1:13 indicate a Gentile audience.

10. Beker, p. 74.

11. The fact that Paul S. Minear, *The Obedience of Faith: The Purpose of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans* (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1971), goes beyond the evidence in trying to identify five different groups-house churches-in Rome should not prevent us from recognizing that two different groups in the Roman church are addressed.

12. See Beker, pp. 83-86, and Scroggs, pp. 281-289, for differing but complementary descriptions of the way chaps. 5-8 differ in character from the rest of Romans.

13. Most writers identify vv. 1-11 as the first major section of the chapter. A notable exception is Peter von der Osten-Sacken, *Romer 8 als Beispiel paulinischer Soteriologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), pp. 60-159, who treats vv. 1-13 as the first paragraph of the chapter. Vv. 12-30 are treated as the second unit of the chapter by Matthew Black, *Romans, New Century Bible* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1973) pp. 113-117, and C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1957), pp. 160-171. Cranfield, I, p. 404, makes vv. 12-16 the second paragraph, but vv. 12-17 are more commonly recognized as the second unit.

14. Henning Paulsen, *Überlieferung und Auslegung in Römer 8* (Düsseldorf: Neukirchener Verlag, 1975), p. 42.

15. Osten-Sacken, p. 145.

16. Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia, Hermeneia-A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p. 208.

17. Cranfield, I, p. 385.
18. See Eduard Lohse, "o nomos tou pneumatou tes zoes Exegetische Anmerkungen zu Rom.8.2," in *Neu Testament und christliche Existenz Festschrift für Herbert Braun zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz and Luise Schottroff (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1973), pp. 270-287. For an argument for multiple meanings of nomos in Rom. 7:21 - 8:4 see Heikki Raisanen, "Das 'Gesetz des Glaubens' (Rom.3.27) und das 'Gesetz des Geistes' (Rom.8.2)," *New Testament Studies* 20, 1, (October 1979): 101-117.
19. Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer*, Übersetzt und erklärt, 5th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1978), p. 249.
20. William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary, 5th ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), p. 196.
21. Cranfield, I, p. 387.
22. Kasemann, p. 220.
23. Ibid, p. 222.
24. Alfred Wikenhauser, *Pauline Mysticism: Christ in the Mystical Teaching of St. Paul*, trans. Joseph Cunningham (New York: Herder and Herder, 1960) pp. 54 and 87.
25. The closest Paul comes to associating flesh with death is Gal. 5:24: Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh. He associates body with death or mortality in Rom.6:6; 7:4.24; 8:11. 13; I Cor. 13:3 and II Cor.4:10.
26. Robert T. Fortna, "Romans 8:10 and Paul's Doctrine of the Spirit," *Anglican Theological Review* XLI, 2, (April 1959): 77-84, Barrett, p. 159, and Cranfield, I, p. 390.
27. Neill Q. Hamilton, *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul*, *Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers* No. 6, (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd Ltd., 1957), p. 3.
28. Cranfield, II, p. 843.
29. For example, Sanday and Headlam, p. 202; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 165; C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1932), p. 128, and Black, p. 118.
30. Sanday and Headlam, and Black.
31. Bruce and Dodd.
32. Barrett, p. 163, and Cranfield, I, p. 396.
33. Eduard Schweizer, "húiothesia," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. VIII, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972): 399.

34. Cranfield, I, p. 398. Contra Barrett, p. 163, who argues that sonship is future here in Rom. 8:15.

35. Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, Vol. I, *The Proclamation of Jesus*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), pp. 63-67.

36. Cranfield, I, p. 402. Contra Kasemann, p. 229 and Barrett, p. 164.

37. H. Strathmann, "martus, martureo, marturia, marturion, epimartureo, summartureo, sunepimartureo, katamartureo, marturomai diamarturomai, promarturomai, pseudomartus, pseudomartureo, pseudomarturia," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. IV, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967): 508-509.

38. C. Clarke Oke, "A Suggestion with Regard to Romans 8:23," *Interpretation* 11, 4, (October 1957): 458. See instead Cranfield, I, pp. 417-418, Michel, p. 270 and Barrett, p. 167.

39. Kasemann, p. 237. The explanation of Cranfield, I, p. 418, that the genitive is both appositive and possessive is unnecessarily obscure.

40. Kasemann, p. 237.

41. The suggestion by Pierre Benoit, " 'Nous gemissions, attendant la deliverance de notre corps' (Rom. VIII, 23)," *Melanges Jules Lebreton*, I (Paris, 1951), 267-280, and especially p. 275, that huiothesia was not part of the original text is untenable. The external support for the omission is primarily in the Western text and the insertion creates an embarrassing tension with v. 15.

42. James Swetnam, "On Romans 8, 23 and the 'Expectation of Sonship,'" *Biblica* 48, (No. 1): 104-106.

43. Käsemann, p. 237.

44. Käsemann, p. 241, and especially in Ernst Käsemann, "The Cry for Liberty in the Worship of the Church," *Perspectives on Paul*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), pp.122-137. Contra George W. MacRae, "Romans 8:26-27," *Interpretation* 34, 3, (July 1980): 290.

45. Cranfield, I, p. 421.

46. See especially M. Black, "The interpretation of Romans viii 28," in *Neotestamentica et Patristica Eine Freundesgabe, Herrn Professor Dr. Oscar Cullmann zu seinen 60* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962), pp.166-172. The NEB also understands the Spirit to be the subject of v. 28.

47. Cranfield, I, pp. 425-426, and in more detail in C. E. B. Cranfield, "Romans 8.28," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 19, 2, (June 1966): 206-208.

JOHN WESLEY'S DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

by

Rob L. Staples

This paper will, at the beginning, briefly summarize John Wesley's doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the function this doctrine has in his theology as a whole. The question of the relation between "Spirit" and "Word" will then be explored, and the way Wesley's understanding of this relationship compares with that of Classical Protestantism. We will then examine the place of the Holy Spirit in two areas of Wesley's theology, namely hermeneutics and soteriology, comparing his understanding with that of the American holiness movement, in an attempt to explore the implications of his views for Contemporary Wesleyanism.

I. The Experiential Focus of Wesley's Doctrine

John Wesley had little interest in a purely speculative theology.¹ His energies were mostly invested in soteriological concerns. In his theology of the Holy Spirit, therefore, he turns quickly from such doctrinal matters as the nature, personality, and procession of the Holy Spirit, and the place of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity, to those subjects more directly related to the *ordo salutis* and the work of the Spirit in Christian experience.

On the former things, nevertheless, he did have some opinions, and it is important at the outset to understand what they were. In his understanding of the Trinity, Wesley aligns himself with those credal formulations long considered definitive in historical Christianity. In the words of one of his brother's hymns, he claimed to be "fix'd on the *Athanasian* mound,"² although in his 1775 sermon, "On the Trinity," he disclaims that statement in the creed which asserts that anyone who does not assent to said creed cannot be saved. And he defends Servetus in his objection against Calvin to the terms "Trinity" and "Person" because they were not Biblical.³ Sounding much like Augustine who tolerated the formula "three Persons" as a description of the Trinity, "not in order to express it, but in order not to be silent,"⁴ Wesley says:

I dare not insist upon anyone's using the word Trinity, or Person. I use them myself without any scruple, because I know

of none better: But if any man has any scruple against them, who shall constrain him to use them?⁵

Despite this similarity, and despite his appreciation for the Athanasian Creed, which is "Augustinian through and through,"⁶ Wesley was probably closer to the Cappadocian Fathers than to Augustine in the way he uses trinitarian language and images.⁷ Just as on another doctrinal issue, Wesley said he came "to the very edge of Calvinism,"⁸ so on the issue of trinitarianism, because of the operational distinctions he sees between the persons of the Godhead, he probably comes closer to the edge of tri-theism than to modalism.⁹

Be that as it may, Wesley is well within orthodox boundaries. On the Trinity, as on so many other doctrinal matters, he is loyally Anglican. In his 1784 abridgement of the Anglican Thirty-Nine Articles for the American Methodists, he includes Article One, "Of Faith in the Trinity," unchanged.¹⁰ Likewise on the issue of the Spirit's "procession," Wesley retains the Anglican Article Five (as the Methodist Article Four). This article affirms the procession of the Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father. Wesley thus agrees with the Western church against the East in the "filioque" controversy.¹¹

Wesley believed also in the "personality" of the Holy Spirit. He repeatedly makes use of personal pronouns and images as he describes the Spirit's relationship to humans.¹² A perusal of the Wesleys' *Hymns on the Trinity*¹³ reveals a conception of the Holy Spirit as "a living, active, 'personal' presence who enters into an intimate interpersonal fellowship with man, and is addressed as a recipient of prayer, praise, and worship."¹⁴ In his *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, his comment on John 15:26 is quite explicit in regard to the Spirit's personality:

The Spirit's coming, and being sent by our Lord from the Father, to testify of Him, are personal characters, and plainly distinguish Him from the Father and the Son; and His title as the *Spirit of Truth*, together with His proceeding from the Father, can agree to none but a divine person.¹⁵

But for Wesley the main point of such scriptural teachings is not merely that the Spirit is a person in relation to the Father and to the Son, but that the Spirit is a person *in relation to us*! When the Spirit deals with us, it is not some impersonal "influence" with which we have to do. It is none other than the personal God himself in His outgoing relational activity.

Thus Wesley's interest in the doctrine of the Trinity and, more particularly, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, is altogether non speculative. These doctrines are decidedly related to human redemption. His interest is soteriological from the beginning to the end, and the Holy Spirit is a key principle in his soteriology. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is expounded by Wesley in the context of religious experience.

Absolutely, all of the Godhead is present and operative in the Holy Spirit; *functionally or redemptively* the Holy Spirit is the earthly vicar of the heavenly Father and Son. The indwelling Spirit applies the work of Christ to the soul of man and initiates and administers the Christian life.¹⁶

All there is of God is unreservedly involved in our redemption, in both its objective and subjective aspects. There is no experience of God that is not an experience of the Holy Spirit. Every experience of God is, at one and the same time, an experience of "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" (II Cor. 13:14, NIV). This claim might seem to be contradicted by what we earlier called Wesley's "operational distinctions" between the persons of the Trinity, or what medieval theologians called the doctrine of "appropriations."¹⁷ This is the concept in which a work which properly belongs to the whole Godhead is attributed (appropriated) to only one of the three Persons. Wesley was utilizing a form of the "appropriations" doctrine when he defined *justification* as "what God does for us through his Son" and *sanctification* as "what he works in us by his Spirit."¹⁸ But these definitions show that Wesley understood clearly that *both* justification and sanctification are the work of God the whole God, not just one third of God.

Nevertheless he also understood that it is as the Holy Spirit that God first "touches base" with us, and it is through the Spirit that we first encounter God in His redemptive activity. Henry P. Van Dusen has described the Holy Spirit as "God near" and "God mighty," as "God-at-hand" and "God-at-work," *intimacy* and *potency* being the Spirit's distinctive characteristics.¹⁹ There is no way that we can know God apart from the Spirit's activity. J. Paul Taylor, capturing the heart of Wesley's understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, writes:

He is the one with whom we have to do, first of all. He comes to close quarters with us all, touching the inner springs of our being in what the old theologians called 'preventing grace,' the gracious action of God upon us, long in advance of saving grace, checking, reproving, creating the sense of guilt and the longing to be something higher and better than we have been. The Spirit is the special representative of the holiness of the one Godhead, and it is his mission to make men holy.²⁰

In "A Letter to a Roman Catholic," Wesley writes:

I believe the infinite and eternal Spirit of God, equal with the Father and the Son, to be not only perfectly holy in himself but the immediate cause of all holiness in us; enlightening our understandings, rectifying our wills and affections, renewing our natures, uniting our persons to Christ, assuring us of the adoption of sons, leading us in our actions; purifying and sanctifying our souls and bodies, to a full and eternal enjoyment of God.²¹

Wesley's doctrine of the Holy Spirit is soteriological, practical, experiential, having received its early development in the context of Wesley's own existential quest among the intellectuals at Oxford and among the Indians in Georgia, and culminating in his "heart warming" experience at Aldersgate. For the general work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life, he uses the word "inspiration." He defines this inspiration as an "inward assistance of the Holy Ghost"²² and as a spiritual breathing, which he holds to be a Biblical term and a meaningful one. "Breathing," he says, "bears a near relation to spirit."²³ Inspiration, in this sense, is "the main doctrine of the

Methodists," according to Wesley.²⁴ At least four characteristics of this "inspiration" may be discerned: immediacy, universality, variability, and perceptibility.²⁵ By *immediacy*, Wesley means that the assistance which the Holy Spirit gives Us, even though mediated by the various means of grace, is given directly, and is "as immediately breathed into you by the Holy Ghost, as if you had lived seventeen hundred years ago."²⁶ Such inspiration is *universal*, given not to a special class of persons nor to a special age in history, but to all who savingly believe in Jesus Christ.²⁷ This inspiration *varies* from person to person. Wesley says "there is an irreconcilable variability in the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the souls of men."²⁸ "The same Spirit worketh in every one; and yet worketh in several ways, according to His own will."²⁹ Finally, and most important for this essay, this inspiration of the Holy Spirit is *perceptible*. "The inspiration of the Holy Spirit must necessarily be perceived by him who receives it."³⁰ In his correspondence with "John Smith" (widely thought to be the *nom de plume* of Bishop Thomas Secker³¹) in the late 1740's Wesley writes at great length about perceptible inspiration. He defines it as "that inspiration of God's Holy Spirit whereby He fills us (every true believer) with righteousness and peace and joy, with love to Him and all mankind."³² "Christian faith," Wesley asserts, "implies a direct, perceptible testimony of the Spirit, as distinguishable from the suggestion of fancy as light is distinguishable from darkness; whereas we suppose he imperceptibly influences our minds."³³ To Dr. Rutherford, sometime Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, Wesley wrote, in 1768, that inward feeling is not inconsistent with reason, that one may be "inwardly conscious" of the operation of the Holy Spirit, and that "love, joy, and peace, are inwardly felt, or they have no being."³⁴

These four characteristics of the Holy Spirit's inspiration reveal Wesley's emphasis on the *experiential* nature of true religion. In his sermon on "The Means of Grace," he affirms that "outward religion is nothing worth, without the religion of the heart."³⁵ This leads us to the next consideration:

II. "Spirit" in Relation to "Word"

We now turn from "inspiration" as Wesley uses the term (i.e. to describe the Spirit's work in the *ordo salutis*, as sketched in the above section) to a topic which for systematic theology may be said to have prior significance, namely, "revelation." Wesley, who seems to have used the term "revelation" only infrequently, would undoubtedly have seen it as part of the *ordo salutis* itself, as the working of prevenient grace. Nevertheless revelation is a concept that, in dogmatics, properly belongs in prolegomena. Our interest here is in the part played by the Holy Spirit in revelation, both in Christian theology in general and in Wesley's theology in particular.

Revelation, as an event of divine-human encounter, can never be described only as an *objective* or a *subjective* happening. It always involves two parties.³⁶ Of course the initiative is always from God's side. God alone makes the encounter possible. But God cannot effect this encounter unless His human partner responds to the divine overture. Revelation is not even revelation if it is not perceived and acknowledged from the human side. Although the initiative is unilateral, there must be mutual involvement of the two parties in the encounter.

But because of our fallenness, humankind cannot recognize the revelation. Therefore, in the words of Hendrikus Berkhof,

to God's coming down into our world must . . . correspond a creative leap of our cognition beyond its own limitations. Both a heightening and a liberation of our cognitive faculty are needed; and that is beyond our ability. Beside the revelation we need the illumination of our mind to be able to perceive the supernatural in the natural and the divine majesty in the humiliation. No revelation will be effected unless God works in us with this double revelational activity. He must make himself present in our reality and he must open our eyes to make us see his presence.³⁷

For this double activity systematic theology uses the concepts *Word* and *Spirit*. In the Bible, Word often stands for the whole of the revelational event, although revelation is not always in the form of words alone. Revelation also happens in events, visions, cultic rites, and supremely in the Incarnation of the Logos. When systematic theology labels all this as "Word," the communicative nature of revelation is emphasized. The Word makes its appeal to us, wanting to be heard. But if hearing actually takes place, "the word event, the *speaking* of the word, has apparently been augmented by another event, the *hearing* of the word."³⁸ To bring this about is the work of the Spirit, that is, of God who not only comes to us from outside, but opens our ears from within and enables us to hear the speaking of God. As Martin Luther put it, "after a man has heard the word with his ears and grasped it with his heart, the Holy Spirit, the real teacher, comes and gives power to the word so that it takes hold."³⁹

This bi-unity of Word and Spirit has not always been held in proper balance in the history of theology. Theological thinking has often proceeded either objectivistically from the divine side or subjectivistically from the human side.

For much of its history, the church paid little attention to the role of the Spirit in revelation. To be sure, Western theology has always given place to the subjective human role in matters of the *fruit* of faith and the living of the Christian life. But only since the Middle Ages has the role of the human subject in the revelational event been given due recognition. Through Luther, Descartes, Kant, and Schleiermacher, among others, the human role takes on new significance.

In theology this meant an increasing emphasis on the role of the Spirit as a medium of revelation beside the Word. Some went so far as "to ascribe to the Spirit, and thus to the subjective pole, an independent content over against the objective event of revelation."⁴⁰ Anabaptists, Quakers, and enthusiasts overemphasized the subjective and the immediate experience of the Spirit in the individual. Luther and Calvin rejected this type of emphasis and maintained that the Spirit's function is *referential*, i.e., to refer us to Christ, to open our eyes not to see the Spirit in ourselves, but to see Christ outside ourselves.⁴¹ Later the followers of the Reformers became divided over the "how" of this referral, Lutherans arguing that the Spirit worked *per verbum* ("through the Word") and Calvinists holding that the Spirit worked *cum verbo* ("together with the Word").⁴² Each position had its dangers. The Lutheran view could easily lead to a working of the Word that is automatic;

the Calvinist position opened up the possibility of a separation of the Spirit from the Word and an autonomous operation of the Spirit. This exemplifies the difficulty theology has had in steering a middle course between the Scylla of objectivism and the Charybdis of subjectivism.

The bi-unity, or duality, of Word and Spirit does not mean that there are two separate sources of revelation. If Spirit is seen as a separate source beside the Word, then a subjectivism ensues in which, by claiming illumination by the Spirit, we may rise above the objective revelation of the Word. This makes the Spirit a pseudonym for our own individual aspirations and ideas. On the other hand, if we view the Spirit as the convincing power of the Word, resident in the Word itself as its "heart" or "center," we imprison the Spirit in the Word and thereby diminish his role in the revelatory event. At the same time we lessen the effectiveness of the Word, for the Word does not automatically convince the hearer. Even the Incarnate Word did not! There is no such thing as word magic. Word and Spirit are thus not interchangeable; and yet they are one. They constitute an indissoluble unity. Logos and pneuma cannot be separated. Luther said: "One cannot separate the voice from the breath. Whoever refuses to hear the voice gets nothing out of the breath either."⁴³ Each complements the other. The Spirit enables us to hear and understand the Word. As Kilian McDonnell says.

the authority of the Bible, whether it is inspired or not, is not a thing to be taken for granted. It has always to be shown and identified. But how does that happen? Only as the Holy Spirit proves the worth and meaning of the scriptures and brings us into the truth. One cannot know God unless somehow God is actually present within the knower. And this happens through the Spirit.⁴⁴

"All understanding is subjective, but it is always the subjective understanding of a trans-subjectively experienced reality."⁴⁵ Hendrikus Berkhof has put it well:

The Spirit moves through the world in the shape of the Word in its various forms. The Word is the instrument of the Spirit. But the Spirit is not the prisoner of the Word, nor does the Word work automatically. The Word brings the Spirit to the heart, and the Spirit brings the Word within the heart.⁴⁶

Now what is the significance of this for John Wesley's doctrine of the Holy Spirit? In discussions of Wesley's structure of religious authority, much has been written about the "Wesleyan quadrilateral" of Scripture, tradition, experience and reason. It has been argued, on the one hand, that, in Wesley, these four are coordinates, and, on the other hand, that tradition, experience and reason are really subordinates of Scripture.⁴⁷ Instead of using the "quadrilateral" model, either pro or con, a more fruitful way to examine Wesley's structure of authority might be along the lines of the double operation of Word and Spirit.

I will here outline a threefold suggestion that will occupy the remainder of the paper: (1) I will suggest that Wesley maintained a proper balance between Word and Spirit at two very crucial points in his theology. One point is in his hermeneutic; the other is in his soteriology. Both can be placed

under the rubric of "the witness (or testimony) of the Holy Spirit," although in each instance the term will be used "in a sense not quite the same, nor yet entirely different"⁴⁸ from the other. In the first instance I refer to the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum* — the "inner witness of the Holy Spirit" to the truth of the Word. In the second instance I refer to Wesley's doctrine of assurance — the "witness of the Spirit" to both our adoption and our entire sanctification. (2) I will also suggest that this classical Wesleyan balance was to some extent lost in the theology of the American holiness movement, at both the hermeneutical and the soteriological points. (3) Finally, I will hold that contemporary Wesleyanism will serve itself best by attempting to recover the classical Wesleyan balance between Spirit and Word, both hermeneutically and soteriologically. This threefold suggestion will be in the background and will cut across each of the two remaining sections of this paper.

III. The "Testimony of the Spirit" in Wesley's Hermeneutic

In the theology of the Protestant Reformation the Holy Spirit is inseparably associated with the Word. The doctrine which depicts this association is that of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*, which received its classical formulation from Calvin, but has antecedents in Luther. In his disagreement with the Roman Catholic system in which the Word is made subject to the power and operation of the Church, Luther discovered that "there is a power in the Word that is able to leap over the gulf of the centuries and speak directly to the heart of the believer."⁴⁹ This power makes the written Word truly a living Word. This living Word is encountered "only where the Word proves itself to be the vehicle of the Living Christ, 'the cradle in which Christ lies.'"⁵⁰ This can happen only by the power of the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit. This *testimonium* is, in Luther, associated primarily with the word of preaching rather than with the written words of Scripture. It is in the actual proclamation of the Gospel, that the witness of the Spirit becomes operative. Luther said:

The gospel . . . is nothing else than the preaching and proclamation of the grace and mercy of God which Jesus Christ has earned and gained for us through his death. It is properly not something written down with letters in a book but more an oral proclamation and a living word: a voice which sounds forth into the whole world and is proclaimed publicly so that we may hear it everywhere.⁵¹

This means that the *testimonium* is connected with the Word in use; it bears no implication with regard to the Word antecedent to its use, such as its inspiration or canonical authority.⁵²

Calvin's concept of the *testimonium* is essentially the same as Luther's, but he introduces an additional element. In Calvin, "the Word is not only the instrument, but also the object of the Spirit's witness."⁵³ The Spirit certifies the Scripture's divine origin.⁵⁴ The inner witness of the Spirit is "equivalent to an affidavit that God is the author of Scripture."⁵⁵

Calvin developed no theory of inspiration to explain *how* the Word of God came to be written. He simply based its authority on its divine origin. He is content to say that it was by the Spirit of God that the prophets and

apostles spoke, and to rest this conviction on the testimony of that same Spirit within our hearts. He was content to leave the fact of inspiration within the realm of Spirit.

However, Calvin's successors proceeded to go beyond this and elaborated a rational or quasi-rational account of the way in which the Word was inspired into prophets and apostles. In this way, Protestant Orthodoxy transformed inspiration into a theory which was capable of objective verification.⁵⁶

In summarizing the Reformation's legacy regarding the relationship between Word and Spirit, the following can be said: Luther held Word and Spirit together in a creative balance. Calvin maintained the balance, although by teaching that the Word is the *object* as well as the *instrument* of the Spirit's witness, he opened the way for Protestant Orthodoxy to place most of the weight on the former, so that the authority and power of the written Word lay altogether in the inspiration of its writers rather than in that of its hearers. Although Protestant Orthodoxy cannot be blamed for all the faults of modern Fundamentalism, there are lines that can be drawn between them — dotted lines, at least, if not solid ones.

And now to John Wesley. Wesley had, like Calvin, a strong doctrine of the inspiration of the written Scriptures. He could even say that some passages of Scripture were "Spirit dictated."⁵⁷ He often refers to Scripture as the "oracles of God."⁵⁸ He says:

The Scripture, therefore, of the Old and New Testament is a most solid and precious system of divine truth. Every part thereof is worthy of God; and all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess. It is the fountain of heavenly wisdom, which they who are able to taste prefer to all writings of men, however wise or learned or holy.⁵⁹

Wesley believed "the best way to know whether anything be of divine authority is to apply ourselves to the Scripture."⁶⁰ He quotes Luther to the effect that "divinity is nothing but a grammar of the language of the Holy Ghost,"⁶¹ both the language and the words of Scripture having been given accurately by the Holy Spirit.⁶² This Spirit inspired Scripture contains no error and is infallibly true.⁶³

Such statements as these may, at first glance, look like a Fundamentalistic mechanical dictation theory of inspiration. But several considerations argue against such an interpretation. For one thing, Larry Shelton is undoubtedly correct when he says of Wesley:

His statements about Scripture must be interpreted from within the context of eighteenth century thought, and efforts to superimpose on various proof texts the framework of twentieth century fundamentalist epistemology must not be considered legitimate examinations of his positions on the Bible.⁶⁴

Important as this historical context is in interpreting Wesley's view of Scripture, even more important is Wesley's own emphasis on the "inner testimony of the Holy Spirit." This was for him "the primary basis for the authority of Scripture and the authenticating factor in its inspiredness."⁶⁵ As Shelton again says, "it seems ironic that the clearest statements on the *testimonium* of the Holy Spirit can be found in Reformed creeds and that spiritual bases

for the authority of Scripture are more clearly presented in some Reformed seminaries than in Wesleyan ones which emphasize a strong theology of the Spirit."⁶⁶

This irony is compounded by the fact that Wesley himself stood with the Reformers in his advocacy of the "inner witness of the Holy Spirit" as a hermeneutical principle. This doctrine was not developed formally in Wesley as it had been in Calvin. It was not used as a key concept in a great theological controversy as it had been used by Luther in his dissent from Rome. But it is clearly a part of Wesley's structure of authority and a key to understanding his hermeneutics.

Wesley's strong insistence that the Biblical writers were divinely inspired and that Scripture constituted the "oracles of God" did not mean that its power rested solely on those facts and that no further authorization was necessary. Before Scripture can do its saving work, the same Spirit who inspired its writers must now inspire its readers and hearers. He says: "The Spirit of God not only once inspired those who wrote it but continually inspires, supernaturally assists, those who read it with earnest prayer."⁶⁷ This thought is richly enshrined in the Wesley hymns. For example, number LXIV in the collection of "Hymns on the Trinity," which has as its dual text II Timothy 3:16 and II Peter 1:21:

Spirit of Truth, essential God,
Who didst Thine ancient saints inspire,
Shed in their hearts Thy love abroad,
And touch their hallow'd lips with fire,
Our God from all eternity,
World without end, we worship Thee.

Still we believe, almighty Lord,
Whose presence fills both earth and heaven,
The meaning of the written word
Is still by inspiration given,
Thou only dost Thyself explain
The secret mind of God to man.

Come then, Divine Interpreter,
The scriptures to our hearts apply,
And taught by Thee we God revere,
Him in three persons magnify,
In each the Triune God adore,
Who was, and is for evermore.⁶⁸

There is no power or profit in reading or hearing the Scriptures apart from the accompanying witness of the Spirit of God.⁶⁹ Wesley asks:

For what can be more undeniable than this, that our preaching also is vain, unless it be attended with the power of that Spirit who alone pierceth the heart? and that your hearing is vain, unless the same power be present to heal your soul, and to give you a faith which 'standeth not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God?'⁷⁰

In the "Hymns for Whit-Sunday," number XXVII, we read:

Spirit of Faith, come down,
Reveal the things of God,
And make to us the Godhead known,
And witness with the blood.

No man can truly say
That Jesus is the Lord,
Unless Thou take the veil away,
And breathe the living word.

Inspire the living faith,
(Which whoso'er receives
The witness in himself he hath,
And consciously believes.)⁷¹

And again Wesley writes: "Revelation is complete, yet we cannot be saved unless Christ be revealed in our hearts, neither unless God cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the *inspiration* of His Holy Spirit."⁷² Wesley spoke of the Scripture as "our rule" and the Spirit as "our guide" or "leader" who applies the Word redemptively to our hearts.⁷³ Without this application by the Spirit, the written word is powerless. In his comment on Acts 7:38, Wesley says the "oracles of God" are living and powerful *because* they are "applied by the Spirit."⁷⁴ On John 15:3, he says the Word is the "grand instrument of purifying the soul" when it is "applied by the Spirit."⁷⁵ And on Hebrews 4:12, the Word of God is "living and powerful" as it is "attended with the power of the living God."⁷⁶

It should be clear by now that John Wesley had a clear understanding of the bi-unity of Word and Spirit (as this bi-unity was delineated in Section II, above) and that he held the two in proper balance, neither merging Spirit into Word so that the former is imprisoned in the latter, nor separating them to the extent that there are two separate sources of revelation. Word does not work automatically, and Spirit does not work autonomously. I suggested earlier that this Wesleyan balance was, to some extent, lost in the American holiness movement. This fact has, I believe, already been sufficiently documented by Wesleyan scholars, and will require little elaboration here. Dr. Paul Bassett had made this point in his article in the Spring, 1978 issue of the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* entitled "The Fundamentalist Leavening of the Holiness Movement, 1914-1940; The Church of the Nazarene: A Case Study."⁷⁷ Bassett shows how during those years in which the Fundamentalist Modernist controversy raged in American Protestantism one holiness denomination was influenced to some extent by a Fundamentalist view of the "inerrancy" of the Biblical autographs. He shows also how this influence was resisted, largely through the efforts of theologian H. Orton Wiley. As far as the "official" theology of the denomination is concerned, as exhibited in its Article of Faith on Scripture, this resistance was successful. The Fundamentalist "leavening" was not as successfully resisted officially in all the holiness denominations, a case in point being the Wesleyan Church's official statement on Scripture.⁷⁸

In his *Christian Theology*, Wiley, resisting both Liberalism and Fundamentalism, takes a position that is neither, but is "a genuinely Wesleyan

third alternative,"⁷⁹ in which the Wesleyan bi-unity of Word and Spirit is maintained with integrity. He says:

Spiritual men and women those filled with the Holy Spirit, are not unduly concerned with either higher or lower criticism. They do not rest merely in the letter which must be defended by argument. They have a broader and more substantial basis for their faith. It rests in their risen Lord, the glorified Christ. They know that the Bible is true, not primarily through the efforts of the apologists, but because they are acquainted with its Author. *The Spirit which inspired the Word dwells within them and witnesses to its truth.* In them the formal and material principles of the Reformation are conjoined. The Holy Spirit is the great conservator of orthodoxy.⁸⁰

To whatever extent a Fundamentalist view of Scripture has "leavened" the holiness movement, to that extent the movement has abandoned the balance between Word and Spirit which characterized Wesley, and has placed more and more of the weight on the "Word" side of the scale — with "Word" being understood more and more exclusively as the "written words" of Scripture. As we have seen, in the light of some of Wesley's statements about Scripture, some have concluded that he held a Fundamentalist view of the inerrancy of the autographs and that this was for him the foundation of religious authority. But, as Shelton says,

these kinds of expressions relate primarily to his verbal dictation tendencies in inspiration, and are not used to establish an inerrantist basis for authority. His epistemology is different from that of Fundamentalism which bases Biblical authority on an assumption of the nature of the external text of the autographs. The Classical Christian approach to authority was never to base authority or infallibility on the original autographs and neither was it to base doctrinal issues on even the external text alone. Luther, Calvin, and the Fathers looked at the inner spiritual content, ultimately Jesus Christ, as authoritative. The external text would surely be at one with the internal sense given by the Holy Spirit, but the form of the external text was by no means ever the criterion for infallibility, which was a spiritual issue.⁸¹

This Classical Christian approach mentioned by Shelton is clearly Wesley's approach — the bi-unity of Spirit and Word.

IV. The "Witness of the Spirit" in Wesley's Soteriology

We come now to another use of the concept of the Spirit's testimony in Wesley's theology — his doctrine of assurance. Although Wesley considered the "grand depositum which God had lodged with the people called Methodists"⁸² to be the doctrine of Christian perfection, he also regarded assurance or the "witness of the Spirit" to be one of the main doctrines of the Methodists. Of this doctrine, he writes:

It more nearly concerns the Methodists, so called, clearly to understand, explain, and defend this doctrine, because it is one grand part of the testimony which God has given them to bear to all mankind. It is by His peculiar blessing upon them in

searching the Scriptures, confirmed by the experience of His children, that this great evangelical truth has been recovered, which had been for many years well nigh lost and forgotten.⁸³

The witness of the Spirit is twofold in nature, consisting of a direct witness and an indirect witness. The direct witness was defined in 1746 in the sermon, "The Witness of the Spirit," and repeated unchanged twenty years later in the second sermon by the same title.

The testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my Spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given Himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God.⁸⁴

The indirect witness is "an influence of the Holy Spirit's work which man draws from the quality of his life according to certain criteria of the Christian life set forth in scripture."⁸⁵ If one is producing the fruit of the Spirit, "even 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance,' " he may infer from this that he is a child of God. But one should not rest in one of the witnesses without the other. Both are necessary in order to constitute a valid assurance. "Let none ever presume to rest in any supposed testimony of the Spirit, which is separate from the fruit of it.... Let none rest in any supposed fruit of the Spirit without the witness."⁸⁶

Wesley taught that not only could one receive the witness of the Spirit (both direct and indirect) that he/she was a child of God, but that one could also receive such a witness (both direct and indirect) to his/her entire sanctification. In a discussion of perfection in the "Plain Account," the question is raised, "when may a person judge himself to have attained this?" Wesley's reply was:

When, after having been fully convinced of inbred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction than that he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to rejoice evermore to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. Not that 'to feel all love and no sin' is a sufficient proof. Several have experienced this for a time, before their souls were fully renewed. None therefore ought to believe that the work is done, till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification, as clearly as his justification.⁸⁷

Here the analogy between justification and sanctification is apparent. Again, in the "Plain Account," the question is asked, "But how do you know, that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption?" Wesley answers:

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

We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit. And First, by the witness. As, when we were justified, the Spirit bore witness with our spirit, that our sins were forgiven; so, when we

were sanctified, he bore witness, that they were taken away. Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first; (as neither is that of justification;) neither is it afterward always the same, but like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and as steady as the former.⁸⁸

The witness of the Spirit, then, is given not only to those who are children of God "in the lowest sense" (justified) but also to those who are children of God "in the highest sense" (entirely sanctified), "By this then also 'we know that we are of God,' and in what sense we are so; whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner."⁸⁹

The fully sanctified may also be assured of their spiritual state through the indirect witness of the fruit of the Spirit.⁹⁰ The change at justification was mixed with selfishness and love of the world, but the fully sanctified undergo a complete change in the instant of entire sanctification.⁹¹ In Wesley's opinion, the person who judges according to all the marks pertaining to entire sanctification need not run any risk of self-deception.⁹²

From a Scriptural standpoint, this may be the weakest point in Wesley's doctrine of the witness of the Spirit. The assurance of entire sanctification has been denied by such a sympathetic student of Wesley as W. E. Sangster, on the psychological ground that no one can know the depths of his subconscious self sufficiently to claim that he is free from sin.⁹³ Earlier, R. Newton Flew had made the same point.⁹⁴

But the most valid criticism of Wesley's view is not psychological but Scriptural. The New Testament does not speak unequivocally of a witness of the Spirit to entire sanctification that is clearly distinguishable from the witness of the Spirit to our justification, new birth, and adoption. The most direct New Testament reference to the witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16) is found in the context of Paul's discourse on adoption. The same is true of the similar statement in Gal. 4:6. Passages such as Acts 15:8-9, Hebrews 10:14-15, and I Cor. 2:12, are sometimes used as proof texts for the witness of the Spirit to entire sanctification,⁹⁵ but such an exegesis is by no means unambiguous.⁹⁶ The idea of "the witness of the Spirit" in the New Testament is usually, if not always, associated with our adoption into the family of God or to our new birth, not with the degree of sanctity we have attained. The Spirit witnesses not to a state of sanctity but to the reality of a relationship. The Scriptures which Wesley offers as support for the assurance of entire sanctification are those which deal primarily with the assurance that we are children of God. Wesley himself recognizes that it is only by *implication* that they can be understood as referring to the assurance that we are among the "higher class" of Christians.⁹⁷ Sangster is correct when he says that Wesley "carried over, without any apparent sense of crossing a gulf, the conviction that we could be assured that our sins were forgiven, and affirmed that we could be assured of our sanctification as well."⁹⁸ Rattenbury points out that Wesley's teaching at this point was "an analogical deduction from the experience that comes to men when they know their sins are pardoned."⁹⁹

Rattenbury is correct in saying that Wesley developed this doctrine analogically rather than supporting it strictly from Scripture. But this is more

of a problem for those who require proof-texting to establish the viability of a given doctrine, than it is for those who understand the dynamics of the bi-unity of Word and Spirit in revelation. In the way Wesley asserts the doctrine of the Spirit's witness to entire sanctification, we see something of the balance between Word and Spirit in his theology. Resting on the "Word" (in this case Scripture) for the basic fact of the reality of the Spirit's witness, he is willing also to allow "Spirit" a position of authority as regards the application and operation of that witness. This seems more authentic than one modification of Wesley's view which emerged in the American holiness movement in the nineteenth century. I refer to the teaching of Phoebe Palmer on the witness of the Spirit. At the end of the second section of this paper, I suggested that the classical Wesleyan balance between Word and Spirit was to some extent lost in the thought of the American holiness movement. Since Phoebe Palmer's theology represents a clear paradigm of this loss, at the point of soteriology, it will be fruitful here to examine and analyze her views.

