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Presidential Address:

MUSINGS

by

Melvin E. Dieter

On the Moment

As we meet here tonight for our annual banquet, there are continuing signs that significant developments are taking place in our Society. An increasing number of interested and involved persons have added their names to the membership rolls and have swelled attendance figures at the annual meetings. Many of the most capable scholars in the Wesleyan-Holiness Movement have found in the Society the forum of ideas and fellowship of learning which the founders of WTS hoped it would prove to be. The deliberations of the past fourteen years have been widely circulated through the Journal. The listing of Journal articles in religious periodical indexes opens up the Society's work to a broad spectrum of interested students outside the Holiness Movement.

This expanded activity has also attracted a large number of students from our colleges and seminaries to a renewed interest in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition and its theological understanding. The significant number of such young persons who are in attendance at this meeting is one of the most encouraging portents of the future vitality of the Society. We welcome them.

We should also note that we seem to be able to consider issues critical to the tradition with a new forthrightness attended by a spirit of mutual respect and love representative of the gospel we seek to proclaim. There is no other place within the structures of the Wesleyan-Holiness Movement which allows for such open theological dialogue among so representative a group of scholars. Our active participation provides a service which we can render to the Wesleyan-Arminian churches and people whose need for self-understanding requires definition and interpretation.

But the society must increasingly serve also as a means to explicating our relationships with other Christian traditions and the secular culture as well. If Wesleyanism is to be more than an eddy in the backwater of religious life, much less in evangelicalism, an even greater willingness to face up to ourselves and to others than we have sometimes mustered is imperative. The viability of such debate, however, depends not only upon the dedication and integrity of this scholarly community, but also upon the willingness of the church community being served to allow the freedom to

follow the search for truth in an atmosphere of mutual respect. This can be done out of our common concern for the integrity of the gospel and the mission of the church.

Both our self-understanding and our understanding of others would be greatly enhanced with the orderly, structured input in some of our meetings of responsible scholarship from other Christian traditions tangential to or even at variance with our own. We all recognize some risk in such a venture, but I believe it is essential to the whole theological enterprise. If I am in dialogue or even dispute with another point of view, I am basically in dialogue with persons who have committed themselves to those views. If I am to come to the best understanding of the position that such persons espouse, I should be willing to listen to the strongest defense of the position by its most able representatives. For example, it seems to me that an essential part of our continued discussions on our understanding of such movements as Keswick, the Charismatic Movement, Fundamentalism, etc., should involve input by representative scholarship from those traditions. Much theological reflection on questions of the deepest concern to us has taken place in these movements. We could stimulate a healthy creativity among ourselves out of interaction with and even reaction to such presentations. I believe that a whole series of future meetings could be devoted profitably to such dialogue with traditions that we often interact with at great distance. These contacts could infuse new life into our own biblical, theological and historical understanding. If our dialogue is to be with others as they are and not with the proverbial straw men we so humanly create, such exchanges carried out in an atmosphere of mutual respect with Christians who differ with us can mean growth; we can also define our genuine differences. This interaction can also encourage community in Christian mission with such traditions in spite of differences. Anything less may well weaken all our hands in a world which is increasingly hostile to the gospel. Provision has already been made in our structures for such interchanges. We have made initial efforts to provide for such input but have not succeeded to this point. I hope we will renew these efforts in future programming.

Another area of still untapped potential for the usefulness of the Society is that of encouraging increased writing and publication of Wesleyan-Holiness literature. Through additional issues of the Journal or by sponsoring other publications in accord with its commitments, the influence of Wesleyanism upon current movements-particularly evangelical movements-could be greatly enhanced. We will continue to suffer a great loss of leadership in these areas if we fail here. We all know that the pressing need at this point is for editorial leadership which possesses the grace and wisdom, the theological and practical leadership requisite to the success of such efforts and, not incidentally, the time to devote to it. Let us pray for such a person or persons to spark an enlarged ministry here.

Certainly these musings on the role and mission of the Society do not exhaustively represent the needs and potential of our work. Each of you members certainly has similar concerns. I hope you will express them freely in business sessions at this and successive meetings.

On a Movement

We cannot approach such an issue as we had before us last year in its historical-theological setting and this year in its Biblical-theological setting without honestly facing up to a broad range of implications. Let me work around a few of them out of my own very visceral feelings about the critical import they may carry for the movement's future understanding of its identity and mission. Boris Pasternak purportedly said, "In every generation there has to be some fool who will speak the truth as he sees it." Perhaps every theological society needs someone of the same genre. I'll play the role this time, with the confidence that should I fail there are many others who can take up the torch.

First of all, it seems to me that our discussion of baptism language reveals that the American Wesleyan-Holiness Movement, as much as it has tried to put considerable room between itself and the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement through certain administrative and historical disclaimers, really has not succeeded very well. The close association of the two movements in the popular mind as well as in an increasing number of historical-theological publications has become increasingly common. The central place given to the use of baptism language for initiation into a new type of Christian experience by the current charismatic revival has generated a whole new review of pneumatology throughout Christendom. Catholic, Anglican, Reformed and almost all other traditions continue to seek new understandings in these areas. Most of this activity is specifically in response or often reaction to the Charismatic baptism terminology and claims.

In some of these traditions such discussions are relatively novel to them, but in our own case we face the prominent use by a highly visible movement of terminology very close to the terminology commonly used in the Holiness Movement by the beginning of the century. Even now some of our articles of faith utilize Spirit-baptism language. This certainly has encouraged if not necessitated our review of the biblical, historical and theological rationale for our use of the language especially in its relation to our second crisis commitments.

It is interesting, and moreover significant, to note that this is not the first time that an aggressive Pentecostal revivalism has forced such decisions upon the Holiness Movement. The very name Pentecostal adopted by the new movement within a decade after its founding over seventy years ago pragmatically forced the holiness churches to pull back from the pervasive use of the Pentecostal semantics which had by then become common place in the movement's representation of itself to the religious and secular worlds. Gradually the term "pentecostal" disappeared from the names of holiness papers and institutions and the so-called "tongues movement" from that point on was left to give content to the word Pentecostal in the public mind. The issue was a broad one and the impact of the holiness movement's understanding of itself and its mission may not have been great; although I suspect that further study of that development would indicate that it was much more significant than our histories have indicated up to this time. For example it would be interesting to investigate whether the slackening of the movement's activism in the promotion of faith-healing was not related to the deeper implications of that action.

But the strong Holiness-Pentecostal polemics and attempts such as the above to radically disassociate the two movements have hardly been successful. Now a neo-Pentecostalism again forcefully reminds us that we really may not have understood the most basic relationship between the two movements. Along with the less visible Keswick deeper life movement we may be finding that our common inheritance in the tradition of the holiness revival of the last century, and even back to the Wesleys and Fletcher as well, is a lot stronger than the holiness movement in particular has been willing to acknowledge. The Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of Spirit-baptism is distinctively different from the Holiness use of the term, and the Keswick understanding is at variance with both the above. But the Pentecostal-dispensationalist exegesis which allows for the use of the expression to identify a new and dynamic infusion of the Spirit distinct from any previous relationship of the Spirit to the believer is basically the same.

Therefore, how and on what premises the holiness movement continues to identify the second crisis experience with a Pentecostal hermeneutic, or how and for what reasons the movement relinquishes or radically reinterprets such identification, may mark a very significant development in the movement's self-understanding of future mission. It may tell more about the future of the movement and its relationship to Pentecostalism than did the earlier Holiness-Pentecostal encounter as to who would give content to the word "Pentecostal" in the second decade of this century. It seems to me that what may very well be at issue is who will continue to represent one of the most dynamic revival traditions to arise in modern church history-a tradition of two hundred years which came to some of its most creative expressions in the strong post-Civil-War proclamation of the Wesleyan-Holiness message in intimate relationship with its use of Pentecostal semantic. One has to ask, If any conscious shift is made, what other terminology can express equally well the fullness of life in the Spirit as the Pentecost motif? what motif can better represent the dynamic for genuine holy living which is at the heart of the Wesleyan tradition?

That leads me to the second significant inference in our current discussions. Not only do the issues have wrong implications for the future nature of our self-understanding in relation to movements which have relied on similar presuppositions underlying baptism language in relation to a "secondness" in Christian experience, but they have strong implications for our understanding of ourselves as heirs of the Wesleyan tradition. With Albert Outler I believe that Wesley's unique contribution to all of Christian tradition was his insistence that there is no biblical tension between salvation by faith alone, and holy living which issues in love. It is that which makes him more than the house theologian of Methodism.' Wesley would not acknowledge that either Lutheran solfideism as he called it or Catholic meritorious works were adequate expressions of the Biblical primitive Christianity which he sought to revive in the church. He probably was not aware that Luther's solfideism was not as exclusive as almost all of his authoritative and non-authoritative interpreters for various reasons have consistently portrayed it.2 He hardly was aware either that Luther had a concern for Pentecostal preaching. Luther once expressed it this way:

> They may be fine Easter preachers, but they are poor Pentecost preachers, for they do not preach . . . "about the sanctification by the Holy Spirit," but solely about the redemption of Jesus Christ, although the Christ (whom they extol so highly and rightly so) is Christ, that is, He has purchased redemption from sin and death so that the Holy Spirit might transform us out of the old Adam into new men . . . Christ did not only earn gratia "grace," for us, but also donum, "the gift of the Holy Spirit" so that we might have not only forgiveness of, but also cessation of, sin.3

However, in spite of any modern modifications of Lutheran interpretation, it is recognized that Luther's strongest contribution was not at the point of a "faith alone"-"holy life of love" solidarity, but rather a "faith alone" polarity.

It was Wesley who brought the unity to the fore. He saw it in the covenant promises of the Bible. It represented a via media the understanding of which he fleshed partially out of the via media of his Anglicanism through Cranmer and even behind the English Reformation to the English mystics of the 14th century. He also built into it the strong balance which his study of the early church brought to his understanding of the nature of Christian truth and life. Along with these, his studies in the Eastern tradition freed him from slavishly interpreting the nature of God's redemptive dealings with men in the strongly forensic tones of those who adhered mainly to Western theological tradition rooted more exclusively in such theologians as Augustine and Tertullian. The strong creational-incarnational motifs of the equally ancient Eastern tradition, that of the Gregories and Basil, balanced him at this point. All these put him at some variance with the Augustinian Luther and the mentors of his early evangelical faith-the Moravians.

If we are to be true heirs of Wesley in current discussions, we should be aware of where true Wesleyanism really lies, or we will consciously or unconsciously succumb to the strong pressures by certain interpreters of the Reformation which would leave us no alternative between a theology of purely subjective experience and a rigid Reformation scholasticism or creedalism. The former has always been at our doorstep and sometimes has gotten more than a foot inside. Today the latter, which finds the whole of any meaningful relationship to the righteousness of God through Christ only in the "Christ for us" motif, is just as present a danger. In other words, there is the very real danger that in offering correction to the subjectivism inherent in the highly experiential emphases of either Pentecostalism, Neo-pentecostalism, our own holiness tradition or all American revivalism itself, we slide right past Wesley into the arms of Luther and Calvin. If we are to be true heirs of Wesley we have to understand what his commitments were and how he held them together. We too should develop a theology of "faith alone-holy living" in that same via media tradition adequate to the demands of this day and communicable to contemporary persons. If we are Wesleyan, it will be a biblically rooted theology of experience which through the fullness of the Spirit will again speak as to how the righteousness of God in Christ is made a living reality in the lives of men.

If Wesleyanism continues, it might still walk the via media into an actual life of righteousness and true holiness.

A third important implication of our current discussions is that they call us to reaffirm our commitment to the final authority of an infallible Bible. The increasing emphasis upon careful exegesis and biblical theology which we are enjoying is a healthy and hopeful sign. But let a vigorous doctrine of the Holy Spirit, of His ministry of prevenient grace, of His personal ministry to the individual Christian (Wesley's palpable inspiration for which he was so strongly criticized by some as a rank enthusiast) be joined to a strong doctrine of sola scriptura lest we languish in a slough of despond created by some "pure exegesis." We must not restrict the preaching of the righteousness of God in Christ to a concept of justification which divorces itself from the sanctification of the Lord God in the hearts of live Christians-Christians at work witnessing to each other and the world by an intimate life of holiness and wholeness in active love. Our interpretation of the Word and our life should be in dialogue. In this we are not falling into the error of some in the neo-orthodox tradition. Our experience does not create the Word or deny its objective authority. With Wesley we simply affirm that the same Spirit who spoke the Word through inspired men is working out that Word in life in individual Christians and in the people of God with dynamic evidence of what grace can and wants to do. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, because ye love one another." Wesley would simply say that any pattern of biblical interpretation which does not have that practical result as its immediate goal in this life is per se suspect. Regardless of the tight logic of any theology which ignores the experiential realm of true righteousness and obedience, he would have insisted that its believers go back to Scripture and review their understanding of it. A brief quote from his Plain Account illustrates this concern. He said that if experience refutes the doctrine, "I should be clearly convinced that we had all mistaken the meaning of those Scriptures."4

A well known example of the dynamic of this principle comes from our own American history of the theology of revivalism. When a deterministic rigidly scholastic Puritanism had so hedged in the work of the Holy Spirit that congregations waited in either despair or indifference for a sovereign God to move upon them with gracious ability, when pessimism reigned in the churches of the founding fathers, the old Calvinism began to respond. It realized that, however strongly buttressed by Scripture the prevailing theology seemed to be, the church was lifeless and ineffective; the gospel itself was suffering. Out of these facts in the life of the Church, American Calvinism went back to the Bible and developed an understanding of God's ways with man which helped to release the dynamic evangelism which Kenneth Scott Latourette believes produced the greatest burst of Christian expansion since apostolic times.

This pattern of theological dialectric between faith and life carries strong implications for our procedures in current discussions. Back to the Bible! Exegesis and biblical understanding to the forefront! We are presently on that side of the dialectic between our theologizing and the life of the church. But neither side of the dialectic ever prevails exclusively or the dialectic itself is lost. The present experience of the church, of the movement in the last century, the history of its life must always be a part of the

data. Any attempt to maintain Wesley's "faith alone-holy life" understanding must be careful not to divide that which Wesley believed Scripture clearly had made one. Wesley insisted that what God has joined together let neither exegetes, nor historical theologians put asunder. You cannot use Scripture against itself. Any understanding of Scripture which in practice denies the possibility of the fulfillment of the promises of the gracious covenant of full salvation in Christ, or which does not encourage and in some real way produce a life of holiness by faith here and now, is deficient and may even deny the gospel itself.

We cannot stand still; the experience of the people of God and the theological explication of that experience must go on-but always under the Spirit and the Word as the authoritative arbiters. In seeking any correction of deficiencies or mis-emphases in our theology or preaching, let us not fall under the apt description which as I recall was given by someone to theologians of the past generation: "In their rush to flee excesses they suddenly found out that they had left all their baggage behind." Let us be better stewards of our biblical, theological and historical tradition than that. After we have come to our best definitions and understandings, hopefully we still can worship and testify in sentiments like these.

An inward baptism of pure fire,
Wherewith to be baptiz'd, I have;
'Tis all my longing soul's desire:
This, only this my soul can save.

Straiten'd I am till this be done;
Kindle in me the living flame;
Father, in me reveal thy Son,
Baptize me into Jesus' name.

Transform my nature into thine;
Let all my powers thine impress feel;
Let all my soul become divine,
And stamp me with thy Spirit's seal.

Love, mighty love, my heart o'erpower:
Ah! why dost thou so long delay!
Cut short the work, bring near the hour,
And let me see the perfect day.5

Notes

1See Bengt R. Hoffman Luther and the Mystics (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1976).

2See Albert C. Outler's essay, "The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition," Kenneth E. Rowe, ed., The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition (Metuchen, N. J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1976), pp. 11-38.

3Luther's Works, Vol. 41, Church and Ministry III (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1906), p. 114.

4John Wesley, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection (London, Epworth Press, 1952), p. 58.

5A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America (Boston: Published by O. Scott, 1843), p. 198.

BAPTISM AND SPIRIT BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

by
Robert W. Lyon

Introduction

The matter of understanding the biblical terminology, language and exegetical bases for the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection is a fundamental starting point for any systemic statement or proclamation of the holy life. In recent years the Wesleyan Theological Society and its journal have considered the language and thought of Pentecost historically as it has been reflected in the holiness movement.' What has been done so far has been helpful in clarifying positions and identifying data. Perhaps not many minds have been changed, but better understanding of the various angles from which the matters of Christian perfection are approached has undoubtedly been an important by-product.

But sooner or later, inevitably, the biblical questions must be raised, for in the end the answers to these questions will be determinative. This study is intended to be a contribution toward working through the biblical questions of the significance of the meaning of Pentecost and the practice of using pentecostal terminology in relation to the doctrine of Christian perfection. The study shall be fundamentally exegetical an m no way is intended to be a systematic statement on the doctrine. The focus will be entirely on the language of baptism and Spirit-baptism in the New Testament to see if the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is, or is related to, the experience of entire sanctification. Are the experiences narrated in the New Testament part of the exegetical basis for Wesley's doctrine of perfection in love? The study is limited to matters relating to this baptism language, and thus does not give consideration to other matters touching more broadly on Christian perfection.2

I shall begin with a general analysis of the baptism terminology throughout the New Testament whenever it is used metaphorically or theologically, and follow that up with a study of the specific phrase, "being baptized in the Holy Spirit," and some equivalent expressions. Finally, I shall draw atten-

tion to other material which will confirm the directions established earlier in the paper.