Phoebe Palmer's religious work and personal testimony are familiar to every student of the American holiness movement. She started a women's Bible study and prayer group that began in 1835 and grew into the historically famous Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness under her leadership. Sorrow visited the Palmer home on several occasions as three of the six Palmer children died in infancy. The impact of these deaths upon Phoebe was profound, and in the aftermath of these losses she finally resolved a long-standing struggle over entire sanctification, testifying to having received the blessing on July 26, 1837.¹⁰⁰ She and her husband preached to thousands in both Britain and America. She was instrumental in establishing the Camp Meeting movement. She published much and read widely. She has been the subject of several recent studies dealing with her contribution to feminism.¹⁰¹ But her most significant contribution to Wesleyan theology lies in her development and articulation of a theological system known as the "altar theology."

The "altar theology" was developed to provide what Mrs. Palmer called a "shorter way" into holiness — a shorter way than that envisioned by the Wesleys and taught in early Methodism. As we have seen, John Wesley emphasized entire sanctification as the birthright of every Christian, to be entered into by faith, but also to be evidenced by the witness of the Holy Spirit — both direct and indirect. To be sure, Wesley taught that entire sanctification was received by *faith*, just as Phoebe Palmer was to teach it, but he also taught that one should not claim to have received it until he had the witness of the Spirit.¹⁰²

With this teaching of Wesley as her heritage, Phoebe Palmer struggled for years in her search for entire sanctification, and could never find the experience and the witness which she so earnestly sought. Her solution to the dilemma was to develop the altar theology.

Oddly taking her cue from a Biblical passage whose context has nothing to do with entire sanctification, nor with the witness of the Spirit thereto, but rather contains a list of "woes" pronounced by Jesus upon the hypocrisy of the scribes and pharisees, Palmer lifts out the clause, "the altar sanctifies the gift" (Matthew 23:19) and makes the idea expressed there the foundation of her doctrine of assurance! She says:

Christ is the CHRISTIAN'S ALTAR. Lay body, soul and spirit upon his merits.... Remember, that it is not left optional with yourself whether you will believe. 'This is the command of God that ye believe.' Believe steadfastly that the blood of Jesus cleanseth. Not that it can or will, but that it *cleanseth now*. Covenant with God that you will believe this, his revealed truth, whether your feelings warrant belief or not. The just shall live by faith.¹⁰³

Palmer's success was in large measure due to her clarity in the method of obtaining the experience, and in the fact that she made Scripture the basic evidence. She stressed the immediate availability of the second blessing. She insisted "that holiness, instead of being an attainment beyond her reach, was a state of grace in which every one of the Lord's redeemed ones should live."¹⁰⁴ In short, her explanation was: When Christians give themselves unreservedly to God and trust the promise, the work is accomplished. There is no need to wait for further evidence, although she allows that further evidence will follow. Feeling is not a trustworthy index, but God's promises are trustworthy. She says:

What is the evidence of entire sanctification? . . . How might an offerer at the Jewish altar arrive at an evidence that his offering was sanctified? In the first place, God had explicitly made known just the sacrifice required, and the manner in which it should be presented. If the offerer had complied with these requirements, he, of course, knew he had done so.¹⁰⁵

To put it another way, whereas Wesley had taught that entire sanctification is evidence by the witness of the *Spirit*, Phoebe Palmer taught that it is evidenced by the witness of the *Word* (the Word meaning, in her case, a written statement found in the Scriptures, even when used out of context). The Word says "the altar sanctifies the gift," therefore when we have brought the gift of ourselves to the altar we know that we are sanctified, without the need for any other evidence, either sensible or supernatural.

Thus with one bold stroke Phoebe Palmer had cut through the prolonged search and struggle which often characterized the early Methodists as they traversed the path toward perfection. She had shortened to "nothing flat" the time one must wait for the assurance of his/her entire sanctification. No supernatural evidence, no "inward impression on the soul," no empirical fruit of the Spirit, lay across the threshold which one must cross to enter in to a state of entire sanctification. One only needed the Scriptural promise, "the altar sanctifies the gift." If I have brought my gift (i.e. myself) to the Altar (i.e. Christ), I know that I am *ipso facto* sanctified.

What shall we say of the Palmer modification of the Wesleyan way? Was it an improvement over the teachings of the Wesleys and their followers? Doubtless it had one pronounced result. As we have indicated, it eliminated the soul searching and struggle and the Bunyanesque strictures and obstacles that marked the way of the spiritual pilgrim's progress as he became a seeker after holiness in the Wesleyan mode. In doing this, it made for a clearer certainty about attainment. By its quite logically explicated promise

of certainty, it promoted personal testimony to the attainment of the blessing.

But for these gains (if indeed they were gains), the Holiness Movement paid a heavy price. This price can, at least in part, be calculated as follows:

(1) The Palmer modification opened the way for the structure of the doctrine of holiness (or what Wesley called its "circumstance") to become prominent, almost overshadowing the substance¹⁰⁶ In Palmer's system, the accent was on the "instantaneousness" of the blessing and the method of attainment. In a moment of presenting the gift, a believer is sanctified, *by the very act of presenting it and believing it to be accepted!*

(2) This involves a type of *rationalism*. Faith was seen as believing a proposition — "the altar sanctifies the gift." Thus the working definition of faith moves from "personal trust" to "intellectual assent." The move may be slight, and it is subtle, but it is a move nevertheless. A logical syllogism is at work in Palmer's altar theology: *Major premise*: The altar sanctifies the gift. *Minor premise*: I have brought my gift to the altar. *Conclusion*: My gift, therefore, is sanctified. This can be called "sanctification by syllogism" and, as William M. Greathouse remarks, "syllogistic holiness is not scriptural holiness."¹⁰⁷ In a sympathetic treatment of Palmer's theology, Melvin E. Dieter acknowledges that "those who accused her of setting up a theological syllogism were not completely in error, for one of the patterns into which the theology and preaching of the ensuing holiness movement often fell, was to press upon seekers after holiness too simplistic a stereotyped formula for the promised attainment of so existential a spiritual experience." ¹⁰⁸

(3) Closely related to this rationalistic bent in Palmer's altar theology is her understanding of holiness in terms of duty. God requires holiness now.¹⁰⁹ "Whether *convicted* or otherwise, *duty is plain*.... Knowledge is conviction."¹¹⁰ "The voice of duty is literally *the voice of God to the soul*."¹¹¹ Greathouse calls attention to one consequence of such a concept: "Mrs. Palmer's insistence on holiness as a present *duty* tended to introduce an element of fear, which at times led to an unscriptural 'holiness or hell' teaching, that is, that those who die without a conscious experience of entire sanctification would not be saved."¹¹² This contrasts sharply with Wesley who, in expounding on holiness as "the more excellent way," says:

I would be far from quenching the smoking flax — from discouraging those that serve God in a low degree. But I could not wish them to stop here: I would encourage them to come up higher. Without thundering hell and damnation in their ears, without condemning the way wherein they were, telling them it is the way that leads to destruction, I will endeavor to point out to them what is, in every respect, 'a more excellent way.' . . . I do not affirm that all who do not walk in this way are in the high road to hell. But this much I must affirm, they will not have so high a place in heaven as they would have had if they had chosen the better part.¹¹³

(4) In the logic of Palmer's system of holiness theology, the importance of ethics was diminished. There was no need for Wesley's "direct witness" of the Spirit — a divinely created "inward impression on the soul." But neither was there any need for Wesley's "indirect witness" as well — the

empirically observable fruit of the Spirit and the evidence of a holy life. This is not to say that Phoebe Palmer did not believe these things should, and would, follow the bringing of the gift to the altar. She did. But to make them unnecessary for professing sanctification, she opened the way for a profession which is not followed by real possession, not to mention growth in grace. I do not say this was her intention. I am quite sure that it was not. But it has been an all too unhappy result. One way to describe this result is in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's words, "cheap grace." Cheap grace, as Bonhoeffer described it, was a corruption of Luther's doctrine of *justification* by grace through faith. But today, in too many instances, we Wesleyans have developed our own brand of cheap grace which is a corruption of the doctrine of *sanctification*. It is a type of "eternal security" with regard to holiness. We do not say "once saved, always saved" as Calvinists do. But, given the inner logic of the "altar theology," it is possible to assume "once sanctified, always sanctified." The inverted self-deceptive thought process may work like this: "Since I am sanctified, pure in heart, free from sin, none of my actions or attitudes can be considered sinful." Thus the need for confession, or what Wesley called "the repentance of believers," which he held to be necessary for growth in grace,¹¹⁴ practically disappears from holiness theology. The altar transaction having been made, by an act of the human will, with no witness or fruit of the Spirit being necessary for the claiming of the blessing, such a "sanctified antinomianism" may result. It is not a necessary result, but it is a possible one. In systematic terms, Palmer has moved the assurance of entire sanctification a step forward in the *ordo salutis*. In Wesley, entire sanctification is logically (and sometimes chronologically) prior to the assurance of it. In Palmer, the act of offering the gift of oneself on the altar is an act which brings both entire sanctification and the assurance thereof, the two being indistinguishable (both logically and chronologically). As Timothy L. Smith puts it, "the distinction between the 'witness of the Spirit' and the exercise of faith for the experience was blurred by this teaching."¹¹⁵

(5) The diminished importance of ethics in the inner logic of Palmer's altar theology can be seen as rooted in a theological understanding whose antecedents and affinities lie in a tradition other than her own. Although loyally Methodist, Palmer, in developing her altar theology, used images and models that were more at home in Reformed theology than in Wesleyanism. Not schooled as a theologian, except in a self-made sense, she can be excused for such an indiscretion. (Whether or not present-day Wesleyanism can be equally excused for perpetuating the same images and models is another question!) Richard S. Taylor has recently called attention to this indiscretion of Palmer's, which he calls the "weak link" in her system. He says:

The weak link in the chain of Mrs. Palmer's argument is in drawing too close a parallel between the ceremonial principle of altar sanctification and the New Testament teaching. 'Whatever touches . . . the altar . . . will be holy' (Exod. 29:37) means that any offering placed on the altar shares in the sanctity of the altar. The altar (one might say) "claims" it for God. It becomes hallowed and any misuse is a desecration. But this is holiness by association, not by purging. It is *positional*, and hence *imputed*.¹¹⁶

Taylor goes on to comment about the New Testament text from which Palmer took her cue for the altar theology:

When Jesus made reference to this (Matt. 23:19) in rebuking the scribes and Pharisees, He was confirming the principle of hallowedness by presentation within the context of Old Testament ceremonialism. To extend this as a descriptive of the New Testament mode of sanctification is highly questionable because it opens the door to (1) the equating of sanctification with consecration . . . , (2) implying a merely positional holiness, and thus (3) an imputed holiness.¹¹⁷

Thus, for Taylor,

it is a non sequitur to conclude that the sanctification effected by Christ is on the same basis as, and no more than, the sanctification effected by the Old Testament altar.¹¹⁸

Taylor's comments underscore a major weakness of the "altar" model and phraseology. Such a model is not capable of bearing the freight that Wesleyan theology needs to convey. The only holiness such a model can convey is a merely *imputed* holiness, not an *imparted* holiness.¹¹⁹

(6) There is an incipient humanism at work in the altar theology. Not only does Palmer highlight the role of free will (in contradistinction to "free grace" in Wesley), she also views the experience of entire sanctification to be in large measure the result of the actions she herself has taken to overcome spiritual darkness. The human decision thus takes on a degree of causality it never had in Wesley. Rather than passively awaiting some "experience" originating from outside the self, Christians must take their spiritual destiny in their own hands within the privacy of their personal lives. The altar transaction was a personal decision, a human act, which was the beginning of the creation of a new self. A number of historians of the American holiness movement have depicted how the movement as a whole fits into and reflects its nineteenth century American context.¹²⁰ But Theodore Hovet focuses specifically on Phoebe Palmer herself and claims that she was the first influential person in the mainline evangelical churches to express the "American spirit" in theology. Palmer had articulated a Christian "pragmatism" which argues that God's kingdom is not a closed system into which the Christian enters by the grace of God alone but a spiritual reality brought forth in this world by the holiness instigated by human action.¹²¹ Hovet further claims that Palmer's altar phraseology "brought the Romantic spirit into evangelical Protestantism."¹²² He goes on to say:

As unlikely as it may seem . . . Palmer's teaching introduced to evangelical Protestants a vision of spiritual freedom, a Faustian quest for knowledge and experience, and a love of the unbounded appropriate to that Romantic era and to such an individualistic culture.¹²³

The six observations elaborated above constitute at least a part of the price paid by the holiness movement for Phoebe Palmer's modification of Wesleyan theology in general and of the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit in particular. It is amazing that such a powerful influence as Palmer has wielded on the holiness movement down to the present day could rest so

deliberately on a Biblical statement which she discovered and took so completely out of context.

I have analyzed Palmer's altar theology in some detail because it has been so influential in the holiness movement and because it presents a graphic example of the way that movement lost a proper balance between Spirit and Word. Palmer's modification of Wesley's doctrine of the witness of the Spirit to entire sanctification may, I believe, be summarized as a shift from the classical Wesleyan bi-unity of Spirit and Word to an almost exclusive emphasis on Word — the latter being defined solely as the written words of Scripture and its appropriation being understood rationalistically. The irony is that this understanding and use of the Scripture dovetails neatly with, and may even have helped prepare the way for, the later encroachment of Fundamentalism within the holiness movement, even though the historical context in which Palmer's theology developed, and by which it was subtly influenced, was that of such American liberal ideals as pragmatism, individualism and Romanticism.

Conclusion

We have looked at the function which John Wesley's doctrine of the Holy Spirit had in his theology as a whole. And we have seen how this function was modified somewhat in the American holiness movement, the modification occurring especially at the points of hermeneutics and soteriology. In both instances the modification was caused by an abandonment of the bi-unity in which Wesley held Spirit and Word together, with the place given to Word being enlarged and the place given to Spirit being diminished.

The conclusion, then, can be stated quite briefly: Contemporary Wesleyanism can serve itself well by attempting to recover and maintain the Spirit — Word bi-unity which permeated John Wesley's theology, which he shared with Classical Protestantism, and which saved both his hermeneutic and his soteriology from the trap of a one-sided emphasis from which his followers have not altogether escaped.

NOTES

1. This is not to say, as many have said, that his was not a "systematic" theology. On the question whether Wesley was a systematic theologian, cf. Randy L. Maddox, "Responsible Grace: The Systematic Perspective of Wesleyan Theology," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Fall, 1984, pp. 7-22.

2. G. Osborn, editor, *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley* 13 Vols.; (London: Wesleyan Methodist Conference Office, 1868-72), VII, 315. Cited hereafter as Osborn.

3. *The Works of John Wesley*, 14 Vols. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, reprint ed., 1979), VI, 201. Cited hereafter as Works.

4. On the Trinity, V, 9-10. English text in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 2nd series; New York, 1890-.

5. Works, VI, 201.

6. J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York: Harper)Brothers, 1958), p. 273.
7. E.g., see hymn number XXIII in Osborn, *Poetical Works . . .*, VII, 248-49.
8. *Works*, VIII, 285.
9. Thomas Rees, *The Holy Spirit in Thought and Experience* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1915), pp. 191ff. Cf. Lycurgus Starkey, *The Work of the Holy Spirit: A Study in Wesleyan Theology* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), pp. 30-31.
10. However, two years later, in 1786, from the Article's assertion that God is 'without body, parts or passions,' the Conference omitted the word "passions. ' Cf. Henry Wheeler, *The History and Exposition of the Twenty-Five Articles of Religion in the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1908), p. 15.
11. Cf. hymn numbers LXXXV and LXXXVI in Osborn, *Poetical Works*, VII, 264-65.
12. John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (Naperville, Illinois: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1958), Eph. 4:30.
13. Osborn, VII, 201-298.
14. Starkey, p. 26.
15. Notes, in loco.
16. Starkey, p. 37.
17. Cf. Justo L. Gonzalez, *A History of Christian Thought* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970). I. 337.
18. *Works*, V, 56.
19. Henry P. Van Dusen, *Spirit, Son, and Father* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), pp. 18-19.
20. J. Paul Taylor, *Holiness, The Finished Foundation* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1963), p. 15.
21. *Works*, X, 82.
22. *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, John Telford, editor (London: The Epworth Press, 1931), p. 39. Cited hereafter as *Letters*.
23. *Works*, VIII, 107.
24. *Letters*, II, 64.
25. For a fuller treatment of these characteristics, in a different order, cf. Starkey, pp. 17-22.

26. Works, VIII, 107.
27. Works, VIII, 49, 76-111; Letters, II, 64.
28. Letters, VII, 298.
29. Letters, V, 175. Cf. VIII, 110.
30. Starkey, p- 19.
31. Letters, II, 42.
32. Ibid, 74.
33. Ibid
34. Ibid, V, 364.
35. Works, V, 186.
36. Cf. Hendrikus Berkhof, *Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), pp. 56-61, for a succinct analysis of the dual role of Spirit and Word in Christian theology, upon which the discussion in this section of the paper is, to some extent, based.
37. Ibid, p. 57.
38. Ibid Emphasis mine.
39. D. Martin Luthers Werke, 17:11, 459f. Cited by Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. by Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 37, note 9.
40. Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, p. 59.
41. Cf. John 16:13-14, and Acts 2 where the context of the Spirit's coming was a sermon on the resurrection of Jesus. Cf. also II Cor. 4:6.
42. Hendrikus Berkhof, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 37.
43. D. Martin Luthers Werke, 9, 633. Cited in Althaus, p. 38.
44. Kilian McDonnell, "The Determinative Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," *Theology Today*, July, 1982, pp. 144-45.
45. Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, p. 58.
46. Berkhof, *Holy Spirit*, p. 38.
47. For a defense of the latter position, cf. Allen Coppedge, "John Wesley and the Issue of Authority in Theological Pluralism," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Fall, 1984, pp. 62-76.
48. Here I am borrowing the phraseology Wesley used in speaking of "repentance" in two senses. Works, V, 157.
49. George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 73.

50. Ibid
51. D. Martin Luthers Werke, 12, 259. Cited in Althaus, p. 73, note 3.
52. Hendry, p. 75.
53. Ibid, p. 75.
54. Cf. Institutes, I, 7, 2-4.
55. Hendry, p. 76.
56. Ibid, pp. 78-79.
57. Notes, John 19:24.
58. E.g., Notes, Rom. 12:6; Works, VII, 294, 296.
59. Notes, Preface, p. 98
60. Letters, III, 128-129.
61. Notes, Preface, p. 9.
62. Ibid
63. Letters, IV, 369; Cf The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., 8 Vols. (London: The Epworth Press, 1938), VI, 117.
64. R. Larry Shelton, "John Wesley's Approach to Scripture in Historical Perspective," Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring, 1981, p. 36.
65. Ibid, p. 37.
66. Ibid, p. 38.
67. Notes, II Tim. 3:16.
68. Osborn, VII, 249.
69. Works, V, 188.
70. Works, VIII, 90; cf. VII, 331.
71. Osborn, IV, 196.
72. Letters, VI, 28.
73. Letters, II, 117; cf. Notes, I John 4:1.
74. Notes, Acts 7:38.
75. Ibid, John 15:3.
76. Ibid, Heb. 4:12.
77. Paul Merritt Bassett, "The Fundamentalist Leavening of the Holiness Movement, 1914-1940. The Church of the Nazarene: A Case Study," Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring, 1978, pp. 65-91.

78. The Discipline of the Wesleyan Church (Marion, Indiana: The Wesleyan Publishing House, 1980), p. 19.

79. Bassett, p. 67.

80. H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology*, I, 143, italics mine. See Wiley's entire discussion of the "three worthy monarchs" (Church, Bible, & Reason) which have been abused in the history of Christianity and "forced into a false and unworthy position before God and man." *Ibid.*, I, 140-142.

81. Shelton, p. 38.

82. Letters, VIII, 238.

83. Wesley's Standard sermons, 2 Vols., edited by Nehemiah Curnock (London: The Epworth Press, 1955), II, 343-44. Cited hereafter as Sermons.

84. *Ibid.*, I, 208; II, 345.

85. Starkey, p. 71.

86. Sermons, II, 358.

87. Works, XI, 401-402.

88. *Ibid.*, 420. It is clear from the context that "sanctification" in this passage means "entire sanctification."

89. *Ibid.*, 421.

90. *Ibid.*, 422.

91. *Ibid.*, 423.

92. *Ibid.*, 402.

93. W. E. Sangster, *The Path to Perfection* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943), pp. 113ff., 160ff.

94. R. Newton Flew, *The Idea of Christian Perfection in Christian Theology* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 337.

95. Cf. J. Kenneth Grider, *Entire Sanctification: The Distinctive Doctrine of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1980), pp. 118-19. Grider, however, is aware that such an interpretation of these texts rests on shaky ground, stating only that the witness of the Spirit is "implied" in I Cor.2:12, and that Acts 15:8-9 "suggests that perhaps right on the heels of our Spirit-baptism, the Holy Spirit bears witness to what has been accomplished." Italics mine.

96. Cf. Richard S. Taylor's comment on Heb.10:15: "This is often construed to mean the inner witness of the Holy Spirit to the believing seeker at the point of sanctification; but while there is such a witness, that is hardly the thought here." *Beacon Bible Commentary*, Volume 10 (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967), p. 121. And cf. F. F. Bruce, who, on the basis of the Greek aorist participles *doous* ("giving") and *katharisas* ("cleansing") in Acts 15:8-9, claims that "God testified to the genuineness of these people's faith by giving them the Spirit and cleansing their hearts

one regenerative moment." Commentary on the Book of Acts (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955), p.306, note 25. Italics mine. Of course Bruce writes from outside the holiness movement. Still, if Acts 15:8-9 be a text on entire sanctification, then we are not "given" the Holy Spirit until that second crisis. But this is contradicted by Rom. 8:9.

97. Works XI, 421.

98. Sangster, p. 161.

99. J. Ernest Rattenbury, The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley 's Hymns (London: The Epworth Press, 1941), pp. 303-304.

100. Cf. Harold E. Raser, "Phoebe Palmer: Ambassador of Holiness," The Preacher's Magazine, Sept., Oct., Nov., 1983, pp. 20-23.

101. Cf. Theodore Hovet, "Phoebe Palmer's 'Altar Phraseology' and the Spiritual Dimension of Woman's Sphere," The Journal of Religion, JUL 1983, pp. 264-280; cf. Note 1, p. 264.

102. Works, XI, 401-402.

103. Phoebe Palmer, Faith and Its Effects (New York: Published for the author at 200 Mulberry St., 1854), pp. 349-50.

104. Phoebe Palmer, The Way of Holiness, with Notes by the Way (New York: Lane and Tippet, 1845), p. 33.

105. Palmer, Faith and Its Effects, p. 242.

106. Cf. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, A Theology of Love (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1972), chapters 15 and 16 for a discussion of "substance" and "circumstance" in Wesley's view of sanctification. For an explanation of what I myself mean by the terms "substance" and "structure" in Wesley, see my article "Sanctification and Selfhood: A Phenomenological Analysis of the Wesleyan Message," Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring, 1972, pp. 3-16.

107. Paul M. Bassett and William M. Greathouse, Exploring Christian Holiness, Volume II: "The Historical Development," (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985), p. 301.

108. Melvin E. Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century (Metuchen, N.J., and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1980), p. 31.

109. Bassett and Greathouse, p. 299.

110. Palmer, The Way of Holiness, p. 19.

111. Ibid, p. 49

112. Bassett and Greathouse, p. 301.

113. Works, VII, 28-29.

114. Ibid, V, 157.

115. Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 126.

116. Richard S. Taylor, *Exploring Christian Holiness, Volume III: "The Theological Formulation,"* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985), p. 181. *Italics mine.*

117. *Ibid.*

118. *Ibid.*, pp. 181-82.

119. Furthermore, the "altar" is not a prominent New Testament metaphor for Christ. Hebrews 13:10 and Romans 12:1 may by inference be interpreted along such lines, but such an exegesis is at least questionable. Among the New Testament metaphors for Christ drawn from the Old Testament sacrificial system, those of Christ as the priest who offers the sacrifice, and of Christ as the sacrifice itself, are far more significant than the idea of Christ as the altar upon which the sacrifice is offered.

120. Cf. e.g. Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, 116-128; Melvin E. Dieter, *The Holiness Revival*, pp.26-32; and John L. Peters, *Christian Perfect on and American Methodism* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 109-113.

121. Hovet, p. 269.

122. *Ibid.*, p. 270.

123. *Ibid.*

JOHN WESLEY'S PLATONIC CONCEPTION OF THE MORAL LAW

by

Kenneth J. Collins

I. Introduction

One of the more significant problems which early Methodism had to face was the attempt by some to make the law void through faith, an attempt otherwise known as antinomianism. Indeed, the joint Moravian-Methodist venture at Fetter Lane dissolved in 1740 largely over this issue. Wesley's move to the Foundry at this time was prompted, in part, by his concern that certain Moravian doctrines, as championed by Molther and Bray, were not only deprecating the role of good works in the life of the believer but were also misprizing the proper role of the means of grace.¹

Wesley, never shy in controversy, impugned many of these teachings at the first Methodist conference held at the Foundry in 1744 where it was queried: "What is Antinomianism? The doctrine which makes void the law through faith. What are the main pillars hereof? That Christ abolished the moral law."²

In the following year Wesley continued the debate through his publications "A Dialogue Between an Antinomian and His Friend" and "A Second Dialogue Between an Antinomian and His Friend." In both of these tracts, as Tyerman notes, "the monstrosity of the Moravian and other errors (was) mercilessly exposed and censured."³ In the first piece, the Moravian Zinzendorf looms throughout. Indeed, in this tract the exact language appears which was "used by Zinzendorf in the well known Latin dialogue with Wesley and which was transcribed in the latter's journal on 3 September 1741."⁴ However, in the second piece which was written in 1745 the chief antagonist was William Cudworth, "who was, for some years, a follower of Whitefield,"⁵ but then turned independent. Wesley described this preacher as an "Antinomian; an absolute, avowed enemy to the law of God, which he never preached, or professed to preach, but termed all legalists who did."⁶

Difficulties with antinomians continued into the next two decades. In a letter to Ebenezer Blackwell 20 December 1751 Wesley assailed the teaching of James Wheatley who spoke "much of the promises and little of the commands."⁷ Perhaps Wesley's task this time was made somewhat easier

for by now his definitive sermons on the moral law had already been published in 1748 and 1750.⁸ Just how did Wesley view the origin of the moral law? What was his understanding of its nature? These are the questions which shall dominate this present inquiry.

II. Moral Law and Creation

About a decade after the Moravian-antinomian controversy at Fetter Lane, John Wesley published a sermon entitled, "The Law Established Through Faith, Discourse I." In this piece, Wesley claimed that the moral law must not be made void, but should be established through faith. He did admit, however, that the ceremonial law has passed away, and is not binding upon Christians.

Wesley, in making this distinction between moral and ceremonial law as evidenced by this discourse, followed in the wake of the Anglican Thirty Nine Articles. What is troublesome, though, is that he failed to indicate clearly the content of this moral law. Thus, in his sermon "Justification by Faith," for example, Wesley defined the moral law as the "unchangeable law of love, the holy love of God and of our neighbor,"⁹ while elsewhere he described it in terms of the golden rule,¹⁰ the Sermon on the Mount,¹¹ and the ten commandments.¹² Oswalt notes this problem as well:

One must confess however that when one comes to inquire of Wesley precisely what is contained in the moral law, beyond Deut. 6:5 (as quoted in Matt.), he is vague at best. Although he talks at great length about the law in 'The Law Established through Faith,' he does not identify any specific passages.¹³

At any rate, whether the moral law is considered to consist of either the Ten Commandments or the ethical teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, Wesley insisted that this law remains in force. In his sermon, "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Discourse V," he argued:

The ritual or ceremonial law, delivered by Moses to the children of Israel, containing all the injunctions and ordinances which related to the old sacrifices and service of the temple, our Lord indeed did come to destroy, to dissolve, and utterly abolish. . . . But the moral law contained in the Ten Commandments and enforced by the prophets, He did not take away.¹⁴

The ceremonial law, in the eyes of Wesley, was merely a temporary restraint upon a disobedient people. As such, this law was not from the beginning of the world, nor was it to endure to the age to come since it was not founded upon "the everlasting fitness of all things that are or ever were created "¹⁵ The moral law, on the other hand, remained because it was intimately tied in with the created order and was expressive of the immutable will of the creator. This law could not be abrogated by Christ because it was a reflection of the divine nature as well as of human nature, and their mutual relations. In his sermon, "The Original, Nature, Property and Use of the Law," Wesley wrote:

It is adapted, in all respects, to the nature of things, of the whole universe, and every individual. It is suited to all circumstances of each, and to all their mutual relations, whether such

as have existed from the beginning, or such as commenced in the following period. It is exactly agreeable to the fitness of things.¹⁶

In the same sermon, Wesley noted that, "If we survey the law of God in another point of view it is supreme unchangeable reason; it is unalterable rectitude; it is the everlasting fitness of all things that are or ever were created."¹⁷ And it is precisely this definition of the moral law as the ever lasting fitness of all things that are or ever were created which seems to confer upon the law a kind of "semi-independent status."¹⁸ Indeed, since the moral law is an expression of God's will in creation, "God the revealer of the law looks first of all not to His own free will, but to creation, and conforms His direct command to what is established there."¹⁹ This strong sense of the semi-independent status of the moral law is somewhat mitigated, however, by Wesley's contention that the moral law is synonymous with the will of God since the "nature and fitness of things" upon which the moral law is based is likewise synonymous with the will of God. Wesley wrote:

if, I say, this (moral law) depends on the nature and relations of things, then it must depend on God, on the will of God; because those things themselves, with all their relations, are the works of his hands.²⁰

It should be pointed out that although Wesley tied the moral law to the created order, he nevertheless rejected the notion of a natural theology in the sense that for him there could be no perception of the law of God by reason apart from grace. Indeed, Williams describes Wesley's position in this way: "in the matter of our relations to God, reason has no pre established principles which would enable it to develop a 'natural theology.'"²¹ And Wilson observes that Wesley's thinking about law was expressed in the context of revealed not natural theology.²²

III. Moral Law as the Image of God

Wesley not only described the law in terms of "supreme unchangeable reason" and "unalterable rectitude" as expressions of a created order, but he also painted the moral law in distinctively Platonic tones. In his sermon, "The Original, Nature, Property and Use of the Law" Wesley wrote:

Now, this law is an incorruptible picture of the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. It is He whom, in His essence, no man hath seen, or can see, made visible to men and angels. It is the face of God unveiled; God manifested to His Creatures as they are able to bear it; manifested to give and not to destroy, life — that they may see God and live. It is the heart of God disclosed to man.²³

And he added in a later section of the sermon:

The law of God is a copy of the eternal mind, a transcript of the divine nature, yea, it is the fairest offspring of the everlasting Father, the brightest efflux of His essential wisdom, the visible beauty of the Most High.²⁴

Both of these quotations just cited remind one of Plato's discussion

of "ideas" and their earthly copies as found in the *Phaedrus* — "the higher ideas which are precious to souls in the earthly copies of them . . . are seen through a glass dimly; and there are few who, going to the images behold in them the realities."²⁵ To be sure, Wesley does quote a part of the *Phaedrus* in this sermon²⁶ for he wrote: "If virtue could assume such a shape as that we could behold her with our eyes, what wonderful love would she excite in us!"²⁷, and added that the law of God is that "virtue" which has assumed "such a shape as to be beheld with open face by all those whose eyes God hath enlightened,"²⁸

Because the law was described in a Platonic fashion by Wesley, as a copy of the divine, it was ascribed many of the same predicates which define the divine being; that is, the law was deemed holy, just, and good.²⁹ Indeed, it was precisely this close association of the moral law and the divine being which caused Wesley to speak disparagingly of Luther's view of the law as expressed in the latter's *Lectures on Galatians*. Wesley wrote in his journal on 15 June 1741:

I set out for London, and read over in the way that celebrated book, Martin Luther's "Comment on the Epistle to the Galatians," I was utterly ashamed . . . how blasphemously does he speak of good works and of the law of God — constantly coupling the law with sin, death, hell or the devil; and teaching that Christ delivers us from them all alike. Whereas it can no more be proved by Scripture that Christ delivers us from the law of God than that he delivers us from holiness or from heaven.³⁰

Wesley's language was strong; nevertheless, his words were not an exaggeration but were carefully chosen and were indicative of his theological posture. He charged Luther with nothing less than blasphemy, for in Wesley's mind to place the moral law that "fairest offspring of the everlasting Father"³¹ in the same company of sin, death, hell or the devil was, in a sense, to place God in that company.

Often, when Wesley's June 1741 critique of Martin Luther is discussed, the issue tends to revolve around "the relation between justification and sanctification."³² In other words, attention is usually focused upon the function of the law in the Christian life. While this is certainly an aspect in the journal account, it seems that Wesley is more disturbed about Luther's conception of *the nature* of the law rather than its function, and his remaining criticisms tend to flow from this central point.

One wonders, though, whether Wesley has gone too far in his identification of the moral law with God. For example, in the sermon "The Original, Nature, Property and Use of the Law" he assigned "to the moral law the Christological predicates of Hebrews 1:3"³³ by stating: "Yea, in some sense, we may apply to this law what the Apostle says of His son; it is . . . the streaming forth or out beaming of His glory, the express image of his person."³⁴ And elsewhere Wesley noted the law is "God made manifest in our flesh."³⁵

All of this has caused Deschner to query: "Is Christ the *only*-begotten of the Father?"³⁶ And in response to his own question, Deschner demonstrates that, for Wesley, "the law is grounded in a created, not a begotten order."³⁷ It seems, then, that the temporal element implicit in the distinction between a created as opposed to a begotten order saves Wesley from an outright deification of the moral law, if indeed he did make such a distinc-

tion. But the evidence for this appears to be mixed. For example, in his sermon, "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount Discourse V" Wesley related law to creation by claiming that, "The moral (law) . . . was from the beginning of the world, being 'written not on tables of stone,' but on the hearts of all children of men."³⁸ But in another sermon Wesley weaved the themes of eternity and creation together and it is difficult to discern his intention. He wrote:

But we may trace its (moral law) original higher still, even beyond the foundation of the world: to that period, unknown indeed to men, but doubtless enrolled in the annals of eternity when 'the morning stars' first 'sang together,' being newly called into existence.³⁹

But upon a further reading of Wesley's statements about the law this ambiguity of eternal/created is resolved. Actually, Wesley was neither imprecise nor contradictory in the quotation just cited, for he taught that the law was both eternal and created. How could this be? The law, for Wesley, was eternal in the sense that the original ideas of truth and good of which the law was a reflection have always resided in the divine mind. At creation, however, these eternal ideas of truth and good, because of their surpassing splendor, had to take on the form which could be readily discernible by human beings, and thus the need for law. Wesley wrote:

What is the law but divine virtue and wisdom assuming a visible form? What is it but the original ideas of truth and good, which were lodged in the uncreated mind from eternity, now drawn forth and clothed with such a vehicle as to appear even to human understanding.⁴⁰

So then, technically speaking, the moral law as a vehicle of illumination, as a *form* accommodated to humanity, is not eternal but is rooted in the created order, the fitness and relations of things, but the content or essence which the form of law seeks to convey is eternal, being the, "original ideas of truth and good, which were lodged in the uncreated mind from eternity."⁴¹

IV. Wesley and the Platonists

In his annotation of Wesley's sermon, "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Discourse V" Sugden suggests that Wesley might have been dependent upon Matthew Tindal's *Christianity as Old as the Creation* for his notion of the eternal validity of the principles of right and wrong and for his idea that the Christian religion is as old as creation.⁴² But such dependence is hardly likely, since Tindal is not even mentioned in Wesley's journals and when his name does appear in Wesley's letters (2x) it is hardly mentioned in a favorable light, "Who Mr. Tindal [sic] is I know not; but he is just as sound as a divine as Mr. Madan. I regard no authority but those of the AnteNicene Fathers."⁴³

On the other hand, it is much more likely that the teachings of the Cambridge Platonists such as John Norris and John Smith informed Wesley's reflections about the law. Indeed, Albert Outler maintains that the heritage

of Christian Platonism was mediated to Wesley by "the Fathers, William of St. Thierry, the Victorines, St. Bonaventura, and the Cambridge Platonists,"⁴⁴ and he notes that, "More directly . . . (Wesley) had been instructed by his father's friend, John Norris, and also by Richard Lucas."⁴⁵ To be sure, Wesley read several of John Norris' works at Oxford over a length of time which could only suggest both interest and influence.⁴⁶ And the mastery of John Smith was conveyed to Wesley through his readings of Henry Scougal who himself freely acknowledged his debt to Smith.⁴⁷

Moreover, an examination of the works which Wesley saw fit to include in his *Christian Library* reveals that several selections from the Cambridge Platonists were included, and John C. English notes that the "works by Cambridge Platonists such as Ralph Cudworth, Nathanael Culverwel, Henry More, Simon Patrick, John Smith and John Worthington appear in seven of the fifty volumes."⁴⁸

It seems remarkable that Wesley, the evangelical, could be interested in the writings of the Platonists and Latitudinarians but Wesley was somewhat of an eclectic and was most probably attracted to the Cambridge Platonists' notion that "right and wrong are not derivative principles — that they are not established by human law . . . but exist by virtue of an eternal autonomy."⁴⁹ Indeed, "Wesley's terms, 'eternal reason,' 'the essential nature of things,' or 'the fitness of things,' as a basic understanding of reality reflect the influence of Platonists such as Clarke or Norris."⁵⁰

Thus, because the terms which Wesley employed to elucidate his teachings on the nature of the law had their parallels in the literature of the seventeenth century Platonists and also because Wesley not only read and recommended these writings but saw fit to include them in his *Christian Library*, it can be asserted that in his conception of the moral law, Wesley was, at least in part, dependent upon Cambridge intellectuals, and this in turn reinforces the idea that law was an integral component in Wesley's theology, an eternal immutable order which formed the background of both his own spiritual life and his theological thinking.

V. Moral Law in History

A. Objective and Subjective Re-inscriptions.

Since the moral law is adapted to the original nature of humanity and its relation to God, one would expect to discern a progressive revelation of this law as it makes contact with human history. To be sure, Wesley's sermons on the law evidence such a progression, and "so fundamental is the law to Wesley's thought that virtually the whole *Heilsgeschichte* can be understood as the giving of the law."⁵¹

In his sermon, "The Original, Nature, Property and Use of the Law" Wesley noted that at creation the law, "a complete model of all truth, so far as is intelligible to a finite being,"⁵² was first given to the angels, those "first born sons"⁵³ of God, "to make a way for a continual increase in their happiness."⁵⁴ After this, when Adam was created, God inscribed this same law which he had given to the angels upon the hearts of humanity.⁵⁵ But, Wesley pointed out, "it was not long before men rebelled against God, and, by breaking this glorious law, well nigh effaced it out of his heart."⁵⁶ To remedy this "utter depravity," an initial, universal re-inscription of the law in some measure was brought about through the work of Christ. In other words,

God did not leave humanity in an utterly dejected state, but sought to re-inscribe upon human hearts both knowledge of Himself and His law. Wesley noted:

And yet God did not despise the work of His own hands, but being reconciled to man through the Son of His love, He, in some measure, re-inscribed the law on the heart of His dark sinful creature,⁵⁷

And later in the same sermon Wesley indicated by what means God brought about this re-inscription: "And this He showed, not only to our first parents, but likewise to all their posterity, by 'that true light which enlightens every man that cometh into the world.' "⁵⁸

These selections above from Wesley's sermons indicate that this benefit of a partial re-inscription of the law is an aspect of prevenient grace and is both Christologically based and universal. Indeed, as Fuhrman notes, "God maintains in all men a residual knowledge of Himself and His requirements."⁵⁹ And this means, of course, that all of humanity receives in some fashion "A conception of the general lines of good and evil,"⁶⁰ whereby they are enabled to distinguish between right and wrong. And although this is but a small measure of light, Wesley nonetheless took this benefit quite seriously, and maintained in the Conference minutes of 1770 to the chagrin of the Calvinistic Methodists that those who have never heard of Christ are accepted of God if they walk according to the measure of light which they have.⁶¹

Moreover, Wesley made clear in a sermon published in 1750 that besides this universal re-inscription of the moral law, God acted in a more particular fashion and, "chose out of mankind a peculiar people, to whom He gave a more perfect knowledge of His law."⁶² Wesley, of course, was referring to the legislation given to Israel at Sinai.

Thus, in Wesley's theology there appear to be two manifestations of the moral law.⁶³ On the one hand, "For the heathen past and present who have no access to the external law, there is the internal re-inscription of the law through prevenient grace."⁶⁴ On the other hand, "those . . . who have access to the Holy Scripture, while still being recipient of the internal standard, are nevertheless subject to the more explicit demands of the written law."⁶⁵ Deschner refers to this first manifestation of the law as an objective re-inscription and characterizes the latter as subjective in the sense that this re-inscription is an essential ingredient in the restoration of the law of love in the believer's heart. Deschner's terms appear to be quite appropriate since the initial re-inscription of the law through prevenient grace (objective) occurs irrespective of human volition while the latter re-inscription of the law upon the heart of the believer cannot occur without the consent of the will.

Although Wesley drew a relation between the work of the Holy Spirit, conscience, and the objective re-establishment of the moral law, he did not, "consider the speculative question of precisely how prevenient grace brings about this re-inscription of the law."⁶⁶ Instead, Wesley merely appealed to John 1:9 to demonstrate that such a benefit of grace does occur.

Moreover, conscience and the objective re-inscription of the law are not to be confused. "The law is God's demand made know to man both internally and externally. Conscience, on the other hand, is the *faculty* by which

man may know himself in relation to God's demand." This means, then, that some measure of content of the moral law, in however vague a fashion, is mediated to all as a grace which is based upon the atonement. But this creates a problem in the interpretation of Wesley because the fact that "content" of the law is communicated to all, apart from the revelation in scripture, although not apart from grace, suggests the notion of innate ideas, a Concept which Wesley clearly rejected.⁶⁸ It would have been better after all if Wesley had entertained the speculative question.

B. Moral Law and Christ

Wesley, no doubt wrote that the law received its greatest illumination under the work of Christ:

Yet was it never so fully explained, nor so thoroughly understood, till the great author of it himself condescended to give mankind this authentic comment on all the essential branches of it; at the same time declaring it should never be changed.⁶⁹

But Wesley so reinforced the idea of the similarity of the two covenants that it seems at times as if the distinctiveness of the "new" covenant was lost, especially when Wesley proclaimed that Christ, "has not introduced a new religion into the world but the same which was from the beginning — a religion, the substance of which is, . . . as old as the creation."⁷⁰ In other words, one of the chief functions of the messiah was to re-establish the moral law by giving a better revelation of it. Wesley wrote concerning Christ's relation to the law:

I am come to establish it in its fullness, in spite of all the glosses of men: I am come to place in full and clear view whatsoever was dark or obscure therein: I am come to declare the true and full import of every part of it; to show the length and breadth the entire extent, of every commandment contained therein, and the height and depth, the inconceivable purity and spirituality of it in all its branches.⁷¹

Thus, Wesley's conception of the moral law as an immutable, rational order which has its origin before the foundation of the world, and whose constancy and immutability are maintained from covenant to covenant by a messiah who re-establishes and re-inscribes its precepts — all of this has the tendency of emphasizing Christ's prophetic role over His priestly and regal ones which in turn seems to confer upon the law, once again, an almost independent status. But it should also be noted that "there is no point in the elaborate history of the law where Wesley has not attempted to provide an explicit Christological foundation."⁷² Indeed, Deschner makes clear that for Wesley, Christ is the "author of the law,"⁷³ "the light which reveals this partially re inscribed law to men,"⁷⁴ "the giver of the decalogue to Moses,"⁷⁵ and the one who has "re-established the law, giving it a new relation to our justification."⁷⁶ Moreover, in Wesley's sermons on the law, the prophetic emphasis of Christ sending one to the law is counterbalanced by the priestly and regal emphasis of the law sending one to Christ. Wesley wrote:

It (the law) justifies none, but only brings them to Christ; who is also, in another respect, the end or scope of the law — the

point at which it continually aims.... Indeed, each is continually sending me to the other — the law to Christ, and Christ to the law.⁷⁷

VI. Moral Law in Eternity

In his sermon "The Original, Nature, Property and Use of the Law" Wesley demonstrated that not only is the law binding in this age but that it remains in force even in the age to come since it will be the means by which Christ will judge the world. Wesley, in answering those who spoke evil of this law, wrote: "So thou hast set thyself in the judgment seat of Christ, and cast down the rule whereby he will judge the world."⁷⁸ Thus, "the continuity of the moral order is maintained from age to age."⁷⁹

But it should be noted that the same ambiguity which was characteristic of Wesley's notion of the eternity of the law before the foundation of the world remains in his conception of the eternity of the law into the age to come. At times, Wesley seemed to acknowledge that since the moral law was rooted in the created order, any change in that order (such as the end of the age) must necessarily bring a change in the law as well. Wesley observed:

Yet was it (moral law) never so fully explained, nor so thoroughly understood, till the great author of it himself condescended to give mankind this authentic comment on all the essential branches of it; at the same time declaring it should never be changed, *but remain in force to the end of the world.*⁸⁰

However, Wesley also appeared to claim that the law would abide for ever, as if it were independent of any change in the created order. He stated: "the moral law itself, though it could never pass away, yet stood on a different foundation from what it did before."⁸¹

As earlier, this ambiguity is resolved by bearing in mind that for Wesley the law is eternal in the sense that the original ideas of truth and good of which the law is a reflection would always remain. But the reflection, the form of law itself, since it is rooted in the nature of God, the nature of humanity and their mutual relations, can possibly undergo a mutation as a product of any change in these relations as precipitated, for example, by the consummation of the age.⁸² So then, Wesley could maintain both that the moral law would remain until the end of the world, "till heaven and earth pass away" and also that the law would remain forever.

VII. Conclusion

The foregoing argument has shown that Wesley held an extremely high view of the law. He taught that the moral law is both immutable and eternal and emphasized its continuity from covenant to covenant. He also demonstrated in his sermons that the law is expressive of the relations between God and humanity which are rooted in the creation, and he exalted the law further by displaying it in distinctively Platonic colors and went so far as to apply the Christological predicates to the law itself.

To be sure, Wesley was able to speak so highly of the law precisely because he divided the one Law, the one Torah, into the categories of moral and ceremonial.⁸³ For example, in quoting the apostle Paul that "the law

is binding on a person only during his life" (Rom. 7:1) Wesley observed: "What! the law of Rome only, or the ceremonial law? No, surely; but the moral law."⁸⁴ In other words, Wesley tried to separate the moral kernel from the ceremonial husk. Indeed, he could not have stressed the continuity of the covenants as he did, if he had not at first extracted a "moral" law from the Old and New Testaments. Likewise, the eternity of the moral law as opposed to the temporariness of the ceremonial law could only be supported upon the foundation of the same distinction. But some theological writers call such a division into question. Sugden, for example, in a notation upon the sermon just mentioned wrote: "There is no distinction anywhere between the ceremonial and the moral parts of the Mosaic Law."⁸⁵ And Fenton Hort observed in his work *Judaistic Christianity*: "The difference which Christ does lay down within the Law is wholly different from this supposed difference of ceremonial and moral precepts."⁸⁶

Now it is not within the scope of this present study to trace the origin and the development of the distinction between moral and ceremonial law, nor to doubt that such a differentiation has served the church well in her theological formulations throughout history. The point to be made here is quite simple: if the division of the law into the categories of moral and ceremonial can be shown to be problematic, then Wesley's Platonic exaltation of the law which is based upon it is also dubious. But if, on the other hand, such a distinction can be substantiated, then Wesley's estimation of the moral law is probably not very wide of the mark.

NOTES

1. Nehemiah Curnock, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* 14 vols. (London: The Epworth Press, 1938) 2:354-55.

2. John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 14 vols. (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room; reprint ed., Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1978), 8:278.

3. Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.* 3 vols. (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1872) 1:481. Bracketed material mine.

4. Edmund H. Sugden, ed., *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, 2 vols. (London: The Epworth Press, 1951), 2:38.

5. Tyerman, *Life and Times*, 1:482.

6. *Ibid.*

7. John Telford, ed., *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, 8 vols. (London: The Epworth Press, 1931), 3:83.

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9. Sugden, *Sermons*, 1:125.

10. Ibid, p. 416.
11. Ibid., p. 404-10.
12. Ibid, 2:41.
13. John N. Oswalt, "Wesley's Use of the Old Testament in His Doctrinal Teachings," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 12 (Spring 1977):46.
14. Sugden, *Sermons*, 1:399-400.
15. Ibid, 2:46.
16. Ibid, 2:49.
17. Ibid, p. 46.
18. John Deschner, *Wesley's Christology* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1960), p. 103.
19. Ibid, p. 104.
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WESLEY'S VIEWS ON THE USES OF HISTORY

by

Joseph William Seaborn, Jr.

Questions concerning the nature of history and its capacity for functioning as more than a conveyor of information have generated numerous discussions and provoked a considerable body of literature. Scholars have identified and examined a wide gamut of purposes which can be addressed in the study and writing of history. In the sense that history is a reconstruction of the past, it requires a sense of coherence to perceive how different and often conflicting events and life circumstances can be composed into a living whole. It also requires efforts at understanding the motives which controlled the activities and development of persons and institutions. If Wesley was correct in assuming that accidents played a minimum role, or none at all, in the flow of history, he also believed as a corollary that writing history involved an explanation of causal and interfacing forces. For Wesley the divine and human wills were the chief causal agents, but these operated within a complex network of institutional, satanic and numerous other causal energies which implied that even apparently simple decisions could often entail multiple implications. Clearly, John Wesley believed, for example, that a collier's conversion and spiritual maturation, if attractively and accurately told, could encourage similar spiritual experiences on the part of those who read the account. On the other hand, an evil king could be cited as the epitome of heinousness whose lifestyle and manners were to be shunned religiously.

As a historian John Wesley was aware that the writing of history initially involved answering a wide range of questions. To what extent did the divine component figure in human affairs? If generalizations were to be drawn and inferences extracted from historical writings, what consistent set of assumptions should under gird them? Especially in biography, what experiences should be expunged due to possible imitation of the negative and which should be told in greater detail to encourage emulation? What is the affiliation between ideas and events and lifestyles? How do various causal vectors intersect? These subtly interweaving dynamics, the intersection of persons and institutions, and the perception that past developments have altered not only the political and economic patterns of the present, but

particularly the moral attitudes and doctrinal integrity of those who would shape the religious configurations of the eighteenth century; these awarenesses comprised the larger part of the intellectual and spiritual milieu within which Wesley devoted himself to the task of recasting the spiritual pattern of his generation. He sought to ensure that his contemporaries be more than prisoners of the present. Certainly for him, history was of far more than antiquarian value; it constituted a means by which he could demonstrate the continuity between primitive church developments and the structure of his own movement; the linear patterns of God's involvement in history and the consistency between God's interaction with persons in the past and in the present. It was for him useful both as a discipline for accurately understanding the present and a valuable preparatory guide for holy living in the future. In carefully screening the contents of histories and by being discriminatory in what he included in his historical writings, Wesley controlled and guided the minds of his readers along paths which he believed would aid them in holy living in the present and ultimately lead them to a future in heaven. Contained in this paper are a series of evidentially supported characteristics which marked Wesley's educational methods and which have direct influence on his use of the specific medium of history as an instrument for instilling carefully chosen Christian doctrines and religious attitudes into the minds of his hearers and readers.

History as Inculcator of Virtues

Both in his references to ideal history writing and in his actual practice of history writing, Wesley demonstrated a pronounced tendency to instruct in virtuous living by means of the historical medium. With regularity he sought to indicate and evaluate the moral motives which moved through the pages of his and others' histories. The historian was under obligation, in Wesley's perception, to maintain the full value of moral currency according to Biblical norms; avoiding by all efforts its debasement at the hands of secular influences. Wesley hoped that his readers would establish high standards of moral self judgment and try others, even historical persons and movements, by the same Biblical moral maxims which governed their own lives.

On December 4, 1749, Wesley read the *Extract of Mr. Brainerd's Journal*. Initially in his comments on the work, he celebrates the propagation of the gospel among other populations of the world. "Once more," he declared, "God has 'given to the Gentiles repentance unto life.' " Regrettably, however, the extracts seemed to Wesley to reflect a self congratulatory attitude and an attempt by Brainerd to usurp God's prerogative in prescribing the pattern for revival in the New World. In so doing, Brainerd had vitiated the strength of his testimony to the work of God and damaged his own reputation as well.

. . . I could not but grieve at this: that even so good a man as Mr. Brainerd should be "wise above that is written," in condemning what the Scriptures nowhere condemns; in prescribing to God the way wherein He should work — and (in effect) applauding himself, and magnifying his own work, above that which God wrought in Scotland, or among the English in New England:

Whereas, in truth, the work among the Indians, great as it was, was not to be compared to that at Cambuslang, Kilsyth, or Northampton.¹

In May, 1742, Wesley read Xenophon's *Memorable Things of Socrates*. He was amazed at the biographer's lack of judgment in including many of the deficiencies in Socrates' personality which, Wesley noted, Plato would have judiciously excluded. In an apparent afterthought, Wesley continued, "But it may be well that we see the shades too of the brightest picture in all heathen antiquity."²

Displeased with historical writings which paraded persons' vices, Wesley much preferred that histories elevate to prominence persons' virtues. In his preface to *The History of Henry Earl of Moreland*, written by Henry Brooke and later revised by Wesley, the Oxford don lauds the fact that the "greatest excellence" of the treatise is "that it continually strikes at the heart. It perpetually aims at inspiring and increasing every right affection; and at instilling gratitude to God, and benevolence to man."³

In his preface to Fox's *Acts and Monuments of the Christian Martyrs* Wesley affirmed again his belief in the need for serious Christian readers to "see this Christianity reduced to practice." In the numerous accounts of martyrdom, Wesley perceived the "pure and amiable religion" which he believed should characterize the lives of those who, like the martyrs, desired to live righteously and godly in this present world. In order to focus directly on the practical religious aspects of these martyrs' lives, Wesley edited Fox's original account, deleting what he termed "all the secular history." Apparently still not satisfied with the length and focus of the accounts, Wesley further omitted from the saints' lives those elements which he did not find "particularly affecting or instructive."⁴ If such deletions seem to hint of a narrowness in Wesley's viewpoint, his own interpretation would counter that his intention was to present his readers with models for living and at the lowest possible expense.

Emphasis on God's Sovereignty and Immanence

As expressed in his historical writings, Wesley openly declared his intention to weave together notions of divine providence and the sovereignty of God in relation to human affairs. He never claimed nor attempted to be detached and dispassionate in terms of his allegiance to the God of the Christian faith. He often berated historians who did not demonstrate a decided tendency toward portraying the divine dimension in history. In his preface to *A Concise History of England*, Wesley set forth his general concern with all the histories of the English nation which he had heretofore read. As far as he could discern, they were deficient inasmuch as they seemed calculated for atheists, since there was nothing concerning God's involvement in history in them. In a paragraph on the matter he observed;

Who would gather from these accounts, who would have the least suspicion, that it is God who governs the world? That his kingdom ruleth over all, in heaven above, and in earth beneath? That he alone changeth the times and seasons, removeth kings and setteth up kings, and disposes all things by his almighty power, according to the counsels of his own will?⁵

Evaluation of historical events in terms of divine guidance and intervention was a primary assumption in Wesley's search for historical truth. When Wesley claimed his to be a calm, objective, and impartial view of history he meant an objective view as seen through a Christian and providential filter. In his history of England, Wesley made the claim to be writing an impartial history free of bigotry and bias and then concluded: "And I am in hopes this will appear to all who are divested of prejudice, and who are lovers of naked truth."⁶

In one of his clearest statements on the ideal use of history, Wesley observed that to fully divest oneself of prejudices and partiality was a particularly difficult task to perform. Then in several statements he noted his own disposition to explore and document God's involvement in all activities. In words that carry the tones of an apology, he declared his position in a single paragraph.

As I desire myself to see God pervading the moral as well as the natural world; so I would fain have others to see him in all civil events as well as in all the phenomena of nature. I want them to learn that the Lord is King, be the earth never so impatient; that he putteth down one and setteth up another, in spite of all human power and wisdom. Let there be at least one History of England which uniformly acknowledges this; let there be one Christian history of what is called (though by a strong figure) a Christian country.⁷

Clearly Wesley was aware that he was not approaching the historical task without certain preconceived and systematic generalizations about the course of the past. His historiographic approach evolved out of a distinctly theological philosophy of history which was patently a prioristic in its theological biases. Whether editing his preachers' autobiographies, or compiling general histories, or writing his own autobiography, he already possessed an interpretative system for serializing into a story the events and interrelations discovered in his writings and research. Wesley believed himself to be a social agent with a theological purpose, and his method of historiography presented him with another tool for forming and informing the minds of his readers toward a uniquely Christian set. In history he found another tool for communicating what was for him the plain truth. Probably he was not completely aware of the extreme degree to which he was weaving a divine providence into the fabric of his work. Whether particularly in an individual life or generally in all of creation, Wesley pointed out the finger of God and desired that all persons acknowledge its presence with him.

History as Reinforcer of Biblical Principles

Wesley was particularly attracted to history with a pronounced parallel in principles and ideas with that of the holy scriptures. The doctrinal and ethical norms set forth in scripture, he sought everywhere to inculcate. He gave easy approval to histories and personal accounts in which the view of God, of persons, of life and of God's involvement in all dimensions of life were closely matched with those of the Bible. He found that parallel illustrated, for example, in *The History of Henry Earl of Moreland*, and praised the work for setting forth in full view most of the important truths which

were revealed in the oracles of God. In this history, he observed, Biblical principles are not only well illustrated, but also set forth in an easy and natural manner; "so that the thinking reader is taught, without any trouble, the most essential doctrines of religion."⁸

In January, 1789, Wesley looked over Captain Wilson's account of Thule, King of Pelew. Caustically he called it "the finest picture of atheistical religion that ever I saw." If the assumptions of the author were to be taken uncritically, then neither knowledge of God nor of the scriptures was necessary to salvation. Wesley summed up Wilson's anthropology in the line; "all accomplished"; in need of no more knowledge of God "than a horse, and no more of his grace than a sparrow!"⁹ In December of the same year, Wesley found time to consider the work more thoroughly. His comments reveal his belief that works with such erroneous theological assumptions tend to corrupt the thinking of readers in the same direction.

. . . I esteem it a dangerous book, which I cannot believe, if I believe the Bible; for the direct tendency of it is to show, that the Bible is quite needless; since if men may be as virtuous without revelation as with it, then it is quite superfluous — then the fable of Jesus Christ, and that of Mahomet, are equally valuable. I do not say that Mr. Keate, much less Captain Wilson, designed to inculcate this consequence; but it necessarily follows, if you believe the premises."¹⁰

Within the same year, on December 30, 1789, Wesley published a full tract on the work entitled, "Thoughts On a Late Publication." The tract expands on the previous ideas, especially the contradiction between the biblical truth that all persons are by nature dead in trespasses and sins and Captain Wilson's contention that persons, at least in the nation he had discovered, were innately good, displaying neither ill manners nor violent crimes. Wesley is nonplused by the fact that Wilson can make such claims and then proceed to narrate regular episodes of polygamy, theft, and murder, all of which receive the author's apologetic support as political necessities in the distant utopia.

Of greatest relevance to this study is Wesley's final paragraph which offers advice to the readers. He urges all persons to exercise caution toward, and to consider avoiding altogether, such devious works which conflict with Biblical revelation.

I cannot, therefore, but earnestly advise all those who will believe the Scriptures to be of God, to beware of this, and all other books of this kind, which either affirm or insinuate that there are any Heathens in the world who, like the supposed nations of the Pelew Islands, are unblamable by nature; since, if there be any such, all revelation is needless and the Christian revelation utterly false.¹¹

For Wesley history provided one more avenue through which to reinforce the certitudes of scripture regarding the goodness of God, the sinfulness of human beings, the possibilities of redemption and the dangers of facing judgment without God. If properly written and understood within a context of divine providence, both general and particular, history revealed

the errors into which human perversity had betrayed persons age after age. Though the reading of history would not guarantee wisdom, it could provide a measure of protection against recurrent folly. As has been often noted, those who will not learn from history are condemned to repeat its mistakes. For Wesley, the positive affirmation was equally true. Those who would learn from history must read it, like the scriptures, carefully and selectively in order to emulate its virtues and imbibe its truths.

Selectivity in the Writing of History

In his effort to place before his readers personal paradigms for model Christian living, Wesley was occasionally given to suppressing certain evidence which might be perceived as sanctioning unchristian behavior. In his preface to *A Concise Ecclesiastical History*, he warned his readers not to expect to find a charming, unsullied history of saints; of persons who walked always worthy of their high calling. It was true, as he observed, that there were a few persons in every age of the church who were bright and shining lights to their generation. But because they shone in a dark place, in a benighted world, a world full of darkness and cruel habitations — they had been sadly influenced by the spiritual darkness around them and had often succumbed to elements of its influence. The mystery of iniquity which had worked in the days of the apostles had overspread the face of the earth corrupting persons in their attitudes and actions before God. Wesley regretfully admitted that " 'The whole world lieth in the wicked one'; . . . not only the Mahometan and Pagan, but also, the Christian, world."¹³

Still there was a tendency in Wesley, as often as the opportunity arose, to select the elements from history and from the lives of his preachers which would leave impressions favorable to the Christian faith. If the suppression of certain evidence could leave a positive model image or prevent spiritual misdirection, Wesley was apt to accept the process of selection as one means for accomplishing these tasks.

After reviewing Clark's *Lives of Eminent Persons*, Wesley, in his preface notes, indicated both the strengths and weaknesses of the collection. His initial design was to take the "pains of abridging" the lives but upon closer inspection, he felt that several of the accounts should be omitted altogether inasmuch as the individuals were eminent for neither understanding nor piety. On the other hand, Wesley recalled several worthy persons from his own Church of England whose lives he desired to see included in the volume of worthy lives. He mentions in particular Archbishop Usher and Bishop Bedell. Due to his addition and deletion of several personal accounts, Wesley believed that he had compiled a volume superior to Clark's *Lives*. In his collection, he observed, one could more easily discern the image of God being reflected in the lives of godly persons.¹⁴

By his own acknowledgment, Wesley held the Frenchman, de Renty, in highest regard as one of the "brightest patterns of heavenly wisdom." Having completed an abridgment of his life, Wesley berated the biography who had so indiscriminately and indiscreetly described de Renty as both sinner and saint.

O that such a life should be related by such an historian!
Who, by inserting all, if not more than all, the weak things that holy

man ever said or did, by his commendation of almost every action or word which either deserved or needed it not, and by his injudicious manner or relating many others which were indeed highly commendable, has cast the shades of superstition and folly over one of the brightest patterns of heavenly wisdom.¹⁵

Such indiscriminate descriptions of the man not only highlighted characteristics of his life which should have remained unknown but also cast doubt on the sanctity of the notable man. A more discerning biographer would have emphasized the virtues and diminished if not completely elided personal weaknesses.

Wesley believed that both the children in his schools and the general reading audience should be protected from written materials which might blemish lofty images of saintly persons. If persons were to be set forth as paradigms of holiness, they should be reviewed ideally, and that in order to demonstrate the spiritual potential to which holiness of life could lead.

In his preface to *The History of Henry Earl of Moreland* he noted the history's greatest excellence in the pointed clause; "it continually strikes at the heart." Perpetually it is aimed at inspiring and increasing every right affection and at instilling gratitude toward God and benevolence toward persons. And in large part it achieved its excellence by the careful description of exemplary persons who as "lovers of God and man" established a pattern for life and faith to which Wesley could attach his highest commendation."¹⁶

Wesley was convinced that properly written history held potential for making an important contribution to the formation of a distinctly Christian mindset which would in turn have the effect of more ably preparing persons for service in the church. For him the discipline of reading properly written histories involved directing the proclivity of the mind toward God. If this was adequately achieved, the spiritual nature would experience cultivation as well. And although history was not the only discipline which could be used to promote development in the Christian faith, it did constitute one primary instrument commensurate with the task. An awareness of the past played an important role in the implications of the present life. History held the potential for showing by illustration, rules which had elsewhere been laid down prescriptively. In the merger of Christian example and normative rules, Wesley saw discipleship potency being raised to its fullest and highest powers.

John Wesley disseminated improving books and among those books were numerous histories. Though knowledge was to be gained from them, Wesley was equally concerned that the knowledge be merged with the common life of people in the present. Morally upright authors and highly principled works were particularly appreciated and ubiquitously recommended as valuable for the development of the spirit. For Wesley, history as well as other literature was a ministerial tool. As Fitchett notes; "This habit of using literature only as a tool, or as a weapon, of course, gives Wesley a certain narrowness; but it is the virtue of a sword edge to be narrow!"¹⁷

Curnock observes that Wesley was one of the "best gatherers and scatterers of useful knowledge" in his age.¹⁸ Wesley would have been especially happy with the word "useful." Assuming a Christian point of view in all

his writings, he gave himself to the task of shepherding persons toward the highest Christian ideals. Every possible means within his grasp was turned to the accomplishment of this goal, and the tool of history was not an exception.

NOTES

1. Diary entry for December 4, 1749, in John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 14 vols., 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 2:169.

2. Diary entry for May 27, 1742, in Wesley, *Works*, 1:373.

3. John Wesley, *The History of Henry Earl of Moreland*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (London: J. Paramore, 1781), i:iv.

4. Wesley, *Works*, 14:227-228.

5. Preface to *A Concise History of England*, in Wesley, *Works*, 14:274.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Preface to *The History of Henry Earl of Moreland*, in Wesley, *Works*, 14:296.

9. Diary entry for January 16, 1789, in Wesley, *Works*, 4:444.

10. Diary entry for November 29, 1789, in Wesley, *Works*, 4:475-476.

11. "Thoughts on a Late Publication" in Wesley, *Works*, 13:413.

12. Preface to *A Concise Ecclesiastical History*, in Wesley, *Works*, 14:299.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Preface to Clark's *Lives of Eminent Persons*, in Wesley, *Works*, 14:232.

15. Diary entry for January 6, 1738, in Wesley, *Works*, 1:71-72.

16. Preface to *The History of Henry Earl of Moreland*, in Wesley, *Works*, 14:296.

17. William H. Fitchett, *Wesley and His Century* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1922), p. 468.

18. Nehemiah Curnock, ed., *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, 8 vols., (London: Epworth Press, 1938), 1:21.

JOHN WESLEY AND THE SECOND BLESSING

by

Timothy L. Smith

I will begin by stating two elementary principles of historical method: friends who have reason to disagree with a person on an important point or two usually provide the most objective evidence of what his or her opinions at a given time actually were; and considering facts in their chronological sequence is indispensable to establishing the nature and cause of any person's changing views.

The second of these I have illustrated in an earlier paper before this society on the doctrine of holiness in the Wesleyan hymns. In that essay, I pointed out that in his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* Wesley incorrectly dated the publication of the second volume of *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (whose preface he quoted prominently there) as 1741 rather than 1740. Since that preface provided so clear a description of a second work of sanctifying grace, we must conclude that the emergence of that doctrine took place sometime before the publication of the hymnbook in the spring of the latter year. The first observation I also illustrated in an earlier paper before this society, namely, the great significance of the Whitefield correspondence with Wesley in 1740 dealing with the experience of heart purity, a portion of which is available to all in Frank Baker's Oxford edition of Wesley's letters. Without regard to any of the other evidence of the origin of Wesley's thought, this correspondence makes plain that something dramatic had happened in Wesley's thinking shortly after Whitefield's second departure for America, in September, 1739. Whitefield called Wesley's new teaching, about which he heard in America, "sinless perfection," an accurate term in his view of the issue raised by Wesley's idea that a second work of grace brought cleansing from the remains of inbred corruption, or from inbred sin. Whitefield's rejection of this idea hastened and was hastened by his growing identification with Calvinist evangelicals in America and Scotland. It led directly to the young evangelist's public break with the Wesleys over both that issue and the doctrine of predestination on the eve of his return from America in January and February, 1741.¹

These two pieces of evidence support my suggestion in that second paper that Wesley composed the substance of his first sermon on the limits and

the nature of Christian perfection, not published until two years later, on November 7, 1739, when he recorded in his diary that he "writ *Christian Perfection*."² The alternative argument — that he began then the condensation of William Law's volume on that subject, since he records in the diary that later that day and on November 8 he "writ Law" — will not fit all the facts. For one, on November 12 and 17, Wesley told us in his Journal, he explained to small groups of his followers "the nature and extent of Christian perfection" — words that point to the famous sermon's contents — and on August 10, 1740, he echoed those words in describing his discourse on its text, Philippians 3:12.³ Moreover, he preached sermons in the following months from texts that he always thereafter used as vehicles to explain the doctrine of sanctification. These sermons prompted several persons in England and Scotland to alert Whitefield to the fact that Wesley was now proclaiming that the Bible taught that Christians may find purity of heart in this life.⁴ Finally, the first chapters of Wesley's condensation of William Law, published anonymously in 1740 under the title *The Nature and Destiny of Christianity*, dealt not with the second work of grace, which gave Whitefield and others of Wesley's friends such problems, but with the doctrine of "the great salvation," which they affirmed; and it allowed the idea that a process of growth, rather than an instantaneous second work of grace, was the method of achieving it. Wesley, of course, had always taught that Christians experienced gradual sanctification — so much so as to enable Gerald R. Cragg to say, and Albert C. Outler to imply, that he taught only or mainly progressive holiness.⁵ But in the fall of 1739 he came to the clear conviction that a second and instantaneous experience was essential to that process. In that moment, believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, their hearts were cleansed from the remains of inbred sin, and they were perfected in love.

The assistance that a correct understanding of these events gives in the task of interpreting various aspects of Wesley's teaching and behavior now requires spelling out. I wish, first, to stress the light they shed on Wesley's own spiritual experience.

Wesley himself acknowledged his disappointment at the small measure of joy he had received when he thought the Holy Spirit bore witness to his regeneration at the famous prayer meetings in Aldersgate Street, London, in May, 1738. He was tempted to doubt whether he had actually experienced what the Scripture promised.⁶ This fact has prompted some modern scholars to denigrate the Aldersgate event. It seems to me, rather, to have reflected the fact that Wesley at that point understood the Bible to teach only one instantaneous experience of saving grace and that, therefore, all the promises of Scripture concerning the righteousness, peace, and joy which were to flow from the presence and work of the Holy Spirit should have been evident immediately after he was assured of being God's child. On the contrary, he found himself a few days afterward nearly "sawn asunder" by doubt, temptation, and the absence of joy. He went to Germany a few days after he preached his sermon on "Salvation by Faith" before Oxford University, hoping to find in the Moravian experience some resolution of the intellectual as well as the spiritual problems that stemmed from his unwarranted expectations.

What Wesley soon learned was that the Moravians believed that the witness of the Spirit to regeneration was usually bestowed sometime after

one was forgiven and enabled to have victory over sinning. In his letter of October 30, 1738 to his brother Samuel, he equated that witness with " 'the seal of the Spirit,' 'the love of God shed abroad in my heart,' and . . . 'joy in the Holy Ghost,' joy which 'no man taketh away,' 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' " He told Samuel he could not doubt "that believers who wait and pray for it will find these Scriptures fulfilled in themselves," and added: "My hope is that they will be fulfilled in me." Such a degree of faith, he had written Samuel from Germany, "purifies the heart" and "renews the life after the image of our blessed Redeemer."⁷ Here was the germ of what became a year later his doctrine of entire sanctification. But at this point, Wesley was still thinking only of degrees of saving faith. He reported to the Moravians at Herrnhut in late October, 1738 that he believed ten ministers in the Church of England preached that "the blood of Christ cleanseth" them "from all sin," and urged them not to cease praying that God would "remove that which is displeasing in His sight" and "give us the whole mind 'that was in Christ.' " "This evidence clarifies the use Wesley made in his sermon "Salvation by Faith" at Oxford of the scriptural promises that the Lord would save His people from "all their sins: from original and actual . . . sin," seal them with "the Holy Spirit of promise," deliver them from "any sinful desire," and give them "the same mind that was in Christ Jesus." This described the experience he had expected but only part of which he had found.⁸

During the months which followed that trip, and particularly after Wesley joined Whitefield in leading the awakening in Bristol and London in the spring and summer of 1739, Wesley carefully studied the Scriptures concerning "babes in Christ" and the degrees of faith. They confirmed his belief that those who, under his and his brother's ministry as well as that of Whitefield and the Welsh evangelist Howell Harris, had professed to have been instantaneously transformed by the Holy Spirit from "the faith of a servant," as he put it, to the faith of a child of God were undoubtedly born again. By the late summer of 1739 he had dealt at length with a multitude of such converts. They had been "set at liberty" from the power of sin. Yet they were unsteady and unestablished. Caring for them taught Wesley that he had been discouraged about his own experience because he had expected too much. Though he had not during that first year after Aldersgate supposed that he could be delivered from inbred sin, he had believed that he would experience fullness of joy and peace. Now, in the fall of 1739, he became convinced Scripture taught this fullness would accompany a second and deeper moment of hallowing grace, which would bring also purity of heart and perfect love. He turned then from bemoaning the incompleteness of his peace and joy in regeneration to marveling at the measure of grace that he and his converts had received and at the fullness which was to come. Now, hungering and thirsting after righteousness became a joyful experience. He was confident that entire sanctification, or purity from the remains of inward corruption, would also guarantee his final perseverance and so make his satisfaction complete.⁹

Eventually, Wesley's followers who sought and found this blessing taught him that he still expected too much; and his study of the experience of Jesus and the apostles confirmed that he had. Hence, in 1765, when he republished the preface to the hymnbook of 1740 in his *Plain Account of*

Christian Perfection, Wesley inserted several footnotes to show where he had overstated the subjective fruits of full salvation. And he explained how the fall from grace of several notable Methodists who he could not doubt had once enjoyed perfect love had convinced him in the late 1750's that this experience assured only present, not final salvation.¹⁰ But from 1740 onward, he never questioned the idea of an instant of heart cleansing in a second moment of sanctifying grace. I think he would be amazed to find some of his modern followers seeking, at this late date, to fasten upon him a belief in progressive sanctification so extensive that it minimizes almost to the point of extinction the doctrine of an instantaneous experience. A central argument of the *Plain Account* was, in fact, that he had been teaching that doctrine ever since the publication of the hymnbook of 1740.¹¹

Wesley's personal struggles were also intertwined with his emerging controversy with the Moravians, and hence his dawning belief in a second moment of grace was closely connected to that controversy. The journals of both Wesley and Whitefield indicate the increasing concern of the evangelists about the insistence of the London Moravians that none had any faith at all who did not have perfect faith — one that banished all doubt and fear and secured complete deliverance from inward sin. They attacked directly the testimonies of the followers of both men to the experience of regeneration and, therefore, the preaching of both evangelists on the doctrine of the new birth. They bade these falsely assured "converts" to desist from doing anything at all, whether self-denial or good works or observing what Anglicans thought were the "means of grace," until they had such perfect faith. The result was to discourage very many of Wesley's converts, to put a damper on the revival itself, and to prompt some of Wesley's closest followers to renounce their professions, stop taking communion, and "wait in stillness for salvation."¹²

Inattention to chronology has allowed scholars to minimize or ignore the connection between the Moravian controversy and Wesley's new view of entire sanctification. He later described in his *Journal* for November 1-9, 1739, the spiritual crisis in the affairs of the Fetter Lane Society in London stemming from the Moravian insistence that justifying faith must be perfect, that is, sanctifying, and that those who had once professed justification must wait in "stillness" until they had such faith. The longest of his several conversations that week with their bishop, August S. Spangenberg, took place on November 7 — the very day that his "Diary" tells us he "writ *Christian Perfection*."¹³ Moreover, that portion of Wesley's *Journal* which recounts his conversion and his trip to Germany was not published until September, 1740. By that time all the world knew that he had broken with the Moravians and begun proclaiming a second work of grace.¹⁴ The *Journal*, as distinct from the "Diary" on which it was based, was written for publication and always had a hortatory purpose. And in this case, Wesley's purpose was to refute the London Moravians by describing the testimonies to degrees of faith and to a second moment of hallowing grace that he had heard in Germany two years before. He published them not simply to confirm his Aldersgate experience but to show that the experience of the "greatest professors" at Herrnhut had presaged his conviction that freedom from inbred sin as well as from all doubts and fears was the fruit of that second moment.