Baptism Terminology in the New Testament

In the New Testament we find four words from the "baptism" family: the verb baptizo is used 76 times, the noun baptisma 20 times, another noun baptismos 3 times, and the personal noun baptistes 12 times. The last two may be dismissed quickly: in all three texts baptz'smos refers to ritual cleansings, as in Mark 7:4, "The washing of cups and pots," or Hebrews 6:2, "instruction about ablutions." Regarding baptistes all 12 references are in the title, "John the Baptist." We are left, then, with baptizo, "I baptize," and baptisma, "baptism." But here we are interested only in those passages where the words are used metaphorically to convey theological or experiential realities. Of the 76 times the verb is used, 56 refer to an act of baptizing by John, by Jesus, or by the early church. For example, "John . . . was baptizing at Aenon near Salim" (John 3:23), or "Jesus came . . . to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him" (Matt.3:13). For our purposes these can be set aside. This reduces the number to 20. Of these 3 refer to ritual washings as in Mark 7:4: "They do not eat unless they purify themselves." Once (Mark 6:14) it is used as a title for John and equivalent to baptz'stes. The number of relevant texts is thus reduced to 16. Of these 6 are in parallels of the promise to those who will be "baptized in the Holy Spirit," and will be considered shortly. We have now 10 references to check out in which the verb is employed. As for the noun baptisma, 13 of its 20 references are to John's baptism as in Matthew 21:25: "The baptism of John, whence was it?" The other 7 references will receive our attention. Taken together the metaphorical and theologically significant references to baptism are as follows (grouped thematically):

Mark 10:38-39: "But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized? . . . The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized.' "

Luke 12:50: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished!"

Rom. 6:3-4: "Do you not know that all of U9 who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death.... "

Col. 2:12: "And you were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith.... "

Gal. 3:27: "For as many of you as were baptized ints! Christ have put on Christ."

I Cor. 10:2: " . . . and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea."

I Cor. 12:13: "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. "

Eph. 4:5: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

I Pet. 3:20-21: "[the eight members of Noah's family] were saved through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves . . . through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The passages in Mark and Luke offer little help in terms of the specific concerns of this paper, for in them we have a singular use of terms. Here Jesus is referring to His impending passion and His metaphor may have in mind Psalm 42:7 ("Deep calls to deep at the thunder of thy cataracts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me.") or Psalm 69:1 ("Save me, O God) For the waters have come up to my neck.") or perhaps Isaiah 43:2 ("When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you.") So we move on to the other places where "baptize" and "baptism" are found.

In Romans 6:3-4 Paul writes, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death. “Here the terms are used metaphorically and refer to entrance into the Christian life. The metaphor is one of beginning or initiation other important point: it is all-inclusive in that it refers to the common experience of every believer.

Colossians 2:12 expresses much the same idea: "You were buried with him in baptism." It is a reference to the death and re-birth of the Christian. Again, it focuses on the beginning; it describes initial, saving faith, And again, it is the experience of every believer.

Linked to both of these is the statement in Galatians 3:26f.: "For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." The context makes it quite clear that Paul is speaking of justification, of entrance into the family of God, and that it relates to all believers.

It does not matter that these texts in Romans, Colossians and Galatians probably refer to water baptism. The two observations which are to be underscored are: (1) that the use of baptism terminology is linked to , entrance; and, (2) that it is inclusive of all believers.

I Corinthians 10:1-2 is a different type of expression. "Our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Paul is alluding to the exodus and analogically to the two sacraments, for he continues, "All ate the same supernatural food and all drank the same supernatural drink." The baptism metaphor relates to the "passing through the water"9 (as the Christian has) and hence to the fundamental saving event and moment. Again, it is all-inclusive.

The next two, I Corinthians 12:13 and Ephesians 4:5, are especially instructive in that they both relate to the Pauline concern for unity. The theme is the unity of the body with all its diversity. "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body." Here is reference to baptism (by) the Spirit. In his appeal to unity Paul points to the one common experience which forms the basis of that unity. All members of the body have, by definition, this experience of "baptism by the Spirit into the body." If it had anything to do with only those who have gone on to the deeper

experiences. it would have no meaning in its context. The common baptism of the Spirit into the body constitutes the unity of the body.

Ephesians 4:4-5 makes the same point with more detail. Paul exhorts his readers to maintain the unity of the Spirit. "There is one body and one Spirit," and then he adds, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." The reference to baptism may have in mind either water baptism or the baptism of the Spirit. But which it is does not affect our study, for either way it involves all believers since it is a basis for the unity that Paul affirms. The different expressions refer to the common commitments and experiences of all in the body. The passage identifies what Westcott calls "the initial conditions of the Christ life"4 or as J. A. Robinson says, with reference to baptism here, "It was . . ., for all alike, the instrument of embodiment into the 'one body.'5

The only other methaphorical use of baptism in the New Testament is found outside of Paul, in I Peter 3:21. (We shall confine our attention to the matters at hand, and not get sidetracked by the innumerable problems this passage raises.) Peter refers to the patience of God in the days of Noah, in whose ark "eight persons, were saved through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you." The reference is obviously to water baptism. In both the experience of Noah and his family and the experience of the believer, water (baptism) was present in the act of deliverance.6 Because it includes all believers, it has reference to their conversion.

This all-too-inadequate survey of the baptism terminology shows clearly and inescapably that so far baptism language without exception always has reference to a common experience of all believers and of their entrance into the body. It is the basis of the unity of the body and the ground of all ethical exhortation.

Being Baptized in the Holy Spirit

We turn now to the specific promise first uttered by John that the One coming after him would baptize in the Holy Spirit. We shall have to include parallel terms and the several crisis experiences in the Acts of the Apostles. To begin with, our phrase which employs the noun ("the baptism of the Holy Spirit") is not found anywhere in the Bible. The expression is found only with the verb. Six different texts preserve the promise that those who hear the messianic word and respond accordingly will be baptized with the Spirit. Four of these (Matt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:33) are the saying of John the Baptist, "I have baptized in water, but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit" (Matt. and Lk, adding "and fire"). The other two passages are in Acts (1:5 and 11:16) and repeat the same promise, but this time, apparently, it is the promise reiterated by Jesus. In both sayings (or in all six if one counts parallels separately) those who respond to the messianic word will be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Another preliminary observation needs also to be made: In all four accounts of the saying in the Gospels, and by implication in Acts, Jesus is the subject, that is, He baptizes with the Spirit in an act of the risen Lord, not an act of the Spirit who is identifie instrumentally in all the sayings. So, by way of summary thus far, we are examining a promise given to all who respond. viz., that the Messiah will baptize them with the Spirit-the Spirit of the new age.

With one exception the only accounts of such experiences are in the

book of Acts, so we shall proceed through the book of Acts and give attention to each expression which speaks of an experience of the Holy Spirit. As we do this we must remember to read the author's thoughts after him, to accept the experiences as he understood them. And not to manipulate by arbitrary cross-reference, proof text or harmonization.

The first such experience is the experience of Pentecost itself in Acts 2, in which we read that those in the upper room were all "filled with the Holy Spirit." No one, I suspect, doubts that this is the fulfillment of the promise expressed in 1:5 and 1:8. If 90, we have three expressions involving three different verbs. In 1:5 they are to be "baptized in the Spirit"; in 1:8 the Spirit is to "come upon" them; then in 2:4 they are "filled with the Holy Spirit." To the author of Acts these terms are interchangeable. To be baptized in the Spirit is to have the Spirit come upon us, which in turn is to be filled with the Spirit. (An important caveat must be offered: because being baptized in the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit are equivalent expressions for this author, does not mean that they are for any other writer; methodologically that would have to be established for each author.) In Peter's sermon that same day he uses yet another term, "pouring out upon" (Acts 2:33, derived from the prophecy of Joel), to explain what has happened. "He [Jesus] has poured out this which you see and hear." So now we have four expressions to describe this experience of the Spirit.

The next expression is a promise to those who heard Peter's sermon and who were pricked to the depths of their being. To them he says, "Repent, and be baptized . . . and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). The narrative that follows tells us that those who received the word were baptized-about 3,000 in number. Now this narrative only fits together if we recognize that these 3,000 did in fact realize in their lives what Peter had promised: they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. To include the promise in the narrative and not to assume fulfillment would not make sense of the account. But one further point needs to be made, and that is, Peter promised to his hearers the very same experience which they had seen occur in the original outpouring. It would be unreasonable and unwarranted not to expect this as though Peter were saying, "We have received this experience; you are not ready for it yet, but this is what is available for you." No. These people saw something take place and were offered the same experience for themselves. Taking the context as a whole, this is the only way we can understand it. Peter by his message and invitation has set before them the very same opportunity which was fulfilled in the lives of the 120. This is important because it adds another term to a growing list. It also means that for this writer-and I emphasize that phrase-no distinction is to be made between receiving the Spirit and being filled or baptized with the Spirit. All the terms-baptizing, coming upon, filling, pouring out, receiving-are equivalent expressions. We will have occasion to test that conclusion later.

The next expression, found in 4:31, is another matter altogether. After release from custody Peter and John return to the believing body and report the events. After prayer the place is shaken, they are filled with the Spirit and they speak boldly. I think we can assume that this group included the inner circle previously described. If so, this is another "filling," but it is probably akin to those experiences in the Old Testament

when the Spirit of God came upon a spokesman, a leader or a judge for purposes of special anointing for wisdom, power or speech. It has reference to the bold, forthright proclamation of the word in Jerusalem and environs.7 Several other expressions in Acts (6:3, 5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:9, 52) are in the same class.8 As such they are not directly related to our examination of that promised experience of the Spirit. So we proceed.

The next account of an experience of the Spirit is in Acts 8, the so-called Samaritan experience. This is by all accounts the stickiest of all narratives because every interpretation falls somewhat short of fitting neatly the pattern of this book. But first some observations. Their preacher, Philip, had the necessary credentials. Nothing was lacking there. It is said also that they believed Philip's message (v. 12). They had received the word (v. 14) and had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (v. 16). This account sounds as if they were truly converted. But questions arise. Everything that is said about the Samaritans is also said of Simon Magus who certainly had problems. If they were Christians, so was he at this point. Further, the reference in verse 16 to the fact that the Holy Spirit had not yet fallen upon them sounds as though this is abnormal and a surprise. Something was not quite right. Finally, the repeated reference in the narrative to the miraculous (w. 6, 7, 13) might suggest an emotion-laden atmosphere which hindered the clear reception of the word. There is precedent for this in the ministry of Jesus, for in John 2:23-24, we read that many believed on His name when they saw the signs He was doing; but Jesus did not in turn entrust Himself to them. I suggest, then, that the sending of Peter and John was to provide some sort of corrective. One thing, however, is quite certain, viz., that when Peter and John laid their hands upon them and they "received" the Holy Spirit, it was their first experience of the Spirit and cannot be counted as a second experience. In the schema of the book (see 1:8) it is the incorporation of the Samaritans into the body. It was, so to speak, the culmination of their conversion.

We turn now to the conversion of Paul as told in Acts 9. He is arrested by a light and a voice and is led blind into the city where he remains three days without nourishment. When Ananias comes, he addresses Paul as "brother" and says to him, "The Lord . . . has sent me that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit" (9:17). The narrative that follows mentions only the regaining of sight, but we cannot doubt that the mission of Ananias was accomplished, that is, that Paul was also filled with the Spirit. An additional observation is to be made from the parallel account in Acts 22:16 when Paul, after being taken into protective custody by the Romans, reports this event. There we read that Ananias, when he reported to Paul his mission, then said, "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sing, calling on his name." According to the author's use of terms, this is conversion language: baptism, forgiveness of sing, calling on the name of the Lord. Here we see that the visit of Ananias to Paul represents the culmination of the latter's conversion, at which time he is filled with the Spirit, that is, he received the Spirit. Wesley noted this, for in his Explanatory Notes on 9:9 and the reference to three days without sight and food he writes, "So long he [Paul] seems to have been in the pangs of the new birth."9 What we have here, then, is

another example of this experience of the Holy Spirit at conversion. It is Paul's initial encounter with the Spirit.

The next encounter with the Holy Spirit has to do with Cornelius and his household. The narrative of the experience itself is given in 10:44-47 with interpretive comments in 11:15-16 and 15:8. While Peter was yet speaking, it happened! The Holy Spirit "fell" upon them. The Jews who had accompanied Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit was "poured out" even on the Gentiles. Peter then suggested the rite of water baptism for those who had "received" the Holy Spirit "just as we have." Here, again, three different verbs are used to describe the experience-"fall upon," "pour out," and "receive"-and they are equivalent expressions. And we note that two of them (viz., "pour out" and "receive") were used earlier of the Pentecost event. Even more important is that little expression at the end of the verse: "just as we have." This clearly equates the experience of Cornelius with what occurred at Pentecost. And it was most certainly the conversion of Cornelius and his incorporation into the body of Christ. Only an extremely tendentious exegesis could avoid that last conclusion. It is the account of a beginning, not a second blessing.

The two texts which interpret this experience allow for no other conclusion. When Peter returns to Jerusalem to tell what happened, he says (in 11:15), "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning." Again, note that last clause. Then he adds, "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit' " (11:16). This supports an earlier conclusion that there is no difference in Acts (and no other book offers evidence) between "receiving the Spirit" and "being baptized with the Spirit, " for in 10:47 and 11: 16 both are used of the Cornelius experience. Acts 15:8 only confirms this, for the Spirit was "given" (a word not previously used) to them "just as to us." Everything in these narratives requires our understanding the conversion of Cornelius as the occasion for his experience of the Spirit. Upon hearing and receiving the word, he was baptized, according to promise, in the Spirit.

The last account of an experience of the Spirit is that of the Ephesians in Acts 19:1-7. Here again we have problems.10 Were these people, who are referred to in verse 1 as "certain disciples," already Christians when Paul came? The use of the term "disciple" certainly suggests that, and that idea is encouraged by the expression "when you believed"l1 in verse 2. But other evidence impinges upon that view. For example, why did Paul even ask the question, unless he knew something? Again, they had not even heard of any receiving of the Spirit; and they had only received John's baptism. Finally, Paul baptizes them in the name of the Lord Jesus-an act he would hardly have performed had he regarded them as Christians. While certainly not free of ambiguities, what we seem to have here is an account of the conversion of some disciples of John the Baptist (or of a similar "preparation type movement") who had been prepared for the gospel. What cannot be doubted is that this is their first encounter with the Spirit-unless one were to suggest that unknown to them they had been born of the Spirit. But that thought would be totally foreign to the author of this book. Nothing in the narrative offers any suggestion that this is a subsequent experience of the Spirit.

What type of picture is presented us in this material from the book of Acts? First, various expressions are used interchangeably which indicate that we have no basis here for distinguishing between receiving the Spirit and being baptized in, or filled with, the Spirit. Both 2:38 and 10:47 refer to "receiving" the Spirit in connection with a baptism experience. We offer a second conclusion: Apart from the initial outpouring at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) all the accounts are first encounters with the Spirit and have nothing to do with any second works of grace. And, third, if we think the author's thoughts after him, those are all "entrance" accounts-how first Jews, then Samaritans and finally Gentiles entered the Christian community. If we can get away from insisting that conversion- must be at a particular moment, we can see all these again, with the exception of Acts 2, are conversion experiences. That is, e.g., Paul's conversion was during his three-day experience at Damascus. The Samaritans were converted under the ministry of Phillip, Peter and John.

Now what about Acts 2? One thing must certainly be said: The disciples were believers before Pentecost. Everything in all four Gospels forces us to that conclusion. Compare especially, Luke 9:1; 10:20; John 15:3; 17:6, 12. As believers, they have come into contact with the Spirit, but and here I suggest a novel term-only "by proxy"-that is, by virtue of the Spirit in Jesus whose ministry is everywhere viewed as a ministry in the Spirit. So, by virtue of His presence the Spirit is present to them, but not in the promised sense. This is the reason Jesus is able to say that it is to their advantage that He go away (John 16:7), because then the Spirit will be given personally. That giving of the Spirit takes place at Pentecost and from that point on the residence of the Spirit is co-extensive with the Church.12 The two-step experience of the original disciples is the truly unique experience and cannot be repeated for there is no way to repeat their relationship with the incarnate and earthly Jesus.13 From Pentecost on every one enters upon the receiving (i.e., the baptism) of the Spirit. The 3,000 at Pentecost, the Samaritans, Paul, Cornelius and his household, and the 12 in Ephesus all enter the body of Christ by virtue of this common experience of the Spirit.

We have found in this material a remarkable correlation with the earlier examination of the baptism terminology in that together we begin to see the language of conversion and entrance into the body of Christ. To be baptized is to receive the Spirit as promised. From Pentecost on, not to have the Spirit is not to be a Christian (cf. Rom. 8:9).

The baptism in the Spirit, far from being the second experience and an experience subsequent to receiving the Spirit or being born of the Spirit, stands scripturally at the heart of conversion. The nature of Christian conversion, when fully appreciated, is by itself and in itself an anticipation of what we seek to find completed in the insufflation of love. To be made perfect in love is to come to know the natural (supernatural) consequence and corollary of conversion. Perfection in love is the follow-up of that baptism in the Spirit which sets the believer on course.