Hence his recounting in the *Journal* for July and August, 1738, Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf's carefully circumscribed definition of justification, which matched Wesley's view at the time in 1740 when he wrote the *Journal*; and hence his report of the inquiries he made of "the most experienced of the brethren, concerning the work which God had wrought in their souls, purifying them by faith."¹⁵ Among these was Christian David, founder and pastor of the church at Herrnhut. Three of the four sermons Wesley heard David preach at Herrnhut dealt with the state of those who were "weak in faith," who were "justified" but did not yet have "a new, clean heart." David said they had "received forgiveness through the blood of Christ" but had "not received the constant indwelling of the Holy Ghost." That the preacher had described their state, and progress from it, by close reference to the opening sentences of Christ's Sermon on the Mount just as Wesley had taken to doing in the fall of 1739, had both dialectical and spiritual significance to the visitor from England. David showed how they must come to mourning and to hungering and thirsting after righteousness before they were made "pure in heart," set free "from all self-will and sin," and made merciful as "their Father which is in heaven is merciful."¹⁶

David also explained the nature of that intermediate state, which "most experience between that bondage which is described in the seventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans and the full glorious liberty of the children of God described in the eighth, and in many other parts of Scripture." And he explained in one sermon "the state the apostles were in, from our Lord's death (and indeed for some time before) till the descent of the Holy Ghost at the day of Pentecost." They were then "clean," Wesley recalled David as saying; they then had "faith, otherwise He could not have prayed for them, that their 'faith' might not 'fail.' Yet they had not, in the full sense, 'new hearts'; neither had they received the gift of the Holy Ghost." And he remembered the pastor urging such persons to "labor then to believe with your whole heart. So shall you have redemption through the blood of Christ. So shall you be cleansed from all sin." This long summary pointed as fully to Wesley's new understanding of sanctification as did Christian David's testimony to his finding "the full assurance of faith" and those of Michael Limmer and Arvid Gradin to the same effect. Wesley cited Gradin's words twenty-five years later, in his *Plain Account*.¹⁷

Wesley composed his famous "Letter to the Church of God at Herrnhut" at the same time that he was editing this *Journal* of 1738 for the press, namely, August, 1740. That letter begins with his complaint that some of the London Moravians were affirming that "present salvation . . . does not imply the proper taking away our sins, the cleansing our souls from all sin, from all unholiness, whether of flesh or spirit" — words which clearly refer to Wesley's new understanding of Christian perfection — "but only the tearing the system of sin in pieces, so that sin still remains in the members, if not in the heart." Wesley said he had also heard Moravians in London insist that saving faith did not secure "liberty from evil thoughts, neither from wanderings in prayer," that it did not grant "an assurance of future salvation," and that "the seal of the Spirit" related only "to the present moment." (Wesley believed at this point, and for a number of years thereafter, that the experience of entire sanctification was indeed a sealing of the Spirit which made it impossible for one to fall from grace.)¹⁸

In short, the letter to the Moravians had to do mostly with the doctrine of entire sanctification, a fact hitherto overlooked. He went on in the letter to complain that London Moravians thought salvation implied "liberty from the commandments of God, so that one who is saved through faith is not obliged or bound to obey them" — a direct contradiction of Wesley's preaching about Christian holiness from the Sermon on the Mount. Moreover, he wrote, "some in England," particularly Philip Henry Molthier, then the Moravian leader in London, insisted that "there are no degrees in faith" and that "there is no justifying faith without the plerephory [fullness] of faith, the clear, abiding witness of the Spirit," nor none "where there is not, in the full, proper sense, a new heart."¹⁹

Modern Moravian scholars have been no more eager than modern Methodists to emphasize the doctrine of heart purity. But in fact that is what their forbears taught true faith would bring.²⁰ And they insisted that none has any faith at all until he or she could give testimony to the faith which hallows the heart. But they did so in such a manner as to "damp the zeal of babes in Christ," Wesley concluded, "talking much of false zeal," and forbidding them to testify to salvation or to share the sacrament of holy communion.²¹

Encountering this Moravian doctrine, Wesley did not consider abandoning his confidence that regenerating faith, even such as was displayed by "babes in Christ," was indeed the true and saving Christian faith. Nor did Whitefield.²² But Wesley was intent on declaring "that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." And he was not satisfied with less than the fullness of joy which Jesus had promised to His disciples.

Attention to Wesley's friends and to the chronology of events helps us, finally to realize how much Wesley was moved by his rethinking of the opening sentences of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. He had first preached a series on them in Bristol in April, 1739, and again the following July. The manuscripts of those sermons, if he wrote them out, were likely edited and then destroyed (as almost all Wesley's published manuscripts were) after he printed in 1746 and 1748 thirteen discourses on Christ's sermon. But whether or not he prepared the discourses in manuscript form in 1739 or 1740, it is certain that the ideas they display in the later printed version permeated the consciousness of Wesleyans in the years 1739 and 1740.²³

We may safely conclude, then, that the doctrine of perfect love emerged both from scriptural study and from the certainty Wesley felt about the genuineness of the faith of his converts.²⁴ Holiness of heart seemed to him, as it has ever since to his followers, what every person who is truly saved by faith will long for. He was convinced that this "great salvation from sin" would be sent down, as "at the day of Pentecost" unto "all generations, into the hearts of all true believers" and that the promise was "to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord shall call."²⁵ Wesley also believed that real Christians would grow in holiness both before they received the blessing of sanctifying faith and afterwards, not by works of righteousness but by the grace of God. This the Holy Spirit brought to them both by the inspiration of His presence and by the "means of grace" — prayer, thanksgiving, obedience, self-denial, studying the Scriptures, and faithful attendance on preaching and upon the sacrament of holy communion.²⁶

Putting events into chronological perspective and paying attention to

his evangelical friends also helps us understand better Wesley's public and private testimony on behalf of Christian holiness. For nearly six years from the time he felt satisfied that doctrine was scriptural he proclaimed it broadly, in public as well as in society meetings. He published a clear summary of it in the spring of 1740 in the preface mentioned above. Whitefield's private and public correspondence indicated the attention evangelicals in America as well as Great Britain paid to his new teaching.²⁷ Though he delayed the printing of his sermon on Christian perfection until September, 1741 (recalling later that he had waited for the Bishop of London to encourage him to do so), he and his brother Charles issued a third volume of hymns in 1742 which, like that of 1740, spelled out fully the Biblical promises of a second and purifying blessing.²⁸ All this was confirmed in the tract *Character of a Methodist* (published, apparently, in 1742, not, as Wesley remembered in the *Plain Account*, three years earlier), in Charles Wesley's great Oxford sermon of April 4, 1742, the most popular publication ever issued by the Wesleys²⁹, and in John's summary defense of Methodist teaching in *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, first printed in 1744.

But the effect of Whitefield's widening attack cut severely into Wesley's community. The young evangelist followed up the famous Christmas letter of 1740 by preaching and publishing nine sermons opposed to Arminianism and perfectionism after he arrived in England in March, 1741. A few months earlier he had endorsed a weekly newspaper, *The Christian's Amusement*, renamed *The Weekly History* in 1741, that combined world-wide revival news with letters and sermons from Whitefield and other persons that promoted Calvinistic and anti-perfectionist ideas. Meanwhile, his *Journals* continued to be published in short segments that appeared only a few months after the date of their closing entries.³⁰ Wesley realized that Whitefield was far more in control of public evangelical opinion than he, and that such controversy weakened the revival everywhere. He feared it would alienate him from Howell Harris, the leader of what became the Calvinistic Methodist movement in Wales. In the early part of 1740, however, Harris was preoccupied with the public controversy his own itinerant revivalism stirred up, and with a tender courtship.³¹

Those who had long opposed Wesley and Whitefield as "enthusiasts" for teaching the actual presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christian believers rushed to publicize the disagreements between the two evangelists and seized upon Wesley's new doctrine of heart purity as proof of their charge.³² The extent of the pressure is evident from the fact that some of Wesley's closest follower's drew back. James Hutton (once Wesley's right-hand man), Charles Kinchin, and John Gambold chose the Moravian version of perfectionism, which avoided the public scandal of a second blessing. For the rest of John Wesley's life, therefore, he periodically felt compelled to refute the claim that true saving faith brought with it entire sanctification, and that there was only one great moment of grace.³³

Apparently in 1745 Wesley decided that preaching Christian perfection to persons not yet converted was neither scriptural nor practical. He began to rely instead upon bands and "select societies," to which he assigned persons who were clearly in the experience of regeneration and clearly seekers or finders of full salvation. If the minutes of the first conference of 1745 actually reflect his practice, for the next dozen years he confined his own

preaching of the details of the second experience to those who had found the first.³⁴

The printed versions of John Wesley's sermons preached between 1740 and 1745 and published in 1746 and 1748 were, therefore, primarily concerned with the new birth. The exceptions are three that he published immediately after their delivery, in 1741, 1742, and 1744: *Christian Perfection*, Charles Wesley's Oxford sermon, *Awake Thou That sleepest*, and John's last Oxford sermon, entitled *Scriptural Christianity*. The last one appeared in fifteen editions during Wesley's lifetime; but it was not explicit enough on the meaning of its text (Acts 4:31, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost") to satisfy later British and American advocates of that experience.³⁵ Even the poems on the work of the Holy Spirit, based on John 7:37-38 and chapters 14 through 17, published in 1745 in the two *brothers' Hymns . . . for the Promise of the Father*, were sufficiently devoted to the entire scheme of salvation as to raise few hackles; theologians, then as now, did not take hymns very seriously. The Wesleys did.³⁶ But in those early sermons on regeneration, Wesley repeatedly signaled his followers that he was entirely committed to the doctrine of entire sanctification. And he plainly told those seeking salvation by faith that much more grace lay ahead for them.³⁷ This strategy, however, accounts for what seems to modern holiness people the nagging lack of specifics about the second blessing in John Wesley's first two volumes of sermons, published in 1746 and 1748, as well as in such early tracts as *A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* and his famous letter to Dr. Littleton, the last part of which he issued in 1751 and several times later under the title *A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity*.³⁸

In pursuing this strategy, however, the Wesleys and their preachers developed great skill in inserting the doctrine of Christian holiness into every treatise, without defining it in great detail. When we understand and believe what the evidence tells us about the maturing of his convictions on the subject in 1739 and 40, Wesley's seemingly innocuous phrases that couple justification with heart purity in many different ways appear in their true light.³⁹ Wesley became increasingly confident that to declare that the God of love had given His children the two "great commandments" was to assure them that they might also receive by faith, through the Holy Spirit, that holiness of heart which was required to obey them. Moreover, he believed that if regenerate Christians everywhere were convinced that the Sermon on the Mount was the New Testament's version of the law, they would hunger and thirst after that righteousness and purity of heart which enabled them to see God. He preached early and late that by faith we establish the law; and the members of his societies, who understood "the whole Wesley," knew that faith to be the condition of both the hallowing experiences that Wesley taught.⁴⁰

Wesley was equally concerned to uphold the theological tradition of the Anglican divines of the previous century as well as that of the early church fathers. He had staked the public understanding of his doctrine that the Holy Spirit accomplishes our regeneration upon the homilies Archbishop Cranmer had long before composed for *The Book of Common Prayer*, and on Bishop John Pearson's seventeenth century volume on *The Creed*. These had expounded the Church of England's idea that salvation came by faith and that faith was the work of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of cleansing from the remains of inbred sin, however, added decisively to the Anglican creed

and brought to the forefront an obscure theological tradition.⁴¹ Here Whitefield had an advantage; for a gradual sanctification, never quite fully achieved in this life, could be harmonized with both Anglican and Puritan doctrine.

In his published writings, therefore, Wesley for many years emphasized progressive sanctification more than the moment of the Holy Spirit's cleansing, though he never failed to use language which enabled his followers to understand that he was contending for both the gradual and the instantaneous work of God's Spirit. In more private documents, however, as for example in the unpublished conference minutes of 1744 and 1747, in his correspondence not intended for publication, and in essays and correspondence circulated privately, he carefully explained the second moment of grace.⁴² scholars have been inattentive to this distinction. Some have concluded, with the great majority of Methodist theologians writing in the twentieth century, that Wesley taught only progressive, not instantaneous, sanctification.⁴³ They have been able to do that, however, only by neglecting Wesley's Oxford Sermons and many of those he published after 1760, and by ignoring the central teaching of his *Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* and his later *Thoughts on Christian Perfection*, abstracted in his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*.

Which brings us to another recently vexed question, that of whether Wesley believed that the first Christians were sanctified wholly at Pentecost, and whether he thought the use of the terms "baptized" or "filled" with the Holy Spirit, as distinct from "gift of the Holy Spirit," were a proper scriptural description of that experience. I must warn you at the outset that in my judgment the historical facts do not shed much light on recent arguments about this subject. The latter deal with whether the Methodist founder thought the apostles were born of the Spirit before Pentecost, which a few of Wesley's conflicting statements have allowed some of his modern followers to doubt.⁴⁴ And they raise questions about his views of both the secondness and the instantaneous aspect of perfection in love, matters on which Wesley appears not to have expressed any uncertainty after the fall of 1739.

Wesley's concerns, rather, stemmed from: (1) the necessity of his rethinking the relation of Pentecost to heart purity in the light of his realization that the blessings flowing from salvation by faith involved two moments of hallowing grace; (2) his determination after 1739 not to diminish in any way the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit begun in regeneration, which in the early months of the great revival of that year he had sometimes described as the baptism or filling with the Spirit; (3) his desire (especially strong after George Whitefield's return from America in February, 1741 to challenge Wesley's opposition to predestination and his teaching that believers may be cleansed from all sin) not to widen the public perception of a rift between him and other evangelical leaders; (4) his pastoral concern to make sure that his converts distinguished sharply the "extraordinary" gifts of the Spirit from the sanctifying fullness imparted to the 120 converts at Pentecost and promised to all believers there; and (5) his concern to keep righteousness pre-eminent, and so lift up to all believers the ethical meaning of full salvation.

Obviously, Wesley's perception in the fall of 1739 that Scripture taught a second moment of sanctifying grace required him to rethink the promises

of Pentecost. The result was clear in his and his *brother's Hymns . . . for the Promise of the Father* and in his Oxford sermon of 1744, *Scriptural Christianity*. The latter made being filled with the Holy Spirit both a promise to all believers and a second experience. To underline these two points, he chose the text from Acts 4:31, rather than Acts 2:4.45 This rethinking took place very early, however, as is evident from his brief explanation of the text about Pentecost in John 7:37-38 in his sermon *Christian Perfection*, in his use at the end of that sermon of the long poem (on "Ezekiel 36:25, etc.") entitled "The Promise of Sanctification," and in the questions he asked in his famous interview with Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf. He published the sermon the same month that the interview occurred, in September, 1741.⁴⁶ The latter, near its close, ran as follows

W[esley]: The apostles were justified before Christ's death, weren't they?

Z[inzendorf]: They were.

W. They were also more holy after the day of Pentecost than before Christ's death, weren't they?

Z. Not at all.

W. But, on that day, they were "filled with the Holy Spirit," weren't they?

Z. They were. But that particular gift of the Spirit had nothing to do with their holiness. It was merely the gift of miracles.

W. Perhaps I don't grasp your thought. Through self-denial, we die to the world more and more and so live to God more and more, don't we?

Z. We reject all "denials"; we despise them. As believers we do as we please and nothing else. We heap scorn on all "mortifications." No "purification" is prerequisite to love's perfection.⁴⁷

It is also evident in his use after 1739 of two pre-pentecostal testimonies to what Wesley said was the witness of the Spirit to saving faith — those of the Virgin Mary and of the Apostle Thomas.⁴⁸

Wesley's use of Pentecostal language came to a climax in his *Farther Appeal*, published in 1745. There he set forth at length the teaching of the Scriptures, the Church of England, and the post-apostolic fathers on the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing to believers both the assurance of salvation and the experience of sanctification.⁴⁹ In response to published criticism of his earlier statements about the baptism or fullness of the Spirit, he emphasized that

Christians now "receive," yea, are "filled with the Holy Ghost," in order to be filled with the fruits of that blessed Spirit. And he inspires into all true believers now, a degree of the same peace and joy and love which the apostles felt in themselves on that day when they were first "filled with the Holy Ghost."

Moreover, Wesley said, that experience was the fulfillment of the promise of John the Baptist, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."⁵⁰

In the second part of the *Farther Appeal*, published a few months later, Wesley declared that all Quakers should "not repent alone (for then you know

only the baptism of John) but believe, and be 'baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.' " He urged them to cry out for that baptism "till the love of God inflame your heart, and consume all your vile affections! Be not content with anything less than this." He also urged Roman Catholics to heed Thomas a Kempis's rules for holy living and their own Marquis de Renty's admonitions that they be "zealous of every good word and work," be "filled with the Holy Ghost and delivered from all unholy tempers," and so be "unblameable and unrebukable, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."⁵¹

Wesley stressed during the same period, however, the work and gift of the hallowing Spirit, as distinct from His fullness, in the experience of regeneration. His most persuasive passages on this subject appeared in the *same Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*. But of equal doctrinal significance are the sermons on regeneration that he preached between 1739 and 1745 and edited for publication in the early summer of the latter year. These sermons as well as his letters and the volumes of his Journal composed in those years constantly allude to the love of God being "shed abroad" in the hearts of persons born again, and to the process of sanctification that accompanied their quest for the experience of perfect love.⁵²

By this means, of course, Wesley participated fully in the sometimes fierce debate that all evangelicals carried on with those who accused them of "enthusiasm" because they taught that the Holy Spirit was still visiting humanity in modern times, bringing sinners to repentance and salvation through faith in Christ's atonement. Their opponents challenged the integrity of the entire awakening, whether Calvinist, Pietist, Wesleyan, or Quaker, and whether in Scotland or England, America or Britain. Wesley's leadership in this debate convinced most evangelicals that he was still ready to defend powerfully the truth they held in common.

His activity was a part of a larger effort to keep out of public view as much as he could the grievous rift between him and other evangelicals, especially that between him and Whitefield. The latter had not only become wedded to Calvinism but continued to use Pentecostal imagery to describe the new birth. In a reprinting of 1745, Whitefield changed the title of his oft published sermon, *The Marks of the New Birth*, to "Marks of Having Received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost."⁵³ Wesley labored to keep their disagreement as private as possible, and to keep its grounds as narrow as he could. He managed, in fact, to retain the friendship and admiration of Howell Harris throughout the critical years 1740-1743, even though Harris had always been a Calvinist and believed no more than Whitefield that God had promised to cleanse believers' hearts from all sin. But, like Wesley, Harris took seriously the biblical promises of growth in holiness; and he stressed as Wesley did, entire freedom from the *dominion* of inward sin, while Whitefield wavered on the point.⁵⁴ To speak of entire sanctification in Pentecostal terms, as Wesley had done in the early years but managed largely to avoid during the decade before he began using them again in his *Notes Upon the New Testament*, was to raise evangelical opposition that he wished to avoid.

Linked to all three of these concerns was a fourth: Wesley's desire to help his converts distinguish clearly between the "extraordinary" gifts of the Spirit associated with Pentecost — languages, miracles, healing, discernment — and His "ordinary" fruit, that is, the universally promised one of His

sanctifying graces.⁵⁵ This was no small task, for a popular tradition in both Catholic and Protestant theology had confused the ordinary with the extraordinary gifts and insisted that those extraordinary gifts (and hence all His gifts) had passed away with the apostolic generation. In the Age of Reason the opponents of "enthusiasm," as they called it, felt compelled to cling to this tradition.⁵⁶ By the 1730's only real enthusiasts testified to Pentecostal experiences. They included the French prophets scattered among England's Huguenot exiles, who caused Whitefield and Wesley great difficulties between 1739 and 1742, partly because Wesley refused offhand to judge their claims invalid.⁵⁷ He did not rule out God's occasional gifts of healing, miracles, and previously unknown human languages (the evidence is very skimpy on *glossalalia*, or "heavenly" languages). But he believed that preoccupation with these "extraordinary" gifts drew believers' attention away from the quest of holiness.⁵⁸

So Wesley almost eliminated his use of the dramatic phrase "baptism with the Holy Ghost," preferring instead the one the Apostles are recorded as having used after Pentecost, that is, "filled" with the Spirit.⁵⁹ And even for this one he preferred such synonymous phrases as "filled with love," or "filled with all the fullness of God."⁶⁰ These focused the hearer's attention upon what Wesley thought most important, and most endangered: the ethical meaning of the righteousness which must exceed that of scribes and Pharisees, of the perfection in love that flows from the faith that God's love, or faithfulness, inspires.

Of course, for trinitarian Christians to suggest that the Holy Spirit is not the One who first communicates divine love to believers and who thereafter presides over its progress and perfection in hallowing their hearts was and is, to say the least, a theological oddity.⁶¹ Hence Wesley always taught *both* regeneration *and* entire sanctification in a Pentecostal frame of reference. But in doing so he had to cope with popular misconceptions of it and with the spread of antinomianism among his evangelical associates. The latter raised to white heat the ethical issue by arguing, variously, that God had not promised *actually* to make us pure in heart, *fully* to restore corrupt nature in the divine image, *completely* to destroy the works of the devil, or to grant us a *perfect* faith that works in perfected love.

Using these and other similar terms, moreover, contributed directly to his overall objective — to preach righteousness, to help believers, and himself and his brother Charles, keep foremost that "holiness without which no man shall see God." He understood such holiness to reflect the character he ascribed to the Lord of both the Old and the New Testaments — a God of ethical love, expressed in faithfulness to lost humanity and especially to the poor and oppressed. When that love triumphed over all its enemies in our fallen natures, the result he usually called purity of heart, salvation from sin, Christian perfection, or full restoration to the image of God. His teaching of such a second blessing, his preaching of what was in fact Pentecostal holiness, was indeed the apogee of John Wesley's theology of love.⁶²

In the year 1757, several circumstances swept away most of Wesley's reticence about public preaching and testimony. Professor Albert Outler once suggested that opposition to sanctification in the conference of 1758, and more widely in the societies, was one of these circumstances. But the manuscript minutes of the conference of 1758, which are preserved in the

Methodist Archives and Research Center at the University of Manchester, give no evidence at all of any strain over the subject. The doctrinal questions and answers on sanctification were routine summaries of what had been the emphasis of Wesley's teaching to the societies during the previous eighteen years. The passages upon how much the "perfect" need the merits of Christ and upon their proneness to mistakes and errors (which were not morally acts of sin but were nevertheless transgressions of the perfect law of Christ) were precisely what Wesley had customarily said.⁶³

Rather, Wesley was swept along by the much larger number of his followers who now professed full salvation, thanks in part to his own energetic preaching during the preceding year. Among them was the self trained scholar and powerful Irish preacher, Thomas Walsh. Walsh died in 1757; much of his diary, chronicling his successful pursuit of the second blessing, was published in 1763.⁶⁴ Another factor was the spiritual lapse of other trusted followers, which persuaded Wesley that though living in the experience of perfect love was the way to final perseverance it was no guarantee of it. The sanctified believer's willingness to be faithful to God must be continually renewed. Wesley's sermons and counsels to band meetings produced hundreds of new testimonies to entire sanctification whose authenticity he could not doubt. Moreover, they came from both old and young believers. Those who professed holiness of heart became so numerous that near the end of the year 1762 he wrote in his *Journal*,

Many years ago my brother frequently said, "Your day of Pentecost is not fully come; but I doubt not it will: and you will then hear of persons sanctified, as frequently as you do now of persons justified." Any unprejudiced reader may observe that it was now fully come.⁶⁵

Reticence abandoned, Wesley included in his fourth volume of *Sermons on Several Subjects*, published in 1760, several which refined his earlier views on the stages of salvation, such as "The Wilderness Experience" and "Wandering Thoughts." And he included also his wonderful "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," digested later near the end of his *Plain Account*, containing a summary of questions raised and answers given at the two or three preceding Methodist conferences. In the "Thoughts" were many warm and scriptural statements about God's promise to perfect believers' hearts by filling them with pure love or, as Wesley occasionally said, by filling them with the Holy Ghost.⁶⁶

In the following decade, Wesley published individually several fine holiness sermons on texts which he had often expounded during the years 1758-1761. Among them were *Scripture Way of Salvation* (a second blessing update of the famous Aldersgate sermon which he had preached from the same text twenty-seven years before), *Sin in Believers*, and *The Repentance of Believers*. And he extended an olive branch to George Whitefield in a sermon published in 1765 on *The Lord Our Righteousness*, using both the subject and the text that Whitefield had long before employed to affirm his devotion to both imputed and imparted holiness.

Finally, Wesley issued his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* in 1765, gathering together materials both recent and well-nigh forgotten that he had published during the preceding twenty-five years. He wrote it to counter

the charge that the emphasis upon an instantaneous experience of perfect love was a new departure for him. He declared instead what I have concluded was factually correct: that he and his brother had taught this doctrine consistently since the publication of the preface to the hymnbook of 1740. For modern scholars to lift out a passage or two from that *Plain Account* which speak of progressive sanctification, and to combine them with Wesley's example comparing the gradual sanctification which precedes the experience of full salvation to a patient who is dying for a long time before he or she experiences the moment of actual death, is a strange use of the document.⁶⁷ And it is to hand over to George Whitefield and his Calvinistic allies the very argument by which Wesley established his difference from them. This is indeed a libel on the dead. And the historian's task, I think, whether he or she is dealing with religious ideas or political events, is to protect the dead from libel.

But the task of all true Wesleyans, I think, is more important — to promote that purity of heart and perfect love which flows from "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." In the face of the present questions I think Wesley would ask ones like this: If we truly love God, ought we not to love Him with all our hearts, and other persons as ourselves? Is not such love what Moses, Jesus, and Paul said were the two commandments that underlay all the rest? And are not God's commands implied promises that we will be enabled to keep them? God's promise to cleanse you "from all your filthiness and all your idols," to put His Spirit within you and cause you to keep His commandments, is, Wesley would say, one of a chain of Biblical promises that call us to perfect love.

NOTES

The dates assigned [in brackets] to sermons are drawn from my tentative efforts in "Chronological List of John Wesley's Sermons and Doctrinal Essays," *The Wesleyan Theological Journal*, 17 (Fall, 1982), 88-110.

Since the new, very expensive, and still incomplete Oxford and Bicentennial edition of John Wesley's Works is used for many citations below, I have placed in parentheses after many of these citations alternative ones from John Wesley, Works (14 vols., London, 1872; reprinted, Kansas City, Missouri, 1978), hereinafter designated WW.

1. Timothy L. Smith, "The Holy Spirit in the Hymns of the Wesleys," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (hereinafter, WTJ), 16, No. 2 (Fall, 1981): 28 and, generally, 29-31; Timothy L. Smith, "George Whitefield and Wesleyan Perfectionism," WTJ, 19, No. 1 (Spring, 1984): 70-2. Cf. John Wesley, Letters, II, 1740-1755, ed. Frank Baker, in John Wesley, Works (26 vols.; Oxford and Nashville, 1975-), XXVI. 31-3. 43.

2. See Smith, "Whitefield and Wesleyan Perfectionism," 68, for an argument I have extended a bit in my volume *George Whitefield and John Wesley on the New Birth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Company, 1986).

3. John Wesley, "Diary," printed parallel to his Journal, ed. Nehemiah

Curnock (8 vols.; London, 1909-1916), November 7 and 8, 1739, Wesley, Journal, November 17, 1739, echoed on August 10, 1740; and John Wesley, [sermon], Christian Perfection (London, 1741), in Albert C. Outler, John Wesley (A Library of Protestant Thought; New York, 1964), 254-71 (WW, VI, 1-22).

4. Wesley, Journal, January 9 and 15, March 5 and 28, April 14, May 5, June 1 and 24, and August 1, 1740; George Whitefield, Savannah, Georgia, March 26, 1740, to John Wesley, in George Whitefield, Letters . . . Written to His Most Intimate Friends, and Persons of Distinction . . . from the Year 1734 to 1770 . . . (3 vols.; London, 1772, a reprinting, from the same plates, of his Works, ed. John Gillies (6 vols., London, 1771), I, 155-7, (also in Wesley, Letters, II, 11).

5. John Wesley, extract of William Law, The Nature and Design of Christianity, Extracted from a Late Author (London, 1740, and many editions thereafter, including three in a German translation published between 1754 and 1757 by Christopher Sauer in Philadelphia). I have examined the original edition of this work, which is item No. 17 in Frank Baker, A Union Catalogue of the Publications of John and Charles Wesley (Durham, North Carolina, 1966) See, on progressive sanctification, John Wesley, The Appeals To Men of Reason and Religion and Certain Related Open Letters, ed. Gerald R. Cragg, in Wesley, Works, XI "Introduction," 21 and, generally, 19-23; and Outler's statement in Wesley, Sermons I, ed. Albert C. Outler, in Wesley, Works, I, 316, which interprets his sermon on Sin in Believers (London, 1763) as denying cleansing from all inward sin. This is surprising, for Wesley wrote the sermon in order to deny that such a cleansing took place before a believer experienced entire sanctification. Cf. John Bennett, "Minutes of the Conference of [June 25-29], 1744, in Outler, Wesley, 140-1; and [John Bennett] Minutes of the Conference of [June 15-18], 1747," the same, 168-9.

6. Wesley, Journal, June 7, 1738. Cf. the same, May 26 and 29, June 3 and 6-7, July 6 and 9, and October 14, 1738; and Outler, Wesley, 14-7.

7. John Wesley, Marienborn, July 7, O. S., 1738, and London, October 30, 1738, to Samuel Wesley, Letters II, Cf. John Wesley, [London], May 24, 1738, to John Gambold, [also in Wesley, Journal, May 24, 1738], the most trustworthy evidence of Wesley's state of mind on the day of the Aldersgate experience; John Wesley, Cologne, June 28, O.S., 1738, to Charles Wesley; John Wesley, Herrnhut, August 4, O.S., 1738, to James Hutton, all in Wesley, Letters II.

8. John Wesley, London, October 14-20, 1738, to The Church at Herrnhut, Letters II; John Wesley, "Salvation by Faith" [June 11, 1738], Sermons I, 122-5 (WW, V, 10-1).

9. John Wesley, "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption," in Wesley, Sermons I, 259-63 (WW, V, 104-8); John Wesley, Bristol, April 30, 1739, to James Hutton and the Fetter Lane Society, John Wesley, Letters I, 1721-1739, ed. Frank Baker, in Wesley, Works, I, 639, mentions the first use [on Wednesday, April 25] I have found of this text from Romans 8:15. What amounts to a testimony to his satisfaction with his own regeneration is in John Wesley [London, July 25, 1739], to Dr. Henry Stebbing, Wesley, Letters I. See

also defenses of his converts in two letters: John Wesley, Bristol, May 10 and October 27, 1739, to Samuel Wesley, in Wesley, Letters I.

10. John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (London, 1767), revised as of 1777 in WW, X, 379-80; and, on the possibility of falling [extracted from his *Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection* (London, 1762)], the same 422-4, 426, and 442.

11. Wesley, *Plain Account*, 370, 373, 381-3, 391, 393. Cf. Wesley, *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion in The Appeals*, 66-68 (sec. 55-6).

12. John Wesley, Oxford, November 17, 1738, to Benjamin Ingham and James Hutton, Letters I; George Whitefield, *Journals*, ed. Arnold Dallimore (London, 1960), April 21, 22, and 25, 1739; and Wesley, *Journal*, November 1, 4, and 7-10, and December 13, 19, and 31, 1739.

13. Wesley, *Journal*, November 1-9, 1739.

14. Baker, *Union Catalogue*, entry No. 18, discusses John Wesley, *An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal*, from February 1, 1737-38 to His Return from Germany (London, 1740), the preface of which Wesley dated September 29, 1740. I have examined a copy of the second printing (Bristol. 1740) at the Methodist "new rooms" in Bristol.

15. Wesley *Journal*, July 9 and August 4-5, 1738.

16. The same, summary following his entries for August 9-10, 1738.

17. The same, August 12, 1738; Wesley, *Plain Account*, 369.

18. John Wesley, [London], August [5-8], 1740, "to the Church of God at Herrnhut," Wesley, Letters II, 25.

19. The same, 27. Wesley, *Journal*, entries for December 31, 1739, and April 25 and 30, 1740, record decisive conversations with Molthier and Wesley's reaction to them.

20. Wesley, *Journal*, September 3, 1741, records in Latin his long conversation about holiness with Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, translated in Outler, Wesley, 367-372, where, p. 370, Wesley comments that theirs was "a squabble about words."

21. Wesley, "to the Church of God at Herrnhut," 30.

22. For example, in John Wesley, "The First-fruits of the Spirit" [June 25, 1745], in *Sermons I*, 239-40, 244-46 (WW, V, 91-2, 95-7). John Wesley, *An Extract of the Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Halyburton* (London, 1741), "Preface," in WW, XIV, 211-4, is dated London, February 9, 1739, and so may be slightly revised from the 1739 edition; it strongly affirmed Halyburton's experience and teaching of regeneration. But in the preface of the 1741 edition, Wesley declared, p. 212, that the Bible promises "entire freedom from sin, in its proper sense" as well as freedom "from committing sin." Cf. Smith, "Whitefield and Wesleyan Perfectionism," 63-7, 69.

23. Wesley, *Sermons I*, 466-591 (WW, V, 247-432), contains the first six

of the thirteen discourses, the last one of which concludes, pp. 589-91, with a long poem from John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London, 1742). In Wesley, *Sermons* I, 467, Outler said that he "preached more than one hundred sermons from separate texts" in Jesus' sermon between 1739 and 1746 but no series on the whole of it. Wesley, however, told James Hutton and the Fetter Lane Society about the series he preached at Bristol in April, 1739 (Wesley, *Letters* II, 619-41, *passim*); he delivered a second series there the following July 21-27 (described in Wesley, *Journal*, July 21, 23, and October 9, 1739), and yet a third at London the next year (Wesley, *Journal*, September 22 and 28, 1740). Other references to his preaching holiness from the Beatitudes are in Wesley, *Journal*, September 17 and October 19, 1739.

24. Wesley, *Journal*, September 13 and October 1,3,9,10,15, and 19,1739, indicates that throughout the early fall of that year he was explaining sanctification in sermons before the public or in society meetings, often expounding one of his life-long favorite texts, I Corinthians 1:30, which declares that Christ is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

25. Wesley, *Christian Perfection*, 262-3 (II, 12). See also, the same, 260-71 (II,21-30); and John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (London, 1755, and many later editions), comment upon Acts 1:8.

26. Wesley, *Plain Account*, 380,387, 402, 423, 430; John Wesley, sermon, "The Means of Grace" [May-August, 1746], *Sermons* I, 378, 381-2.

27. See above, note 5; Whitefield, *Letters*, 67; Jonathan Edwards, *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (Boston,1743), in Edwards, *Works*, IX, *The Great Awakening . . .*, ed. C. C. Goen (New Haven, Connecticut, 1972), 118; and Howell Harris, Trevecka, July 16, 1740, to John Wesley, in Wesley, *Letters* II.

28. John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London, 1742), described at length in Smith, "The Holy Spirit in the Hymns of the Wesleys," 32-7; and Wesley, *Plain Account*, 374, on Bishop Edmond Gibson's approval of *Christian Perfection*, not yet verified by any other source.

29. Baker, *Union Catalogue*, entries No. 33 and 34; below, pp. 246-7; and Wesley, *Earnest Appeal*, 66-68 (55-56, 98).

30. George Whitefield, *Nine Sermons . . .* [the remainder of the long title names each sermon] (Edinburgh, 1742), *passim*. Whitefield's preface indicates they had been preached in America and written down aboard ship on the journey home, January and February,1741. The Christian's Amusement I have not seen, but I have examined *The Weekly History*. Frank Baker *Union Catalogue*, item No. 14a, gives a publication history of the earlier segments of Whitefield's *Journals*.

31. Wesley, *Journal*, April 7-12, 1740, and October 15-17, 1741, describes two visits with Harris in Wales; John Wesley, London, August 6, 1742, to Howell Harris, in Wesley, *Letters* II, deals with Christian perfection and appeals to the text of Wesley's sermon, "A Catholic Spirit." Howell Harris,

letters of January and February, 1740, "To a Friend," No. 188, 214, 212, 226, and 228 in the ms. Trevecka Letters at the National Library of Wales, record that controversy and courtship.

32. William Fleetwood, *The Perfectionists Examin'd, or Inherent Perfection in This Life No Scripture Doctrine, To Which Is Affix'd The Rev. Mr. Whitefield's Thoughts on This Subject, in a Letter to Mr. Wesley* (London, 1741); Wesley, *Farther Appeal*, 172-173.