A working thesis would be set forth as follows: According to Scripture, conversion is itself a radically transforming experience which involves a breaking of the bondage to sin, a dying to self and the realization of a new righteousness. In receiving Christ, the powerful and creative Word of God

is engrafted and the Spirit is received, as promised, in full measure. There is new beginning in every respect (II Cor. 5:17). In our conversion the Holy One touches down and His nature invades our privacy. We are brought out from under the tyranny of darkness into the domain of filial love (Col. 1:13). In short, conversion biblical style is a truly sanctifying experience in its impact and in its ramifications. All imperatives to Christians to cease from sin and to be holy flow from this understanding of the dynamic of biblical conversion.

In speaking of conversion as a "truly sanctifying experience" care must be taken not to take that to mean it is the "entirely sanctifying experience." The experience of entire sanctification is biblically speaking the normal follow through of conversion when the latter is adequately perceived. In conversion we receive from a gracious and all-wise God every provision for carrying out all His commandments. That we do not do so is clear, but that does not alter what Scripture says of conversion.

It might be suggested at this point that none of this is new, that Wesleyan theologians have consistently spoken of an "initial sanctification" that takes place at conversion. But the tendency has been to limit such sanctification to almost only a hint of what is available. That it is so constricted flows quite naturally from some of our common distinctions as "Christ the justifier; the Spirit the sanctifier" or "receiving the Spirit at conversion and being filled with the Spirit at sanctification." The work of the Spirit in conversion is then reduced to a minimum and His crucial work kept till later. Such distinctions may preach well, but they are not biblical.

Other Related Terms

Permit me now to justify this "thesis-with-commentary" by a few additional exegetical observations. In Romans 6:12f£, Paul exhorts his readers to cease from sin which is no longer to have dominion over them. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, . . . yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, . . . For sin will have no dominion over you." We go back to the preceding verses to understand why he can issue such a command with such confidence. In verse 2, he says we have "died to sin." In verse 6 "our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed." Because of the nature of the metaphor-the crucifixion of our old man, the destruction of the body of sin-Wesleyan theologians have at times picked upon this passage as a basis for the doctrine of Christian perfection to argue that sin can be destroyed and our old self can be crucified. But a careful reading of verses 1-14 shows that verses 1-11 represent the affirmation of fact (all indicatives) and form the basis for the exhortation in verses 12-14. Paul states categorically that a Christian-every Christian-is one who has died to sin and his old man has been crucified for the destruction of the body of sin. This is the common experience of the believer and not only of the few who have gone on to perfection. These are not merely legal or forensic accounts, but descriptive of fundamental change brought about by incorporation in Christ. "Legal" death to sin cannot account for the imperatives of verses 12-14. In their conversion to Christ sin has been dealt a lethal blow and no longer is master. The "therefore" (oun) of verse 12 is significant. What he says about moral purity is said because of their basic experience of Christ.

Consider along with this the other references in the Pauline letters to the death and/or crucifixion of believers: II Corinthians 5:14, "We are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died." These no longer live for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised. Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." Galatians 5:24, "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." And Colossians 2:20, "If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe [and you have],14 why do you live as if you still belonged to the world?" In each passage fundamental and all-encompassing imperatives are based on these indicatives.

Consider, too, the other references to "the old man" in Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:9, where the putting off of the old and the putting on of the new are the factual experiences of believers and thus are the warrants for the moral exhortation in both texts. Note the dio ("wherefore") in Ephesians 4:25 and the noun ("therefore") in Colossians 3:12. In these passages Paul does not exhort the Christian to put off the old man and put on the new. Imperatives are built on indicatives, not other imperatives. As Christians this they were taught to do; and because they have done it, they are to bear the fruit of that new man created in righteousness and true holiness. Put it all together and we begin to see the creative power and the potential for moral freedom that is the warp and woof of conversion, Pauline style.15

Other Pauline metaphors such as "the new creation for whom the whole past is done away" (II Cor. 5:16ff.) and the Adam/Christ antithesis in Romans 5 suggest a radical personal re-orientation that includes the moral dimension. Prior to being in Christ he was helpless, totally so, but in Christ it is a new ballgame. An alternative to Adam is now before him. Obedience is not only an authentic possibility, but in Christ a natural one.

If this is true in Paul's letters, how much more clearly so is it in I John. Listen to what the aged saint says to the struggling Christians under his ministry. In 3:6 we read, "No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him." And in 3:9, "No one born of God commits sin; for God's nature abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God." Then in 5:18, "We know that any one born of God does not sin." Without dealing with all the difficulties presented by these texts, and without becoming technical by discussing the tenses in the Greek, yet one element of John's thought stands out and is above debate, viz., that new birth meant a radical break with sin. The possibility of not sinning or the impossibility of committing sin simply are not categories outside Christ. He writes not of the entirely sanctified only, but of every believer. In and by virtue of his new birth, the Christian finds himself with a new freedom which results in a separation from sin; "the evil one does not touch him" (I John 5:18) To be sure John does make provision for the believer who sins for he has a paraclete with the Father. John is not talking about the sinlessness of all believers. He is speaking of a new alienation from sin by virtue of his being born of God. This is what I mean when I speak of conversion which suggests the reality of a subsequent perfection in love. The great hurdle is overcome in new birth. Now, instead of sin being at

home, or being natural, it is as a stranger at the gate. Now instead of our struggling to get sin off our back, sin itself struggles to maintain a hold on our lives.

Summary

By way of a summary I offer the following: From Pentecost on, all believers receive at conversion the Holy Spirit as promised-in His fullness. No biblical basis exists for a distinction between receiving the Spirit and being baptized in, or filled with, the spirit. The Acts of the Apostles shows au contraire that they are interchangeable expressions. All references involving the language of baptism reinforce that conclusion, for they are all-inclusive as descriptive of every believer. These, in turn, are further reinforced by various Pauline and Johannine themes in which the indicative descriptions of the basic experience of being apprehended by Christ are the bases for all-encompassing commands for holy living.

Were someone to ask me where we begin in establishing the biblical roots of Wesley's doctrine of perfection in love, one of the powerful warrants I would offer would be this biblical account of conversion. The dynamic of conversion to Jesus Christ is such that perfection in love is the mandatory follow-up. Consider how Scripture spells out conversion: Through faith in Christ a person is born from above and so finds an alternative to the cycle of sin and death. Now for the first time he need not sin. The old man is crucified; the "body of sin" is destroyed; in Christ the new man has been put on, an authentic creative act in which righteousness and devotion find clear expression (Eph. 4:24). He has received in full measure the promised gift of the Spirit of God. He is what he is by virtue of a new creative act of God which removes all the past and establishes an alternative to Adam. The powerful and purging Word of God is engrafted and he is being transformed from one degree of glory to another (II Cor. 3:18). Every New Testament imperative is based on the nature of this conversion to Christ. And every New Testament imperative is considered right in the light of what has already transpired.

Notes

1See, e.g., John A. Knight, "John Fletcher's Influence on the Development of Wesleyan Theology in America," Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring 1978, 13-33; Timothy L. Smith, "The Doctrine of the Sanctifying Spirit: Charles G. Finney's Synthesis of Wesleyan and Covenant Theology," WJT, Spring 1978, 92-113; D. W. Dayton, "The Doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Its Emergence and Significance," WTJ, Spring 1978, 114-126; H. McGonigle, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," WTJ, Spring 1973, 61-72.

2Because this study confines itself to a study of Spirit baptism language and experiences and to texts which relate to such experiences, it will not relate directly to the biblical evidence for belief in Christian perfection, nor will it touch on matters related to that doctrine such as the nature of sin, progress and crisis and so forth. By way of anticipating the conclusions the paper offers a description of conversion in its full dynamic as the

biblical preface to, and ground for, anticipating an experience of entire sanctification.

3It does not matter that the relation of water to the people involved in the two experiences (the exodus and Christian baptism) is different. In the former the people are kept from contact with the water and thus pass through to freedom; in the latter water contact is as fundamental.

4B. F. Westcott, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (1952), p. 59.

5J Armitage Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (1903), p. 178.

6As in I Cor. 10:2, the relationship of the one(so delivered is different. Noah and his family were saved from the water. But the point is that in both experiences water was present in the experience of deliverance. Cf. footnote 3.

7Cf. E. Haenchen, The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), p. 228. "It is the Holy Spirit who bestows the fearlessness with which the Christian message is proclaimed in the face of danger."

8" . . . the Holy Spirit filled them all and sent them forth to proclaim the good news with renewed confidence." F. F. Bruce, Commentary on the Book of Acts (NIC) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), p. 109.

9Cf. J. A. Bengel on the reference in 9:9 to "three days": "The business of conversion is worth the bestowal of whole days, when one is being drawn to God." Gnomon, ad loc.

10"Taken as an isolated passage, Acts 19:1-7 is the despair of the exegete." E. Kasemann, Essays on New Testment Themes, SBT No. 41 (SCM, 1964), p. 136.

11Any attempt to establish time of action on the basis of the aorist tense of the participle is doomed to failure. The basic element of tense in Greek is not time but how the action is viewed by the writer or speaker. An obvious example, pace, KJV, of an aorist participle at the same time as the leading verb iY Acts 1:8. On the Greek tense see E. D. Burton, Moods and Tenses, pp. 54, 59f.; C. F. D. Moule, Idiom Book, pp. 5f.; A. T. Robertson, Grammar, pp. 343f.

12 Cf. Rom. 8:9; the portrait of Paul in Acts is consistent at this point.

13Some within the holiness movement concede the experiences of the Samaritans, of Cornelius and his household, and of the twelve in Ephesus do not provide a basis for a doctrine of a second work, but contend that the experience of the original disciples (Acts 2:4) provides a model or pattern today. Two observations make this impossible: (1) the model is not followed elsewhere in Acts or the early Church; (2) it fails to consider the heilsgeschichtlich significance of Pentecost as the once-for-all inaugurative event which establishes the Church.

14The conditional clause in Greek indicates condition of fact.

15It is worth noting how often these passages (Rom. 6:1ff.; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9f.) have been employed within the holiness movement as a basis for

the exhortation to Christian perfection when in reality they are descriptive of what has happened in the lives of all believers. The metaphors employed (the crucifixion of the old man, the destruction of the body of sin, the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new) are powerful images; that they all relate to all believers underscores the existentially radical character of conversion as a new orientation and dynamic opening up of new vistas of obedience. That they have been treated in terms of a second work shows that (probably) unconsciously conversion has in fact been reduced in significance, hence making a second work more obviously necessary. But the Wesleyan doctrine has its sure foundation.

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION AND THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT: PERSPECTIVES ON THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE RELATIONSHIP

by

Alex R. G. Deasley

Introduction

This subject must be considered in the context of the ongoing discussion of it among Wesleyan historians: a discussion which has occupied considerably the attention of the Wesleyan Theological Society in recent years.1 The net result of that discussion has been to demonstrate not merely that Wesley did not equate entire sanctification with the baptism with the Holy Spirit, but that he expressly refused to do so.2 Dr. George Allen Turner's statement fairly indicates the position.

> John and Charles said or wrote little about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This emphasis is relatively recent. It is not easy to find Wesleyan writers devoting much space to it or associating it with entire sanctification and evangelical perfection.3

With this judgment Dr. Leo G. Cox expresses agreement.

> Wesley believed that any change wrought within the heart of a person was by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that until this holy love was "shed abroad in the heart" no one could enter heaven. This teaching of Wesley may appear strange to some who insist that the Holy Spirit is given subsequent to regeneration at the time of a "second blessing," but in this concept Wesley is at one with most Reformed teaching.4

It is not my purpose, nor is it within my competence, to trace the subsequent history of this significant and in many respects embarrassing divergence between Wesley and many of his spiritual heirs. There are however, two observations I wish to make which bear upon the aspect of the problem with which I am dealing.

The first is that the bifurcation of thought which emerged in Wesley's lifetime, chiefly as between himself and Fletcher,5 has continued from that day to this. In what may be called the classical Wesleyan tradition the

equation of entire sanctification with the baptism with the Holy Spirit is conspicuous by its absence. Nowhere does it appear in the Collected Works of Richard Watson; if nowhere does it appear in the systematic theologies of Miley and Pope.7 Indeed Pope does not merely omit it; he expressly repudiates it. Writing against the background of the Higher Life Movement in England, he says:

> There has been a tendency among some teachers of religion in modern times so to speak of Christian Perfection as to seem to make it the entrance into a new order of life, one namely of higher consecration under the influence of the Holy Ghost. That this higher life is the secret of entire consecration there can be no doubt. But there is no warrant in Scripture for making it a new dispensation of the Spirit, or a Pentecostal visitation superadded to conversion. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" means "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" In other words entire consecration is the stronger energy of a spirit already in the regenerate, not a Spirit to be sent down from on high. This kingdom of God is already within if we would let it come in its perfection. Neither "since" in this passage, nor the "after" in "after that ye believed" (Ephesians 1:13) has anything corresponding in the original Greek.8

Possibly even more surprising than Pope is H. Orton Wiley as an illustration of this bifurcation of thought. It is true that Wiley followed the other fork of the bifurcation, equating entire sanctification with the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The remarkable thing is that, in the entire three volumes of his Christian Theology, Wiley devotes only a single page to the baptism with the Holy Spirits and the structure of his argument for entire sanctification is not affected by it in the least degree. This seems to suggest that, in his most formal statement, Wiley was considerably influenced as far as his evaluation of the biblical data was concerned, by the classical Wesleyan tradition. More recent examples of this tradition are not difficult to find.10

The second observation I would make arising from the history of the divergence referred to bears even more directly upon my immediate concern. This is that, even within that fork of Wesleyan thought which has equated entire sanctification with the baptism with the Holy Spirit, there have been both uneasiness and disagreement in the handling of the evidence of Acts. Daniel Steele is a notable example of the former. While clear about the equation, he nonetheless finds himself under repeated pressure to qualify it. For example, in commenting on the experience of unbelievers who responded to Peter's summons in Acts 2:38, he says:

> Unbelievers during the sermon of Peter were rapidly transformed into penitent believers, ready to submit to any test of the genuineness of their faith; even to be publicly baptized in the hated name of that Jesus whom they had personally insulted and crucified. The finishing stroke of this rapid transformation was "the gift of the Holy Ghost" with its fruits-unselfishness, oneness of spirit, "gladness and singleness of heart." *But generally there was a brief interval*

between conversion and the baptism of the Spirit." (Italics mine.)

The last sentence plainly implies that, at least on the day of Pentecost, all that is described in Acts 2:38 was both proclaimed and received as a single experience; and there is no doubt that that is the natural meaning of Peter's words. Steele attributed to the greatness of the spiritual power manifested that day.12 Three pages later he is dealing with "the ordinary sequence of blessings" which he gives as "(a) hearing; (b) faith, implying preventing and saving grace; (c) baptism; (d) communication of the Holy Spirit."l3 After listing supporting evidence from Acts he adds:

> Acts 10:44 and perhaps 9:17, are exceptional cases. The reason for the seeming blending of the baptism of the Holy Ghost with regeneration in exceptional instances in the Acts of the Apostles is to be attributed to the fact that the regenerate were urged to the immediate attainment of this great blessing, so that they did attain it with the interval of only a brief period.14

Most interesting of all from Steele's works is his chapter on "Baptism with the Holy Ghost" in A defense of Christian Perfection.15 As is well known, this book was written in reply to Mudge's Growth in Holiness Toward Perfection in which (among other things) Mudge trained his guns on Spirit-baptism language used in support of entire sanctification.16 Steele's reply is two-fold. First, he points out that the use of such evidence is no part of classical Wesleyanism. Referring to the title of his chapter he says: "The chapter with this caption may have relevancy to some modern advocates of Christian perfection, but is not relevant to the doctrine as taught by Wesley and Wesleyan standard theologians."17 He then proceeds to cite Wesley and Fletcher. His parting shot is: "Our author's chapter on the baptism of the Spirit might have been included in his discussion of irrelevant texts,18 on none of which do our standard theologians ground the doctrine of Christian perfection."19 Second, basing on Fletcher who, he says, "does not positively affirm the entire sanctification of 'the multitude of them that believed' in the happy 'days of Pentecost,' " Steele concludes "that the phrase 'baptism or fullness of the Spirit' may mean something less than entire sanctification."20 It may refer to what he calls the "ecstatic fullness of the Spirit," a flood of peace, joy and power which "-may prostrate the body without cleansing the soul."2l Again, it may refer to "a charismatic fullness of the Spirit" in which "the person . . . may be filled with some extraordinary gift or charisma of the Spirit."22 On the other hand there is the "ethical fullness which must imply entire sanctification."23 These qualifications bespeak a recognition on Steele's part that the evidence of Acts cannot be systematized in a completely tidy way, and that a certain elasticity is called for. To this, Steele makes considerable concessions.