33. Wesley, *Letters II*, n.13, by Frank Baker, attached to John Gambold, [Oxford, April 15, 1740] to John Wesley; John Wesley [Bristol], November 14, 1741, to James Hutton, the same. Wesley's refutation appeared, among many other places, in his sermon *On Sin in Believers* (London, 1763), in his *Sermons I*, 324-332 (III, 9-10, IV, 1-13), with specific reference to Count Zinzendorf's view. Cf. John Bennett, "Minutes of the Conference of [June 25-29,] 1744," in Outler, Wesley, 140.

34. John Bennett, "Minutes of the Conference of [August 1-3,] 1745," in Outler, Wesley, 150-1.

35. John Wesley, *Scriptural Christianity* (London, 1744), in Wesley, *Sermons I*, 159-60, 165, 172-5 (WW, V, 41-2, 47-9). Its teaching of a second experience is echoed in the poem "Primitive Christianity," first printed that year and always thereafter at the end of Wesley's *Earnest Appeal*.

36. See my edition of them in *The Pentecost Hymns of John and Charles Wesley* (Kansas City, Missouri, 1981), 18-9, 26-68, 77-8. Cf. Albert Outler's comments on the modern misunderstandings that flow from Wesley's veiling sophisticated theological knowledge behind plain prose, in the introduction to Wesley, *Sermons I*. 67-8.

37. See, in Wesley, *Sermons I*: "Marks of the New Birth" [April 3, 1741], 430 (WW, V, 222); *The Almost Christian* (London, 1742), 139 (WW, V, 23); "The Way to the Kingdom" [June 6, 1742], 231-2 (WW, V, 86); "Justification by Faith" [October 6, 1739], 184, 187 (WW, V, 54, 58); "The First-fruits of the Spirit" [June 25, 1745], 236-7, 247 (WW, V, 88-9, 97); "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption" [November 14, 1739], 262-3, 266 (WW, V, 108, 111); and "The Witness of the Spirit, I" [May-August, 1746], 283-4 (WW, V, 122-3).

38. John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity* (Dublin, 1753, and many later editions) in Outler, Wesley, 183-96 (WW, X, 38-54), containing publication details in the introduction, pp. 182-3.

39. The same, 188-9, 193; Wesley, "The Marks of the New Birth" [April 3, 1741], *Sermons I*, 427-8 (WW, V, 220-1); John Wesley, "The Law Established by Faith," *Discourse I*" [June 27, 1741], (WW, V, 453-4); Wesley, "Sings of the Times," (WW, VI, 312).

40. Wesley, *Journal*, June 27, 1741, records what I believe is his first preaching of "The Law Established Through Faith," published in 1750 as the first of two discourses on that subject. His "preface" to *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1740), WW, XIV, 323-7, is his first statement on faith as the condition of

entire Sanctification. Cf. Wesley, *Genuine Christianity*, 189; John Wesley, *Scripture Way of Salvation* (London, 1765), in Outler, Wesley, 275-8, 281-2 (WW, VI, 46-7, 52-4).

41. Wesley's extracts of two crucial homilies are accessible in Outler, Wesley, 123-33, and the editor's introductory comments about them remain invaluable. See also Wesley's long quotation from John Pearson in John Wesley, *A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* (London 1745), in *The Appeals*. 163-66 (WW, VIII, 99-101). Albert Outler's brief description, in the introduction to Wesley, *Sermons I*, 84-5, of the obscure background and the essential novelty of Wesley's idea of " 'being perfected in love' in this life" is a major contribution to Wesleyan studies.

42. In addition to the Conference Minutes of 1744, 1745, and 1747, which were of course widely but privately circulated, he seems also to have circulated small segments of his *Journal*, probably extensively revised later; see Frank Baker's comment in Wesley, *Letters II*, 11n and 482.

Examples of his later correspondence dealing with entire sanctification as an instantaneous experience are scattered through John Wesley, *Letters . . .*, John Telford, ed. (7 vols.; London, 1931), V-VI [for the 1760's and 1770's], especially London, December 14, 1770, to Mrs. Deptford; Chester, March 17, 1771, to Mary Stokes; London, January 26, 1773, to [Mrs. Pywell?]; [London], November 20, 1775, to John Falton. See also the long series on the subject to Miss Furley [June 14, 1757 - December 15, 1763], in Wesley, WW, XII, 194-208, and to Hester Ann Rogers [May 3, 1776 - February 3, 1789], the same, XIII, 75-86.

43. In addition to Cragg and Outler, mentioned above in note 4, see the following: George Croft Cell, *The Rediscovery of John Wesley* (New York, 1935); and Richard Heitzenrater, *The Elusive Mr. Wesley: John Wesley His Own Biographer* (Nashville, 1984), 151-2. J. Kenneth Grider, *Entire Sanctification. The Distinctive Doctrine of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City, Missouri, 1980), 91, 97-98, deprecates Wesley for his emphasis on gradual sanctification and praises the nineteenth-century holiness movement for correcting him! The exceptions include Harald G. A. Lindstrom, *Wesley and Sanctification: A Study in the Doctrine of Salvation* (London, 1946; rpt. Wilmore, Kentucky, 1980), 117-8, 121, 133-4; Colin Williams, *John Wesley's Theology Today* (London, 1962, rpt., 1969), 183-7; Thomas A. Langford, *Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville, 1983), 42; Laurence W. Wood, *Pentecostal Grace* (Wilmore, Kentucky, 1980), 19-35, and *passim*; and Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *The Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City, 1972), 356-62. All balance the moment with the process of sanctification.

44. Grider, *Entire Sanctification*, 59-60, 62, 81; Herbert A. McGonigle, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," *WTJ*, 8 (Spring, 1973) 61-2; Alex R. G. Deasley, "Entire Sanctification and the Baptism with the Holy Spirit: Perspectives on the Biblical View of the Relationship," the same 14, No. 1 (Spring, 1979): 27-8; Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, "Theological Roots of Wesleyanism's Understanding of the Holy Spirit," the same, 86, 94-5;

and Donald W. Dayton, "The Doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Its Emergence and Significance," the same, 13 (Spring, 1978): 116.

45. Above, 13; Wesley, *Scriptural Christianity*, 159-160, 165 (WW, V, 39-41). See also John Wesley, preface to *The Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers* . . . (London, 1744, in WW, XIV, 222; Wesley, "The First-fruits of the Spirit," 237 (WW, V, 79); Wesley, "The Great Privilege of Those that Are Born of God" [September 23, 1739], in *Sermons I*, 440 (WW, V, 231); and the poem "Primitive Christianity" printed at the end of all editions of Wesley, *Earnest Appeal*, stanzas 1, 13-14, 15-16, 20-21.

46. Wesley, *Christian Perfection*, 262, was echoed four years later in *Farther Appeal*, 142 (WW, VIII, 80-1). The poem appeared in all the standard publications of the sermon before the twentieth century; see WW, VI, 20-2. Cf. Baker, *Union Catalogue*, entry No. 29.

47. Wesley, *Journal*, September 3, 1741, is translated in Outler, Wesley, 37172. Certain passages, but not the one quoted here, appeared also in John Wesley, *Dialogue Between an Antinomian and His Friend* (London, 1745), in WW, X, 266-76.

48. Examples, which could be multiplied by a score, are in Wesley, *Scriptural Christianity*, 162 (WW, V, 38), and Wesley, *Farther Appeal*, 171 (WW, VIII, 106), [Mary's words]; Wesley, "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption," 261 (WW, V, 106) and Wesley, *Earnest Appeal*, 69 (WW, VIII, 24), [Thomas's]. Cf., in *Earnest Appeal*, 69, 73 (WW, VIII, 24, 27), his use of the testimony of Job and of the assurance Jesus gave to the woman taken in adultery. Note also Wesley's confidence that the Patriarchs were born of God's Spirit: "The Great Privilege of Those that Are Born of God," 436-7 (WW, V, 228).

49. Wesley, *Farther Appeal*, 107-8, 142-6, 155-6, 164-5, and 166-70 (WW, VIII, 49, 76-83, 92-3, 98-105).

50. The same, 142, 172, (V, 4, 28).

51. The same, 253, 261, (Part II, III, 4, 12).

52. Wesley, *Farther Appeal*, 146-52, 156-60, 170-1 (WW, VIII, 83-9, 93-7, 1057); Wesley, "Spirit of Bondage and Adoption," 260-263 (WW, V, 106-8); John Wesley, "The Witness of the Spirit, I" [May-August, 1745] in *Sermons I*, 264-6, 270-2, 279 (I, 1-3, 7-12; II, 6); John Wesley, "The Marks of the New Birth" [April 3, 1741], in *Sermons I*, 425-6 (III, 1-3); and Wesley, "The Great Privilege of Those that Are Born of God," 432, 434-5, 442 (I, 1, 8; III, 2). Cf. Wesley, *Earnest Appeal*, 51-3 (Par. 20-23).

53. George Whitefield, *Twenty-three Sermons on Various Subjects* (new ed.: revised and corrected by the author: London, 1745), 203-19. See also Whitefield's sermon on "Saul's Conversion," in his *Nine Sermons*, 96-8. It was reprinted in *Twenty-three Sermons* and in many other places. And see George Whitefield, London, December 21, 1742, to John Wesley, in Wesley, *Letters II*, 97-8, for evidence of Wesley's (and Whitefield's) efforts.

54. Howell Harris, Trevecka, July 16, 1740, to John Wesley in Wesley,

Letters II; [Howell, Harris], *Brief Account of the Life of Howell Harris, Esq., Extracted from Papers Written By Himself To Which Is Added a Concise Collection of his Letters . . .* (Trevecka, 1791), 40-46, including such letters as Howell Harris, January 30, 1741, to a "dear Friend," 126-27, saying "I am worse than any worm, for they don't sin, but I do"; and Howell Harris, Rhas Tywarch, December [?] 1740, to Mr. M Llwyngwarven, 123-4 and Howell Harris, Little Summerford, to "Mr. A ," 139. See also, the same, 114-7; and, generally, Geoffrey Nuttall, *Howell Harris, 1714-1773: The Last Enthusiast* (Cardiff, 1965). John Jacobs, [n.p., n.d.], 1740, to [Howell Harris] in ms. Trevecka Letters, No. 2791, The National Library of Wales, describes the writer's disillusionment with Wesley's perfectionism thus: "I hereby was led to build up a perfection in my own strength and to not looking . . . to [the] Outward Imparted Righteousness of our dear and loving Saviour." He decided to return to Harris' fold after Whitefield's sermon on "Christ our Righteousness, Wisdom, Sanctification, and Redemption" [Whitefield, *Nine Sermons*, 117-381 convinced him of the eternal election of true believers.

55. Wesley, *Scriptural Christianity*, 160-61 (Intro.5), gave a glimpse of the much longer argument Wesley prepared the next year in *Farther Appeal*, 141-166 (WW, VIII, 78-101), in response to Richard Smalbrooke, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry.

56. Wesley, *Farther Appeal*, 139-142 (WW, VIII, 78-81); John Wesley, *A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Conyers Middleton Occasioned by his Late "Free Inquiry"* (London, 1749), in WW, X, 5, 12, 13-4, 16-29, and here and there on pp. 38-54.

57. Wesley, *Journal*, January 28 and June 22, 1739. Cf., generally, Hillel Schwartz, *The French Prophets: The History of a Millenarian Group in Eighteenth-Century England* (Berkeley, California, 1980).

58. Wesley, *Letter to . . . Conyers Middleton*, 54-6; John Wesley, "The More Excellent Way" [sermon from I Cor. 12:31, composed in 1787], WW, VII, 26-8; Wesley, *A Farther Appeal*, 163-70 (WW, VIII, 99-109). On his eventual flat rejection of glossolalia, see John Wesley, *A Letter to the Right Reverend [William Warburton] the Lord Bishop of Gloucester* (London, 1763) in Wesley, *The Appeals*, 503 (WW, IX, 149).

59. Exceptions are many. One, noted earlier, is Wesley, *Farther Appeal*, 142, 165 (WW, VIII, 78-80, 99-101, the second quoting Bishop John Pearson). Another was Charles Wesley's tender usage of the phrase in a letter to his bride-to-be, Holyhead, August 12, 1748, quoted in Frank Baker, *Charles Wesley, As Revealed By His Letters* (London, 1948), 57, in which he wrote "Both you and I have still a baptism to be baptized with; and how should we be straitened till it is accomplished! This, this is the one thing needful-not a Friend-not health-not life itself, but the pure perfect love of Christ Jesus. Oh give me love, or else I die!"

60. John Wesley, "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," in his fourth volume of *Sermons on Various Occasions* (London, 1760), 246, 260, 264 (Questions 6, 27, 31) [also, in Wesley's final and edited version of 1787, in Outler,

Wesley, 283-98]. This work, severely abridged, became a long section of *The Plain Account*. Its use of these favored terms builds upon a lifelong succession; see above, 139, and Wesley, *Farther Appeal*, 128 (WW, VIII, 66).

61. Timothy L. Smith, "Holy Spirit and Holy Scripture," *The Asbury Seminarian*, 37 (Summer, 1984), 30-45, summarized the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the light of modern Biblical scholarship and Wesleyan evangelical thought.

62. Wesley, *Plain Account of Genuine Christianity*, 184-5, 187. Cf. Albert Outler's comments on the centrality of pneumatology in Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection in his introduction to Wesley, *Sermons I*, 74-6, 80-5, especially his stress upon Wesley's understanding of the distinction between indwelling and possession.

63. John Wesley, ms. minutes of the conference of Methodist ministers, August 12-16, 1758, Methodist Archives and Research Center, John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester.

64. Thomas Walsh, *The Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Walsh*. Composed in Great Part from the Accounts Left By Himself . . . James Morgan, comp. (n. p., n. d., but the compiler's preface is dated July, 1762 and John Wesley's prefatory note, January 20, 1763; rpt. London, 1866), 242-3; and remarks on Walsh's mastery of the Hebrew and Greek texts of Scripture in John Wesley, "On Charity," dated 1784, in WW, VIII, 54. Walsh's *Life* was reprinted in Philadelphia in 1792.

65. Wesley, *Journal*, October 28, 1762.

66. See above, note 60; cf. John Wesley, London, December 28, 1770, to Joseph Benson, and John Wesley, Chester, March 16, 1771, to Joseph Benson, in Wesley, *Letters*, V, 214-5, 228-9.

67. Wesley, "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," 260-1 (Questions 26-28), contains the original statement on which the passage in *Plain Account* is based; its whole import is to state and explain how entire sanctification is an instantaneous experience.

THE TRAJECTORY OF WESLEYAN THEOLOGY

by

R. Larry Shelton

Introduction:

One of the most exciting developments in contemporary ecclesiology, at least for Wesleyans, is a desire to "come home to Wesley," as some describe it. There is an increasing appreciation of the contributions of Wesley to the vitality of the entire tradition of the Christian Church. The implications of his life and ministry are being drawn out in the works of numerous scholars from various perspectives.¹ There is not universal agreement about how he influences contemporary thought, but diverse tributaries of interpretation are bringing new directions in areas as varied as spiritual formation and liberation theology. Our purpose in this address is to suggest some directions, a "trajectory," if you will, for the development of Wesleyan theology. Because of the diversity in the tradition called "Wesleyan," I would suggest that these directions might be most relevant within the context of those who are self-consciously and directly developing the principles of Wesley's thought and who are attempting to interpret the Wesleyan spirit for the present culture.

The concept of "trajectory" is defined as "a path, progression, or line of development" (Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary*). When a trajectory is plotted, however, as in the programmed path of a satellite, it is no single vectored line, but instead is a complex and interwoven matrix of ideas and directions and forces which work together to form a pattern of movement. In like manner, the trajectory which I would suggest will involve a diversity of component factors which are analogous, perhaps, to the unity, yet diversity, of movement of the solar system. Furthermore, the intent is not to be exhaustive, but suggestive, in the delineation of the trajectory in which those Wesleyan theologians, particularly those who consider themselves evangelicals, might move most advantageously. The goal of such a trajectory would certainly be soteriological and practical. It would be Scriptural and reasonable. It would be relevant to the most critical issues being faced by our culture, for, as Langford notes, "Theology, for John Wesley, was intended to transform life."² Such a trajectory would also involve innovative,

as well as traditional approaches, if it is to be truly Wesleyan. In factoring such a trajectory, several issues need to be addressed.

I. We need a clarification of the distinctive categories and attitudes of Wesleyan theology.

We must continue to insist that our heritage is drawn from the 39 Articles, not Channel 39. The pressure of the categories of various subcultures and schools of thought threatens to erode the uniqueness of the Wesleyan spirit. A kind of liberalism which ignores the primacy of Scriptural authority for Wesley, and a kind of fundamentalism which seeks to intrude theological categories which are antithetical to Wesley's are equally insidious in deflecting the trajectory of authentic Wesleyanism. Several issues need continued development:

A. Theological method: In the present discussions of Wesley's theological method, the so-called "Wesleyan Quadrilateral" has often been presented as the description of his approach to theological issues. While it is certainly true that he utilized Scripture, reason, experience, and tradition as factors in his doctrinal development, it is not always clear in discussions of the quadrilateral that Scripture is the final and only absolute criterion of theological authority for him, nor is the focus and function of the Holy Spirit as the context of his theological method usually recognized adequately. There is a tendency to flatten these four aspects of analysis into a series of coordinate authorities. This is to misread Wesley. His approach to theology has some similarities to that of Luther, and the *sola scriptura* watchword in Luther is virtually the equivalent of Wesley's *homo unius libri* emphasis.³ Luther's distinctive emphasis was not that he asserted the authority of the Scripture, for all the Fathers and Scholastics did that, but he denied "the authority of popes and councils as exclusive and final arbiters of interpretation." He denied subjectivity as it appeared in Karlstadt and his followers. He denied reason as it was represented in Aristotle. For him, Scripture was the only authority left as a reliable and irrefutable source of Christian faith.⁴ *Sola scriptura* was not a wooden literalism, however, but a hermeneutical system which called upon the best that scholarship and tradition could produce to interpret the theological meaning of Scripture accurately. It also emphasized the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit as a basis for trust in the authority of Scripture.

Similarly, Calvin did not base the authority of Scripture on reason, authority of the Church, nor subjective experience, but on the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit which attests to the divine authorship. The Scriptures are thus self authenticating for him, and the attempt by Reformed scholars to show that rational arguments for Calvin work coordinately with the Holy Spirit to authenticate Scripture finds inadequate support in the primary sources.⁵

Although his theological applications to practical divinity move in directions significantly different from those of Luther or Calvin, Wesley's concepts of Biblical inspiration and authority and his methods of interpretation rest firmly in the mainstream of orthodox hermeneutics. His theological heritage involves Anglican and Puritan roots with a healthy amount of Patristic and Reformation theology.⁶ His cautious approach to Aristotle and the Scholastics would suggest that he would not sympathize with theological

methods which were heavily influenced by them, as in post Reformation neo-scholasticism.

As in Luther and Calvin, the primary basis for the authority of Scripture for Wesley was the authenticating work of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*, the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. Colin Williams says, "He is also at one with Luther and Calvin in relating the authority of Scripture to experience by the living witness of the Holy Spirit,"⁷ and Franz Hildebrandt notes that "Wesley takes his stand with the Classical Protestant view of authority in exalting the Scriptures as the final authority in matters of faith and practice."⁸ The Westminster Confession of 1647 reflected the prevailing thought on the *testimonium* issue at the time, and its emphasis is consistent with Wesley's:

We may be moved and induced by the Church to a high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture.... Yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.⁹

Thus, we would conclude that Scripture is the final authority in faith and practice for Wesley, and that those who interpret Scripture as being only a coordinate authority for him are creatively dealing with the evidence. Also, the fundamentalist tendency to supplement the authority of Scripture with neo-Scholastic methods also subverts the Wesleyan and classical Reformed positions that the Scriptures are self authenticating, and it is the Holy Spirit in the experience of the entire Body of Christ which witnesses to the authority of Scripture as He reliably shows the way of salvation to successive generations. Any foundation for Biblical authority which ignores the concept of the internal testimony is not authentically Wesleyan. The relevance of this classical emphasis needs to be recovered and more fully applied in the face of the prevailing trends which base authority either on rational syllogism or upon issues other than Scripture. *Sola scriptura*, rightly understood, has relevance when it is understood in its historical context without the overlays of some more recent distortions.¹⁰

Thomas Langford has effectively shown the integral work of the Holy Spirit in Wesley's use of Scripture. While Wesley sought the best resources available to aid him in his exposition, he did not assume that the text was self interpreting. Its relation to tradition, reason, and experience must be analyzed. Also, while individual interpretation must be encouraged, it remains subject to the correction and enhancement by the entire Christian community. Langford says of Wesley's approach:

Underlying all valid interpretations of Scripture is the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The internal witness of the Holy Spirit is the foundation upon which the authority of the Bible is built.... Adequate exposition always requires the internal witness of the Holy Spirit, and this emphasis has prevented bibliolatry.... This understanding of Biblical authority has kept the variety of interpretations, which has expanded over more than two centuries, open to change, new understandings, and fresh expressions of its authoritative norm.¹¹

Such an involvement of the Spirit in the process of interpreting Scripture allows the Church to see the abiding relevance of Scripture in each generation, and prevents the welding of the Biblical message to the cultural spirit of any particular age.

With this caution in mind, it is important to emphasize the role of reason, experience, and tradition in Wesley's method. His blending of these elements in working out a "practical divinity," to use Langford's title, is the genius of his work as a theological model, and may provide the most fruitful model for theological method to enable the Church to address the needs of a diverse world culture today, as Abraham points out.¹²

With regard to reason, Wesleyans have never been as negative toward it nor as exclusively dependent upon it as some segments of the Lutheran and Reformed traditions. This probably is because of the differing views of depravity. Wesley used reason as a gift from God, a part of His image. To the mystics, he stressed its importance for the understanding the Word of God. To the rationalists, he stressed that reason did not produce revelation. But his opinion that "irrational religion is a false religion" reflected a realistic appraisal of its appropriateness in theological reflection.¹³

Experience, for Wesley, was a means of actualizing one's relationship with God. It is a context for interpreting the Word of God, and these interpretations are always guided by the Holy Spirit. Experience is never an end in itself, and is never a source of faith. Wesley disapproved of the Quaker use of experience, even though it was understood as the perception of the Spirit, because it tended to place the authority of the Scripture in a subordinate role. Experience was not intended to replace the authority of Scripture, but to confirm it and explicate it.¹⁴

Tradition was important for Wesley because it provided a context for interpretation in the past. In order to interpret Scripture adequately, he says that the original languages must be studied in addition to "a knowledge of profane history, ancient customs, natural philosophy, geometry, *and the writings of the Church Fathers* (italics mine)."¹⁵ He uses the principle of the "analogy of faith" in comparing his interpretations with those of others in the history of Biblical interpretation. It was on this basis of the analogy of faith and of Scripture that he criticized the Roman Catholic Church for adding doctrines such as transubstantiation and purgatory which could not be found in the Scriptures, or ancient tradition.¹⁶

Thus, Wesley's quadrilateral is a means of interpreting the theological content of Scripture in the context of the total heritage of the Christian Church, if he is understood to make the Holy Spirit active in the work of the theologian and in the experience of the Church. Furthermore, he sees the purpose of Scripture to be soteriological. The reason for its existence is to communicate the message of salvation. When he wants to know "one thing the way to heaven," he asks for the Bible. Wesley is concerned with praxis, how theology works. His trajectory throughout his entire theological method is directed toward showing how the means of grace are appropriated to provide information for salvation and Christian living.¹⁷ To this purpose, Scripture, reason, experience, tradition-all are directed. If theology does not succeed in plotting a trajectory, it has failed.

To be Wesleyan, then, theological method must utilize Scripture and all other available resources to plot a trajectory which leads the Church toward

this goal of salvation. Since the parish in which this is to be done is the world, Wesleyan theology must utilize even contemporary traditions, such as those of the Third World, as means of understanding what Christ is saying to the churches through the Scripture today. Scripture is used by the Spirit to speak to the diverse experiences of a variety of social and cultural contexts. How may the categories and attitudes of Wesleyan theology be addressed to those contexts today? That is the key to our trajectory.

B. We need a clear self-identity as Wesleyans. The roots of Wesleyan theology in the Anglo-Catholic tradition provide an anti-schismatic emphasis which is being seriously attenuated by the aggressiveness of the fundamentalist emphasis which is finding its way into American Wesleyanism in the holiness tradition. The true character of Wesleyanism is concerned more with practical divinity than with theological hair splitting with its resultant schismatic character. While Wesley would not separate from the Church of England, he did separate from the Fetter Lane Society. Even this separation occurred, however, only after many attempts at reconciliation and only after he was certain that the form of sacramental antinomianism being advanced by the Moravians was contrary to Scripture and detrimental to the salvation of those involved.¹⁸ His attitude was not censorious, but conciliatory.

Unfortunately, the mood in evangelicalism today is being darkened by the efforts of some vocal fundamentalists to disenfranchise those whose theological positions differ from theirs ever so slightly. Perhaps the most visible of this lot is Franky Schaeffer, whose strident name calling has transcended not only the bounds of propriety, but frequently those of fellowship, as well. In *his Bad News for Modern Man*, as well as in numerous other contexts, he calls those with whom he disagrees evangelical "wimps," or "jellyfish." These targets include Richard Halverson, Ron Sider, Wheaton College, *Christianity Today*, *Inter-Varsity*, and many more. Such tactics result only in dissension and seem to be motivated by a desire to exalt one's opinion at the expense of the Body of Christ. Furthermore, the positions he attacks in disagreeing with some of these persons are difficult to differentiate from his own. One is reminded of Juan Carlos Ortiz' application of the encounter of Solomon with the two women who claimed to be mother of the baby. The true mother gave up the child rather than have it slain. Ortiz says, those who truly love the Church will do anything they can to keep from tearing it up. Few issues are worth mutilating the Body of Christ.¹⁹

Even more distressing are the more subtle media personalities who aggressively advocate schism from those who are less conservative or who reflect different political viewpoints. More distressing still are those Wesleyan pastors and theologians who would advocate schism, belligerency, restrictive and fundamentalist theological categories, and *ad hominem* argumentation in a style lifted out of the pages of fundamentalist, non Wesleyan rhetoric. Wesley's understanding of the Church and the nature of love should be a counteraction against an easy tendency to schism. He continually argued against Asbury and others who rejected the Church of England as an apostate church.²⁰ Catholic love is a counter force to schism among those who are truly the children of God.²¹ The schismatic mood of fundamentalism is alien to the catholic spirit of Wesleyanism. The trajectory

of Wesleyan theology needs to factor in these divisive factors and their impact on the Church. The full weight of Wesleyan scholarship needs to be brought to bear on clarifying the course of authentic Wesleyanism through the confusing terrain of a militant fundamentalistic spirit. The goal should be to define the Church Biblically and historically to a generation of Wesleyan churches and laity who hear only the version of the fundamentalist media blitz. Volume IV of *Wesleyan Theological Perspectives*, entitled *The Church*, is a valuable contribution to the need for clarification in this area. But this kind of material must be targeted to the respective denominational and local church contexts so that Wesleyanism may remain a distinctly diverse and yet theologically sound organism.

David Cubie's chapter in *The Church*, edited by Melvin Dieter and Daniel Berg, presents a thorough analysis of the issue of separation. Entitled "Separation or Unity? Sanctification and Love in Wesley's Doctrine of the Church," the chapter examines Wesley's application of sanctification to the issue of separation or union among persons and groups of diverse views in the Church.²² In contrast to some of his followers, Wesley did not define holiness as predominantly separation. His principle of "catholic love" binds together those of different opinion and modes of worship. His well known words in his sermon, "On Having a Catholic Spirit," reflect his attitude:

17. Is thy heart right toward thy neighbor? . . . Do you "love your enemies"? Is your soul full of good-will, or tender affection, toward them? Do you love even the enemies of God, the unthankful and unholy? Do your bowels yearn over them? . . .

18. Do you show your love by your works? While you have time, as you have opportunity, do you in fact "do good to all men," neighbors or strangers, friends or enemies, good or bad? . . . If so be, give my thy hand.²³

He also points out:

But although a difference in opinions or modes of worship may prevent an entire external union; yet need it prevent our union in affection? Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, although we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may.²⁴

For Wesley, schism is the opposite of reciprocal love. It is a causeless separation from a body of living Christians, and is a breach of the law of love which is meant to unite us together. He felt that any action or attitude that tended to make distinctions within the Body of Christ was contrary to love. This, of course, did not include separation from apostasy. But the kind of separation which was based on differences not essential to the very nature of Christianity was unloving. He warned against insisting on specific vocabulary which would precipitate separation:

. . . beware of tempting others to separate from you. Give no offense which can possibly be avoided; see that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior.... Avoid all magnificent, pompous words; indeed, you need give it no general name; neither perfection, sanc-

tification, the second blessing, nor the having attained. Rather speak of the particulars which God has wrought for you.²⁵

Those who are weary of the strife of fundamentalism can find a creative model for the life of the Church in Wesley's catholic spirit. The kind of schism that is being caused by the rigid and unloving application of exclusion from fellowship by those who insist on particular views on inerrancy of Scripture, certain commitments on charismatic issues, or particular alignments with the political right or left is inconsistent with the spirit of Wesleyanism. The trajectory of Wesleyan theology needs to factor in the proclamation of the character and attitudes of true Wesleyanism in the face of the popular syncretism which is threatening to blur the distinctive attitudes of this tradition. A Wesleyanism which absorbs the harshness of spirit, the lovelessness, and the exclusiveness of a fundamentalist attitude is a Wesleyanism which will soon be bankrupt. The doctrine and practice of holiness will not thrive in an atmosphere of censoriousness.²⁶ Wesleyanism must assert its own identity with an attitude of catholic love in the face of an exclusivist fundamentalism, objective theologies which minimize ethics, charismatic theologies which reject the primacy of Scripture in favor of individual revelations, and an indiscriminate pluralism which recognizes no parameters to Wesleyan distinctiveness.

II. We need a theology of the church and ministry based on Biblical/theological, not sectarian, categories.

The doctrine of the Church in the thought of John Wesley is centrally concerned with soteriology.²⁷ Salvation is the central purpose and mission of the Church, and in spite of the diversity in forms and ministries, those ecclesiologies which would rightly call themselves "Wesleyan" must also reflect this priority.²⁸ For Wesley, the work of God in calling, converting, and discipling is the basis of the Church. The true Church is made up of those whose lives have been transformed by faith and whose salvation is made evident by an ethic of faith and love. Thus, the prerequisite to incorporation in the Church, for Wesley, was a personal experience of saving grace, and the result of this transformation was a concern to grow in holiness and to proclaim the gospel of Christ.²⁹ This soteriological and evangelistic concern took priority over any concerns about deviations in doctrine, liturgical practice, and ecclesiastical structures. He asks:

What is the end of all ecclesiastical order? Is it not to bring souls from the power of Satan to God, and to build them up in His fear and love? Order, then, is so far valuable as it answers these ends; and if it answers them not, it is worth nothing.³⁰

This Christocentric concern for salvation left no room for sectarianism. All those who were grafted into Christ were united in fellowship and mission, and the boundaries of this mission were as wide as the world and as specific as each individual's need.³¹

The soteriological mandate led Wesley to understand the Church in terms of mission rather than in terms of institution. He developed a "functional ecclesiology" which focused on the priority of praxis in forming the structures and ministries of the Methodist movement.³² Form thus follows function

in his view of the Church, and his ministry followed the lines of a "practical theology," or as Langford terms it, "practical divinity."

The trajectory of Wesleyan theology today, it seems to me, should recover Wesley's functional understanding of the Church and its mission, and should include a reasoned and Biblical theology of ministry which incorporates Wesley's concern for a salvation which affects all of life with the insights of the tradition of spiritual formation in the Church, the insights of critical Biblical and theological study, and the understanding of human development gained from the social sciences. As James Fowler defines it, "practical theology is theological reflection and construction arising out of and giving guidance to a community of faith in the praxis of its mission."³³

A practical theology is a theology of church in mission. It is concerned with the formation and transformation of persons toward maturity in the Christian faith. The methodology for this concern involves reflecting upon the experience of the community of faith in relation to the story of God's action in Scripture and the history of the Church. It involves, according to Poling and Miller, "the activity of a living community as it tries to discern the truth and meaning of its life in the modern world."³⁴ It is an investigation of Scripture and the tradition of the Church, on the one hand, and an analysis of the needs of the ministry of the Church, on the other, in order to develop a constructive and thoughtful pattern of guidance for the church's praxis.³⁵ Such a methodology requires the foundation of Scripture, and the reflection upon tradition and the present experience of the Church in the world that sound and reasonable theological work can contribute, particularly the mission directed theology that is most truly Wesleyan. The heritage of Scriptural authority and a creative usage of reason, tradition, and experience in the context of the Holy Spirit's work that is distinctively Wesleyan and may well provide the most useful approach.

Such an ordered approach to practical theology is far superior to the all too frequent tendency to devise praxis out of an after-the-fact reaction to problematic behavior in the Church. A proactive focusing of a theology of ministry upon the goals of salvation and faith development provides an attention to the trajectory of mission which facilitates catholicity of spirit and a robust context for faith development such as that which characterized early Methodism. The need for primary attention to such a theology of praxis is evidenced by the drift of Wesleyan clergy toward models of ethics, church planting, church growth, spiritual formation, and church renewal which do not reflect patterns of ministry which are consistent with the whole of Wesleyan theology.

For example, the hierarchical models of Bill Gothard and others are not compatible with the classical Protestant "priesthood of all believers" concept nor with the more consensual forms of nurture, such as the Methodist class meetings, which are the heritage of Wesleyanism. The rejection of the roles of women in ministry, which is such a part of the praxis of some forms of fundamentalism, is at odds with the tradition of Wesleyanism and with an objective exegesis of Scripture. The selection of certain ethical issues to the exclusion of others is contrary to Wesley's wide-ranging sense of social justice. Issue of personal ethics are still emphasized in popular Wesleyanism more than are issues of structural evil or cosmic concern. Even the very appropriate concerns for such social issues as abortion and pornography

should not excuse us from profound involvement in cosmic issues such as world hunger and nuclear proliferation. Yet, the ubiquity of Moral Majority Concerns does seem to influence the life of the church in Wesleyanism more than the imminence of nuclear and hunger and justice issues. Does pre tribulation eschatology lead us to minimize cosmic world issues because we think we will forestall Christ's coming by making the world better? This is certainly not our Wesleyan tradition, but is it becoming a subtle influence upon our churches because of a lack of a forthright Wesleyan practical theology? Is an emphasis on sanctification as crisis in popular preaching obscuring the need for sound programs of Christian education and nurture in faith development? Is the increasing attractiveness of the charismatic movement for our people a result of our inattention to aggressive programs of discipleship, nurture, and creative ministry styles? It is easy to place blame on other movements, but there is a need to clarify some directions in our own movement in developing a theology of the church and ministry which addresses the needs of our people in terms of the cultural context in which they function. The defection of our people to the "electric church" may be symptomatic of a deeper problem in our own theology of ministry. The nets of our praxis need mending in the power of the Holy Spirit with an awareness of culture and the nature of the developmental aspects of learning. The social sciences can give insight here. Leaders such as Donald Joy, James Fowler, James Poling, Howard Snyder, James Garlow, and others are showing that Biblical, theological, social science, and other resources are invaluable ingredients in plotting a trajectory of Wesleyan theology of praxis.³⁶ The solid work of scholars such as Stanley Hauerwas in developing an understanding of sanctification as character provides much in the way of resources for spiritual formation.³⁷ Integrating the insights in developmental theory of persons such as Ted Ward, Lawrence Kohlberg, Don Joy, and of James Fowler in faith development, into our Christian education curricula, our preaching, and our ecclesiastical structures of government would significantly improve the trajectory of our ministries toward both numerical and spiritual growth in our churches. However, the tendency in evangelical Wesleyanism to segregate the work of the theologians from the life of the pastorate and the formation of church polity is a deterrent to the ready movement of the church in these directions. The "electric church" will likely remain the dominant influence in the development of practical theology unless there are concerted efforts to integrate the work of the clergy and the scholar. The need for such integration is being addressed in some cases. An annual Sermon Preparation Seminar is held in my own conference in which pastors and resource persons come together for several days in workshops to integrate preaching with exegetical and theological materials. This is a step toward plotting an adequate trajectory toward "practical divinity."

Consistent with the need to perform a soteriological mission, a trajectory for Wesleyan theology needs to involve a communication with culture.

III. We need new forms and metaphors to address rapidly developing and diverse culture.

Contemporary theology is desperately attempting to respond to the rapid and radical changes taking place in society. It is concerned with developing new forms with which to express the abiding functions of the Christian

message. These forms need to be responsive to the confessional traditions of the churches, they must address the culture in which they exist, and they must interrelate theology with other academic disciplines as a context for academic interchange. Gilbert Stafford, in Vol. I. of a *Contemporary Wesleyan Theology*, surveys "Frontiers in Contemporary Theology," and suggests several differing perspectives that should be considered by Wesleyans. These include dynamic, ecclesial, and formal theological trends.³⁸ David B. Harned notes:

If the Christian message is to kindle man's imagination, it must address him where he stands and not demand that he stand somewhere else in order to hear it. One task of the theologian is to relate his discipline to other modes of cultural activity, to the arts and sciences, to historical studies and linguistic analysis. Out of this dialogue there can develop greater sensitivity to the new questions that confront the contemporary Christian community. Perhaps there will emerge some new and more persuasive forms in which the substance of the gospel can be cast. Perhaps there will also come a renewed appreciation of the meaning and importance of the traditional religious prescriptions and vocabulary."³⁹

Jack Rogers points out several characteristics that are usually included in present-day theological work. They are "participatory" in that theology is more often the product of the collaboration of a number of workers. "Process" orientation is a method which describes relationships, operations, and other factors such as human experience of God. Theology is increasingly "public" in assuming that the thought forms of the Christian community are usually the same as those in the community at large, and if a theologian is to have any apologetic effectiveness, he/she must speak in terms understood by the entire culture. Theology is also "pluralistic" in that it must be contextualized to address the varied contexts in a global community. And theology must be "philosophical" in attempting to reflect a comprehensive theory of reality.⁴⁰ Such a list of factors is rather forbidding, but theology which is to address a culture effectively must reflect something like this kind of comprehensiveness, and Wesleyan theology is no exception. A failure to factor such characteristics into a trajectory for Wesleyan theology will seriously circumscribe the direction in which we can go.