A more recent instance, not of uneasiness with but rejection of the accepted interpretation of a central portion of the narrative of Acts, namely the Gentile Pentecost in Acts 10, is found in the commentaries of Dr. Ralph Earle. The received view is that the devotion, almsgiving, and prayer of Cornelius (Acts 10:2, 22) are tantamount to regeneration: a conclusion held

to be vindicated by the words of Peter in Acts 10:35: "in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him." On this basis, the descent of the Spirit (Acts 10:44) is then interpreted as entire sanctification.24 This exegesis Dr. Earle discountenances. "To hold that Cornelius was a Christian before he met Peter is very precarious exegesis," he writes.25 How precarious that exegesis is shown in work such as that of Philipp Vielhauer who argued that Luke comes near, if he does not actually embrace, a doctrine of salvation by works. "According to Luke . . . justification by faith is so to speak only complementary for Jewish Christians. It is necessary for them because and to the extent that they fall short of the fulfillment of the law or because the law provides no complete justification."26 Dr. Earle insists that the force of Peter's words in Acts 10:34-35 is that "Cornelius was just as much accepted before God as any physical descendant of Abraham":27 a conclusion that is surely amply justified by the context.28

What then is the significance of the Gentile Pentecost if Cornelius was not regenerate before Peter's arrival? Dr. Earle is aware of the problem and replies as follows.

> Perhaps the explanation which best accords with Scripture is that while Peter was only getting well started with his sermon his hearers in their hearts believed on Jesus Christ and experienced evangelical conversion.... Then, because their hearts were fully open for all of God's will, these listeners who had walked devoutly in the light of Judaism (10:2), and had now accepted Christ, were suddenly filled with the Holy Spirit.29

The only difficulty with this exegesis is that there is not a syllable in Acts 10:44 or 11:15 to suggest or support it.

These illustrations from Daniel Steele and Ralph Earle illustrate the complexity of the data of Acts as they also illustrate the failure to reach a consensus among committed Wesleyans regarding their interpretation. It is but five years since Dr. Delbert Rose read a paper on this problem to the Wesleyan Theological Society, concluding with the words: "Let us hear from you who will accept the challenge to develop an in-depth study on the distinctions herein discussed."30 It is not as one who knows the solution, but certainly as one who is prepared to accept the challenge, that I attempt to conduct this study.

It may be that one way of seeking a resolution of the problem will be to trace the use of the phrase "baptism with the Holy Spirit" in two of the leading phrases of New Testament history, in the ministry of Jesus, and in the earliest church, and then to conclude with a glance at the teaching of Paul. Comparison and contrast may serve to illuminate not only the New Testament usage, but also the origins of the divergent views within the Wesleyan tradition.

I. Baptism in the Spirit in the Ministry of Jesus

The infrequency of mention of the Spirit by Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels has often been noted.31 This is even more the case with the expression "baptism in the Spirit," a phrase found on the lips of Jesus only once (Acts 1.5) The pursuit of this phrase leads us behind the ministry of Jesus to the prophetic utterances made by the Baptist regarding Jesus' ministry

as well as to Jesus' ministry itself. Each of these deserves separate attention.

A. John's Prophecy of the Ministry of Jesus

The central question here is: what did the Baptist mean when he foretold that the Coming One would "baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matthew 3:11)? The matter has been much debated, involving as it does a whole series of complex issues such as the presence of the words "and with fire" in Matthew's and Luke's versions of the story as against their absence in Mark; the origins of the Baptist's imagery; and-resulting from both of these-the burden of his message. It is impossible to examine these at length; at the expense of appearing dogmatic, I can only set down what seem to me to be the conclusions most in harmony with the evidence.

1. Regarding the differing form of John's prophecy as between Matthew and Luke on the one hand and Mark on the other: there is nothing to suggest that this requires a difference in meaning. The evidence was surveyed in a paper presented to the Wesleyan Theological Society by my colleague Dr. Willard Taylor in 1976 in which he concluded that:

> We need not assume a breakdown in the transmission of the tradition nor postulate a form-critical reading back of a later view of the Church. The ingredients for this understanding of the ministry of the Holy Spirit are available in the old scriptures and the current thought patterns of John's day. Thus, it is proper to interpret the Baptism with the Holy Spirit as a fiery baptism in which we must be immersed as it were or one which results from the "pouring out" of the Spirit upon us.32

2. The reservoir of imagery and ideology on which the Baptist draws is significant for determining the meanings he attached to the phrase "baptism with the Holy Spirit." That John drew the form of his baptism from earlier rites goes without saying, for ablutions of various kinds were commonplace in Judaism. For its import however, no precedent can be found. Essene ablutions (assuming them to be represented by those of the Qumran community) were repeated, and had ceremonial rather than ethical significance;33 Jewish proselyte-baptism, though not repeated, was deficient in the same way.34 Whence then did John derive his understanding? The Gospel accounts clearly present John as a Spirit-possessed prophet (Luke 1:15, 17, 80; Matt. 11:9), and it is a natural expectation that he derived his inspiration and thought-forms from the prophets of the Old Testament. These are replete with metaphorical language which expresses the eschatological hope of inward cleansing and the outpouring of the Spirit under the imagery of water and washing. Isaiah 1:16-20, Jeremiah 4:14, Ezekiel 36:25-27, Zechariah 13:1 are only a few of the best known prophetic sayings, to say nothing of the evidence of the post-canonical literature.

When John's proclamation of the baptism in the Spirit is read in the light of these antecedents, it is not difficult to see what John understood as the essence of that baptism. John's own baptism summoned to repentance hose who depended on their Abrahamic pedigree, but who did not bring forth the living evidence of a changed life which alone was the sign of true penitence (Matt. 3:8-10; Luke 3:8-14). The Spirit-baptism to be administered

by the Coming One is contrasted with John's baptism to the disadvantage of the latter. The imagery of the threshing-floor has a double application, both collective and individual. On the one hand the grain and the chaff denote respectively penitent and impenitent Jews, sorted out by the fiery baptism. On the other hand the grain that has survived the fire has shown thereby that it is thoroughly pure.35 The implication is that the Spirit-baptism would remove, not only those who persisted in their wickedness, but also the last remains of wickedness in those who had responded to John's preaching in penitence. In short, John had fastened on to that aspect of Old Testament prophecy of the Spirit which saw its essential meaning in the purification of the heart. While there is no direct evidence of indebtedness, it is the thought and emphasis of Ezekiel which the Baptist seems to have absorbed, conjoining as it does sprinkling with clean water, the giving of a new heart and spirit in place of the heart of flesh, and the implanting of a spirit of obedience to the divine commands (Ezek. 36:25-27). This was the essence of the Baptist's understanding of baptism in the Spirit.36

B. The Ministry of Jesus and the Baptism with the Holy Spirit

There is nothing accidental in the fact that in all three Synoptic Gospels, John's proclamation of the impending baptism in the Spirit is followed at once by the baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). The significance of this is stated explicitly by the Fourth Evangelist (who, for reasons of his own, does not record the baptism of Jesus by John): "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (John 1:33). Two points important for the understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit emerge from the ministry of Jesus.

1. The first is that in His case, baptism was the occasion of His endowment with the Spirit. The language of the Synoptists varies in keeping with their individual styles and interests, but the association of the descent of the Spirit with baptism is unmistakably plain, especially by the use of the adverb euthus in Matthew and Mark. Matthew writes: "and when Jesus was baptized, immediately he came up from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove. coming upon him" (3-16). The preservation of euthus by Matthew suggests that its use by Mark is more than simply an example of stylistic redundancy. Mark writes: "And immediately as he was coming up from the water he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit like a dove descending on him" (1:10). In short, for the one and only time in the ministry of John the Baptist his preparatory baptism with water and its spiritual fulfillment were united in the experience of the Coming One Himself. Professor Lampe writes:

> Whereas the multitudes were baptized by John as a Remnant elected to await the dawning of the age to come, Jesus received the promised descent of the Spirit, and the association of water and Spirit which had been prefigured in the metaphorical language of the Prophets became translated into reality. Hence, when the death and resurrection of the

> Christ had established the New Covenant, and the Spirit could be bestowed on all those who responded in faith to His saving work, the union of water and Spirit as the outward sign and the inner reality of the sacramental rite became normative for the baptismal theology of the early Church.37

When therefore, one reads a statement like Acts 2:38: "Repent and be baptized and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," one is witnessing the application to the individual Christian of the pattern of the experience of Christ. or, to express it differently, the Christianizing of the baptism of John by its being drawn into the age of the Spirit.

2. The second point of importance from the ministry of Jesus for the understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is that His baptism had a proleptic aspect to it. In each of the Synoptics the descent of the Spirit is followed by the utterance in some form of the words by the bath qol "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22); while according to Matthew, Jesus submits to baptism with the words: "Thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt.3:15). On any showing, these sayings link the baptism of Jesus with His death. The meaning of the conventional view that the heavenly utterance is a conflation of Psalm 2:7 with Isaiah 42:1 is strengthened rather than weakened by the suggestion that agapetos may be an allusion to the binding of Isaac; for it combines to show that Jesus' Sonship consists in the willing acceptance of being God's Servant, even to the point of death. Hence, it is upon Jesus who has been baptized into death that the Spirit descends. Clearly, however, that death in its ultimate sense still lies in the future. And against interpretations to the contrary, it is this which makes it probable that in sayings in which Jesus refers to His impending death under the figure of baptism, Jesus is not using the image metaphorically. Thus in Mark 10:38 Jesus asks James and John if they are able to drink the cup which he drinks and be baptized with the baptism with which he is baptized. Any ambiguity regarding the meaning of this is removed in the sequel in which He holds before them the example of the Son of Man who came to "give His life a ransom for many" (v. 45). Likewise in Luke 12:50 Jesus speaks of the constraint He feels that the baptism with which He is to be baptized should ba completed. Most interestingly the parallel saying in the preceding verse expresses the same thought in terms of fire: "I came to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled." In an important sense, His water and fire baptism was only initiated at the Jordan; it awaited completion. What is so clearly implied in the Synoptic Gospels is stated explicitly in the Fourth Gospel in the teaching that the Spirit would not be given until the death and glorification of Jesus (John 7:39; 12:23; 16:7).

If we summarize the meaning of the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the ministry of Jesus we reach the following conclusion: (1) that the baptism in the Spirit was foretold by John the Baptist as the power of God, unleashed in the last age to extirpate gin either by destroying it in the penitent soul, or destroying the impenitent sinner along with his sin; (2) that in the case of Jesus the giving of the Spirit was associated directly with His baptism at John's hands: and (3) that the experimental meaning of His baptism was

not exhausted in the sacramental rite. While in symbol He accepted death in the moment of baptism it was not until Calvary that the death was fully realized; and while in measure the Spirit descended on Him at the Jordan, it was not until His exaltation that He "received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit" and, at Pentecost, "poured forth that which they both saw and heard" (Acts 2:33).

II. Baptism in the Spirit in the Earliest Church

From the ministry of Jesus we may turn next to baptism in the Spirit in the earliest church. This means that Acts is our primary source of information. However Acts cannot be interpreted safely apart from the Third Gospel. It may be suspected that much of the exegetical confusion alluded to earlier in this paper arose because of failure to ask the fundamental hermeneutical question: what is the author of Acts trying to do? And this question cannot be answered for Acts without asking the same question regarding Luke's Gospel. It is impossible to deal with this question comprehensively; we must content ourselves with one aspect of it and inquire as to what is Luke's perspective on the baptism with the Holy Spirit. We begin with his Gospel.

A. The Spirit in Luke's Gospel

In determining the emphases and motifs of Luke's Gospel it is easy to be fanciful and subjective. Beyond this, it must also be remembered that Luke's intent was at least partly historical, and he was limited both by this and the materials available to him. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify, at least tentatively, several points that seemed to be of importance to him.

1. First, the coming baptism in the Spirit would have, as a significant effect, the interiorizing of religion. It must suffice to refer back to the earlier discussion of the significance of the baptism in the Spirit with the baptism of John. Indeed, it is in Luke's account that the contrast is most sharply drawn. It is Luke alone who records John's replies to his various interrogaters (tax-collectors, soldiers, etc.) asking him for practical directions; but the most they can do is prepare for the arrival of the Coming One. Inward renovation awaited His advent. The same thrust is present in the Birth Narratives. On the one hand are the standard features of messianic expectation: the overthrow of the mighty and deliverance from powerful enemies (1:52, 71, 74). On the other hand there is the suggestion of a new mighty act of God potent enough to rout not merely the enemy without but the enemy within. "The Magnificat," says E. E. Ellis, "describes a reversal of political and economic status in the coming age. The Benedictus speaks of the ethical transformation to be effected by the messianic redemption."38 The divine visitation for the redemption of Israel in which Zacharias exults is seen as the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham; but that promise-to quote Creed-"is interpreted in a broad and spiritualized sense: not the gift of the promised land, but the gift of deliverance from foes for the continual service of God."39

2. A second emphasis in Luke's Gospel appears to be on the giving of the Spirit as the mark of the new age. At each stage of the life of Jesus this seems to be underscored. The comparison with John the Baptist is illuminating. Thus, the births of John and Jesus were miraculous, the Spirit

being operative in both (Luke 1:17, 35), but the miracles were of a different order. the one involving a miracle of procreation, the other a miracle of creation. In the words of C. K. Barrett: "The central, biblical idea with which we have to deal is that the entrance of Jesus into the world was the inauguration of God's new creation.... The part played by the Holy Spirit in the birth narratives is thus seen to be that of Genesis 1."40 A similar significance may be discerned in some of the features of Jesus' baptism. The tendency of Matthew and Mark noted above to bind Jesus' reception of the Spirit to His baptism is even more noticeable in Luke. The rite itself is passed over in a genitive absolute (Luke 3:21) and the accent falls on the descent of the dove and the heavenly voice, both of which bear the same message. The descent of the Spirit like a dove recalls Genesis 1:2 and 8:11 in which it was the harbinger of a new creation.41 The bath qol, regarded in Judaism as the substitute for the voice of the Spirit during the years of prophetic silence, here points away from itself to Him upon whom the Spirit rests, thereby announcing that the new age of the Spirit has dawned. And the message uttered by the voice is that Jesus has been appointed as Son and Servant-Messiah in terms of Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1. In short Jesus is baptized with the Spirit not merely in expectation but in inauguration of the age of the Spirit. That this is so is confirmed by the fact that while, according to Luke, He speaks little of the Spirit, yet His ministry abounds in the works of the Spirit: exorcism, healing, prophecy, forgiveness of sins, all of which are part of His Spirit-anointed commission in Luke 4:18.

3. A third conspicuous feature of the account of the Spirit in Luke's Gospel is the marked stress on the Spirit as the agent of prophecy. Luke mentions the Spirit seventeen times in his Gospel (as against Matthew's twelve and Mark's six); seven examples occur in his first two chapters and six of them refer to prophecy.42 Elizabeth, Zacharias, Simeon are filled with the Spirit and prophesy (1:15, 41, 67; 2:25, 26, 27). Of programmatic significance is the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth (4:16-30) in which Jesus presents Himself as the Anointed One of Isaiah 61:1; and the ministry to which He has been appointed is to preach (4:18). Prof. Geoffrey Lampe holds that the first discourse of each of Luke's volumes contains the primary message of the book.43 If that is so, then Luke's intent in his Gospel is to present Jesus as a Spirit-anointed prophet.

4. Finally, it is almost certainly no accident that Luke, of all the evangelists, preserves direct references to the role of the Spirit at nodal points in the ministry of Jesus. In some cases the references are direct. Thus, the birth of Jesus takes place as a result of the activity of the Spirit (1:35); at His baptism the Spirit descends (3:22); when the Seventy return Jesus "rejoices in the Spirit" (10:21). Sometimes the references are indirect, being associated with prayer which-in Lampe's words-is "complementary to the Spirit's activity since it is the point at which the communication of divine influence becomes effective for its recipients . . . the means by which the dynamic energy of the Spirit is apprehended."44 Luke alone mentions that when the Spirit descended on Jesus following His baptism He was praying (3:21); likewise at other crucial points in His career: the choosing of the Twelve (6:12); before Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (9:18); at the Transfiguration (9:28); while of the agony in Gethsemane Luke alone says that "he prayed more earnestly" (22:44).45

If the foregoing analysis is correct, then it provides us with a perspective on Luke's understanding of baptism in the Spirit, even within the limited place which it occupied in the ministry of Jesus and so in Luke's Gospel. The ethical note is present, in the prophecies of Jesus' ministry in the Birth Narratives and by John the Baptist. However, it is not this note which Luke appears to stress in his Gospel. It is rather the coming of the Spirit as the sign of the New Age, present at each nodal point of the Heilsgeschichte and furthering the progress of salvation by ministering prophetic power to those who receive Him.

B. Baptism in the Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles

We may turn now from Luke's Gospel to his second volume: the locus of the heart of the problem. The confessions of bewilderment from the lips of the eminent are at once consoling and unnerving: from C. K. Barrett and R. R. Williams who believe it is impossible to "reconstruct a harmonious account of what Luke believed about baptism";46 to B. S. Easton who believed he had never even thought about it.47 We may approach the subject by concentrating on a single, central episode which not only is interpreted itself but in turn is used to interpret Pentecost: namely the Gentile Pentecost. So important is this episode in Luke's mind that he uses his valuable space to deal with it three times over /10:1-48; 11:1-18; 15:1-11). I wish first, to discuss the meaning of these narratives, and then consider their implications.

1. The Narratives of the Gentile Pentecost. Four features stand out as being significant in the exegesis of these sequences.

(a) The central purpose of the narratives is to recount the incorporation of the Gentiles into the Church. The prelude in 10:1-16 revolves around the two leading personages with their anthithetical problems: the vision of the Gentile Cornelius that the acceptance he seeks is about to be vouchsafed to him; and the vision of the Jewish apostle Peter that he is not to refuse what God has cleansed. This is the point stressed by Peter on his arrival in Cornelius' house: "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit any one of another nation; but God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (10:28); and again: "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (10:34-35 RSV). Everything else is subordinate to this. The evidence the situation requires is evidence that will substantiate this conclusion.

(b) A second feature of exegetical significance is the message Peter preached. This is expressed uniformly in salvation terms. The report of the sermon in 10:34-43 has as its conclusion: "To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name" (43). Peter's account of the angelic message to Cornelius is in the same vein: "Send to Joppa and bring Simon called Peter; he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household" (11:13-14). And his opening words to the Jerusalem council are akin: "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe" (15:7). The terminology used throughout in description of Peter's

message is that of hearing the Word, leading to repentance, faith and the forgiveness of sins.

(c) A third notable feature of these narratives is the description of the conclusion drawn by the apostles. At the end of the narrative of the event itself Peter indicates by a rhetorical question that the administration of baptism is the appropriate conclusion: " 'Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (10:47-48). Evidently, baptism in the name of Jesus was regarded as the sacramental correlative of receiving the Holy Spirit. At the first Jerusalem inquiry prompted by Judaistic criticism opposition is quelled by Peter's report and the conclusion of the inquiry is spelled out specifically: "When they heard this they were silenced. And they glorified God saying: 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life'" (11:18). And at the Jerusalem council itself Peter again is the spokesman. The sequence of phrases in Acts 15:7, 8, 9, 11 is significant. In 15:7 Peter affirms his appointment that by his mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. In 15:8-9 he evidently describes how this happened: "God who knows the heart bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us; and he made no distinction between them and us, but cleansed their hearts by faith." The inference which Peter draws from this is: "We believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will" (15:11). In short, the conclusion drawn by the apostles is in the same terms as the message Peter preached: hearing the Word, leading to repentance, faith, salvation and reception of the Spirit expressed in baptism.48

(d) A fourth feature important for the exegesis of this episode is the way in which it is repeatedly presented as a repetition of Pentecost. Cornelius and his fellow Gentiles "have received the Holy Spirit just as we have" (10:47). Again Peter reports: "The Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us after we believed in the Lord Jesus, who was I that I could withstand God?" (11:15, 17). In 15:8, 9, 11 the point is thrice-repeated: God "gave them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us" (8); he "made no distinction between us and them" (9); "we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will" (11). In other words, the Gentile Pentecost is not to be regarded as in any way unique or different from the Jewish Pentecost; it would stultify Peter's argument if it were so. As said above not only is the Jewish Pentecost used to interpret the Gentile; the reverse is also true.

2. The Implications of the Gentile Pentecost. It is now time to consider the implications of the foregoing exegesis. It might well be inferred that the chief implication is that in Luke's theology baptism in the Holy Spirit is explained without remainder by repentance, faith and new life verified by baptism: in a word by regeneration. However, that conclusion is foreclosed by the prophecies of the New Age in the first chapter of Luke's Gospel and of the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the third, in both of which (as was shown earlier) an inward purification of a radical character seemed plainly to be implied. What then is Luke doing? I would draw attention to three features of Acts which in my judgment are clues to his intention.

(a) First, is Luke's overall purpose in Acts. A comprehensive

examination of this is out of bounds here;49 but confining our inquiry to Luke's message of the Spirit (as with the Gospel) it is interesting that similar results emerge. There is the same stress on the New Creation. Pere Dupont writes: "The Spirit came upon the apostles during the feast at which Judaism commemorated the promulgation of the Law and the conclusion of the Covenant between God and His people. The Christian Pentecost presents itself as the feast of the New Covenant constituting the Church a new people of God."50 Again, there is a marked stress on prophecy as the consequence of the giving of the Spirit. It is of moment that the prophecy which is quoted by Peter as being fulfilled at Pentecost is Joel 2:28-32 whose primary emphasis, twice-repeated (Acts 2:17, 18), is that when the Spirit comes, men and women will prophesy. Proclamation as the consequence of the giving of the Spirit is underlined in 9:20; 10:46; 19:6. Once more, it is notable that, it is at the nodal points of the Church's advance (in keeping with the programmatic statement of Acts 1:8) that the giving of the Spirit is treated most fully: Jerusalem, Samaria, the Gentiles (including Saul, as their apostle), the Ephesians. These features combine to say that for Luke a controlling theme is not merely the recounting of the universal spread of the gospel, but underlining that this is accomplished only in the power of the Spirit. For Luke, the Spirit is the Spirit of mission.51

(b) A second factor suggestive of Luke's intention is the wide field of meaning attaching to his language. Luke has frequently been charged with inconsistency at this point. Thus, Jesus' promise that before many days the disciples would be "baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5) was evidently implemented when "they were all filled " (2:4). A further filling takes place during and following the trial before the Sanhedrin, resulting in boldness to speak the word (4:8, 31); while certain figures are described as being "full" (pleasures of the Spirit evidently as a permanent state (6:3), 5, 8, 10; 7:55; 11:24).52 Yet in reference to similar events (especially in passages examined earlier) the language of the "falling" of the Spirit (10:44; 11:15), the "pouring out of the Spirit" (10:45), the giving of the Spirit" (10:45; 11:17; 15:8), the "receiving of the Spirit" (10:47) is used with the meaning indicated above.

(c) A third feature relevant to our inquiry, and in some degree anticipated in the previous point, is that Luke did not regard all as having received the Spirit in the same measure. Bultmann comments:

> On the one hand all Christians have received the Spirit in baptism thereby being transformed into a new nature. Elsewhere however, the fact of the common possession of the Spirit is ignored. Some are regarded as pneumatikoi in a special sense (I Corinthians 2:13-3:3). Again, the Spirit is possessed by some in greater measure than others (Acts 6:3, 5; 11:24).53

The examples referred to are those in which the adjective pleres is used evidently, in the sense of permanent endowment. Dr. Howard Marshall observed that "Luke does not go deeply into the 'ethical' effects of the Spirit (as in Galatians 5:22f.) because for him the life of the church is to be understood in terms of mission, and it is for mission that the church has received the Spirit."54 It is therefore worth noting that it is precisely where pleres is used that the ethical aspects of the fullness of the Spirit are

congregated. In Acts 6 the Twelve seek seven men "of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (3); Stephen is "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" (5), "full of grace and power" (8, cf. 10); and at his murder when he is again described as "full of the Holy Spirit" (7:55), manifests a Christ-like spirit of forgiveness (7:60). Barnabas likewise is described as "a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (11:24).

Conclusion

It is now time to ask whether any pattern is perceptible in all this. Taking all the evidence together I would suggest with great diffidence that what Luke is doing is using the phrase "baptism in the Holy Spirit" with the same breadth that the root hagios-hagiazo is used in the New Testament epistles. It is an axiom that all Christians are sanctified in a lower sense (I Cor. 1:2; 6:11; II Cor. 1:1); however, they are exhorted to be sanctified wholly (I Thes. 5:23); to cleanse themselves from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor. 7:1). Luke's understanding of salvation, expressed in terms of the Holy Spirit, is in harmony with this. However, that is not his prime concern in Acts. His concern is rather with the Spirit as the agent of mission; hence the emphatic insistence at each of the nodal points in the advance of the gospel that the Spirit is poured out. His basic intent is to show that the Christian era is the era of the Spirit; that there is no Church without the Spirit; no Christian without the Spirit; and wherever the gospel goes in power, it goes in the power of the Spirit. In keeping with this his language is correspondingly wide, and terms such as "salvation" and "fullness" can bear whatever degree of meaning is appropriate to their context. Even a phrase such as "cleansing their hearts by faith" (15:9) is capable of a lower and higher sense, and parallel phrases are so used elsewhere in the New Testament.55

If this is so one may go one step further and say that Luke's use of "baptism in the Spirit" is analogous to Paul's use of baptism. For Paul, baptism includes potentially the whole of Christian experience, the fullness of salvation. But this is not received experimentally all at once; there must be a further moment of surrender and commitment. This is the whole argument of Romans 6.56 If I understand Luke, he holds a similar view with two differences: instead of baptism he uses the fuller expression "baptism in the Spirit"; and his description of it is refracted by his missionary intent, so that he is more concerned with the fact of the Spirit's coming to inaugurate the mission of the Church than with the total range of meaning of the Spirit's coming for the spiritual life.

To answer the question proposed in the title of this paper then: entire sanctification is related to the baptism in the Holy Spirit in precisely the same way that it is related to baptism. Baptism is initiation into Christ, death with Him, burial with him. But it means more than this: in Daniel Steele's phrase it means "not the bare symbol, but the thing signified thereby;57 the realization experimentally of all that the symbol means by a further act of faith (Rom. 6:11). Similarly, entire sanctification is the full realization in experience of that fullness of God's salvation into which one is initiated by the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Reserving the right to qualify his emphasis on the process aspect of sanctification (though he also

concedes a place to crisis)58 I believe Professor Geoffrey Lampe expresses the matter adequately thus:

> The convert to faith in Christ receives the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit by virtue of his participation (through faith responding to the grace of God in Christ) in the status of sonship to God.... This union with Christ ... is symbolized and sacramentally effected by Baptism.... The resurrection life which is entered upon at Baptism is life in the Spirit; and the indwelling presence of the Spirit is simply one aspect of the sharing of the resurrection life of Christ which is begun in Baptism.... The benefits of the sacrament are, however, conferred to some extent proleptically, for in the single action there is summed up an experience of Christ which is gradually realized throughout the whole course of the Christian's life. It expresses in a moment what can in fact be realized only step by step. The process of sanctification, as well as the decisive act of justification, is foreshadowed and proleptically summed up, so that the effects of the sacrament are partly actual and partly potential. . . . The indwelling presence of the Spirit, a Person and not a donum gratiae, is mediated to the believer through Baptism as the sacrament of conversion; but that personal presence comes to be apprehended more fully, and more deeply experienced, as the Christian proceeds on the course of his life in the Spirit.59

Notes

1E.g., Herbert McGonigle, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," Wesleyan Theological Journal, 8, 1973, 61-72; Donald W. Dayton, "Asa Mahan and the Development of American Holiness Theology," ibid., 9, 1974, 60-69; John A. Knight, "John Fletcher's Influence on the Development of Wesleyan Theology in America," ibid., 13. 1978, 13-33.

2Cf. the letter to Joseph Benson in 1770: "You allow the whole thing that I contend for; an entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul and strength. And you believe God is able to give you this; yea, to give it to you in an instant.... If they like to call this 'receiving the Holy Ghost' they may: Only the phrase. in that sensei is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all 'received the Holy Ghost' when they were justified. The Works of John Wesley (14 vols., Kansas City: reprint of 1872 edition), Vol. XII, 416.

3The Vision Which Transforms (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City. 1970), 149.

4John Wesley's Concept of Perfection (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1964), 122.

5In the letter quoted in note 2 "they" refers to Fletcher and his followers. See the editor's note in John Telford (ed.), The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M. (London: 1931), Vol. 5, 228.

6Collected Works (London: 1836).

7John Miley, Systematic Theology (2 vols., New York: 1892); William Burt Pope, A Compendium of Christian Theology (3 vols., 2nd ed.; London: 1880).

80p cit., Vol. III, 64, cf. 44.

9Christian Theology (Kansas City: 1952). II, 444. Other references are casual: e.g., 496, 504.

10E.g., J. Baines Atkinson, The Beauty of Holiness (London: 1953). Cf. 151-54

11Love Enthroned Essays on Evangelical Perfection (2nd edit., London: 1887), 59.

12Loc. cit.

130p. cit., 62.

14Loc. cit.

15Daniel Steele, A Defense of Christian Perfection (New York: 1896), Ch. 29

l6James Mudge, Growth in Holiness Toward Perfection (New York: 1895).

17Steele, Defense, 108.

18A reference to Mudge, op. cit., Chapter VI.

19Op. Cit., 111.

20Ibid, 108-09.

2lIbid

22Ibid

23Ibid, 110.

24 See for instance (among many possible examples) A. M. Hills Holiness and Power (Cincinnati: 1897), 147.

25Charles W. Carter and Ralph Earle, The Evangelical Commentary: he Acts of the Apostles (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959), 154.

26Art. "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts" in J. L. Martyn and Leander Keck, Studies in Luke-Acts, (Nashville: 1966) 42.

27Ralph Earle, The Acts of the Apostles in the Beacon Bible Commentary, Vol. VII, (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 19653, 379.

28Cf. I. Howard Marshall: "What Luke is defending is not the value of works as a means of salvation. On the contrary he sees in piety and good works the indication of an attitude which prior to the coming of the gospel O faith in Jesus Christ is seeking salvation by trusting and serving God." Luke: Historian and Theologian (Grand Rapids: 1974). 190.

29Beacon Bible Commentary, VII, 383. Cf. Evangelical Commentary,

30Delbert R. Rose, "Distinguishing the Things that Differ," Wesleyan Theological Journal, 9, 1974, 5-14. The quotation appears on page 12.

31Cf. E. Schweizer, art. "Pneuma" in Kittel-Friedrich (eds.): Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (E T, G. W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976\, VI, 402; C. K. Barrett, The Holy Spirit in the Gospel Tradition (London: 1947), 120-21.

32Willard H. Taylor, "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit: Promise of Grace or Judgment?" in Wesleyan Theological Journal, 12, Spring 1977, 16-25, especially 21-23; the quotation occurs on 22-23. Cf. James D. G. Dunn, Baptism in the Holy Spirit (London: SCM Press, 1970), 9-10.

33Cf. IQS 4-9, cf. X:11. For a brief discussion see W. S. LaSor, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Faith (Chicago: 1962), 78-80.

34G. W. H. Lampe, "Though all Jewish baptisms were purificatory, John's is unique in its ethical significance. Apart from the doubtful allusions to baptism in the Sybilline Oracles, there is little evidence that proselyte-baptism was connected with spiritual as opposed to merely ceremonial cleansing." The Seal of the Spirit (London: 1951), 24. Cf. C. E. B. Cranfield, "Proselyte-baptism seems to have had some ethical significance, though it was no doubt primarily a means of ritual cleansing. In the case of John's baptism the ethical significance is clear." The Gospel According to St. Mark in The Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary (Cambridge: 1977), 44.

35Cf. A. H. McNeile, "Fire will purify that which can stand it, but will burn away all that is unworthy." The Gospel According to St. Matthew (London: MacMillan, 1928), 29.

36Cf. Dunn, "The baptism in Spirit-and-fire was not to be something gentle and gracious, but something which burned and consumed, not something experienced by only Jew or only Gentile, only repentant or only unrepentant, but by all. It was the fiery pneuma in which all must be immersed, as it were, and which like a smelting furnace would burn up all impurity. For the unrepentant it would mean total destruction. For the repentant it would mean a refining and purging away of all evil and sin which would result in salvation and qualify to enjoy the blessings of the messianic kingdom" (op. cit., 13f.). Cf. E. Schweizer, "The Baptist is even prone to discourage baptism; he is not after cheap success with hosts of the baptized whose hearts are not renewed. The metaphor of fruit is typically Biblical: fruit is what 'grows' out of a fundamental disposition of the heart; it is not something that can simply be 'done.' " The Good News According to Matthew (ET Atlanta: 1975), 49.

370p cit., 34-35.

38E. E. Ellis, The Gospel of Luke in the New Century Bible (London: 1966), 77.

39J. M. Creed, The Gospel According to St. Luke (London: 1930), 26.

40C. K. Barrett, The Holy Spirit in the Gospel Tradition, 24.

4lCf. Barrett, op. cit., 38f.; Lampe, op. cit., 35f.; Dunn, op. cit., 27; Cranfield, op. cit., 54.

42See I. H. Marshall, op. cit., 91.

43G. W. H. Lampe, "The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke" in D. E. Nineham (ed.), Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot (Oxford: 1956), 159.

44Ibid., 169.

45For fuller discussion see S. S. Smalley, '(spirit) kingdom and Prayer in Luke-Acts," Novum Testamentum 15, 1973, 59-71.

46C. K. Barrett, Luke the Historian in Recent Study (Philadelphia: 1970), 75.

47B. S. Easton, The Purpose of Acts (1936), 40, quoted in Lampe, Seal of the Spirit, 78, note 1.

48It is worth noting that the immediate issue which gives rise to the Jerusalem council, the Gentile mission of Paul and Barnabas is likewise described in salvation terminology. The Judaists say that "unless you are circumcised you cannot be saved" (15:1). Paul and Barnabas report "the conversion of the Gentiles" (15:3). When the formal debate opens Peter quotes the case of Cornelius as a parallel to the ministry so described in 15:3. James's understanding of Peter's mission was "how God first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name" (15:14).

49For a recent, persuasive attempt see S. G. Wilson The Gentiles and The Gentile-Mission in Luke-Acts (Cambridge: 1973); aiso Eric Franklin, Christ the Lord A Study in the Purpose and Theology of Luke-Acts (Philadelphia: 1975). A recent general survey is R. P. Martin, New Testament Foundations, Vol. 2, The Acts, The Epistles, the Apocalypse (Grand Rapids: 1978), 53-63.

50Jacques Dupont, Etudes sur Les Actes des Apotres (Bruges, 1967), 498 (my translation). See the entire chapter for a sen9itive exegesis of Acts 2.

51For fuller discussion of this, see Marshall, op. cit. 199-202.