The "public" and "pluralistic" characteristics are of particular interest for Wesleyan theology today. It has not been typical of Wesleyan theology in recent years to speak in terms easily understood by the general public. The language we often use is not a part of the vocabulary of a public which has been formed by the secular media. The language often used in worship, Sunday school curricula, and theological works is often not readily assimilated even by our laity, much less the general public. It was not a modern communications expert like McLuhan, but the Apostle Paul who suggested that the gospel must be communicated in terms readily understandable by the receptor culture when he wrote, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (I Cor. 9:22, KJV).

The methods, preaching, and hymns of the Wesleys, as well as the nineteenth century holiness leaders, modeled this adaptation of the gospel

message to the language of the common person. However, what was largely understood by the general community in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries may well be foreign conceptually and linguistically to the twentieth century secularized mind. Perhaps we need to re-examine some of the central concepts of Wesleyanism with this issue in mind. We need metaphors and paradigms which interact with the cultural situation of a technological and secular age.

Some examples of metaphors or concepts which might be utilized to contextualize the Wesleyan message to a technological and global community are the language of developmental psychology, the psychological concept of "empathy," and other relational terminology which addresses the issue of personal alienation.⁴¹ The sociological concept of culture lag which describes the situation in which changes in the political, educational, family, and religious institutions fall behind technological changes is a phenomenon which should inform our theological trajectory. When, as William Osburn points out, the material culture develops at a faster rate than the non material culture of values and beliefs, there is a disruption of cultural equilibrium.⁴² When such a lag occurs, theology must relate afresh the message of the gospel to the changing culture. However, in order to speak theologically to a culture, it is necessary to understand sympathetically the minds of those who make up that culture. Sociologists often use Max Weber's method of *Verstehen* ("understanding, insight, or comprehension") to infer the values and behavior of a society from taking the role of those in the culture.⁴³ Theologically, the concept of Incarnation is a model of *Verstehen* for the specific purpose of accomplishing the redemption of a lost world. Wesley's model of addressing the specific points of need of those to whom he ministered certainly seems also to reflect this kind of sympathetic understanding. The radical nature of his interpretation of the gospel was at odds with the prevailing establishment cultural values of his time, but he was a sympathetic participant in the existential life and thinking of the masses. He ministered so effectively to them not only because he was anointed of God, but also because he understood them and could speak to them in ways they understood. Perhaps Howard Synder is right to suggest that an appropriate contemporary paradigm for Wesleyans is a "radical Protestant model."⁴⁴ He is absolutely right to suggest that being "Wesleyan" needs to be understood in terms relevant to this culture, and that renewal in the Church requires a creative re-application of the classical structures of renewal.⁴⁵

It is true that several theological models exist, all of which attempt from one perspective or another to address culture with their respective doctrinal approach. Jack Rogers mentions process, liberation, narrative, conservative rational, and contemporary confessional models for doing theology.⁴⁶ William Abraham has suggested the model of the Wesleyan quadrilateral itself as a form and method which might address most effectively and comprehensively the concerns of the evangelical community in his book, *The Coming Great Revival*.⁴⁷ His suggestions merit careful study, and are suggestive for further expansion of theological method.

Another model of doing theology which is quite compatible with Wesleyan theological trajectories is narrative, or story, theology. Narrative theology builds useful bridges between theology and the social sciences and human experience. George Stroup says, "Narrative theology appears to open

new channels of conversation between the systematic theologian, the Biblical scholar, the social scientist, and most importantly, the lay person who long ago gave up on the theologian as a resource for understanding the Christian faith."⁴⁸ Beginning with a narrative view of life which is concerned that theology be connected with the real life of individuals and the faith community, this model uses canonical, or Biblical stories, stories of the faith community, and life stories to reflect upon the meaning of faith and motivate the development of character and ethics.⁴⁹ One person who deals with the structure of parables as effective narrative forms to enable the gospel to be heard effectively in our day is Sallie McFague.⁵⁰

If Wesleyan theology desires to relate an understanding of God to real, lived experience, it must also become more conversant with how individuals come to faith, grow in faith, and understand God. It must factor into its trajectory insights from life-span development, and particularly the studies in faith development. The work of psychologists in human development is a useful element which can help focus the work of theologians upon the processive and dynamic aspects of the person.

Not only are fresh models needed to communicate the content of Wesleyan theology, but the methods of interpreting theology must be reviewed, as well. There is ample historical precedent in the histories both of the Christian Church as a whole and in Wesleyanism in particular for finding ways of interpreting Christian theology and experience in terms meaningful to the respective cultures. Recent studies in missiology are helpful in identifying methods for effective communication across cultural lines. In a real sense theological communication in today's American culture is cross-cultural because of the growing pluralistic tendency. Theological communication to cultures other than our own certainly requires radical interpretation. The principle of dynamic equivalency is a way of "deprovincializing" theology and communicating the essential concepts into cross-cultural terms. St. Paul, for example, recognized that effective communication required adopting the linguistic, cultural, and situational frames of reference of his hearers. Jesus phrased truth in terms of the conceptual frameworks appropriate to his hearers.⁵¹ Anthropologist Charles Kraft notes the importance of dynamic equivalence translations:

Theologies, then, become an important part of the necessary repackaging of the Christian message as it moves from culture to culture and from subculture to subculture. If theologians are properly in tune with the surrounding cultures, they will manifest differences of focus, differences of understanding, and differences of expression proportionate to the differences between the cultures and subcultures in which they are involved. This is true even though there are two strong pulls toward uniformity: (1) the fact that theologies in order to be Christian are based upon the Biblical revelation, and (2) the fact that beyond cultural differences human beings share an extensive common humanity. But such differences of focus, understanding, and expression are necessary if the theologies are to be meaningful to the consumers of these theologies.⁵²

Thus, it seems that sometimes the form of the language and method

of theology must sometimes be changed if the content is to be preserved. since, for Wesley, form follows function in the praxis of ministry, and since his concern is not to canonize either forms or language, but to adapt creatively the message of salvation in a way that is true both to Scripture and to the needs of the hearers, can we do less? We cannot afford to hold with traditional language, structures, and models if they are less than effective in making an impact on our present culture. For example, what is the effectiveness of Pentecostal language in communicating the Wesleyan theology of sanctification? The language is already culturally stressed by its usage in the charismatic movement. The concepts of "character" and "constancy" as developed by Stanley Hauerwas have much promise in expressing the kind of devotion and wholeness called for by both Wesley and William Law.⁵³ The work of James Fowler in faith development is certainly useful in developing the Wesleyan emphasis on perfection by means of a new idiom,⁵⁴ although his commitment to Kohlberg's language of stages can sometimes intrude upon his insights into Wesley. James Oakland has suggested the relevance of the construct of self actualization for an understanding of sanctification.⁵⁵ We must, at least, analyze the perceptions of the receptor language and culture to which we are speaking if we expect to accomplish Wesley's world parish mandate, and hopefully, that is the target of the theological trajectory we are working together to develop.

The Wesleyan trajectory must include Scripture, reason, experience, and the tradition of piety and social reform as a part of a spirituality which can provide the context for a new evangelical awakening. Such a renewal will involve sensitivity to this world, responsible and loving action, spiritual piety, reliance upon divine sovereignty and an integration of individual and social ethics. This is our goal. Surely the resources, wisdom, and spiritual vigor of the members of this Wesleyan Theological Society can, by the grace of God, be applied effectively to accomplish this task and plot accurately the factors in this trajectory.

NOTES

1. A few selected examples include Kenneth E. Rowe, ed., *The Place of John Wesley in the Christian Tradition* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press 1976); Albert Outler, *Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit* (Nashville: Tidings, 1975); Theodore Runyon, ed., *Sanctification and Liberation: Liberation Theologies in Light of the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981); Colin Williams, *John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960).

2. Thomas A. Langford, *Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press 1983), p.24.

3. R. Larry Shelton, "John Wesley's Approach to Scripture in Historical Perspective," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*. Vol. 16, Number 1 (Spring): 1981,33,37.

4. *Ibid*, p. 31.

5. *Ibid*, p. 35; see John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Library

of Christian Classics, Vol. XXX, John T. McNeill, ed., and F. L. Battles trans. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), I, vii, 3; also, see Bernard Ramm, *The Witness of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1960), p. 14. Note also the caution against using primarily rational categories to prove the authority of Scripture in Jack B. Rogers and Donald K. McKim, *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), pp. 103-14, and footnotes 225-27 on p. 140.

6. Ibid, p. 36; see John Deschner, *Wesley's Christology: An Interpretation* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1960), pp. 5-7.

7. Ibid, p. 37; see Colin Williams, *John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1960), p. 37.

8. Ibid, see Franz Hildebrandt, *From Luther to Wesley*, pp. 125-32, cited by Williams, *ibid*.

9. Philip Schaff, ed. *The Creeds of Christendom* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1966), 3:603.

10. On sola scriptura and its hermeneutical function, see R. Larry Shelton, *Martin Luther's Concept of Biblical Interpretation in Historical Perspective*, unpublished Th.D. dissertation, (Pasadena: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1974), pp. 171-76.

11. Langford. *op cit.*, pp. 264-65.

12. William J. Abraham, *The Coming Great Revival* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984), pp. 56-60.

13. Allan Coppedge, "John Wesley and the Issue of Authority in Theological Pluralism," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 2(Fall 1984): 71; see John Wesley, *The Letters of the Reverend John Wesley* (London: Epworth Press, 1931), V, p. 164.

14. Ibid., p. 72; see Langford, *op. cit.* pp. 265-66.

15. James T. Clemons, "John Wesley-Biblical Literalist?" *Religion in Life*, 46 (Autumn 1977): 336-40.

16. Shelton, *op. cit.*, "John Wesley's Approach to Scripture . . .," p. 42.

17. Ibid, p. 39.

18. Coppedge, *op. cit.* p. 69.

19. Ortiz's statement reported by Ben Patterson, *The Wittenberg Door*, No.78 (April-May 1984): 4; see Franky Schaeffer, *Bad News for Modern Man*, (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1984), for the primary data on the accusations and characterizations he makes.

20. John Wesley, "On Attending the Church Service," *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, A.M.(New York: Carlton and Lanahan, 1831), II, pp. 368-76

21. David Cubie, "Separation or Unity? Sanctification and Love in Wes-

ley's Doctrine of the Church," *The Church*, in *Wesleyan Theological Perspectives*, Vol. IV, ed. by M. E. Dieter and Daniel Berg (Anderson, Ind: Warner Press, 1984), p. 360.

22. This chapter by Dr. Cubie contains extensive and thorough documentation on the Catholic and irenic nature of Wesley's understanding of the Church. It is from this perspective of the concept of "catholic love" that I have difficulty with the credalistic, exclusivist, and schismatic tendencies of Fundamentalism. While evangelical Wesleyanism shares a number of theological concerns with Fundamentalism, it should be clear that the Wesleyan doctrine of holiness as love, especially as Cubie explains Wesley's position is not consistent with those attitudes of Fundamentalism which encourage schism and a harsh judgmentalism against those who hold diverse theological opinions, even though those opinions may have extensive foundations in evangelical tradition. For example, the Fundamentalist tendency to exclude from fellowship those evangelicals who do not affirm the term "inerrancy" is noted by Timothy Smith in "Letters to the Editor," in both *Christian Century*, March 2, 1977, p. 198, and *Christianity Today*, March 10, 1978 p. 8.

23. John Wesley, "Catholic Spirit," *Works*, V, p. 493.

24. Wesley, *Ibid*.

25. Wesley, "Cautions and Directions Given to the Greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies," *Works* XI, Sec. 25, p. 434.

26. See J. Kenneth Grider, "Wesleyanism and the Inerrancy Issue," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol. 19, Number 2 (Fall 1984): 52-61. Grider warns against readily accepting "spillovers" from "Calvinistic evangelicalism

27. Clarence Bence, "Salvation and the Church: The Ecclesiology of John Wesley," *The Church*, op. cit., p. 299.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 303-04.

29. *Ibid*

30. John Wesley, *Letters*, II, p. 76.

31. Bence, op. cit., pp. 303-05.

32. *Ibid*, p. 307.

33. James Fowler, "Practical Theology and the Shaping of Christian Live Practical Theology," ed. by Don S. Browning (San Francisco: Harper and Row-Publishers, 1983), p. 149.

34. Daniel E. Poling and Donald Miller, *Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon. 1985).p.64: see also p. 12.

35. Fowler, op. cit., p. 155.

36. Donald Joy, "The Contemporary Church as 'Holy Community': Call to Corporate Character and Life," *The Church*, op. cit., pp. 397-432; James Garlow, "The Layperson as Minister: A Call for a New Theology of the

Laity," *The Church*, op. cit., pp. 433-72; Poling and Miller, op. cit.; Fowler, op. cit.; Howard A. Snyder, *The Problem of Wineskins* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1975).

37. Stanley Hauerwas, "Characterizing Perfection: Second Thoughts on Character and Sanctification," unpublished lecture, University of Notre Dame," 198; see his *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1975) pp. 179-228.

38. Gilbert Stafford, "Frontiers in Contemporary Theology," *A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology*, Vol. I, ed. by Charles W. Carter (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1983), pp. 19-46.

39. David B. Harned, *Theology and the Arts* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), p. 17.

40. Jack B. Rogers, "The Search for System: American Theology in the 1980's," *Theology, News and Notes* (December 1981): 4-5.

41. See R. Larry Shelton, *Sanctification in Romans Chapter 6*, unpublished Th.M. thesis (Wilmore, Ky.: Asbury Theological Seminary, 1968), pp. 71-77.

42. William F. Osburn, *Social Change* (New York: Dell, 1966).

43. See Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, tr. by A. M. Henderson and T. Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).

44. Howard A. Snyder, *The Radical Wesley* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press. 1980). DD. 112 ff.

45. *Ibid.*, Chapters 10-12.

46. Rogers, op. cit., p. 7.

47. Abraham, op. cit., I am indebted to Dr. Abraham and to Drs. Dan Berg and Charles Dillman for their very helpful suggestions during the preparation of this paper.

48. George Stroup, *The Promise of Narrative Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981). p. 6.

49. For a relevant and practical discussion of the use of narrative theology, see Les Steele, "Narrative Theology and Religious Education: A Dialogue," paper presented to the Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education (Chicago, November 1985). The accompanying bibliography is excellent. Steele is Assistant Professor of Christian Education at Seattle Pacific University.

50. See Sallie McFague, *Speaking in Parables* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

51. Charles H. Kraft, "Dynamic Equivalence Theologizing," *Readings in Dynamic Indigeneity*, ed. by Charles Kraft and Tom N. Wisely (Pasadena, C.A.: William Carey Library, 1979), p.269; see also I Cor.9:19-23. See Thomas N. Wisely *Dynamic Biblical Christianity in the Buddhist/Marxist Context*:

Northeast Thailand, Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1984 (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1984).

52. Ibid., p. 273.

53. Hauerwas, op. cit.

54. James H. Fowler, "John Wesley's Development in Faith," unpublished paper, Emory University; see also James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1981).

55. James A. Oakland, "Self-Actualization and Sanctification," *The Journal of Psychology and Theology* (Summer, 1974): Vol. 2, No. 3, 202-29.

HOLINESS, TECHNOLOGY AND PERSONHOOD

by

H. Ray Dunning

Ours has been appropriately characterized as the technological age. As Arthur F. Holmes says:

Culture arises as a fruit of human creativity, and the first cultural enterprise that inevitably commands attention nowadays is that of science and technology. While it was of course present in simplified fashion in earlier years and was given fuller rein by the scientific revolution of the Renaissance and by the industrial revolution, the past fifty years have witnessed a knowledge explosion and ushered in a technological age of unprecedented magnitude.¹

It is fitting that the theme of this convention focuses on the issue of technology. It seems also fitting that in this seminar sponsored by the Wesleyan Theological Society we address some theological issues which are raised by this distinctive ethos. And furthermore, to be relevant, we should seek to identify the way the message of holiness ties in with these theological issues. I propose that we do this in a rather wide-ranging way which will provide a very broad background within which the issues of technology may be highlighted. The question of "the human" is the most crucial dimension of the problem and this immediately drives us to the Christian way of speaking to this issue. As we all would immediately recognize, the theological approach to the question entails a discussion of the *imago dei*, the image of God. It is in this that the Christian faith finds the distinctiveness of human being.

Traditionally, efforts have been made to define the imago by seeking to identify that in man which differentiates him from the rest of creation. That involves defining it from below. Under the influence of Greek thought, this *differentia* has been classically identified as reason, freedom and/or personality. G. C. Berkouwer, following Luther, makes the incisive observation that "if the image of God should lie in such ontic qualities. then Satan himself

would exhibit the image of God."² Aristotle's definition of man as "a rational animal" has been pervasively influential at this point. It was doubtless this approach which was the origin of the term natural image, common in Protestant theology. There are two difficulties with this way of addressing the question: (1) it defines the imago from below rather than from above which results in a false perspective. It is not a question of how man differs from other beings, but a question of how he stands in relation to his Creator. (2) It suggests that the imago is some quality or faculty or characteristic which man possesses in himself, an aspect of his substantial form. This aspect is then identified with the same quality in God.

G. C. Berkouwer comments on this way of interpreting what he refers to as the "wider" image:

It is regrettable that the valid emphasis in the dogma of the image of God in the wider sense has often taken on the form of an analysis of the ontic structure of man, e.g., as defined by person, reason and freedom. For it is undeniable that Scripture does not support such an interpretation. Scripture is concerned with man in his relation with God, in which he can never be seen as man-in-himself, and surely not with man's "essence" described as self or person.³

This statement points to a much more adequate way of interpreting the *imago*, that is, in terms of a relationship within which man stands, and one with which the preponderance of contemporary theologians agree. This approach may best be understood through the analogy of a mirror. When we stand in front of the mirror, in proper relation to it, our image is reflected therein. Analogically, when man is in proper relation to God, His image is reflected in human life. The chief strength of this interpretation is that it avoids the "naturalism" of the substantial view and provides a genuinely *theological* explanation. The mirror itself is not the image; the mirror images. God's image is in the mirror. The image of God consists in man's position before God, or rather the image of God is reflected in man because of his position before Him. Thus the proper way of putting it is not to speak of the image of God in man, but of man in the image of God.

Our point here is that the image, both in its wider sense and its narrower sense should be understood in this way. We now speak of the wider image, that relation within which man stands which constitutes him a human being. In his *Dogmatics*, while retaining the language of a "formal" and "material" image which he had used in his earlier debate with Karl Barth, Brunner declares that "in both instances the fact that man has been made in. the image of God is conceived not as a self existing substance but as a relation And this is the most important point to grasp. Responsibility (the essence of the 'formal' image) is a relation; it is not a substance."⁴

Karl Barth, too, in his *Church Dogmatics* came to the position that man's being, man's nature, is to stand in grace. Man is not essentially a "rational animal;" his essence is to be an object of God's grace. This essence is indeed covered and hidden by sin, but how can something which has its basis in God's grace be wholly destroyed? There is and remains a "continuum, an essence unchanged and unchangeable by sin."⁵

Luther, and some of his successors, have spoken here of a relic of the

image which survives the Fall. But as Brunner points out, this says both too much and too little. Wesleyan theology proposes that this image in the wider sense is explained in terms of the doctrine of Prevenient Grace. It is this grace that goes before, which is effective in all men, that preserves man's humanity and person hood. It takes seriously the understanding of person hood as set forth by John MacMurray in his Gifford Lectures entitled *Persons in Relation* and argues that it is man's relation to God which constitutes him a human being.

Now let us look more specifically at the content involved when man stands in proper relation to his Creator. The theological implications of the Genesis account provide us with significant resource to understand what may be termed "original righteousness."

This original righteousness, we want to suggest, was constituted by a fourfold "freedom." (Not to be taken as an ontic quality entailing the power of contrary choice). Freedom, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer shows, is

not something man has for himself but something he has for others. No man is free "as such," that is, in a vacuum, in the way that he may be musical, intelligent or blind as such. Freedom is not a quality of man, nor is it an ability, a capacity, a kind of being that somehow flares up in him. Anyone investigating man to discover freedom finds nothing of it. Why? Because freedom is not a quality which can be revealed-it is not a possession, a presence, an object, nor is it a form for existence but a relationship and nothing else. In truth, freedom is a relationship between two persons. Being free means "being free for the other," because the other has bound me to him. Only in relationship with the other am I free.⁶

The original *imago*, we are suggesting as a result of theological exegesis of the Genesis accounts, includes (1) Freedom for God; (2) Freedom for the Other; (3) Freedom from the Earth or World and (4) Freedom from Self domination. The first three are explicitly spelled out theologically in Genesis 1-11 and the fourth is implied quite clearly in the other three.

Freedom for God. The same idea can be conveyed by the term "openness." It is symbolized by the time of communion with the Creator which Adam enjoyed in the "cool of the day." This highly anthropomorphic account is a profound theological presentation of an uninhibited *tete-a-tete* since there was nothing in the relation to hide. It was informed by Truth since no subterfuge was necessary. No turned away head, no averted eyes, no double-talk, the "yea was yea and the nay was nay."

This freedom of man for God was founded in the freedom of God for man. With God it was a *se*, but with man it was a gift. There is with God not only an "I" but an "I-Thou" relation within the Divine Nature. With man, it is the I who is himself in relation to the Thou who is God. Thus the analogy of relation is, as Barth says, the "correspondence of the unlike."

Freedom for the Other as Image. One of the intriguing features of the Genesis creation narratives is the use of the plural form for Deity. Genesis 1:1 declares: "In the beginning Elohim (plural for the singular El) created the heavens and the earth." The plural pronouns become both pronounced

and prolific when the writer comes to speak of the origin of human being. Up to that point, the first narrative (1:1-2:4a) records "then God said" in connection with each day's creative activity with the originating fiat immediately following. But in 1:26 it is followed by an "in-house" consultation concerning this particular potentiality: "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness." The plural is then transferred to the proposed created being: "Let them have dominion . . ." In the 27th verse, the creation of mankind is stressed to be in the form of "male and female," a plural creature. Certainly all other "animals" also had male and female species but the structure clearly indicates that something special is implied by this characteristic of human being.

Karl Barth, in particular, has been influential in contemporary theology in calling attention to the crucial theological significance of the "male and female" factor in defining the *imago dei*. Barth insists that this is the most definitive element in the account. It seems clearly the case that he is at least correct concerning the decisive significance of the point and when joined with the other evidence in the passage makes it almost unequivocal that man's creation in God's image involves a social dimension.

St. Augustine was groping for a basic truth about man in his efforts to identify a trinitarian structure within human nature on the assumption that the *imago* would entail the same ontological structure in man as revelation disclosed obtained in the Divine Nature. His basic error, however, was in seeking to confine the "social" structure within the individual. The truth to which the Biblical affirmations point is an interpersonal ontological structure. Modern understandings of the self have brought this more clearly to light but it was a truth which the Biblical mind grasped all along.

As in the case of the basic Divine-human relation, the person-to-person relation can be described as "openness." That is the significance of the phrase "freedom *for*." It is an I-Thou relationship that was marked by the absence of shame. The references in the second creation account (2:25) to the fact that "they were both naked . . . and were not ashamed," symbolize this kind of openness. They were radically "free for" each other. The absence of lust which has self gratification (see discussion of freedom from self) as an element in its motivation made such unashamed openness possible in this picture of almost naive unselfconsciousness.

Freedom from the Earth as Image. Because of man's status in relation to God he is given "dominion" over the remainder of created reality. It is true, as many have argued that we cannot equate this dominion with the image of God without remainder but it seems clearly to be a subsidiary aspect of it. The earth does not dominate man when the Divine-human relation is in order, but serves man. Adam's task of naming the animals symbolizes his dominion over them and their subservience to his God appointed ends.

The commission to "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen. 1:28) is a cultural mandate. "Culture" implies a "tilling" and man's appointed role is to till God's creation, or cultivate it. The clue to the boundaries of this mandate is "the glory of God" to which unfallen man would be committed. It thus carries responsibility as well as privilege and implies ecological caretaking.

Freedom from Self as Image. Implicit in each of the other three relations

is the submission of self to the authority of the Creator. The recognition of His Lordship acknowledges the status of man as creature. As long as this arrangement obtains man remains not only free for God but free to be himself in terms of his created destiny, free to be his true self.

This is not, however, a relationship that is impersonal, arbitrary or forced but free. The logical consequence is that the relation can be upset if the free partner (man) decides to dissolve the situation of the Lordship of the Creator and assume an equal partnership role or usurp the prerogatives of the Creator. This possibility was actualized in the Fall which basically takes the form of a "Revolt against Heaven."

If what we have described is Original Righteousness then Original Sin involves the loss of or the perversion of the relationship in which man stood in the "state of integrity." However, we must emphasize that it is more than a negation. The loss of the image of God created a vacuum into which positive evil rushed so that man in his "natural" state as it is now is corrupt in every aspect of his being. In classical theological language, he is "totally depraved."

In theologically analyzing Genesis 1-11 we see indications that all four relations which we are suggesting constituted original righteousness were disrupted. The openness for God was replaced by hiding. The interpersonal relation was marked by shame and the covering of clothes. But for our purposes here, we want to emphasize that the Fall also resulted in loss of freedom from the earth. This is symbolized by the cursing of the ground with resulting "thorns and thistles." It was not work that came into being through the curse, but the resistance of the earth to man's efforts to cultivate it.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's description of this loss is pungent:

We . . . try to rule, but it is the same here as on Walpurgis night. We think we are pushing and we are being pushed. We do not rule, we are ruled. The thing, the world, rules man. Man is a prisoner, a slave of the world, and his rule is illusion. Technology is the power with which the earth grips man and subdues him. And because we rule no more, we lose ground, and then the earth is no longer our earth, and then we become strangers on earth. We do not rule because we do not know the world as God's creation, and because we do not receive our dominion as God-given but grasp it for ourselves.⁷

We have observed the increasing sophistication of man in his conquest of the earth. He has wrested its secrets from it and created artifacts with seemingly limitless possibilities but he has been unable to keep them under his control. His inventions seem to take on a life of their own and assert themselves in mastery over the creator. And the larger and more complex the inventions the more destructive they seem to become to human well-being. It is not the monster of nuclear power, for example, which threatens human life. It is the man who discovered it who has no dominion over himself and so loses control of what many dreamed would be the solution to many human problems. Having revolted against his own Creator, man has lost the power to hold dominion over his own creation..

In its day, the sinking of the Titanic had tremendous theological impact. The "unsinkable" ship seemed the apex of human technological achievement.

When it went down, it brought man face to face with the reality that he was still a creature and was not the master of his own fate no matter how sophisticated and educated he might be. It was one more nail in the coffin of liberalism. In our time, it seems to me that the tragedy of the space shuttle which still impacts our spirits testifies to the same reality. I am certainly not suggesting that it was a direct intervention of God, but that it serves as a symbol of man's loss of dominion and witnesses to the fact that he is really not "god."

When we introduce the perverted relation to self which results from the loss of the image of God, we see a further dimension of this truth. The intrusion of a perverted relation to self in relation to the other gave a specific character to human interaction. The "openness" symbolized by "nakedness" was now replaced by shame and resulted in hiding their bodies from each other. What now pollutes the relation is the motive of self gratification.

The elevation of self to the control tower of life likewise perverts man's relation to nature or the earth. His original mandate was to cultivate the created world (culture) for the glory of God. The Fall twisted this around so that the task of tilling the earth (developing culture) became motivated by self advantage. The practical results in terms of the "rape of the earth" are appalling. Exploitation, irresponsibility and greed all paint a gloomy picture for the future of the environment because men have sought to exploit the earth for their own pleasure in ways that far exceed their needs. And technology is the means by which man carries out his exploitation.

Stephen Winward, in his analysis of the message of Haggai the prophet in which he relates the poverty of the restoration community to their lack of obedience in building the temple observes that it is extremely difficult for contemporary man to believe that there is a direct connection between piety and prosperity, between the acknowledgment of God in worship and the conditions of the economy. We are not in the habit of interpreting natural calamities or adversities as judgments of God. Rather we account for such things in terms of "secondary causes." If there is a drought, modern man turns for explanation to the meteorological experts. If the land fails to yield good crops, he buys fertilizers or seeks to improve agricultural techniques. But, he asks, does this mean we can dismiss the message of Haggai as irrelevant in the contemporary, scientific age? By no means, he argues, for there is indeed a fundamental relationship between obedience to God and the fertility of the earth, between the acknowledgment of God in worship and the economic prosperity of mankind. His conclusion is that whenever man turns away from his chief end which is the worship and service of God, the consequences of his rebellion are manifested in three directions: the corruption of his own nature, the destruction of community, and the perversion of his relationship to the earth into one of exploitation and dominion. He then quotes the words of Paul Tillich, the *preacher*. "This technical civilization, the pride of mankind, has brought about a tremendous devastation of original nature, of the land, of animals, of plants . . . it has occupied everything for domination and ruthless exploitation." The point of his argument is that while the message of Haggai may be difficult to apply to individual life, the prophet is not really addressing that issue but speaking to communal life. Hence his message, with contemporary relevance, is that a prosperous economy has a moral basis, and the earth approximates to paradise as the

inhabitants thereof acknowledge the supreme worth of God. Irreligion is the root cause of social decay and economic disaster. In this twentieth century nations and communities have all the scientific and technical knowledge necessary to bring untold benefits to all mankind. Yet, in fact, multitudes suffer from malnutrition and hunger. There is abundant evidence, he argues, to prove that when men give absolute priority to the satisfaction of their own material needs and desires, the result is not health, happiness and prosperity for all. For in an age obsessed as never before with the material, the economic, there is widespread poverty and desperate need.⁸

If person hood is constituted by the *imago dei* and it is understood as involving a right relation to God with other relationships being "good" in the Genesis sense when this relation is restored, and conversely the tragedy of these other broken relations hinges on man's destiny in God, they all point to a defective person hood. Hence, if man has a desire to achieve full personalness involving meaningful personal relations and fruitful, non-destructive use of his technological knowledge, the way to do so is to bring his spirit back into the proper relation to God.

This brings us now to the doctrine of holiness which is most broadly defined by Wesleyan theology as the renewal of man in the image of God. When repentance and faith have restored man to the favor of God, it is God's intention to bring man to his appointed destiny which has long been thwarted by sin. That destiny is embodied in the "image of God." This is not only what man was, but also what he is intended by God to become. To put these truths simply, God accepts me just as I am and then begins the process of making me into the kind of person He wants me to be. The latter is the working of grace that is described in a shorthand way by the term *sanctification*.

What are the possibilities of grace in this regard? To that crucial issue we want to give brief attention. It is important to distinguish the Wesleyan position from the classical Reformation one. The Protestant reformers interpreted the image of God in legal categories of righteousness. The restoration of man to the image of God is likewise interpreted in this framework. Thus for both major Protestant reformers (Luther and Calvin) the process of sanctification is seen in terms of doing good works and these good works are judged in terms of their conformity to the law.

When the works of redeemed man are measured by the law of God in its fullest expectation, there is always a deficiency. As John Calvin puts it: "We have not a single work going forth from the saints that if it be judged in itself deserves but shame as its just reward.... For since no perfection can come to us so long as we are clothed in this flesh, and the law moreover announced death and judgment to all who do not maintain perfect righteousness in works, it will always have grounds for accusing and condemning us unless, on the contrary, God's mercy counters it, and by continual forgiveness of sins, repeatedly acquits us" (*Institutes*, III, xiv, 10).

John Wesley concurs with this judgment when it is bound to this context. In the Plain Account he says in answer to the question, "But do we not 'in many things offend all,?'" that in one sense we do, "and shall do, more or less, as long as we remain in the body."

But Wesley discovered in the Scripture another way of interpreting man's relation to God other than by law. He began this process of discovery under the tutelage of Jeremy Taylor, St. Thomas a Kempis and William

Law. From them he learned that the essence of piety was inward and intentional. "Purity of intention" was the phrase he used to speak of what he learned from Taylor. This paved the way for his recognition that while man can never be restored to the image of God in any legal sense or when it is interpreted in terms of law, he can be perfectly related to Him in terms of *love*. He found, in a word, the truth of Paul's assertion that "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10).

We want to suggest that sanctification involves the restoration of all four of the relations earlier mentioned as constituting the image of God, and this restoration is to be understood in terms of love. As Mr. Wesley so pertinently commented, addressing the first two relations, to be entirely sanctified is to "love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength" and "your neighbor as yourself."

Let us now look briefly at what it might mean in terms of restoring the third relation mentioned, the relation to the earth. In his original created condition man was given dominion over the remainder of created reality. This dominion seems to be directly related to man's own submission to the dominion of the Creator. But with the revolt against God, the earth "revolted" against man and the proper relationship was lost, man was no longer free *from* the earth. St. Augustine provides a penetrating analysis of the present condition of men in this dimension when he observed that we ought to love God and use things, but instead we tend to love things and use God.

Obviously, the New Testament says nothing about technology, but we can catch some glimpse of the application of the theological truth to this matter by noting the way the New Testament speaks about possessions. All of these like technology are products of the earth. It is astounding how pervasive this theme is in the Bible, especially in the N.T. Why does Scripture give so much attention to this question? Doubtless Luke T. Johnson's analysis provides us with the answer. He says, "The way we use, own, acquire, and disperse material things symbolizes and expresses our attitudes and responses to ourselves, the world around us, other people, and, most of all, God."⁹ In a word, it symbolizes all the relations about which we have been speaking, that is, they all come to focus in this issue since they are all interrelated as we noted earlier.

It is the loss of this dimension of the *Imago* which has resulted in the idolatrous attitude toward science and technology characterizing scientific humanism. This view holds that "Science alone affords reliable knowledge . . . and science alone can assure a future in which suffering and disaster are overcome."¹⁰

This is a mythology which must be repudiated. The Christian understanding is that while such discoveries or inventions are gifts of God, they must be seen as servants rather than masters. Developing the earth is part of the cultural mandate given man at the creation but it can only be done in a non-self-destructive way when it is carried out under the Lordship of Christ and this is the relation to the earth to which the full message of Wesleyan holiness calls us. Thus it speaks most relevantly to the issue so crucial today.

NOTES

1. Arthur F. Holmes, *Contours of a World View* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983), p. 207.
2. G. C. Berkouwer, *Man. The Image of God* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), p. 56.
3. Ibid, pp. 59-60.
4. H. Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, trans. by Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952), p. 59.
5. *Church Dogmatics*, III/1, 195.
6. *Creation and Fall*, p. 38.
7. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall* (N.Y.: The Macmillan Co., 1967), p. 37.
8. *A Guide to the Prophets* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983), pp. 194-195.
9. Luke T. Johnson, *Sharing Possessions* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), p. 40.
10. Holmes, *Contours*, p. 207.

**FELLOWSHIP IN FERMENT:
A HISTORY OF THE WESLEYAN THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,
1965-1984**

by

Major John G. Merritt

FOUNDATIONS FOR FERMENT

In surveying developments in the study of John Wesley from 1960 to 1980, Dr. Frank Baker, a British Methodist who is professor emeritus of English church history at Duke University Divinity School, observes that

One sight of the theological ferment of these last twenty years is the presence since 1966 of *The Wesleyan Theological Journal*, which has published more than a hundred studies of various aspects of Wesley's theology, especially as that theology was focused on the work of the Holy Spirit in human life. The articles vary in quality — as do those of most journals — but most are well written and carefully documented; occasionally they are of major importance. The fact that membership in the publishing body, the Wesleyan Theological Society, is restricted by a conservative theological test -- one, however, to which Wesley himself would have had little difficulty subscribing may sound unpromising to many, but the thousand members are drawn from many different denominations, including both non Methodist and non-American.¹

This rather favorable evaluation by an eminent scholar in Methodist studies accurately reflects the importance, orientation and scope of the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (hereafter, *WTJ*) and suggests that its history is definitively bound up with the purpose and growth of the Wesleyan Theological Society (hereafter, WTS) — the theological commission of the Christian Holiness Association (hereafter, CHA).