52See G. Delling, art. "pleres," TDNT, VI, 285. Regarding the special "fillings" as in Acts 4, Delling says, "In harmony with other statements in Acts, the usage includes rather than excludes the fact that the author is acquainted with a normal Christian endowment with the Spirit which is to be differentiated from this intensive and concentrated work in e.g., preaching, tongues or the apostolate." Art. "pimplemi," op. cit., 130. R. B. Rackman comments on the use of pleres in Acts 7:55. "The Greek tenses denote not a sudden outburst, but a continuous state. So in 55 'full of the Holy Ghost' does not mean a sudden inspiration a9 in 4:8, but Stephen's existing condition: cf. 6:3, 5, 8." The Acts of the Apostles in the Westminster Commentaries (London: 1919), 107, note 2. Cf. Dunn: "When Luke wants to indicate a lasting state of 'fullness' resulting from a past 'filling' the word he uses is pleres (Luke 4:1; Acts 6:3, 5, 8; 7:55; 11:24)." (Op.cit., 71). To the game effect, J. H. E. Hull, who, of the phrase in question, says it "proves beyond all doubt that (Luke) realized the Spirit could be a permanent possession." The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles (London: 1967), 123.

53R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament (2 vols; ET London: 1952), I, 158-59.

54 *Op*. cit., 201.

55See I Peter 1 :22-23 where "having purified your souls" (22) is explained in the following verse as "being born again" (both perfect participles). The entire context (1:22-2:3) is cast in the form of the indicative and the imperative, "having purified your souls" being the indicative, and "love one another from a (pure) heart" (22b) the imperative. As to the use of "cleanse" (katharizo) in Acts, all three instances occur in the accounts of the Gentile Pentecost (10:15; 11:9; 15:9). (In Luke's Gospel it is used either of the cleansing of lepers, as in 4:27; 5:12-13; 7:22; 17:14, 17; or of ritual cleansing, as in 11:19.) In Acts 10:15; 11:9, which are verbally identical, the meaning is plainly cultic: Peter is told not to refuse contact with Gentiles, because God has "cleansed" them, i.e., declared that the ritual barrier between Jews and Gentiles is annulled. This idea is carried forward into 15:9 in the words, "He put no distinction between us and them": God has yet again signified His acceptance of the Gentiles by cleansing their hearts just as He did their bodies or persons. The meaning to be attached to cleansing in 15:9 must be determined by the context, just as in all other examples of the term in Luke-Acts. It has been shown above that the surrounding context is concerned with the proclamation of repentance, faith, salvation and new life (Acts 15:1, 3, 7, 11, etc.).

56Daniel Steele's comments, Half Hours with St. Paul (Rochester, PA.: reprint, n.d.), 6-7.

57Loc. cit.

58"Confirmation may be said to imitate a deeper and enlarged experience of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit." Seal of the Spirit, 321. The whole context is worth reading. 590p. cit., 317-18.

9Op. Cit., 317-18.

PROCESSIVE ESCHATOLOGY: A WESLEYAN ALTERNATIVE

by
Clarence L. Bence

In recent years, eschatology has again become a dominant theme in theological discussion. From Germany and the Third World come theologies of hope and liberation, calling for a uniting of political and theological aspirations into a program to transform society.1 From a more philosophical perspective, process theologians endeavor to explore the creative possibilities of human existence and even God Himself.2 And at the popular level, Hal Lindsey and a host of minor prophets continue to offer up-dated analysis of the apocalyptic calendar and current events.3

In general, theologians of the holiness movement have been observers, rather than contributors in these eschatological discussions. Our evangelical commitments make us look with caution, if not discomfort, at some of the Biblical and theological presuppositions underlying the contemporary eschatologies of Moltmann, Miguez-Bonino and Cobb. But there is an equally significant uneasiness among Wesleyan evangelicals with the current apocalypticism, despite its claims to Biblical authority and theological conservativism. This discomfort with Lindseyan interpretation extends beyond his penchant for prediction and overstatement to the underlying soteriological understanding that does not coincide with Wesley's understanding of God's work in the world.

Why not a Wesleyan eschatology? Our scholars have developed carefully defined statements of Wesleyan doctrines of sin, conversion, sanctification and Christian life. But our statements on eschatology appear to be exercised in evasive theology, devoid of any clear commitment to a Wesleyan perspective of salvation history. Is this indicative of our tolerance of divergent views, or ignorance of our own theological heritage?

It is one thing to advocate a Wesleyan eschatology; it is quite another to propose any definitive statement on the end times which would satisfy more than a handful of Wesley scholars. Wesley himself contributes considerable ambiguity to the subject. It is not as simple as quoting a few selected passages from Wesley's works, for many of Wesley's apocalyptic interpretations reflect the prevailing views of his own century and thus are anachronistic to present day understanding. Wesley accepted a view which Ernest Sandeen calls "historical pre-millennialism"4 a view interpreting the

Book of Revelation as largely a description of past events in the history of the Church. The apostle John looked into the future and described what he saw in the apocalyptic language of woes, pestilences, calamities and destruction. According to Wesley and his contemporaries, these prophecies had already been fulfilled with amazing accuracy in the conquests of Rome, the Germanic invasions and the spread of Islam.6 The severe persecutions of Christians before and after the Reformation certainly qualified as the great woes described by John in chapters 9-17. For Wesley, the Anti-Christ had already appeared in the later middle ages in the form of the Roman papacy. Only the closing events of history, described in the final chapters of the Apocalypse remained to be fulfilled. Wesley and many of his contemporaries expected the Beast and False Prophet to appear in Rome at any moment, and certainly before the end of the eighteenth century.7 From his Notes on the book of Revelation, it appears that Wesley concurred with the calculations of the German writer, Johann Bengel, who predicted that on or about 1836 the conflict with evil would reach its climax in the destruction of the Beast and False Prophet, and the binding of Satan for one thousand years.8

None of these great eschatological events took place before Wesley's death in 1791. And despite considerable millenarian excitement in the 1830s and 40s, nothing of great significance occurred as Wesley had forecast. The older position of historical pre-millennialism was largely replaced by post-millennialism; and by the end of the nineteenth century, yet another premillennial interpretation espoused by the dispensationalists Darby and Scofield vied for the allegiance of evangelical Christians.9 In a number of interesting articles and pamphlets, both pre- and post-millennialists of the Wesleyan tradition claimed the founder as a member of their ranks and offered dubious proof-texts from the writings of Wesley to substantiate their claims.10 (Both were partially correct; Wesley accepted Bengel's rather bizarre belief in two millennia-a thousand years during which Satan is bound and the church prospers on earth, followed by another thousand year reign of Christ and his saints.)11 Unfortunately, both pre- and post-millennialists failed to grasp the historical and theological distance between Wesley's understanding and their own. And we too would be illserved if we simply resorted to Wesley's Notes on the New Testament to formulate a Wesleyan alternative to modern day eschatologies.

In fact, the question might properly be raised whether apocalyptic speculation has any place in Wesleyan eschatology. Given the large body of material that Wesley either wrote himself or edited, very little of it deals specifically with the events or personalities associated with the end times. One must turn to sermons on the great judgment, eternity or hell's to glean details on Wesley's view. It is only in the Notes on the New Testament that one finds specific interpretations of dates, places and names. And here Wesley readily acknowledges his own ignorance concerning such matters and his almost total reliance on the work of others. In the introduction to his notes on Revelation, Wesley confesses:

> It is scarce possible for any that either love or fear God, not to feel their hearts extremely affected, in seriously reading either the beginning or the latter part of the Revelation. These, it is

> evident we cannot consider too much: but the intermediate parts I did not study at all for many years: as utterly despairing of understanding them . . . and perhaps I should have lived and died in this sentiment, had I not seen the works of the great Bengelius. The following notes are mostly those of that excellent man.... Yet by no means do I pretend to understand or explain all that is contained in this mysterious book.13

Wesley's Journal entry for December of 1762 confirms the existence of many unresolved questions.

> Monday the sixth and the following day, I corrected the Notes upon Revelation. Oh, how little do we know of this deep book. At least, how little do I know. I can barely conjecture, not affirm, any one point concerning the part of it which is yet unfulfilled.14

And while Wesley quoted Bengel as if he was in total agreement with his views, he later seemed to draw back from some of this writer's interpretations. After being accused of setting a date for the end of the world in one of his sermons, Wesley wrote the following open letter:

> My dear brother, I said nothing-less or more-in Bradford Church concerning the end of the world, neither concerning my own opinion. What I said was that Bengal had given it as his opinion, not that the world would end, but that the millennial reign of Christ would begin in the year 1836.I have no opinion at all upon that topic. I can determine nothing about it. These calculations are far above, out of my sight. I have only one thing to do, to save my own soul and those that hear me.15

Wesley not only demonstrated caution in his own apocalyptic speculation, but also criticized those who were "immoderately fond of knowing future things."16 In his Poetic Words, he castigates the "prophets false . . .pointing out the hour unknown, hid from all but God alone."17

One of these false prophets was George Bell, a convert of Wesley's own ministry. Shortly after his conversion to Methodism, Bell announced that the end of the world would come on February 23,1763. Wesley publicly repudiated Bell and his prediction, declaring that such a prophecy "must be false if the Bible be true."18 Bell was finally arrested as a public nuisance and spent the fateful day in jail. With a touch of irony, Wesley made the following Journal entry (February 28):

> Preaching in the evening at Spitalfields on "Prepare to meet thy God," I largely showed the utter absurdity of the proposition that the world was to end that night. But, notwithstanding all I could say, many were afraid to go to bed and some wandered about in the fields, being persuaded that, if the world did not end, at least London would be swallowed up by an earth-quake. I went to bed at my usual time, and was fast asleep about ten o'clock.19

Wesley refused to indulge in eschatological enthusiasm. John Fletcher, himself given to strange speculations on the end times,20 urged Wesley to

discern the times more diligently and not to judge harshly those who sought to unlock the secrets of Scripture.21. But Wesley was content to remain "willingly ignorant" of those things which were not clearly revealed in the Scriptures. His confidence in the glorious appearing of Christ was unshakable;22 yet he found more urgent issues for both work and preaching than calculating the timetable of the end of the age.

Thus far, our attempt to construct a Wesleyan eschatology has resulted in only negative conclusions. We have established that Wesley's explicit statements about the end of history are dated and thus, to a large degree, inadequate for our purposes. We have determined, furthermore, that preoccupation with apocalyptic details is inimical to Wesley's approach. The key to a Wesleyan eschatology must be found elsewhere. I am convinced that a clue to the proper starting point is contained in Wesley's letter quoted above-"I have only one thing to do, to save my own soul and those that hear me."23 For Wesley, theology is soteriology. According to Colin Williams, "The central focus of Wesley's theology is the saving work of Christ and the human appropriation of that work."24 For Wesley, the saving work of Christ touches every aspect of the life of the individual and society, and every doctrinal formulation must flow out of this hermeneutical center.

Wesleyan eschatology must be developed out of thc Wesleyan understanding of salvation, both in its individual and its broader socio-historical orientation. Wesley's eschatological goal for the individual is very clearly stated in his writings: "I want to know one thing-the way to heaven: how to land safe on that happy shore."25 It is relatively easy to trace out this path to the kingdom for the individual. Justification, sanctification, perfection all lead in a sequenced order toward the eschatological realities of death, glorification, paradise and eternal glory. It is more difficult to discern Wesley's view of history and its eschatological goal in the kingdom of glory. However, we must insist that whatever particular interpretation one holds regarding the conclusion of salvation history, it must coincide with the Wesleyan doctrine of personal salvation. The reason for this goes beyond simply maintaining doctrinal consistency to Wesley's constant refusal to isolate the individual from his or her relationships to humankind. Wesley does not share our modern day inclination to make distinctions between the person and society. Love of God entails love of neighbor; personal holiness demands a social holiness. Should not then the salvation of the individual directly involve and reflect God's larger plan of redemption for the created order and its historical process? What are some of the basic elements of Wesleyan soteriology and how would they shape an eschatology from the holiness perspective?

1. Full salvation: The message of salvation through Christ is shared by almost all Christians, no matter what their creed. The unique significance of Wesley's soteriology is his optimism regarding the power and extent of the work of Christ. His is a call to full salvation.26 In relation to the negative effects of the Fall, Wesleyan salvation goes beyond declaring freedom from the guilt and punishment of sin to promise freedom from the "power and root of sin"27 itself. While sharing the Reformed emphasis upon the pervasiveness of sin in the fallen order, Wesley refuses to concur in their implicit assumption that being human entails being sinful. Although sin is an ever-present reality to both the unbeliever and the believer, it is not an

intrinsic quality of humanity; rather, it is a disease28 that may be cured through the cleansing blood of Christ. The effects of that disease may persist in the individual, but sin itself need no longer be inherent in the person.

Reformed theology rejects the possibility of such a freedom from sin. Full salvation such as Wesley describes is reserved for the glorified body of the life to come. Implicit in such a view is the close identification of the sinful nature with human nature, and thus a limiting of the power of the cross to free one's humanity from the power of sin.29 For Wesley, the devastating clutches of sin must give way to the redemptive power of the cross. Salvation must be the "restoration" of that which was lost in the Fall.30 "The great end of religion is to renew our hearts in the image of God, to repair that total loss of righteousness and true holiness which we sustained in our first parents."3l Here Wesley's creational theology comes into focus. The world that God created is very good. To be fully human does not necessitate sin. And what is lost spiritually in the Fall must be recoverable in the cross, or else the disease is greater than the cure and God's redemption is weak. Full salvation is for Wesley a return to "participation in the divine nature, having the mind of Christ,"32 who combined in His one person the fullness of divinity and the fullness of a sinless humanity.

John Fletcher once compared the Calvinistic theology of Lady Huntington with that of Wesley. Regarding their respective views of salvation, he observed.

> All the difference between them seems to me to consist in this: my lady is more for looking to the misery and depth of the fall; Mr. Wesley more for considering the power and effects of the recovery. My lady speaks glorious things of free grace; and Mr. Wesley inculcates the glorious use we ought to make of it. Both appear to me to maintain one and the same truth....33

But the difference is more significant than Fletcher realized, both in terms of personal salvation and the broader perspective of the goal of history. The Reformed emphasis upon the inherent character of sin extends beyond the individual to the created order of society as well. Reinhold Niebuhr and Hal Lindsey-radically different in their understanding of the gospel-both view certain historical and social institutions as intrinsically corrupt and hence limited in their redemptive potential.34 Much of the present day eschatology being preached from evangelical pulpits contains a tacit assumption that there are incalcitrant pockets of evil, seen as "signs of the time" rather than areas of redemptive concern.

A Wesleyan eschatology can, indeed ought, to realistically appraise the reality of sin in our world. Furthermore, it must share the Reformation truth that there is no saving ability in human endeavor alone. But we must re discover and affirm what Gordon Rupp has so incitefully termed Wesley's "pessimism of nature, and optimism of grace."36 There is no dimension of God's created order that is beyond the reach of the cross; full salvation cannot limit the power of God's redemptive work.

2. Salvation in History: In his sermon, "On Perfection," Wesley asks the question:

> Why should any man of reason and religion be afraid of, or averse to, salvation from all sin? Is not sin the greatest evil on

> this side of hell? And if so, does it not naturally follow that an entire deliverance from it is one of the greatest blessings *on this side of heaven?*36 (Italics mine.)

The corollary to Wesley's doctrine of full salvation is the affirmation that the experience is attainable in this life, i.e. within the personal history of the believer. Others would agree with Wesley that freedom from sin is the goal, but they would see it only as an eschatological reality to be accomplished after death in the glorified state.37 Wesley, himself, is fully aware of the crucial issue behind his doctrine of Derfection.

> I have frequently observed, and not without surprise, that the opposers of perfection are more vehemently against it when it is placed in this view, than in any other whatsoever; they will allow all you say of the love of God and man, of the mind which was in Christ; of the fruit of the Spirit; of the image of God; of universal holiness; of entire self-dedication; of sanctification in the spirit, soul and body; yea, and of the offering up of all our thoughts, words and actions, as a sacrifice to God-all this they will allow, so we will allow sin, a little sin, to remain in us till death.38

But for Wesley that full salvation promised to us through Christ must be attainable in this life; we must "expect it now!"39 The Christian need not be caught in a dialectical "holding pattern" of sin and grace, but through grace the believer can experience the present reality of salvation from sin. Salvation is more than a judicial act of God to be claimed by faith in hope of a future actualization. It is the redemptive work of God experienced in the "here and now" of the Christian.

> And first let us inquire "What is salvation?" The salvation which is here spoken of is not what is frequently understood by that word, the going to heaven, eternal happiness. It is not the soul's going to paradise, termed by our Lord, "Abraham's bosom." It is not a blessing which lies on the other side of death, or as we usually speak in the other world.... Whatsoever else it may imply, it is a present salvation. It is something attainable, yea actually attained on earth, by those who are partakers of this faith. For thus, saith the Apostle to the believers in Ephesus, and in them to the believers of all ages, not "Ye shall be, " (though that also is true) but "Ye are saved through faith."40

Here is the heart of Wesleyan soteriology-salvation both in this life and in the life to come. Victory over sin both now and in the future. To be sure Wesley is realistic in his claims regarding Christian perfection: never definitely claiming it for himself,41 acknowledging that many of his converts never went on to this experience and many who had attained full salvation had subsequently lost the experience.42 But he refuses to restrict the redemptive work of God to some future time; it is attainable now.