Laying the Foundations

This connection with the CHA points to the broad context in which the

WTS was born: the conviction of five educators in schools and denominations related to the Association, that there was the need for a fellowship of scholars in the Wesleyan Holiness tradition comparable to the Evangelical Theological Society. These men² decided to contact their colleagues in the (then) National Holiness Association (hereafter, NHA) about the feasibility of such an organization, and if interest was sufficient a meeting to launch a learned society would be called during the April 1965 convention of the NHA/CHA in Detroit, Michigan. The response to their inquiries was positive and thus the meeting was convened which resulted in the formation of the Wesleyan Theological Society, with Dr. Leo G. Cox of Marion College being elected president. It was decided that the first annual meeting of the WTS would be held November 5-6 of that year at Spring Arbor College, with the summer and fall being devoted to the securing of charter members.³ This initial membership effort concluded January 1, 1966, and resulted in a charter membership of ninety-two persons.⁴

The interim executive committee met in Chicago at the Hoyne Avenue Wesleyan Methodist Church in August to plan the program for the first weekend of November 1965 — which set the chronological precedent for all subsequent annual meetings of the WTS. The inaugural event was attended by approximately sixty persons, and during the first business meeting of the Society, Dr. Cox proposed the possibility of an annual bulletin. Apparently the response to the idea was positive, for no objections were recorded in the minutes of the business session. After Lt. Colonel Milton S. Agnew of The Salvation Army and Dr. Wilber T. Dayton of Asbury Theological Seminary made suggestions about the financing of the venture, "(i)t was . . . moved and supported to refer the matter to the executive committee for a decision as to how the question of an annual bulletin can be resolved."⁵ Then in a question that indicated what the content would be, Professor Charles W. Carter of Marion College inquired if "the editorial board would have the right to select and edit papers presented on the conference floor for publishing." The minutes reveal that "(i)t was agreed that this was the function of this group."⁶

Obviously, the "question of an annual bulletin (was) resolved," for Professor Carter (editor from 1965 to 1972), assisted by an editorial committee,⁷ produced the first number of the Wesleyan Theological Journal, which appeared in the spring of 1966. The significance of this decision was later expressed by Professor Robert A. Mattke of Houghton College — Buffalo Campus, WTS president in 1971-1972: "The publication of an annual Journal continues to be one of the more significant contributions of the Wesleyan Theological Society to the Holiness Movement."⁸

Two years later, serious discussion commenced about cooperatively expanding the *WTJ* to a quarterly publication. An *ad hoc* committee, composed of representatives of the WTS, Asbury Theological Seminary, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Western Evangelical Seminary, and the Nazarene Publishing House,⁹ and chaired by Dr. W. T. Purkiser (editor from 1973 to 1975), met in the Heritage Center of the Nazarene Publishing House, Kansas City, Missouri, to consider the possibilities of such a journal. With a positive consensus emerging from this August 1974 consultation,¹⁰ a report was presented to the annual meeting of the WTS at Bethel College, Mishawaka, Indiana, on November 1 of that year and produced a favorable response.¹¹

The minutes of the annual meeting of the WTS at Circleville Bible College in 1975 recorded that "(j)oint publication of the Journal with the Seminaries was considered. Certain members spoke in favor of this."¹² With this brief reference, the consideration of a jointly-sponsored quarterly journal apparently moves out of sight and never returns to view in any official WTS documents.

Although, for whatever reasons, the quarterly publication of the journal under wider auspices did not materialize, the WTS did decide in the 1978 annual meeting at Mount Vernon Nazarene College at least to consider expanding the *WTJ* to two numbers per year, with the editorial committee also being instructed to look into the inclusion of "book reviews, research abstracts, responses to papers and other materials relevant to the purposes of the Society."¹³ Actually, the matter of book reviews had already been realized by the editor, Dr. Leon O. Hynson, in his report to the Society which met the preceding year at Huntington College in Indiana.¹⁴ This suggestion was adopted in 1980¹⁵ and implemented in the fall issue of 1981, with eighteen reviews having appeared since that time in five of the eight numbers that have been published up through Spring 1984. Also, flowing out of the 1978 directive to the editorial committee was the publishing of the responses to at least some of the major papers, a feature which commenced with the Spring 1981 number but which, in part at least, may have been prompted by the intense exchange of views regarding the relation of the baptism with the Holy Spirit to the experience of entire sanctification, which particularly surfaced in the issues extending from 1978 through 1980. The executive committee in its meeting on November 1, 1979, during the annual conference at Marion College, decided that with Volume 15 in 1980, two numbers of the Journal would be published.¹⁶ However, the enlargement apparently commenced immediately, because the fall issue (the second number) of Volume 14 for 1979 appeared in early 1980.

In a period which overlapped 1978 and 1979, there was particular effort expended to publicize the WTS and the *WTJ* in the two major magazines of American Protestantism; viz., *Christianity Today* and the *Christian Century* — unfortunately, not always with gratifying results due, on the one hand, to editorial procedures and, on the other hand, to space limitations.¹⁷ However, Dr. Hynson did mention in his 1978 editor's report that "(i)n his review of books in *Christianity Today* (September 8, 1978), p. 33, Donald Tinder refers to the 'important collection of essays' in the last *Wesleyan Theological Journal*." ¹⁸ Also Professor Donald Dayton, promotional secretary of the Society, was able to report that the material deleted from the *Christian Century* in 1979 — in which he "attempted to feature the work of the society in an essay on Holiness and Pentecostal churches," which included "specific information about the journal"¹⁹ — "was restored to the essay which will appear . . . in a book edited by Martin Marty, *Where the Spirit Leads* (Abingdon Press, 1980)."²⁰

Professor Dayton's promotional efforts in other directions have been more rewarding in the making of positive contacts with and participation in (along with other members of the WTS) the Oxford Institute of Methodist Studies in England and the John Wesley Theological Institute near Chicago — aspects of "networking that also have involved promotion of the *WTJ*."²¹ This has included the display of the *WTJ* at a meeting of the Ameri-

can Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature in a joint venture with other evangelical scholarly journals, with Dayton helping to staff the booth. In a letter from Allan Fisher, Baker Book House textbook editor who initiated the project, to Dr. Wayne Caldwell of Marion College and, from 1976 to 1984, secretary treasurer of the WTS, the comment was made that "this should give both your journal and your society greater visibility, and it will certainly add balance to the display" — an accurate remark, given the fact that the *WTJ* was the only journal featured which was Wesleyan-Arminian in orientation.²² Such visibility and balance was then and is now imperative for scholarly and ecclesiastical interaction with the academic and church world for, as Dayton noted:

In the last few years I have been drawn into certain "ecumenical" discussions where I have been able to represent the WTS and the CHA constituency to some extent. In this process I have discovered the alarming extent to which we are not even on the intellectual map of many church leaders. We tend to be lost amongst the Evangelicals or confused with the Pentecostals. We have only recently, for example, begun to be counted among the "world confessional bodies."²³

Although Dayton's 1983 comments focus on the need for the WTS to move out into and be correctly recognized by the larger ecclesiastical world, a converse concern was indicated as far back as 1975 in which Dr. Eldon Fuhrman of Wesley Biblical Center and Society president that year, "raised the question relative to inviting those of other theological positions to participate in W.T.S. conventions." Although the ensuing discussion during the business session revealed mixed reactions, the minutes state that a motion was passed "that the Program Committee be instructed to prepare guidelines for bringing scholars of other theological positions. Such scholars may be brought in next year, if the committee wishes to do so." In response to the question of Dr. Richard S. Taylor of Nazarene Theological Seminary that "if this procedure is followed, would the editorial committee have to include the papers in the Journal..., (t)he answer is no."²⁴

Whether or not the program committee did exercise its discretionary liberty to invite non Wesleyan scholars to participate in the 1976 annual meeting at the Houghton College — Buffalo Campus, there is no evidence that this kind of dialogue was pursued until the 1983 annual meeting at Anderson College and Graduate school of Theology, at which John Howard Yoder, a Mennonite scholar at the University of Notre Dame, provided a commentary from an Anabaptist perspective on a panel discussion of Wesley's "primitivism," and Dr. William Hasker, a member of the Disciples of Christ but a professor in Holiness oriented Huntington College, responded to a discussion of "Christian Holiness and the Problem of Systemic Evil" by Dr. Albert Truesdale of Nazarene Theological Seminary. Although Dr. Yoder's commentary has not yet appeared in the *WTJ*, Dr. Hasker's response was printed in the first number of Volume 19 for Spring 1984. At least we may say that there is no evidence of inter-confessional dialogue in the context of the WTS on the basis of what articles have appeared in the Journal since 1977 (which featured papers from the 1976 conference) up until the spring of 1984. Indication of a movement toward a more dialogical orientation in

the *WTJ* may be suggested in Number 2 of Volume 18 for the fall of 1983 in which there are some papers — none of which, however, was presented at a Society annual meeting — that are by scholars in non Wesleyan schools and/or were presented in non Holiness settings, but all of which do impinge on Wesleyan concerns.

The Precursors of Ferment

Having staked out the organizational parameters in which *the Wesleyan Theological Journal* was born and has matured, we can turn our attention to the thematic tone that was struck in the first issue of the Journal and the implications therein for the two major theological crises through which the Wesleyan Theological Society has gone and/or through which it may still be going. The first number of the *WTJ* occupies more than an obviously historical place in the WTS; it also enjoys a seminal status, in a way perhaps unrecognized in 1966, in the theological witness and movement of the Society. This proposition is rooted in the fact that the first number contains some of the basic, distinctive emphases of the Wesleyan Holiness Movement. This is apparent in the lead article, "Entire Sanctification as Taught in the Book of Romans."²⁵ In this essay, Dr. Wilber T. Dayton proposes that the characteristic Wesleyan focus on holiness as including "entire sanctification," which is stressed in the title, justifies, in a way legitimated by Scripture itself, the use of the term in Biblical contexts that do not explicitly employ that particular expression. Dayton's interpretive approach sets a hermeneutical tone and interfaces with the exegetical basis suggested for the various aspects of the Wesleyan understanding of holiness that spin off from the crucial term of "entire sanctification." But in doing this, there appears to be, even in the papers read at the first meeting of the WTS, a recognition and fear of a decreasing emphasis on the Wesleyan doctrine of perfect love. Thus, we may ask, although the expressed purpose of the founding of the Society was the creation of a forum for the scholarly study and presentation of the doctrine of Christian perfection as understood by John Wesley, is there implicitly present, also, the purpose of preserving, on a scholarly basis, a doctrine that is perceived to be receiving diminishing emphasis in the Holiness churches?

The late Kenneth Geiger, then general superintendent of the United Missionary Church, who, in the early 1960S presidentially led the National Holiness Association through a particularly productive theological period, commences his paper on "The Biblical Basis for the Doctrine of Holiness" with a reference to the inerrancy of the original autographs of Scripture, stating that "(t)his is the official position of the National Holiness Association and, *quite uniformly, the view of Wesleyan-Arminians everywhere.*"²⁶ This unequivocal pronouncement causes us to wonder if Geiger is speaking too emphatically and generally, for developments that occurred within the first three years of the founding of the WTS point away from such universality of agreement regarding Scripture. Also, the statement in reference to the NHA makes enigmatic the later affirmation of the WTS by the Association in a meeting occasioned by the decision of the Society to remove from its doctrinal statement the reference to Scripture as "inerrant in the originals."²⁷

Recalling Dr. Frank Baker's observation of the focus in the *WTJ* on the place of the Holy Spirit in the thought of John Wesley, Lt. Colonel Milton

S. Agnew's discussion of "The Works of the Holy Spirit," particularly in the section dealing with the relation of Pentecost to holiness and purity,²⁸ doubtless is a precursor of the intense and varied understandings of that connection in Wesley's theology which critically surfaced in the *WTJ* between 1978 and 1980. If these observations — made in light of the total historical context of the *WTJ* — are correct, then even in the first meeting of the Society and in the inaugural issue of its journal, we already see emerging two concerns which eventually become the most important areas of critical discussion thus far in the existence of the WTS and the *WTJ*.

THE FERMENT ERUPTS

Thematic Directions

But how is the thematic tone, which was created in *the Wesleyan Theological Journal*, worked out in the subsequent numbers in a way that both characterizes the Journal as distinctly Wesleyan Holiness and anticipates the theological crises mentioned above? Without doing so in terms of exact precision, yet, hopefully, not in an inaccurate and / or arbitrary manner, we may see the articles in Volume 1 (Spring 1966) through Volume 19 (Spring 1984) falling — sometimes in an overlapping way — under twelve basic rubrics. Let us survey each thematic category in terms of:

1. The number of authors involved (exclusive of those who made assigned responses, in order to keep the various emphases in correct, relative balance);
2. The number of denominations and schools which these authors represent;
3. The distribution of each thematic category by decades.

THEMATIC SURVEY OF THE WESLEYAN THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

Thematic Categories:	Writers:	Denominations:	Schools:	Decennial Distribution:
1. Wesley Himself	23	8	16	1966-69 — 5 1970-79 — 15 1980-84 — 5
2. Distinctive Wesleyan Emphases on Holiness ²⁹	37	9	18	1966-69 — 13 1970-79 — 14 1980-84 — 17
3. Scripture ³⁰	11	5	9	1966-69 — 4 1970-79 — 3 1980-84 — 5
4. The Holy Spirit ³¹	17	5	11	1966-69 — 4 1970-79 — 15 1980-84 — 3
5. The Wesleyan Movement and Evangelicalism	2	1	2	1980-84 — 2
6. Theological Roots of Wesleyanism	8	4	8	1966-69 — 1 1970-79 — 5 1980-84 — 3

7. Practical Theology	6	5	6	1966-69 — 1 1970-79 — 3 1980-84 — 2
8. Philosophical Issues	10	4	7	1966-69 — 1 1970-79 — 6 1980-84 — 3
9. Contemporary Theology	8	6	5	1970-79 — 2 1980-84 — 8
10. Wesleyan Perspectives on Various Doctrines and Theological Disciplines	16	5	10	1966-69 — 2 1970-79 — 4 1980-84 — 10
11. Historical Issues	12	6	11	1970-79 — 9 1980-84 — 6
12. Miscellaneous Topics	5	4	5	1966-69 — 1 1970-79 — 1 1980-84 — 3

A rough composite of this tabulation indicates that of the 155 contributors (some of whom wrote more than one article, which would thereby make the actual figure lower), the following representations ranked the highest regarding denominations and schools:

The Four Denominations with the Largest Representations:

1. Church of the Nazarene—	57 contributors
2. The Wesleyan Church—	38 contributors
3. The United Methodist Church—	23 contributors
4. Free Methodist Church—	14 contributors

The Four Schools with the Largest Representations:

1. Asbury Theological Seminary—	26 contributors
2. Nazarene Theological Seminary—	21 contributors
3. Houghton College—	6 contributors
4. Marion College—	5 contributors

With the exception of The United Methodist Church (which is not a member of the CHA), the denominational distribution of authors reflects the relative numerical strength of the other three churches in the CHA. The distribution of schools reflects the relative size of each institution. The composite findings also indicate that of the articles contributed by those representing the top four schools in terms of participation, a noticeable majority were written by those teaching at the graduate level; however, in the total tabulation, a majority of the essays were prepared by those teaching in undergraduate settings. The other nine denominations represented are the Brethren in Christ, Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), Church of God (Holiness), Evangelical Congregational Church, Evangelical Methodist Church, Friends Church, Korean Holiness Church, The Missionary Church (which includes the former United Missionary Church), and The Salvation Army.

The forty-two schools represented, by affiliation, in the *WTJ*, are:

Brethren in Christ: Messiah College.

Church of God (Anderson, Indiana): Anderson College and Graduate School of Theology.

Church of God (Holiness): Kansas City Bible College.

Church of the Nazarene: Nazarene Theological Seminary, Bethany Nazarene College, Canadian Nazarene College, Eastern Nazarene College, Mount Vernon Nazarene College, Olivet Nazarene College, Point Loma Nazarene College, Trevecca Nazarene College, Nazarene Bible College.

Church of the United Brethren in Christ: Huntington College.

Evangelical Congregational Church: Evangelical School of Theology.

Free Methodist Church of North America: Seattle Pacific University Spring Arbor College.

Korean Holiness Church: Oriental Missionary Society Theological Seminary (Seoul, Korea).

The Missionary Church: Bethel College (Mishawaka, Indiana) Fort Wayne Bible College.

Religious Society of Friends: Friends Bible College.

The Salvation Army: New York School for Officers' Training.

The Wesleyan Church (which is a merger of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Pilgrim Holiness Church): Central Wesleyan College, Houghton College, Marion College, Miltonvale College, United Wesleyan College.

Independent-Holiness-Oriented: Asbury Theological Seminary, Wesley Biblical Center, Western Evangelical Seminary, Asbury College, Azusa Pacific University, Taylor University, Vennard College.

Non-Wesleyan: North Park Theological Seminary, Randolph-Macon College, Whitworth College.

Private - Non-Church-Related: The Johns Hopkins University.

State Schools: Illinois State University, State University of New York — Buffalo, University of Louisville, University of Massachusetts.

This thematic overview provides the larger framework within which to pinpoint the two areas which have been the most crucial in the history of the WTS: (1) the problem of Biblical inerrancy/infallibility and (2) the debate over the relation of the expression "baptism with the Holy Spirit" to the central Wesleyan distinctive of "entire sanctification." As proposed above, both controversies were anticipated — no doubt without design — in the seminal, inaugural issue of the *WTJ* in the spring of 1966 and periodically have surfaced in varying degrees of intensity throughout the Journal. However, an understanding of the discussion requires a contextual awareness which is found only in the various official papers of the Society, which, at the time the research for this paper was conducted, were at Marion College, but now are deposited at Asbury Theological Seminary.

The Problem of the Nature of Scripture

The extended reflection on the nature of Scripture commenced during the business session at the first annual meeting of the Wesleyan Theological Society in a way that (1) addressed the integrating center and purpose of the Society — the scholarly consideration of the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection; (2) impinged on the doctrinal statement of the Society and its developing articulation in the Journal; and (3) helped to clarify and establish the nature of the relationship of the WTS to the National Holiness Association/Christian Holiness Association. The crucial question which precipitated all this concerned the commitment to Biblical "infallibility" as a condition for membership in the WTS.³²

The debate about the nature of the Bible centered as much, or more, in the problematic concept of "inerrancy," for two years after the historic discussion in the first business meeting of the WTS the third annual conference of the Society at Malone College in 1967 included a panel discussion on "Biblical Inerrancy." Moderated by Dr. Richard S. Taylor, immediate past president of the WTS, the panel involved three presentations: "Facing Objections Raised Against Biblical Inerrancy" (Dr. W. Ralph Thompson, Spring Arbor College), "The Concept of the Universal in Relation to Biblical Inerrancy" (Dr. Stephen W. Paine, president of Houghton College), and "Theology and Biblical Inerrancy" (Dr. Wilber T. Dayton).³³ The first and third papers, preceded by the essay of Dr. William M. Arnett, Asbury Theological Seminary, on "John Wesley and the Bible," appeared in the Spring 1968 issue of the *WTJ*.

A pivotal sequel to this is that two years after the 1967 conference, Dr. Thompson concluded his 1968-1969 report as secretary treasurer of the Society with this conciliatory appeal:

Considerable discussion has taken place on the subject of Biblical inerrancy. Those who know me best know that I tend to take a stand in favor of the doctrine.... Many of my brethren do not see the matter as I do; yet they appear to believe as strongly as I do in the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures.... I wonder if a position which we hold but cannot prove should debar from membership in this Society those whose minds do not operate exactly as ours. Let us be exceedingly careful lest we take any step that will weaken our position with respect to the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. But if a change in the wording in our doctrinal statement could be made that would protect our position and at the same time respect that of our brethren whose intellectual honesty will not allow them to subscribe to our statement, I recommend that such an action be taken.³⁴

The statement to which Dr. Thompson referred and which was found in the first issue of the *WTJ*, said: "We believe.... That both Old and New Testaments constitute the divinely inspired Word of God, inerrant in the originals, and the final authority for life and truth."³⁵ The problem was that prior to 1970 no *official* doctrinal statement was possible because the WTS did not have a constitution. Rather, the Society had a doctrinal statement of mutual agreement which served it up through 1969.³⁶ But at the 1969 annual conference at Marion College, a constitution was adopted in which the doctrinal affirmation of Scripture was revised to read:

We believe.... In the plenary dynamic and unique inspiration of the Bible as the divine Word of God, the only infallible (i.e., "absolutely trustworthy and unfailing in effectiveness or operation" — RHD), sufficient and authoritative rule of faith and practice.³⁷

The adoption of an official constitution with its revised statement on Scripture — which first appeared in the 1970 edition of the *WTJ* — necessitated discussion with the National Holiness Association regarding the facile relationship of the WTS to the Association. Thus Dr. Charles W. Carter, editor of the *WTJ*, met with the executive committee of the NHA during the Association's Implementation Conference on Cooperative Ministries in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 7-9, 1970. The importance and clarifying function of this meeting was indicated by Dr. Carter in "An Open Letter to the WTS Membership" in the 1971 issue of the *Journal*:

After due consideration by all members present, including Dr. Leo Cox and other founders of the WTS. . . , the consensus appeared to prevail that an *assumed* relationship had existed between the WTS and the NHA for which there appeared never to have been any official action taken. The WTS had indeed borrowed unofficially, and printed in its annual *Journals* certain

doctrinal statements as general guidelines for its organization, from the NHA Constitution.³⁸

The doctrinal and organizational result of this meeting is recorded in the annual meeting minutes of the WTS for November 6, 1970:

The primary purpose of that meeting, (Dr. Carter) said, was to discuss the wording of the doctrinal statement relating to the Scriptures which is contained in the Constitution that was adopted by this Society at its last annual conference. Complete approval of the Wesleyan Theological Society's action, he said, was given by the National Holiness Association's Executive Committee.... Dr. Carter's report to (WTS president) Dr. (Ralph) Perry dealt not only with the doctrinal statement in the Constitution but with the relationship of the WTS to the NHA. The NHA Executive Committee, however, expressed its desire, he said, that the WTS be a commission of the NHA with full responsibility for the NHA doctrinal seminars and for any publications which NHA should authorize.³⁹

This revised expression of the doctrinal statement on Scripture continued to appear in each number of the *WTJ* until, following the revision of the Constitution on November 4, 1978, the statement underwent some modification, so that since 1979 it has appeared thus in the *WTJ*:

We believe.... In the plenary and unique inspiration of the Bible as the divine Word of God, the only infallible, sufficient, and authoritative rule of faith and practice.⁴⁰

Although the debate over the doctrinal expression about Scripture appears largely to have subsided, the publication of two articles in the 1981 numbers of the *WTJ* — "John Wesley's Approach to Scripture in Historical Perspective," by Dr. R. Larry Shelton of Seattle Pacific University,⁴¹ and "Early Wesleyan Views of Scripture," by Professor Daryl McCarthy of Kansas City Bible College⁴² — indicate that some kind of tension over this issue may still continue to exist in the Society. A viewing of these two historically oriented articles in light of the more theologically slanted essays by Thompson and Dayton in 1968 suggests that the problem in the debate is about the form and content of Scripture: "inerrancy" is related primarily to the *form* and "infallibility" to the *content*. All seem to agree that the content is infallible — but what is the relation of infallible content to inerrant *form*? Are any aspects of the form errant in terms of history, science, and geography? Is the nature of Biblical authority affected if one does not perceive perfect correspondence between *content* (which all writers in the *WTJ* apparently agree is salvifically and doctrinally infallible) and *form* (which all writers may not agree is inerrant historically, scientifically, and geographically)?

But whatever theological developments may be present in this spectrum of articles regarding Biblical authority, a central issue appears to involve the search for an epistemological base that is historically sensitive (one which does not read twentieth century presuppositions back into the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries) and a theological articulation that does not involve Wesleyans in matters that are not central to the essence of Biblical authority.

Whether or not the membership is unanimous in its reaction to such questions, the present doctrinal statement suggests that the more adequate confessional response is felt to be in terms of "infallibility" rather than "inerrancy." Thus, for whatever reason, although the early Journal expressions of Biblical authority seem to come down on the side of inerrancy, it appears that the preference for infallibility over inerrancy, as recorded in the minutes of the executive and plenary business sessions of the WTS, prevailed in terms of official doctrinal confession in the *WTJ*. Further — and perhaps just as important — the attempt to wrestle with a problem that is not uniquely Wesleyan from the perspective of Wesleyan presuppositions and within a historical context shaped by Wesleyan precedents points to a healthy sense of identity and a developing theological maturity in the American Holiness tradition.⁴³

The Problem of Expressing the Doctrine of Entire Sanctification in Pneumatological Language

Although the factors which make up the complex structure of the second basic crisis in the history of the Wesleyan Theological Society had been present since at least 1970 and possibly reach back to Lt. Colonel Milton S. Agnew's article in the first issue of the *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, they began to come together in a rather explicit way in 1972 and 1973. For during the business session of the 1972 annual conference, Dr. Delbert Rose of Asbury Theological Seminary and Program chairman

expressed to the body his desire for suggestions concerning creative things which the WTS might do during the coming year. In a response George Turner (of Asbury Theological Seminary) suggested a panel on the subject of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, with Reformed, Pentecostal, and Wesleyan representation and participation.⁴⁴

The following year, Dr. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, theologian-in-residence at Nazarene Theological Seminary, reported to the WTS membership during the annual conference at Asbury Theological Seminary that "(the plan ... (for) the doctrinal seminar at C.H.A.... is to deal with the Holy Spirit in relation to sanctification."⁴⁵ Could it be that these two proposals were prompted by and cast light on each other because of the provocative paper presented by the Reverend Herbert McGonigle, a British Nazarene pastor-scholar, at the 1972 conference? For by his essay (which appeared in the 1973 volume of the *WTJ*), McGonigle possibly was the first in an annual meeting — certainly the first in the *WTJ* — to raise the issue about whether the Wesleyan use of pneumatological terminology in relation to entire sanctification finds a precedent in Wesley and early Methodism.⁴⁶

Whether or not Pastor McGonigle's address was at least part of the occasion for the above mentioned program emphases, the climate of the WTS in the early 1970s was characterized by a gradually increasing interest — from historical, Biblical and theological perspectives — in the relation between the terminology of Pentecost and the experience of entire sanctification. This was becoming definitely evident by the time of the 1976 annual conference in Buffalo, New York, for at that conference two things transpired which, in the larger context of this issue, have more than a tangential relationship.

First, the late Dean Willard H. Taylor of Nazarene Theological Seminary affirmed, on exegetical grounds, that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a "promise of grace" which effects the sanctifying purpose of God as part of the full redemptive message of the gospel.⁴⁷ Second, during the executive committee meeting the day preceding Dr. Taylor's presentation, Professor Donald Dayton conveyed

the interest of Timothy Smith in presenting a paper at the 1977 meeting that would reflect his most recent study of questions of the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the 19th century. A possible format of a corresponding paper or response by Don Dayton was discussed.⁴⁸

That format was eventually approved, for in a letter referring to those who had committed themselves to present papers during the 1977 conference at Mount Vernon Nazarene College, Dr. Melvin E. Dieter of Asbury Theological Seminary and program chairman said that "(t)he Smith Dayton papers should be very significant."⁴⁹ This comment written to Dr. W. Ralph Thompson was more prophetic than Dr. Dieter probably realized at the time, for with the 1977 conference that which had been an enlarging stream of interest reached cascade proportions which poured forth from the *WTJ* from 1978 through at least 1980. This controversial atmosphere was sensed in the editor's report of Lee M. Haines in November 1979:

This has been a challenging year to the Editorial Committee. We stepped into the middle of an on-going two-year discussion of the historical theological and exegetical theological developments of Wesleyan thought, particularly as these related to the use of Holy Spirit baptism terminology. A new Editor and one new committee member assumed office at the close of last year's annual meeting in which significant differences of opinion had been expressed, and the Committee faced the responsibility of publishing papers which had already provoked questions and other papers were expected to be written in response. The latter expectation was due to the bold move by the Society to publish two numbers of the Journal rather than one for the first time in its history.⁵⁰

Without attempting to be evaluative, we may observe the direction which this debate took in the pages of the *WTJ*. The movement of the exchange led from (1) the affirmation of the baptism with the Holy Spirit as indeed related to entire sanctification (Mattke, 1979)⁵¹ to (2) whether or not Wesley himself and the early Methodists made such a connection (McGonigle, 1973), to (3) a defense of making the association largely in reference (a) to the American Holiness tradition rather than to Wesley (Rose, 1974)⁵² and (b) to Scripture (Taylor, 1977). With its rootage located between (a) and (b) there was (4) consideration of why the connection was made in the American Holiness Movement, particularly in terms of Oberlin's Asa Mahan and Charles G. Finney, as well as in reference to the historical and theological significance of the shift toward the association (Dayton, 1974).⁵³ This line of approach (5) was expanded in 1978 (Knight, Coppedge, Hamilton, Smith and Dayton)⁵⁴ to debating (6) whether it was consistent with Scripture and

early Wesleyan tradition to relate the baptism with the Spirit with the experience of perfect love (Spring 1979: Lyon, Deasley, Turner and Wynkoop; Fall 1979: Agnew, Arnett, Grider and Wood; Spring 1980: Smith and Wood Fan 1980: Grider and Lyon).⁵⁵ No consensus has yet been reached nor has a synthesis emerged — either during the annual conferences or in the *Journal* — from the diverse angles of the debate. Thus the issue apparently lies where it was in the Fall 1980 number of the *Wesleyan Theological Journal*.

Summary and Conclusion

In summarily comparing the two major doctrinal crises which the Wesleyan Theological Society has encountered in the first twenty years of its history and which have been expressed both in its journal and of ficial papers, we may make at least two observations: (1) The first crisis, regarding Scripture, was a philosophical one with historical overtones and theological consequences. (2) The debate over the relation of Spirit baptism to Christian perfection was a hermeneutical one — both Biblically and historically — which bore profound theological significance for the Wesleyan Holiness tradition in North America. But as disturbing as these debates and controversies may have been to the constituency of the WTS and the readers of the *WTJ*, they are empirical evidence for Dr. Frank Baker's assessment of the *Wesleyan Theological Journal*. It is "(o)ne sight of the theological ferment" in the current study of John Wesley and the variegated movement that bears his name.

NOTES

1. Frank Baker, "Unfolding John Wesley: A Survey of Twenty Years' Studies in Wesley's Thought," *Quarterly Review*, Advance Edition (Fall 1980): 44-45.

2. Dr. William M. Arnett (Methodist), Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Ky.; Dr. Leo G. Cox (Wesleyan Methodist), Marion College, Marion, Ind.; Dr. Wilber T. Dayton (Wesleyan Methodist), Asbury Theological Seminary; Professor Merne Harris (Wesleyan Methodist), Vennard College, University Park, Iowa; and Dr. W. Ralph Thompson (Free Methodist), Spring Arbor College, Spring Arbor, Mich. Source: Dr. Leo G. Cox, interview with author, Marion, Ind., November 15, 1984.

3. Ibid

4. Seventy-nine full members (holding B.D., M.A., Th.M., Th.D., or Ph.D. degrees), nine associate members and four student members. Source: Dr. Wayne E. Caldwell, secretary treasurer of the Wesleyan Theological Society, letter to author, October 7, 1982.

5. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Spring Arbor, Mich., November 5, 1965, p. 3.

6. Ibid Cf. "Editorial Policy for the 'Wesleyan Theological Journal,' " *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 18 (Fall 1983): 113.

"1. In selecting materials to be included in the Journal the Editorial Committee shall give preference to papers assigned for and presented at the annual meetings of the Wesleyan Theological Society and the WTS seminar at the annual convention of the Christian Holiness Association.

"5. For assigned papers, the Editor and one additional member of the Editorial Committee have the authority to ask for a response for a paper by another scholar, or they may decline to publish an assigned paper.

"6. For papers voluntarily submitted for publication, it shall require a majority of the Editorial Committee to approve publication."

7. Dr. Arthur M. Climenhaga (Brethren in Christ), Dr. Wilber T. Dayton (Wesleyan Methodist) and the Reverend Armor D. Peisker, M.A. (Pilgrim Holiness). Wesleyan Theological Journal 1 (Spring 1966): outside back cover.

8 Wesleyan Theological Society president's report to the Christian Holiness Association board of administration, 104th annual meeting of the Christian Holiness Association, Indianapolis, Ind., April 4-7, 1972, p. 1.

9. Representatives: Wesleyan Theological Society: Dr. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, president; Dr. W. T. Purkiser, editor. Asbury Theological Seminary: Dr. Donald Joy. Nazarene Theological Seminary: Dr. William M. Greathouse, president; Dr. Willard H. Taylor, dean; Dr. Paul M. Bassett; Dr. Harvey Finley. Western Evangelical Seminary: Dr. Leo Thornton, president. Nazarene Publishing House: Bud Lunn, manager; J. Fred Parker, book editor and secretary of the committee. Source: Minutes of the ad hoc committee, Kansas City, Mo., August 22, 1974.

10. Ibid.

11. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Mishawaka, Ind., November 1, 1974.

12. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Circleville, Ohio, November 7, 1975.

13. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Mount Vernon, Ohio, November 3, 1978, p. 3.

14. Editor's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Huntington, Ind., November 2, 1977.

15. Executive committee minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Kansas City, Mo., November 6, 1980.

16. Executive committee minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Marion, Ind., November 1, 1979.

17. Donald Dayton, promotional secretary's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Mount Vernon, Ohio, November 3, 1978, and Marion, Ind., November 2, 1979.

18. Editor's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Mount Vernon, Ohio, November 2, 1978.

19. Promotional secretary's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Marion, Ind., November 2, 1979.

20. Promotional secretary's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Kansas City, Mo., November 7, 1980.

21. Promotional secretary's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Wilmore, Ky., November 6, 1981, and Colorado Springs, Colo., November 4, 1982. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Colorado Springs, Colo., November 4, 1982, p. 2.

22. Promotional secretary's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Wilmore, Ky., November 6, 1981, p.2. Letter: Allan Fisher to Wayne E. Caldwell, July 2, 1981.

23. Promotional secretary's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Atlanta, Georgia, November 2, 1984, p. 2.

24. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Circleville, Ohio, November 8, 1975.

25. Wilber T. Dayton, "Entire Sanctification as Taught in the Book of Romans," Wesleyan Theological Journal 1 (Spring 1966): 1-10.

26. Kenneth E. Geiger, "The Biblical Basis for the Doctrine of Holiness," Wesleyan Theological Journal 1 (Spring 1966): 43, italics added.

27. Wesleyan Theological Journal 4 (Spring 1969): inside back cover.

28. Lt.-Colonel Milton S. Agnew, "The Works of the Holy Spirit," Wesleyan Theological Journal 1 (Spring 1966): 37ff.

29. The single largest sub-division in this category is on the "ethical," which reflects Wesley's focus on perfect love as his theological center. Although various kinds of references to the experience may be peppered throughout the Journal, only two articles in this category specifically treat the crisis aspect of entire sanctification — a surprisingly small number given the fact that holiness as a crisis subsequent to conversion is a central distinctive in the Wesleyan Holiness Movement. Only four articles in the category are devoted specifically to the doctrine of sin — again a surprising tabulation since it is its doctrine of sin that helps the Wesleyan Movement define its primary focus on entire sanctification as cleansing from inbred sin. Twelve articles deal with the Biblical basis of holiness.

30. This category will be of particular importance later in the paper as a basis for touching on the first major theological crisis that confronted the WTS.

31. This category will be of particular importance later in the paper as a basis for touching on the second major theological crisis that confronted the WTS.

32. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Spring Arbor, Mich., November 4, 1966.

33. Program brochure for the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, November 1967.
34. Secretary-treasurer's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, November 1967.
35. Wesleyan Theological Journal 1 (Spring 1966): inside back cover.
36. Charles W. Carter, interview with author, Marion, Ind., November 14, 1984.
37. Wesleyan Theological Journal 5 (Spring 1970): inside back cover. "RHD" refers to Random House Dictionary, Carter interview.
38. Charles W. Carter, "An Open Letter to the WTS Membership," Wesleyan Theological Journal 6 (Spring 1971): 94.
39. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, November 6, 1970, pp. 1-2.
40. Wesleyan Theological Journal 14-19 (Spring 1979-Spring 1984): inside back cover.
41. R. Larry Shelton, "John Wesley's Approach to Scripture in Historical Perspective," Wesleyan Theological Journal 16 (Spring 1981): 23-50.
42. Daryl McCarthy, "Early Wesleyan Views of Scripture," Wesleyan Theological Journal 16 (Fall 1981) 95-105.
43. Further Journal evidence of this salutary growth is seen directly in John E. Hartley, "Old Testament Studies in the Wesleyan Mode," Wesleyan Theological Journal 17 (Spring 1982): 58-76, and Sherrill F. Munn, "A Response to the Paper Presented by John E. Hartley," Wesleyan Theological Journal 17 (Spring 1982): 77-84 — in a less direct manner in Paul Bassett "The Fundamentalist Leavening of the Holiness Movement: 1914-1940," Wesleyan Theological Journal 13 (Spring 1978): 65-91.
44. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, November 3, 1972.
45. Annual meeting minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Wilmore, Ky., November 2, 1973.
46. Herbert McGonigle, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," Wesleyan Theological Journal 8 (Spring 1973): 61-72.
47. "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Promise of Grace or Judgment?" paper read by Willard H. Taylor at the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, November 5, 1976. Brochure of the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Buffalo, N.Y., November 4-5, 1976. Printed, Wesleyan Theological Journal 12 (Spring 1977): 16-25.
48. Executive committee minutes, Wesleyan Theological Society, Buffalo, N.Y., November 4, 1976.
49. Letter, Melvin E. Dieter to W. Ralph Thompson, March 16, 1977.

50. Editor's report to the annual meeting, Wesleyan Theological Society, Marion, Ind., November 1979.

51. Robert A. Mattke, "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit as Related to the Work of Entire Sanctification," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 5 (Spring 1970): 22-32.

52. Delbert R. Rose, "Distinguishing Things that Differ," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 9 (Spring 1974): 5-14.

53. Donald W. Dayton, "Asa Mahan and the Development of American Holiness Theology," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 9 (Spring 1974): 60-69.

54. John A. Knight, "John Fletcher's Influence on the Development of Wesleyan Theology in America," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 13 (Spring 1978): 13-33. Allan Coppedge, "Entire Sanctification in Early American Methodism: 1812-1835," *ibid.*, pp. 34-50. James E. Hamilton, "Nineteenth Century Philosophy and Holiness Theology: A Study in the Thought of Asa Mahan," *ibid.*, pp. 51-64. Timothy L. Smith, "The Doctrine of the Sanctifying Spirit: Charles G. Finney's Synthesis of Wesleyan and Covenant Theology," *ibid.*, pp. 92-113. Donald W. Dayton, "The Doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Its Emergence and Significance," *ibid.*, pp. 114-126.