If salvation for Wesley is both in and beyond one's personal history should not the same confidence be expressed in God's salvation history for the world? Does not God work out His redemptive plan both in and beyond

human history? Wesley's personal involvement in the social issues of his day demonstrates his commitment to a present transformation of society through the power of the gospel. Here is no token protest against a world destined for divine wrath; but rather a passion for a total evangelism of love, which in the words of Wesley "we believe to be the medicine of life, the never-failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men. This religion we long to see established in the world."43

More than once Wesley dares to dream of a time "when Christianity will prevail over all and cover the earth."44 That dream applies to both sides of the end of the world-to this present age and the age to come. Wesley is not naive in his optimism, however. After depicting the glories of a Christian world to his colleagues at Oxford, he admits that there is no such Christian world, no such Christian England, not even a Christian Oxford University. But the responsibility for such a failure is not to be laid on God's lack of power, or on an inherent corruption in the institutions of society. The blame is upon human beings who are not faithful to God's call to redemption.45

Wesley addresses the same issue in his sermon, "Causes for the Inefficacy of Christianity," written at the close of his life.

> Why then is [the world] not restored? You say, Because of the deep and universal corruption of human nature. Most true; but here is the very difficulty. Was [Christianity] not intended, by our all-wise and almighty Creator, to be a remedy for that corruption? A universal remedy for a universal evil? But it has not answered this intention, it never did, it does not answer it at this day. The disease still remains in its full strength; wickedness of every kind; vice, inward and outward, in all its forms still overspreads the face of the earth.46

But then Wesley proceeds to answer the question, "Why does this evil persist?" It is first a lack of knowledge of the gospel, and secondly, it is a lack of discipline among those who have responded to the message of Christ.47 The possibility of a Christian world remains, despite its present lack of attainment. A redeemed society is a live option from the Wesleyan perspective-not by a "great society" of human endeavor, but by the transformation of the gospel. And as a possibility, a redeemed society must be the goal toward which the Methodists strive.

A strong tendency prevails in popular eschatology to deny the redemptive power of God apart from an apocalyptic interruption of the process of history For Lindsey, Kirban and other "neo-dispensationalists," a redeemed social order is largely restricted to the coming age. In keeping with past dispensations, this Church Age must degenerate into increasing chaos in order to set the stage for the redemption that is to come from beyond history 48 And implicit fatalism pervades many of these writings. World hunger, racism, political corruption are "signs of the times"-theooglcal auguries-rather than areas of mission and redemption. Wesleyan eschatology must not succumb to this pessimism, looking for a redemption only beyond history. We must pray, "Thy Kingdom come on earth as it in heaven," and see this petition in all its present and future possibilities.

3. Salvation as Eschatology: To this point, we have largely referred to eschatology in the sense of future reality-the divine inbreaking at the end of the age when redemption is completed in Jesus Christ. As such, eschatology is closely associated with apocalypticism. But for Wesley, eschatology is a much broader concept extending to all of God's redemptive activity from the resurrection to the consummation of all things.49 Therefore any manifestation of God's saving work is a partial attainment of the ultimate goal of human existence. Heaven is not only a future hope, but also a present reality in the believer's life;50 through Christ one can "live all the life of heaven on earth."51

> This eternal life, then commences when it pleases the Father to reveal the Son in our heart; . . . when we can first testify, our conscience bearing witness in the Holy Ghost, "The life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." And then it is that happiness begins; happiness real, solid, substantial. Then it is that heaven is opened in the soul that the proper heavenly state commences.52

Wesley uses several eschatological phrases to describe the present salvation of the Christian: The beginning of heaven,53 a foretaste of eternal glory,54 “walking in eternity,"55 and especially, "tasting of the powers of the world to come."56 Full salvation is the earnest of our final salvation, not merely a promise of what is to come, but rather the down payment-an actual "part of our purchased inheritance. It is God manifest in our flesh bringing with Him eternal life."57

Several scholars have pointed out the "realized eschatology" in Wesley's thought.58 His heavy use of Johannine theology and imagery would support such a claim. However, as Cyril Downes observes, a better term for Wesley's view might be "anticipated eschatology," for salvation is not some fully attained subjective state, it is the actual impartation of the glory that is to be ours in Christ.59 With that imparted righteousness comes participation in the kingdom of God.

> It is termed "the kingdom of God," because it is the immediate fruit of God's reigning in the soul. So as soon as ever He takes unto Himself His mighty power and sets up this throne in our hearts, they are instantly filled with His "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." It is called the "kingdom of heaven," because it is (in a degree) heaven opened in the soul. For whosoever they are that experience this, they can aver before angels and men,
>
> Everlasting life is won,
> Glory is on earth begun.60

But this kingdom of God is not just an individual experience; Wesley extends its meaning to the broader scope of the Christian Church,61 and ultimately to the entire arena of God's redemptive work. "Wheresoever, therefore, the gospel of Christ is preached, this his Kingdom is nigh at hand."62 Wesley understands the resurrection of Christ to be the crucial moment in salvation history; it was then that the kingdom of God began. According to Wesley, "The time of the Gospel dispensation, commencing at

the time of our Lord's death is peculiarly styled the last days."63 Christianity is the final dispensation of God's grace and it will endure "till the consummation of all things."64

Wesley is confident that God's kingdom will ultimately triumph, not by human endeavors, but through the power of sovereign grace. But since grace is both a present and a future reality, the kingdom is likewise both now and yet to come. Wesley encourages his followers:

> It is the Father's good pleasure to renew the face of the earth. Surely all these evil things shall come to an end, and the inhabitants of the earth shall learn righteousness, . . . and all the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of our God. . . . Be thou a part of the first-fruits, if the harvest is not yet. Do thou love thy neighbor as thyself.65

Since love, for Wesley, is the "essence of heaven"66 where love of God and neighbor is truly manifest, the kingdom of heaven is begun here on earth.

> The kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are but two phrases for the same thing. They mean, not barely a future state in heaven, but a state to be enjoyed on earth; the proper disposition for the glory of heaven rather than the possession of it. It properly signifies here the gospel dispensation, in which subjects are to be gathered to God by the Son, and a society formed, which was to subsist first on earth, and afterwards with God in glory. In some places of Scripture, this phrase more particularly denotes the state of it on earth; in others it signifies only the state of it in glory; but it generally includes both.67

For Wesley the eschatological reign of Christ has already begun in the reign of grace, the present dispensation. This kingdom is locked in a struggle with the forces of misery and sin, infirmity and death.68 But it is not discontinuous with the future kingdom of glory; there is an optimism in Wesley regarding the power of the gospel over the kingdoms of earth.

> And it is meet for all those who love His appearing to pray that He would hasten the time that His kingdom, the kingdom of grace may come quickly, and swallow up all the kingdoms of earth; that all mankind, receiving Him for their King, truly believing in His name, may be filled with righteousness, and peace, and joy, with holiness and happiness-till they are removed hence into His heavenly kingdom, there to reign with Him forever and ever.... We pray for the coming of His everlasting kingdom, this kingdom of glory which is the continuation and perfection of the kingdom of grace on earth.69

In no place does Wesley introduce a millennial concept into his discussion of the coming kingdom. The issue is not whether pre- or post millennialism is the proper Christian position. The focus is rather upon the foretaste of glory, the eschatological reality that is available to the believer, the Church, and to some degree, the Christian society prior to the end of the age. This shift away from an apocalyptic dualism,70 a sharp division between a decadent present existence and a utopian future state is consistent with the

Wesleyan soteriology. It offers an incentive for evangelism and social action as instruments of God's redeeming work in the world and history.

4. Processive Salvation: Wesley's understanding of the gospel is clearly processive in nature. The phrase "going on" might best describe the Wesleyan hermeneutic. The Christian life is a process toward an eschatological goal attainable in its fullness in the world to come, but attainable in part within time and history. For years the Methodists have asked their preachers, "Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be perfected in love in this life? Are you earnestly striving after it?"7l The Wesleyan order of salvation is a carefully outlined way to the kingdom, in which every spiritual experience, whether gradual or instantaneous in character, is both an invitation and a command to proceed to a higher level of spiritual reality. In "The Circumcision of the Heart," one of Wesley's earliest sermons, there is already this processive structure; each of the four virtues of humility, faith, hope and love is a successive stage in a process of salvation.72 In a similar fashion, Wesley understands the Beatitudes to be "gradations" which lead the individual from poverty of spirit to purity of heart.73 The Christian is one who is "going on in the might of the Lord, his God, from faith to faith, from grace to grace, until, at length, he comes unto a 'perfect man, unto the measure of the fullness of Christ.'"74 Wesley tolerates no complacency, no resignation to the status quo. The believer who does not aggressively progress must necessarily fall back in Christian experience.75 The goal for Wesley is Christian perfection, "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."76 But even full salvation is not a static experience:

> So that how much soever any man has attained, or how high a degree sover he is perfect, he has still need to grow in grace and daily advance in the knowledge and love of God his Savior.77

Perfect love has no limits, and the call is always to "go on to still highest degrees of love."78 Wesley is even bold enough to claim that this process continues throughout eternity. "Can those who are perfect grow in grace? he asks. "Undoubtedly they can, and that not only while they are in the body, but to all eternity."79 Albert Outler concludes that for Wesley. "perfection meant perfecting (teleosis) with further horizons of love and participation in God always opening up beyond any level of spiritual progress."80

There is the temptation, however, to present Wesleyan perfection as a Quixotic "impossible dream"-a glorious attempt to "reach the unreachable star" or "beat the unbeatable foe." But to do so is to return to the flaw in Reformed theology, which denies the power of God to give actual victory over sin in history. There is in Wesley's theology a constant interchange between the attainment of a clearly defined objective and the expectation of some further goal on toward which the believer strives Justification, assurance, entire sanctification, all can be reached; but Wesley's exhortation is "whereunto we have already attained, we hold fast. while we press on to what is yet before, to the highest blessings in Christ Jesus."81

Here is the essence of Wesleyan eschatology, whether personal or comic in nature: a recognition that God is at work in time and in history

to bring about His redemption for humankind; the confidence that through grace, victory over sin, both in its personal and social expression, is a possibility; and an eager anticipation of the kingdom of glory with all its continuing potential for growth in the presence of God. Here is no place for pessimism or passivism. Wesley informs us.

> ... it is time to rise, to arm, to walk, to work.... Final salvation, glory, is nearer to us now than when we first believed. It is continually advancing, flying forward upon the swiftest wings of time. And that which remains between the present hour and eternity, is comparatively but a moment.82

This eschatology of the now and the future is an alternative to the contemporary options. To those on the Continent who would limit the work of God to a supramundane realm of Heilsgeschichte, Wesley affirms the reality of salvation in time and history. Liberation theology shares with us the optimistic dream of a transformed society, God's kingdom here on earth. But we would be ever cautious to emphasize a kingdom of grace, rooted in the saving work of Christ-not merely a kingdom of justice, based upon human rights and political activism. Wesleyan scholars have already pointed out the affinities of Wesley's dynamism with process theology.83 Certainly there is a creative openness to Wesley's concept of eternal perfecting. Yet one must balance this with Wesley's equally strong emphasis upon salvation as a return to the original created order established by the eternal, unchanging God. Wesley does not propose an indeterminant universe groping for a final destiny; rather he sees all reality moving toward a clearly defined telos, namely the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Even the popular apocalypticism of today is not without its benefits. We need to hear its constant reminder that salvation is ultimately God's work and that final redemption will only come with the "glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." However, we cannot share the underlying pessimism of many of these writers, who adopted the "lifeboat theology" of Dwight Moody, seeking only to snatch souls from the sea of life while consigning the social and political structures to destruction. Martin Marty describes adherents to this understanding of salvation as the

"rescuers" and contrasts them with the "transformers" who seek to produce the kingdom of God within the established institutions of our culture. Each has adopted an eschatological and millennial position consistent with his understanding of God's saving work.84

I suggest that Wesley's avoidance of apocalyptic categories offers us a pattern to emulate. By understanding eschatology in its broadest meaning, we have the option of claiming the truth contained in the aspirations of both the "rescuers" and "transformers." Our commitment to personal evangelism should be closely tied to our involvement in social reformation, as we seek to share in God's redeeming activity in this present fallen creation, while looking to His ultimate triumph in the age to come.

The British theologian, Gordon Rupp, has observed:

> In the sixteenth century Luther set men looking eagerly toward the horizons with an eschatology of faith, and in the eighteenth century, Wesley gave them an eschatology of love and called men to be always seeking eagerly and expectantly, new

> horizons of Christian experience, those spiritual gifts which the bountiful Giver is always more ready to bestow than His children ask. Here then is a confident reliance on the will and power of God to work signs and wonders of redeeming grace in this present evil age.85

Within the context of this "optimism of grace" we can and should develop a processive eschatology, which stresses the work of God here and now as the down payment of that greater work which is yet to come. As followers of Wesley we must live in the creative tension between the reality of present salvation and the hope of future triumph. The exciting possibilities of this eschatology are clearly described in a hymn of Charles Wesley-a hymn, not on the second coming-but the present experience of salvation in Christ.

Come, almighty to deliver,
Let us all thy life receive.
Suddenly return and never
Nevermore thy temples ieave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above;
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then Thy new creation,
Pure and spotless let us be.
Let us see Thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love and praise.86

Notes

1Jurgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), and Gospel of Liberation (Dallas: Word Books, 1973\. Jose Miguez Bonino, Out of the Hurt and Hope)New York: Friend Publishers, 1970).

2John Cobb and David Griffin, Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976).

3Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970) offers the standard expression of the neo-dispensational view.

4Ernest Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p 63.

5Wesley assumed the apostolic authorship of this book. John Wesley. Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament (rpt., Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers, 1976), p. 650.

6Ibid., pp. 673, 679, 683.

7Ibid, p. 715

8For a detailed chronology, see Ibid, p. 732.
9Sydney Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New York: Doubleday, 1975), pp. 277-282, offers a brief survey of this position. For a more detailed discussion, see Sandeen, op. cit.
10For the post-millennial appeal to Wesley, see Haris Rall, Was Wesley a Pre-millennialist? (New York: Methodist Book House, 1921). The pre-millennial position can be found in Nathaniel West, John Wesley and Pre-millennialism (Cincinnati: God's Revivalist Office, 1894).
11Notes, pp. 723f. (In this passage, Wesley indicates that the millennial reign will transpire in heaven, not on earth.)
12John Wesley, The Works of the Rev. .John Wesley, A. M., Thomas Jackson, ed., 14 vols. (London: Wesleyan Conference OfSce, 1872), includes the following sermons relating to eschatological themes: "The Way to the Kingdom" (VII), "The Great Assize" (XV), "On Eternity" (LIV), "Of Good Angels" (LXXI), "Of Evil Angels" (LXXII), "On Hell" (LXXIII), "The Reward of the Righteous" (XCIX), and "On the Wedding Garment" (CXX).
13Notes, p. 660.
14Works, 3:123.
15Ibid, 12:298.
16Notes, p. 534.
17John Wesley, Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley, G. Osborn, ed. (London: Epworth Press, 1868), 11:276.
18Works, 3:129.
19Ibid, 3:130.
20Fletcher himself predicted the second coming to occur between 1750 and 1770 and expected a millennial reign of 360,000 years (following the day-year method of interpretation). John Fletcher, "Letter to Wesley," Arminian Magazine, XVI (1793), pp. 370-376, 409-416.
21Ibid, p. 415.
22See for instance Wesley's "Letter to a Roman Catholic," Works 10:82.
23Supra, n. 15.
24Colin Williams, John Wesley's Theology Today (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 41.
25Works, 5:3.
26John Wesley, The Letters of John Wesley, John Telford, ed. (London: Epworth Press, 1951), 6:42.
27J A. Wood, Christian Perfection as Taught by John Wesley (rpt.; Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers, n.d.), p. 54.
28Harald Lindstrom, Wesley and Sanctification (London; Epworth Press, 1946), p. 41 contrasts the objective judicial (guilt) aspect of sin with the subjective-medical aspect. He notes that Wesley's emphasis upon sanctification led him to stress the latter without denying the reality of the former, particularly as it relates to the doctrine of justification.
29Leo COx, John Wesley's Concept of Perfection (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1964), pp. 54-58.
30Works, 6:64f., 71.

31Ibid, 11:64.
32Ibid, 1:225.
33Luke Tyerman, Wesley's Designated Sucessor (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1882), p. 182.
34Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941), p. 253f. Lindsey, op. cit. devotes a final chapter to describing the coming decay of religious and social institutions without offering any positive program of redemption apart from sharing the gospel and looking for the Lord's return.
35Gordon Rupp Principalities and Powers (London: Epworth Press, 1952), pp. 77ff.
36Works, 6:423.
37George Whitefield once wrote to Wesley, "I am persuaded you err greatly. You have set a mark you will never arrive at, till you come to glory." George Whitefield, Works (London: Charles Dilley, 1771), 1:219.
38Works, 6:423.
39Letters, 6:42.
40Works, 6:44; 5:10.
41Lindstrom, op. cit., p. 135n.
42Wood, op. cit., p. 116, where Wesley acknowledges that "hardly one in thirty" retain the experience for more than a year.
43Works, 8:3.
44Ibid, 5:45.
45Ibid, 5:47ff.
46Ibid, 7:282.
47Ibid
48The roots of this historical understanding can be found in the earlier dispensational theology, popularized by C. I. Scofield's study Bible and the prophetic charts of Clarence Larkin. See his Dispensational Truth (Philadelphia: Clarence Larkin, 1918), pp. 44ff.
49Notes, p. 199.
50Ibid,p. 374.
51Works, 12:388.
52Ibid, 6:430.
53Notes, p. 374.
54Ibid, p. 384.
55Letters, 3:41.
56Works, 5:159.
57Ibid, 5:442.
58Williams, op. cit. p. 194. See also Franz Hildebrandt, From Luther to Wesley (London: Lutterworth Press, 1951), p. 53.
59Cyril Downes, "The Eschatological Doctrines of John and Charles Wesley" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1974).