55. Robert W. Lyon, "Baptism and Spirit-Baptism in the New Testament," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 14 (Spring 1979): 14-26. Alex R. G. Deasley, "Entire Sanctification and the Baptism with the Holy Spirit: Perspectives on the Biblical View of the Relationship," *ibid.*, pp. 27-44. George Allen Turner, "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit in the Wesleyan Tradition," *ibid.*, pp. 60-76. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, "Theological Roots of the Wesleyan Understanding of the Holy Spirit," *ibid.*, pp. 77-98.

Milton S. Agnew, "Baptized with the Spirit," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 14 (Fall 1979): 7-14. William M. Arnett, "The Role of the Holy Spirit in Entire Sanctification in the Writings of John Wesley," *ibid.*, pp. 15-31. J. Kenneth Grider, "Spirit-Baptism the Means of Entire Sanctification," *ibid.*, pp. 31-50. Laurence W. Wood, "Exegetical-Theological Reflections on the Baptism with the Holy Spirit," *ibid.*, pp. 51-63. Timothy L. Smith, "How John Fletcher Became the Theologian of Wesleyan Perfectionism, 1770-1776," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 15 (Spring 1980): 68-87. Laurence W. Wood, "Thoughts upon the Wesleyan Doctrine of Entire Sanctification with Special Reference to Some Similarities with the Roman Catholic Doctrine of Confirmation," *ibid.*, pp. 88-99. J. Kenneth Grider, "Evaluation of Timothy Smith's Interpretation of Wesley," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 15 (Fall 1980): 64-69. Robert W. Lyon, "The Baptism with the Spirit-Continued," *ibid.*, pp. 70-79.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Scripture Principle, by Clark H. Pinnock. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984. 230 pp. \$15.45. Reviewed by Randy L. Maddox, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Religion, Sioux Falls College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Conservative Wesleyans will find Pinnock's update of his views on Biblical authority to be quite instructive. However, let them be warned at the beginning that it is not a good first introduction to discussions of the nature of Biblical authority and inerrancy. (For such an introduction it is still hard to improve on Robert Johnston's *Evangelicals at an Impasse* [John Knox, 1979]). Rather, *The Scripture Principle* is Pinnock's highly-nuanced articulation of a constructive position that he hopes will mediate many of the ongoing debates over these issues.

Pinnock's primary concern in this articulation is to defend the full authority and trustworthiness of the Bible against the tendency of those Christians who either limit or dismiss this authority. However, he is equally concerned to reject the oversimplifications and false dichotomies that he finds in fundamentalist appeals to verbal inerrancy in a defense of the Bible's authority. Indeed, he suggests that such inadequate defenses of the authority of Scripture have contributed indirectly to the rejection of Biblical authority he is fighting on the other side.

It is this sensitivity to the weakness of the typical inerrancy position (including that of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy) that constitutes the strength of Pinnock's present book, distinguishing it from even his own earlier work. Put briefly, Pinnock now argues that those who defend inerrancy all-too-often undervalue the humanity of Scripture and the work of the Holy Spirit. As such, he develops his alternative articulation in three sections dealing with Scripture as The Word of God (I), in Human Words (II), functioning as the Sword of the Spirit (III).

Pinnock's central argument in the section on the Word of God is that Scripture claims for itself authority as the revelation of God's Word and that the contemporary tendency to reject this claim ultimately undercuts all Christian truth claims because it removes their nonobjective basis. He concludes that the affirmation that authority for Christian life and thought lies ultimately in the Bible (the Scripture Principle) is essential to Christian belief. Obviously, the targets of this argument are "liberals."

Woven throughout this section, however, is an equally important

argument with fundamentalists namely, that the Scripture Principle does not necessarily commit us to a detailed inerrancy view of Scripture. Indeed, Pinnock argues that the affirmation of detailed inerrancy: 1) is usually grounded more in a sensed *need* for an unquestioned authority than in the claims of Scripture (58); 2) is based more on a (false) deductive argument about the nature of God than on inductive study of the Bible itself (57); 3) is an unwarranted imposition of a *modern* definition of truth upon Scripture (40); and 4) can be defended only by very strained arguments (137); because, 5) a truly inductive study of Scripture itself reveals a more flexible and functional understanding of its authority and truth (57-60).

This more functional understanding focuses on the claim that Scripture reliably communicates to us the way to know and love God in Christ (60). Such a definition should prove amenable to most conservative Wesleyans, who have typically talked about Scripture's authority as focused in "matters of faith and practice." The distinctive element of Pinnock here is his argument that such a focus of Scripture's authority is not an arbitrary imposition, but can be demonstrated to be the intention of Scripture itself. In that sense, he can say that Scripture is totally reliable, even inerrant, in everything it *teaches* and *affirms* (78) while admitting it may make "errors" in details that do not affect its practical intention.

In his second section Pinnock's focal concern is the human side of Scripture. He notes that the sensitivity to this side of the Bible has been particularly heightened by contemporary scholarly analysis of Scripture. He is very aware of how some have been influenced by this awareness to see Scripture as merely human. He repeatedly argues that such a move is unwarranted. However, his primary concern is to resist the conservative tendency, by way of response, to deny or undervalue the human side of Scripture.

Drawing on classical categories of incarnation and accommodation, Pinnock argues that we must be willing to accept the type of revelation that God has chosen to give rather than demanding the type we think God should have given. For Pinnock, this means a recognition that revelation was progressive (111), that it comes in a variety of literary forms (118) and that it sometimes even comes to us via legends etc. (125). In these recognitions Pinnock comes to terms with modern Biblical scholarship much more than in his earlier work.

Perhaps the most interesting point, for Wesleyans, that Pinnock makes in this section is the claim that a dictation approach to inspiration which he argues is implicit to a detailed inerrancy viewpoint-is a logical, if not necessary, outgrowth of the tendency of Calvinistic orthodoxy to construe all God's actions in terms of total divine control. Pinnock rejects such a tendency (see p. 7) and argues that a more "resistible" view of God's power will lead to a more positive appreciation of the human side of the Bible (101-3).

The final section of the book argues for a dynamic relationship between the Spirit and the Word. Here again Pinnock must fight on two fronts. He is obviously concerned not to affirm an authority for the Spirit that is separate from that of the Word. However, he is even more concerned to help conservatives recover a proper appreciation of the work of the Spirit in understanding and applying the truths of Scripture. He believes that the conservative defense of the "objective" truths of Scripture all too often leads

them to undervalue this work. Despite their emphasis on the work of the Spirit in other areas, conservative Wesleyans are prone as well to this weakness.

Clearly, *The Scripture Principle* is an important work that will be of help to all who struggle to understand and affirm the authority of the Bible. It will be of particular help to those who struggle to integrate a strong affirmation of the authority of Scripture with an openness to the human side of Scripture revealed in modern Biblical scholarship. It is not, however, without its problems.

In the first place, there is an unevenness of tone to the book. At times it is a model of the balance between faith and critical freedom. At other times it erupts in piques of fideistic exaggeration that leave one wondering what Pinnock really believes. To cite one example, Pinnock argues in some detail that there is a positive side to Biblical criticism (89ff) but then boldly asserts that the authority of Scripture lies in "the Bible unaffected by criticism" (66).

Secondly, Pinnock seems to assume that one can reestablish the authority of Scripture (the Scripture Principle) simply by defending the identification of the Word of God and the Bible (62). Surely the recent history of the ICBI has shown this is not true, for they can agree on affirming this identity but often radically disagree about how to use this Scripture authoritatively to deal with current issues (*See Christianity Today*, Feb. 20, 1987, pp. 14-15). Ultimately, we would agree that the present crisis of the Scripture principle is more one of hermeneutics — how to use Scripture as an authority — than one of simply denying Scripture as an authority. At the heart of this hermeneutical crisis is the question of how one can distinguish between what in Scripture is the normative Word of God and what is the relative human situation. Pinnock is aware of this problem (109) but provides no guidelines for how to deal with it.

Thirdly, Pinnock retains the basic "foundationalist" presupposition of fundamentalism, even if he has nuanced it. That is, he seems to accept their assumption that we must be able to *prove* Scripture is reliable or its authority will be called into question. Here we would suggest he still does not accept broadly enough the work of the Spirit. He limits that work to understanding and applying Scripture. He never takes seriously Calvin's claim that it is actually the witness of the Spirit that is the ground of the authority of Scripture (cf., 53).

Finally, there is Pinnock's perplexing argument for *retaining* the term "inerrancy" for his position. His argument that the term is flexible enough to fit his position that Scripture does not lead us astray in what it affirms and teaches seems strained (77). Others who use that term will surely not recognize his definition as fitting (cf. Carl F. H. Henry, *Christianity Today*, Feb. 1, 1985, p. 68). Likewise, we fail to see why this term necessarily is a better metaphor for expressing a determination to trust God's Word than other possibilities like infallibility (225).

Frankly, Pinnock seems to tip his hand when he argues that the adoption of this term is an "operational policy" (77). He seems to have conceded to the game that Gerald Sheppard has branded "the politics of biblical inerrancy" (*Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 32 [1977]: 81-94); i.e., using the approved password to placate a constituency even though one might not agree with their understanding of the meaning of the term. Such an operational strategy could only be acceptable if the matter did not truly make

a difference. Pinnock apparently believes such is the case. We cannot agree. Rather, we would suggest that arguments over inerrancy are one more result of the Enlightenment adoption of a scientific mindset whose rationalistic and literalistic constraints have greatly impoverished Christian theology, worship and life. Fortunately, we are beginning to see this mindset overcome in other areas of Christian life and thought. To follow Pinnock's advised operational practice would only hamper these advances.

All in all, Pinnock provides us with the most nuanced and critically aware exposition of Biblical inerrancy available. However, one cannot help but feel that he has had to so qualify the basic paradigm of inerrancy that the time has come for a paradigm shift-to a model of truth that deals with personal fidelity rather than scientific accuracy.

The Church: An Inquiry into Ecclesiology from a Biblical Theological Perspective, ed. Melvin E. Dieter and Daniel N. Berg (Wesleyan Theological Perspectives, Vol. IV). Anderson, Indiana: Warner Press, 1984. Pp. Viii + 499. Reviewed by Thomas Haverly, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Religion, Eastern Nazarene College, Quincy, Mass.

A Presbyterian friend once summed up his estimate of John Wesley's place in theological history, "Oh, Wesley had some great ideas about small groups." Ironically, his condescending remark touches an area in which Wesley and the Wesleyan tradition, it would seem, have had little distinctive to say namely, Ecclesiology. The Wesleyan Holiness movement itself is subdivided into denominations (and associations which refuse that term) whose forms of church government range from episcopal to congregational. This concretely confirms the impression of indistinctiveness.

On the other hand, this situation may reflect something quite accurate about Wesleyanism, a relativizing of ecclesiastical structure. Wesleyan theology then may have a genuine contribution for thorny issues of Protestant and current ecumenical Ecclesiology. One therefore opens volume four of the Wesleyan Theological Perspectives series, entitled *The Church: An Inquiry into Ecclesiology from a Biblical Theological Perspective*, edited by Melvin E. Dieter and Daniel N. Berg, with both curiosity about what Ecclesiology or Ecclesiology will emerge, and hope that Wesleyan evangelical thought may benefit the life of the larger Christian church.

The article that in my opinion most clearly expressed the "Wesleyan perspective" was that of Clarence Bence, "Salvation and the Church; the Ecclesiology of John Wesley." He stated that Wesley's was a "functional" Ecclesiology, the function being determined soteriologically. Membership in the Church follows one's evangelical experience of salvation, and the mission of the Church is to offer that salvation to others. Scripture provides no fixed model for the church (although I am not sure Wesley is consistent on this point, given his constant appeal to "primitivism"), but rather illustrates functionality and the positive use of human reason in adaptation. Given the lack of a generally accepted Wesleyan "perspective" on

Ecclesiology, and the failure to define one by the editors, Bence's position will be taken as the implicit criterion for the remaining articles.

Wesley did not promote radical revision; rather he worked "creatively within the institutional structures." Bence tries to illustrate, finally, that Wesley's Ecclesiology partakes of the dialectic eschatology of the New Testament, in that the Church does (or, ought to?) reflect the present, transforming "first fruits" of the Kingdom of God, but not claiming identity with the "harvest" yet to come. This exemplifies a dialectical hermeneutic that I am convinced was characteristic of Wesley, and that anticipates much current Biblical interpretation.

On the negative side, the character of Bence's intended readership is uncertain. At times it is not clear when Bence is speaking for himself or for Wesley, lending a sermonistic cast to his prose that some might find objectionable in a scholarly article. Quotations from Wesley are not contextualized

as to date or occasion, surely an important practice given the nature of Wesley's corpus. Nor is attention given to evaluating Wesley's theological contribution. It would be unfortunate if these matters limited the effectiveness or the appeal of Bence's clear and valuable description to those who were already "converted."

The book opens with a quartet of articles on Biblical resources for Ecclesiology. The first two essays, Joseph E. Coleson, on "Covenant Community in the OT," and Milo Chapman, on "The Church in the Gospels," are perhaps the least satisfying in the book, although for different reasons. Coleson's article is handicapped by its sheer brevity: the OT spans the same period as the history surveyed in Paul Bassett's articles (see below) which are six times longer. I am not convinced that Coleson made the best choice in choosing a "canonical" framework for his study: surely the historical development of the Israelite community is more apropos for a discussion of ecclesiological issues (especially from a functional perspective), unless one wishes to discuss only the Jewish community behind the completed canon. As a result, crucial, even contentious "ecclesiastical" issues, such as the roles of priest, prophet, and sage, or the rise, nature, and fall of the Hebrew monarchy, are overlooked. Another issue, the ethnic inclusiveness or exclusiveness of the covenant community, is brought into an uneasy "both/and" that is not reflected in any individual OT source. In fact, this is generally seen as a point of conflict in the canon.

As with Bence, the identity of Coleson's audience is unclear: must one explain the three divisions of the Hebrew canon to a reader who already knows that "Qoheleth" is an alternative title for Ecclesiastes? Coleson's article ("Qoheleth" notwithstanding) may prove a valuable starting point for understanding the continuity of the OT covenant community with the church, both in its self understanding, calling and intended character. He also provides the student a nice model of how "word study" exegesis may be done, and a fine description of its limitations (although he seems to violate it later in less-than-careful citation of passages using the polyvalent term "holy"). I do not have the impression that the book as a whole was intended for this basic level, however.

Milo Chapman's "The Church in the Gospels" was the most disappointing in the book. Great (and appropriate) emphasis was placed upon the relationship with Jesus as being essential to the community, and upon the quality

of fellowship engendered by Jesus. It seemed however that a certain Ecclesiology was imposed upon the Gospel material. Chapman insists for example that Jesus did not found an "organized institution": this is hardly a revolutionary claim, but the significance of passages like the granting of the "keys" in Matthew 16 and the instructions concerning community discipline in Matthew 18 is completely overlooked. True, these hardly constitute a code of canon law, but they are clearly a step in that direction. It is ironic that Chapman spent effort to defend the authenticity of these very passages, but overlooked their implications. Still more ironically, the argument against authenticity is based precisely on the view that Jesus did not found an "organized institution"!

This raises the fundamental shortcoming of the article: it was entirely out of touch with recent critical study of the Gospels. Form and redaction criticism of the Gospels, whatever limitations and strictures conservative evangelicals might wish to place upon them, have helped to focus attention on the ecclesiological significance which later Christians (in developing a more organized, institutional Church) found in the words and actions of Jesus. Much more could have been accomplished here. In a similar fashion, the author seems to assume an out of date "realized eschatology" in his understanding of Jesus' teaching regarding the Kingdom of God. The current consensus, the dialectical "already/not yet" eschatology, offers a far better and more balanced avenue for progress in understanding both the New Testament and the twentieth century church.

The final pair of Biblical essays seem to work on a different plane than the first two. Alex R. G. Deasley, "The Church in the Acts of the Apostles," clearly describes and follows a conservative critical perspective on Luke as writing "theological history," and deals specifically with the full range of ecclesiological categories (in contrast to the previous articles). His conclusions regarding the ecclesiological implications of Acts provide exegetical support for the functional perspective, and allow the contemporary church a sense of responsible freedom regarding how it structures itself. I do wish he had taken time (1) to deal more thoroughly with "early Catholic" interpretation of Acts, and (2) to discuss the implications of his interpretation for popular "low church" reading of Acts.

M. Robert Mulholland's article, "The Church in the Epistles," opens fascinating hermeneutical perspective on the metaphors used in describing the Church in the New Testament. He treats the metaphors as a "literary iconography," arguing that the diverse multiplicity of Biblical imagery can only become meaningful to a reader who shares with the writers in "the experiential reality of life in the new order of being in Christ." The imager is organized first under the overarching banner of the love command (no icon here?), and then under three controlling images: Temple City, and Body which indicate worship, internal order, and loving relationships or service, respectively.

There is considerable potential in Mulholland's approach: the material the Body, and the Eucharist, was particularly good. In general too much was attempted to provide specific guidance in dealing with well entrenched ecclesiastical positions. The very multiplicity of the NT imagery itself suggests the difficulty faced in conveying the corporate dimension of Christian experience in the first century. Are the "icons" of the first century merely

to be preserved, explained, and mass produced (as with Orthodox icons), or do they provide us a process and models for crafting our own as well?

The author's claim to the contrary, his approach seems closely related to the Bultmannian demythologization hermeneutic, but avoiding the unfortunate connotations of Bultmann's terminology. However one may evaluate the utility or validity of Bultmann's choice of Heideggerian philosophy to describe the modern experience of "the new order of being," it does at least specify terms to describe the character of modern experience. Simply to claim a shared "experiential reality" spanning two millennia of human cultural development is a tremendous hermeneutical leap. Consider for example the contemporary charismatic movement's claim to a "shared experience" with early Christian glossolalia. That claim has certainly been open to contest! Nevertheless, one must thank Mulholland for raising the hermeneutical issues, and attempting to lead us beyond abstractions regarding "doctrine" of the church: this, too, is a contribution to achieving a functional Ecclesiology.

Paul M. Bassett contributes a massive pair of magisterial articles jointly titled "A Survey of Western Ecclesiology to about 1700." The first essay, covering the period of the second to the fifteenth centuries, provides sympathetic description of the motives behind the developing ecclesiastical system, as well as critical evaluation of the models used. Bassett offers a series of theological vignettes concerning influential thinkers on Ecclesiology, including the well known, such as Augustine and Gregory the Great, and the less well known, such as William of Occam, Torquemada, and Nicholas of Cusa. The sheer number of medieval theologians always threatens to overwhelm the non specialist: this is no less the case here, despite the invariably clear individual treatments. Bassett's mastery and his creative treatment of the personnel and literature make the task worthwhile. For a personal example, early in the series of figures, Hippolytus emerged as a seminal figure, who, desiring to restore the (supposed) primitive purity of the church, contributed greatly to the elevation of the clergy and the episcopacy.

I would have been interested to have had discussion of the challenges to the traditional, Eusebian account of Christian origins (e.g., from Walter Bauer, Elaine Pagels, and Robert Wilken). This could well illuminate the issues of Christian unity and diversity, and of "primitivism" which are relevant to understanding Wesley and the contemporary church. Of course this would exacerbate the problem of the length of the article. Despite the excellence of the material, one must ask the author and editors why this article should be included in a book on "Wesleyan perspectives." Definition of Bassett's perspective (and I would suggest it is functional) and integration with the remainder of the book are left entirely to the reader.

The second part of Bassett's survey, subtitled "Ecclesiology in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," continues in the same manner and quality as the first, but with a steadily narrowing Protestant focus, from the magisterial reformers and Anabaptism, to issue in the development of English Protestantism which set the context for Wesley. This narrowing is certainly appropriate, although contrary to the general title and the rather encyclopedic feel of the first essay. Bassett however stops short of Wesley, and the reader is left to infer from his or her own knowledge how the strands of Protestant Ecclesiology are included in the skein of his thought and

practice. Ensuing articles on Wesley himself, unfortunately, do not complete the task.

Melvin Dieter's "Concept of the Church in the Nineteenth Century Holiness Revival" comes out of chronological order, before the three (eighteenth century) Wesley articles, one of the curiosities of the volume. Dieter approaches his subject by way of three "critical" features: the small group, the camp meeting, and the concept of the "age of the Spirit." The first two elements, inherited from main-line Methodism, became vehicles for the maintenance or restoration (or introduction, depending upon one's point of view) of Holiness teaching and preaching.

The "age of the Spirit" was a fresh insight: many (how many?) in the revival saw it as an eschatological phenomenon, heralding the final consummation. Dieter argues that this concept marks a fundamental difference from the Christocentric perspectives of traditional Lutheran and Reformed thought. Does it also mark a difference from Wesley? Recent debate over Spirit-baptism has emphasized the Christocentrism of Wesley in distinction from the Holiness movement: perhaps more than the exegesis of Acts was involved. (However, it seems that one might argue that Wesley, too, saw his revival as eschatological: see on David Cubie's article, below.)

The issue of the schismatic tendency of the Holiness revival keeps coming up in Dieter's article. This is a topic of which the heirs of the revival are naturally chary. It may be that all three "critical" elements are inherently sectarian, Dieter does not address this. The third element causes me to wonder if the revival was a "millenarian" sect (to use a current sociological label). If so, then critical reflection upon the Wesleyan holiness heritage may (indeed, must) take an interesting, if somewhat threatening, step forward in investigating the perceived social reality and the corresponding religious experience of the Revival period.

Bence's article follows Dieter's, and is succeeded by two more on Wesley himself. Daniel N. Berg, "The Marks of Church in the Theology of John Wesley," deals with how Wesley appropriated the characteristic Protestant marks, preaching of the Gospel and administration of the sacraments. True to his functional perspective, Wesley was not interested in the marks solely as ideological, polemical tokens. Rather he was interested in them as "means of grace," and Berg stresses that Wesley tried to maintain both as equal. It is a pity that Berg did not have opportunity to integrate his research with Bassett's fascinating discussion of Anglican Puritan Ecclesiology, because this background throws Wesley's view into sharp relief. (There seems to be a problem with end note 15 in Berg's article: a long citation of Wesley is attributed to one "Bicknell," with no page reference at all.)

David L. Cubie, "Separation or Unity? Sanctification and Love in Wesley's Doctrine of the Church," treats the effect of the Wesleyan doctrine of holiness upon the relationship between early Methodists and the Church of England. Cubie argues that Wesley himself held several factors in "creative tension": basically (1) the church as consisting of believers and the church as consisting of any who "profess faith," and (2) holiness which requires separation from that which is not holy, along with love that seeks unity. Cubie attempts to show how the kaleidoscopic elements of Wesley's thinking led him now in the direction of separation, now toward unity. In the variety of ideas covered, the article itself becomes rather kaleidoscopic—the reader

faces a struggle in holding everything together. Discussion of the four ways in which Wesley used the term "love" is surely worth a separate article. As is the treatment of Wesley's eschatological consciousness (an interest not suggested in the title). Despite shortcomings in clarity and structure, Cubie offers the most critical approach to Wesley found in the book, as he shows the effects of Wesley's views even when they run counter to his intent.

The final three articles deal with practical issues of the Church and Ministry. Donald Joy, in "The Contemporary Church as 'Holy Community': Call to Corporate Character and Life," takes on "nuclear individualism" in an attempt to formulate a "holistic" view of theology and Christian life. Joy's use of brain hemisphere dominance theory to explain theological history will undoubtedly leave many cold, but his attempt to re-unite affective and cognitive approaches to theology is salutary. It is unfortunate here that Joy descends to *ad hominem* evaluations of various persons. Does the fact that Augustine and John Knox are not top choices among those who name hospitals really suggest that they have anything in common with Cain, Charles Darwin and Thomas Paine? (Darwin and Paine might also object.) Augustine in particular is not to be characterized simply as a "left brain" individual! This kind of theological naiveté damages Joy's credibility, and may distort the many healthy, attractive contributions he can make in attempting to describe the ideal psycho social state that Christian community aims to create.

The strongest feature of the article is Joy's adaptation of a series of developmental psychological theories to understanding Christian experience and maturation. Here again, however, Joy's depth of theological understanding comes into question. At times his theological interpretation seems too pat: do Piaget's stages of human development simply parallel the "salvation pilgrimage"? Does the sequence of the Beatitudes really presage Erikson's "stages of life"? His view of "creation grace" in this context sounds suspiciously "Pelagian": is he aware of the humanistic implications of this? In any case, Joy leads one to focus on what is meant by "experience" when one speaks of Christian experience, and may also help to identify in human terms the goals toward which Ecclesiology should be oriented. I would like to see Joy deal more philosophically with psychology of religion and its implications for evangelical religious experience.

James Garlow, "The Layperson as Minister: A Call for a New Theology of Laity," appeals to roles of the laity (particularly lay preachers) in early Methodism in order to revitalize contemporary lay ministry. Garlow emphasizes that all Christians are called, gifted, trained and sent. The article is one more in the series of calls to lay ministry emanating from such people as Ray Stedman and Howard Snyder. The motivational tone and practical level of the article are of a different character from the balance of articles in the book. This is not to criticize the article, but once more to raise the issue of readership: Garlow's article is useful and energizing, but is not aimed at the same level of scholarship as other articles.

Everett Richey's article, "The Church: Its Mission and Message," reads like a manifesto regarding the character and "complimentary" [sic] roles of mission and message. His emphasis upon the Incarnation as the key to understanding these appears to provide an important step toward expressing the positive, non Fundamentalist (or "parochial") version of evangelical Chris-

tianity that many now seek. It also appears to carry forward the functional perspective on the Church.

In the latter part of his article, Richey wrestles with the relation between the "eternal" Church and the "church terrestrial" in a way that is less than satisfying. (He could have returned again to the Incarnation for a more forceful treatment.) The force of the article is diminished at other points by a lack of clarity and cohesiveness in following up on otherwise stimulating programmatic statements. Nevertheless the essay provides a challenge to the church and to theological educators to reconsider the essential purpose of theological formation and education.

Regarding the production of the book as a whole: a much better job could have been done. The amount of errata was excessive and distracting. The most serious error was the omission of "not" from a sentence in Deasley's article (p. 53 "the Church may be in mind even in passages in which it is mentioned" ! j; one wonders if other similar problems were less self-evident. In addition, there were problems with page headers ("the Acts of the Gospels," e.g.) in two articles, and seven section headings occurred at the very bottom of a page, with no text following.

The seeming comprehensiveness of the range of essays leads one to ask why the reader is not provided a survey of interpretations of Wesley's Ecclesiology, although Bence gives this cursory attention in passing. Why, for example, is John L. Peters' work never mentioned in the book? A study of the ecclesiological diversity in the Wesleyan Holiness movement would also have been useful.

The book did come close to fulfilling the reader's anticipations. It fell short on three counts: (1) a lack of a clear, integrating description of what is meant by a "Wesleyan perspective"; (2) the failure to target any particular readership (a lack of focus found in both the range of articles included and the varying levels of writing; this criticism has been voiced in previous reviews of the series)' and (3) the uneven quality of the essays themselves. Within the book one may indeed, in my opinion, find an expression of seminal ecclesiological insights of Wesleyanism, but the reader will need to exercise considerable patience and "prevenient" sympathy in order to benefit. The reader lacking either of these graces will find the book as a whole worth less than some of its parts.

To Reform the Nation: Theological Foundations of Wesley's Ethics. By Leon O. Hynson. Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1984. 176 pp. Reviewed by Howard A. Snyder, Ph.D., Irving Park Free Methodist Church Chicago, Illinois.

"God's design" in raising up Methodist preachers, John Wesley said, was "to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land." Leon Hynson picks up on the first part of this mandate as a theme for examining Wesley's ethical thought.

The book is well done and competently researched. As the subtitle suggests, it is more than an examination of Wesley's own ethics; rather it uses

Wesley as a resource for the constructive ethical task confronting the church today. At points Hynson draws inferences from Wesley's ethics for contemporary issues. One might wish he had done more of this, though the author's focus is primarily on the theological underpinnings of ethics rather than on specific application. Hynson does take note of contemporary scholars in the Wesleyan tradition (such as Ron Sider and David McKenna) who have been addressing specific ethical issues.

Hynson's opening chapter, "A Man for All Seasons," is particularly strong. It succeeds in showing both the complex sources that fed Wesley's theology and that understanding Wesley the man is key to understanding his ethics. He sees Wesley's Aldersgate experience as crucial for his ethics: "Wesley's ethical conversion occurs in 1738," changing him "from a man who sought to do good in order to win God" to "one whom God has won one whose faith becomes active in love." Thus Wesley's own experience is the paradigm for his fundamental ethical stance: Faith working by love.

Two things I especially appreciated about this book were its trinitarian emphasis and its delineation of the church as an ethical community. In his chapter "Toward a Wesleyan Social Ethics" Hynson says a genuinely Wesleyan ethics will be "precisely Trinitarian," and then proceeds to speak of "creation ethics" (stressing the image of God), "Christological ethics" (stressing reconciliation), and "spiritual ethics" (stressing the ongoing cleansing, empowering, and motivating work of the Spirit). This trinitarian focus structures the remaining chapters of the book in which the author discusses creation and grace, the Sermon on the Mount as "an ethics of imitation" of Christ, and an ethics of the Spirit. Central to all of this, Hynson rightly insists, is the priority of love.

The author discusses the church as "the community of the Spirit" and "an ethical community." He stresses the key role of *koinorzia* (fellowship, community) in Wesley's understanding and practice of the church. "Wesley's conception of the social nature of the Christian is the corrective to the argument of critics that his concern was too individual and inadequately social." The church is to be "a leavening Christian society in the whole human society." Hynson is quite right in this, and graphically pictures the church's transforming role in society. Yet the picture lacks concreteness, and could easily be taken-as so often happens in ecclesiology-as an ideal to be affirmed but with little practical application in terms of specific behaviors and structures. For Wesley, affirming community and the social nature of Christianity meant practical structures (classes, bands) for experiencing this reality.

In this connection, it is interesting that although Wesley spoke of the mandate "to reform . . . *particularly* the Church," little is said here about what "reforming the church" might mean as an ethical consideration.

Hynson insists that a genuinely Wesleyan ethics will have "a thorough-going dedication to civil and religious liberty" and challenges "every form of slavery in the world." He speaks briefly of human liberation, but says nothing of sexism or feminism. The absence, in fact, of any treatment in the book of human sexuality (even in discussions of the image of God) is a noticeable gap.

Overall, this is an excellent introduction to theological ethics in the Wesleyan mode. The book is perhaps best seen as part of the new flowering of

Wesleyan studies which seeks to be clearly evangelical in the Biblical and Wesleyan sense and moves beyond review of Wesley's own thinking to constructive engagement with the theological currents of today.

The Elusive Mr. Wesley, by Richard P. Heitzenrater. Two volumes. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984. Reviewed by William C. Miller, Ph.D., Librarian and Professor of Theological Bibliography, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Missouri.

Holding that existing studies of John Wesley are more confusing than helpful in comprehending Wesley and that an adequate biography has yet to be written Richard P. Heitzenrater, Albert Cook Outler Professor of Wesley Studies and Director of the Bridwell Library Center for Wesley Studies at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, has produced this two volume anthology to facilitate "the quest for the 'real' John Wesley." While stating that this work is not a biography (in spite of the misleading subtitle to volume one: *John Wesley his own biographer*) Heitzenrater offers four considerations to guide this biographical quest: 1) Wesley was a legend in his own day; 2) Wesley's public image can be distinguished from his private image; 3) Wesley was a controversial figure; and 4) Wesley embodied ideals and qualities not always easily held together or reconciled. The failure to hold these considerations together has led to studies viewing Wesley as a saint, sinner, enthusiast, catholic, reformer, etc. without capturing the elusive person himself. The excerpts selected for inclusion reflect the diversity to be found in Wesley's life and thought. The first volume contains an introductory essay and selections from Wesley's own hand in which he states, explains, or defends himself to family, friends, foes, and the public. The second holds extracts from contemporary associates, foes, and other interested parties regarding Wesley and a review of subsequent Wesley studies including the so-called "standard editions." For each excerpt Heitzenrater has provided a brief introductory preface placing it in historical context, yet the emphasis is upon letting each selection convey the author's view or attitude. The selections reveal Wesley as son, Oxford student and don, spiritual pilgrim and mentor, colonial missionary, preacher, theologian, poet, and husband. The selections, given the size of the volumes (220 and 224 pages), are representative and extensive enough to serve Heitzenrater's purpose. This is not to say that some would have chosen other passages or extended the extracts. It is beneficial to have such a wide range of passages, especially the excerpts in volume two from sources which are too frequently overlooked, collected in a handy format. The emphasis upon presenting differing or conflicting perspectives on Wesley and the volume's organization may lead some readers to the impression that Wesley was a fragmented rather than an elusive person. Yet, Heitzenrater has produced a work presenting Wesley as a multifarious 18th century person, both to serve as a corrective to existing studies and to serve as a chart for future biographers. For those who have appropriated Wesley for their own polemical or hagiographic purposes this anthology offers a necessary and effective, but gentle, rebuff. Unfortunately

Heitzenrater has not provided full bibliographic citations for the excerpts, or items mentioned in the review of subsequent Wesley studies, making it difficult for scholars or students to use this work as a starting point for further study. The literature review provides an informative historical summary of publications regarding Wesley stressing their weaknesses. One wishes he had expanded the critical engagement with the scholarly literature, as distinct from citing and commenting upon, to more fully realize the expressed hope that the work will "act as a critical guide through the maze of published material available on Wesley."

This anthology deserves a reading as a reminder of the complexity of Wesley and, for students, as a companion to existing biographies. Its value to Wesley scholars and students may not rest on its own significance but upon the merits of the quest Heitzenrater seeks to call forth. A quest for which it serves as a prolegomenon.

Streiff, Patrick Phillip: *Jean Guillaume de la Flechere, 1729-1785. Ein Betrag zur Geschichte des Methodismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1984. Reviewed by W. Stephen Gunter, Dean of the College of Ministry and the Humanities, Southern Nazarene University, Bethany, Oklahoma.

Students of Methodism will be pleased to see this first attempt of the twentieth century at a full-scale biography of the man John Wesley selected to succeed him as leader of the Methodists. Wesley's "designated successor," as Luke Tyerman identified him in his biography of the late nineteenth century, has remained a relatively obscure figure in the development of Methodist theology. Although this volume will not greatly relieve this situation, being written in German and rather expensive (\$47.00 in paperback), it is a welcome addition to our knowledge of early Methodist history and certainly fills a void in the study of the life and influence of Fletcher of Madeley. It is to Streiff's credit that he recognizes that the general perspective on the piety of Fletcher was greatly shaped by his earliest biographers (Gilpin and Benson) and few if any have paid the price to transcend that naively idealized portrait. (Cf. p. 26ff.)

It is well known that Fletcher was Swiss, and the reviewer hoped to find the serious gaps in our knowledge about Fletcher's early years filled in. From a Swiss Methodist pastor we had hoped to have uncovered new sources of information heretofore concealed. We remained undaunted even in the face of the qualification by Streiff, "There remain now only a few primary sources related to the family history and youth of John William Fletcher. None of the family documents have been preserved" (p. 22). Not willing to give up the desire to have new insight into Fletcher's background and youth even when the author intimated that it was not to be, I was frustrated when the subchapter "FAMILY HISTORY AND EARLY YOUTH" proved to be little more than a demonstration that the sources are few and the insight into the early formative years still quite dim.

There is perhaps a relationship between the amount of information available and brevity of the sub-chapters, but many of the sub-chapters are only

1-2 pages in length. An integration of the material into a larger corpus would perhaps provide better reading continuity. The advantage of the multitudinous subdivisions when a complete index is absent is the isolation of specific information which would otherwise be buried in the flow of the text. For example, if one is looking for the roots of Fletcher's rationalized orthodoxy, the table of contents provides the reference: II.2.2-3, "THE TRANSITION TO RATIONAL ORTHODOXY IN GENEVA."

Streiff promises: "That Crinsoz de Bionens [Fletcher's uncle who pastored in Waadtland] and Fletcher were kindred spirits can be of significant help in clarifying later phases of the development in Fletcher's theology." It would be most helpful if the author would have provided the reader with a page reference in his development of Fletcher's thought to which this material is logically connected. Having searched in vain for the related material, one wonders whether Fletcher's "stages of history" resemble de Bionens' apocalyptic scheme as much as de Bionens' predictions are based on concepts similar to those of the chiliast, Joachim de Fiore.

In all fairness to Streiff, his book is a biography of John Fletcher and not an analysis of his theology. There are significant lacunae and misperceptions about Fletcher which this excellent work corrects, not the least of which is a false conclusion about Fletcher's theological studies in Geneva, based primarily on a 1781 letter, "having some desires to be a clergyman, I was, for seven years sent to Geneva to pursue [*sic*] my studies. But after I had stayed there seven years, a fear of being unfit for the Christian ministry, . . . made me at times prefer the sword to the gown, and I left the academy . . ." (p.44). Streiff, not willing to draw the obvious but false conclusion that other biographers have propagated brings together a series of chronological considerations which seriously question the hypothesis that Fletcher "studied theology for seven years in Geneva" and offers a conclusive rejection by pointing out that Fletcher's name does not appear in the *Codex Bibliotheca Publica* under the theology column for those students who had matriculated and were using the library, although his name does appear under philology. Streiff's conclusion, much better historically warranted than previous speculations, is, "John Fletcher was for two years, and perhaps even only for one year, a student in the 'Faculty of Arts' at the Academy of Geneva under [the professorial guidance of] Jacob Vernet" (p. 45).

Students of early British Methodism will be especially delighted to discover Streiff's lists of Fletcher manuscripts and printed writings. His chart and list, pp. 493-536, are the only ones of their kind in print on the literary production of Fletcher. This biography is a significant "Contribution to the History of Methodism" (the book's sub-title) and throws much needed light on Wesley's "designated successor." The book can be read by the specialist in German, but it deserves to be translated into English so that a larger printing can bring the cost within reason and make the book accessible to a larger audience.