60Works, 5:81.
61Notes, p. 18.
62Works, 5:81.
63Notes, p. 553.
64Works, 5:314; Wesley goes on to state that "all pretenses to another ore perfect dispensation fall to the ground, of course. " On the basis of this statement, one would question whether Wesley looked for a millennial age follow the present dispensation.
65Ibid., 5:277.
66Notes, p. 221.
67Ibid, p. 14.
68Works, 5:336.
69Ibid
70Walter Schmitals, The Apocalyptic Monument: Introduction and interpretation (Nashville: Abingdom Press, 1975), points out the contrast between apocalyptic thought, with its sharp division between present history and the future age, and the more continuous understanding of history among the Rabbinic Jews.
71Wesley's text: "Are you groaning after it?" Works, 8:309f.
72"Yet lackest thou one thing, whosoever thou art, that to a deep in humility, and a steadfast faith, hast joined a lively hope, and thereby in a good measure cleansed thy heart from its inbred pollution. If thou wilt be perfect, add to all these, charity; add love, and thou hast the circumcision of the heart." Works, 5:207.
73Ibid, 5:32.
74Ibid, 5:12.
75Ibid, 3:204
76Ibid, 6:509.
77Ibid, 6:5f.
78Notes, p. 611
79Ibid; Worhs, 11:426.
80Albert Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit (Nashville: Tidings, 5), p. 73.
81Works, 5:252.
82Notes, 399.
83Rob Staples, "The Present Frontiers of Wesleyan Theology," Wesleyan Theological Journal, XII (Spring 1977), p. 9.
84Martin Marty, Righteous Empire (New York: Harper, 1977) p. 265.
85Rupp, Op. cit., p. 24.
86Hymns of Faith and Life (Marion, Indiana: Wesley Press,1976), hymn

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE WESLEYAN TRADITION

by
George Allen Turner

Introduction

In this essay on Wesleyan theology it is well to remember that most Protestants believe in justification by faith. Many of these are now known as "evangelicals," those who believe that we must be "born again."

Among these evangelicals, those in the Wesleyan or Methodist tradition believe that at a "second crisis," subsequent to regeneration, one may experience spiritual renewal and a filling with the Holy Spirit. Among these "holiness people" three main branches are discernible. On the right or conservative wing are the "Calvinistic Methodists" or Keswickians of the Victorious Life Movement. These believe in a "second crisis experience" in which the believer, in response to confession of need, consecration, and faith receives a "baptism in the Holy Spirit" which makes one more effective in God's service. The stress is on continued victory over indwelling sin as one abides in Christ. On the left, or more radical wing, are the Pentecostals who stress a second-crisis experience, a baptism in the Holy Spirit resulting in spiritual gifts, especially the gift of tongues. In the center is the main stream of Wesleyan emphasis, which, unlike the Victorious Life Movement, believes in deliverance from all sin, and which, unlike the Pentecostal Movement, believes that the gift of tongues is not an evidence of the "baptism in the Holy Spirit," or of entire sanctification.

In this central mainstream, several biblical expressions are used to describe this experience of a "second work of grace, subsequent to regeneration." These expressions include: the "rest of faith" (Heb. 4:3), "entire sanctification" (1 Thess. 5:23), "perfect love" (1 John 4:17-18), "the mind of Christ" (Phil. 2:5), "heart purity" (Acts 15:9), the "second blessing" (cf. 2 Cor. 1:15), and the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5, 8; 2:4). The present essay seeks the meaning of the latter term as used in Scripture and in Wesleyan nomenclature, convinced that unless a doctrine is based on Scripture and attested by experience, it cannot be authentic.

> . . . just as when the ground in a given locality is rich in underlying ore, there will often be outcroppings which may appear on the surface, so also holiness, which underlies the whole of

> scripture, stands in specific clarity in numerous passages....One passage may reveal a facet which another passage does not make clear, and . . . the consensus of all the passages will give a good representation of the whole underlying stratum of holiness.1

Responsible scholarship seeks objectivity by an inductive method which comes to the data of scripture and history, not to extract from it a pre determined conclusion, but rather to derive a conclusion from all of the relevant evidence; in short, not to bring doctrine to the Bible for support but rather to derive doctrine from scripture.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is one of the most difficult of biblical doctrines. It was mentioned only, but not defined, in the Apostles' Creed and received only slight attention in the four great ecumenical church councils. (When it did receive attention it contributed to the great schism between the Roman and Greek confessions in A. D. 1054.) In this study interest focuses on the connection, or lack of it, between the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" (baptisei en pneumati hagio) and cleansing from sin. Related questions are: (1) Is the phrase "baptize in the Holy Spirit" descriptive of initiation into the Christian life, or is it a gift of the Spirit for cleansing and empowering for those who are already believers? (2) Is this expression, as commonly used in the Holiness Movement, a derivative from Wesleyan theology or is it a subsequent accretion that is without precedent either in Scripture or the usage of the Wesleys?

The issue has received attention in recent years due to the following considerations: (1)The absence of a link between the work of the Holy Spirit and cleansing from sin in most standard works of theology, including those by many Wesleyan theologians. (2) Studies by Wesleyan scholars who have sought in vain for a clear teaching by Wesley that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to be linked with entire sanctification. (3) The lack of an exhortation in the New Testament epistles that believers are to seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (4) Definitive exegetical studies which seek to demonstrate that the New Testament always associates the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initiation into the Christian life.2 (5) Researchers who conclude that baptism in the Holy Spirit, as simultaneous with entire sanctification, was a concept introduced into historical theology early in the ninteenth century and is neither scriptural nor Wesleyan.3

Whether the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" is to be viewed as certifying the believer's initiation into the Christian life or a subsequent bestowal upon the believer for purity and power there are certain areas in which advocates of both can agree. (1) All Christians are born of the Spirit (John 3:8; Gal. 3:2; 1 Cor. 12:13). (2) All Christians need subsequently to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18). (3). All agree that sanctification begins at conversion simultaneously with justification (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; Tit. 3:5). (4) Scripture supports the view that the baptism with the Holy Spirit and the filling with the Holy Spirit are distinct (Acts 11:16). (5) The view that links the expression "baptism in the Holy Spirit" with initiation does not necessarily imperil the view that entire sanctification and perfect love, subsequent to regeneration, are available and hence mandatory.

I. The Biblical Evidence

It will be helpful to review briefly the case for the position that the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit is limited to that of incorporating the believing sinner into the body of Christ, thus making him a Christian, as distinct from being filled with the Holy Spirit.

According to this view the baptism in the Holy Spirit was given historically only once, but in four installments: to Jews in Jerusalem, to Samaritans in Samaria, to Gentiles in Caesarea and to John's disciples at Ephesus. Since then all when justified are also baptized with the Spirit; it often occurs in connection with water baptism, it is not something to be sought after conversion. In the light of such passages as 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:2 and Romans 8:9, the only criterion of whether or not one is a Christian is whether he has been born of the Spirit; in the light of such passages as Ephesians 5:18 it is clear that to be "filled with the Spirit" is quite distinct and should be sought after conversion. No Christian should seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit, since in the light of 1 Corinthians 12:13 he was baptized with the Holy Spirit when he became a Christian. As expressed concisely by Merrill Unger, "The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit never occurs apart from His simultaneous baptizing, indwelling, and sealing, . . . wrought instantly, simultaneously and eternally in the believer the moment he believes...."4

In support of this point, many of its advocates insist, as a hermeneutical principle, that the Gospels and the Acts are historical records and must not be considered normative for Christian experience and doctrine today; instead the epistles are the only sound way to establish doctrinal positions.6

After re-examining the evidence, my conclusion is: (1) That biblical history is a basis for doctrine, and (2) that the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" is not always linked with conversion-initiation, but rather, in Luke-Acts, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is seen as subsequent to regeneration; hence this usage is both scriptural and Wesleyan.

A. Divine Revelation is in Both Words and Deeds

It can be demonstrated that in both Old and New Testaments doctrine is established not only upon words attributed to God but also upon acts attributed to God. In short, divine revelation is mediated through both words and deeds of God.

An early creed is a recital of God's actions in behalf of His people. When secure in the Promised Land the Israelite was supposed to say, "A wandering Aramean was my father; and he went down into Egypt.... Then we cried to the Lord the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice . . .and . . . brought us out of Egypt . . . and gave us this land" (Deut. 26:5-9).

From the Exodus the Israelites learned of God's power in delivering them from the Egyptians. From the gift of manna in the desert they learned of God's providence. At Sinai they learned of His holiness, His intolerance of idols. During the conquest they learned of His power and His faithfulness in keeping covenant promises. The captivity taught them of God's justice, and the restoration taught them His mercy. These "mighty acts of God" formed an important part of biblical theology as expressed often in the Psalms and in prophecy (cf. Pgs. 78; 95; 105; Amos 5:22-27).

This methodology is continued into the New Testament. We are taught lessons based on such events as Israel's rejection of God's messengers (Acts 7:2-53), Israel's unbelief as precedent for contemporary skepticism (Acts 13:16-41), the faith of Abraham and David as indicative that justification by faith was experienced under the old covenant (Rom. 4:2-12), Israel's unbelief as proof of the danger of apostasy (Heb. 3:6-4:11) and Elijah's prayer as a precedent for men of "like passions" today (James 5:16-18).

When John the Baptist wondered about the identity of the Messiah Jesus did not send him a lecture or an exposition of Scriptural doctrine, but instead asked the messengers to report the miracles they had witnessed an let John draw his own conclusions about Jesus (Matt. 11:2-6). In the light of this hermeneutical procedure, how can John Stott say, "A doctrine of the Holy Spirit must not be constructed from descriptive passages in the Acts"?6 Stott argues deductively: "Begin," he says, "with the general, not with the special." But where does he get the "general"?

Jesus often taught by deeds as well as words. We have no record of a catechusm relative to Jesus' messianic claims before Peter was asked for his "great confession." Instead Jesus simply asked His disciples to follow Him. As they did so day after day they witnessed their leader's mastery of disease, demons, the storm, and even death, in addition to teaching as "one having authority" in the exposition of scriptures. Surely these events, in their cumulative effect, enabled Peter to voice the conviction of the twelve that Jesus was indeed "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt.16:16) Their doctrine was based largely on a combination of historical events of which they were first-hand witnesses. The gospel is a report of what "Jesus began to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1). No less are the events recorded in the Luke-Acts volume useful in the formulation of doctrine. It was God's acts in giving His Spirit to believing Gentiles that convinced the apostles and elders that Gentiles are now to be included in the new covenant (Acts 15:7-12)

B. Initiation-Conversion and the "Baptism in the Holy Spirit"

Repeatedly we are told that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is invariable associated with initiation into the Christian life. The proof-text for this Corinthians 12:13, and we are told that

> . . . any view of the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit in the Gospels or in the Acts must be reconciled with the central New Testament doctrinal passage on this subject in 1 Corinthians 12-13. To assert that . . . the term "baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16) does not pertain to the same thing as 1 Corinthians 12:13 . . . is an arbitrary assumption which . . . casts any sound exegetical method to the winds....7

In short, Lukan language must give way to Pauline. Again, a patient study of the context in each case is called for.

The question now confronting us is the claim by Dunn and others that e baptism with the Holy Spirit is always linked with conversion-initiation.8

The evidence presented in Luke-Acts justifies the conclusion of R. E. O.

White that, "it does disappoint those who look for logical and liturgical consistency."9 But it must be remembered that one seldom finds in Scripture a systematic theology. Instead one finds the "raw material" for a biblical theology which the student must endeavor to systematize. Luke's primary purpose was to narrate the role of the Spirit in the life and growth of the early church rather than to build a pattern of doctrine (Acts 1:8).

But is it true that the "baptism in the Spirit" is always or even predominantly linked with initiation? John's baptism with water unto repentance is clearly to be linked with initiation (Luke 3:3; Acts 1:5), as with the Samaritans (Acts 8:12), the Ethiopian (Acts 8:38), Lydia and the jailer in Philippi (Acts 16:15,33). With this Paul agrees (Rom. 6:3-4). We may add that accompanying this was the activity of the Spirit in regenerating these repentant and baptized believers; they are all born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:8; Gal. 3:2; Rom. 8:9) and thus "sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (Eph. 1:13; 4:30). But were they also "baptized" with the Holy Spirit? If the two are synonymous or simultaneous, why the repeated contrast between John's baptism with water unto repentance and Jesus' baptism with the Holy Spirit?

The only verse which clearly links initiation with the baptism with the Holy Spirit is 1 Corinthians 12:13-"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-Jews, or Greeks, slaves or free-and all were made to drink of one Spirit." Is this an exception or is it the verse to which all the others must conform? What do the contexts indicate? In the six texts mentioned in the Gospels and Acts, the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" is contrasted with the water baptism of John "unto repentance " But, in 1 Corinthians 12:13, Paul is thinking primarily of unity and the expression is paralleled by the statement, "and were all made to drink of one Spirit." Drinking is not a baptismal figure of speech; "baptized" and "made to drink" are figures stressing unity. Does "baptism" always mean the same thing? When warning against the danger of apostasy, Paul reminds the Corinthians, "our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. 10:1-2). The same idea, a corporate "baptism," appears in 1 Peter-"in the days of Noah . . . eight persons, were saved through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you" (1 Peter 3:20). The Red Sea and the Deluge both are cited as symbols of water "baptism" upon the group, a collective "baptism." Jesus speaks of His own "baptism" in the context of judgment (Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50; cf. Matt. 20:22-23). Obviously the immediate context must define the meaning of "baptism" in each instance. Can one say with certainty that 1 Corinthians 12:13 is not an exception (like 1 Cor. 10:1-2; 1 Peter 3:20; Luke 12:50) and that it is to be instead the text by which all the others are to be measured? Is it not rather another instance in which "baptism" is a term indicating, not initiation, but a corporate experience as in the Exodus and the Deluge usages? Certainly "baptism" is not always a term linked with initiation There is a "baptism with fire," a symbol of purging and judgment (Matt. 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17- as in Malachi 3:1-3; cf. Isaiah 4:4). It does violence to the evidence to insist that the term "baptism in the Holy Spirit" is consistently associated with initiation into the Christian experience; such a thesis is not sustained when ALL of the evidence is reviewed.10 Proponents of the Reformed position, who

claim that the Lukan evidence consistently supports this position, do so only by ignoring part of the evidence. (For example, Peter in retrospect, stated that for them, as well as for Cornelius, Pentecost meant primarily the cleansing of their hearts by faith (Acts 15:8-9.) Is it sound exegetical method to use a Pauline idiom to define a Lukan idiom?

If Lukan term "baptism with the Holy Spirit" is not always associated with repentance, remission of sin and conversion-initiation what does it denote?

For the 120 who experienced the "promise of the Father" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4) which Luke equates with the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" can it be said that they were not "disciples" prior to their experience at Pentecost? A collation of texts indicates that for Luke-Acts "disciples" (mathetas) always means Christians.11 The Twelve had been authorized to "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons" (Matt.10:8). At least seventy of them had their "names . . . written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). Of the eleven Jesus declared, "You are clean (katharoi)" (John 13:10; 15:3). Later Jesus described them as those "given" to Him by the Father, and as "not of the world," as having "kept the word," and as believing in Jesus and in His mission (John 17:6-19), hardly language descriptive of those who still needed to be initiated into the family of God! "From this," wrote R. A. Torrey, "it is evident that regeneration is one thing, and that the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is something different, something additional."12

The context of the phrase, the "promise of the Father," makes no mention of initiation; instead the Father's gift was needed, not to make them Christians but to make their witness more effective, to enable them to bear "more fruit" and "much fruit." The baptism with the Holy Spirit was needed to give them "power (dunamis) from on high" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). This is what resulted; their witness was with "boldness" (parresias) and effective, in contrast to their hiding for "fear of the Jews" prior to Pentecost (John 20:19; cf. Acts 4:29, 31).

Those who had been baptized in the Holy Spirit were later "filled" with the Holy Spirit as critical situations required (Acts 4:31; 7:55; 13:9); John the Baptist, Jesus, and Barnabas were said to be filled with the Holy Spirit continually. When Jesus was baptized with the Holy Spirit, it was not to be initiated but to be empowered (Luke 3:21-22; 4:14) for service. Why did not Jesus then baptize His disciples with the Holy Spirit and power? The only clue is found in John's Gospel, "The Spirit had not been given [in His fullness] because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39; cf. 16:7). After Jesus was "glorified" the Spirit was given in fullness and power, as Peter told the astonished multitude (Acts 2:33). Even Dunn (very reluctantly) admits that for the Fourth Gospel the sending of the Paraclete upon the disciples was fulfilled, not at John 20:22, but at Pentecost.13

In Luke's language the closest link between Spirit-Baptism and initiation is Acts 2:38. But it should not be the proof-text by which all the others must be judged. It cannot be successfully argued that there is no time-lapse between baptism with water and baptism with the Spirit.14

The case of Philip's converts in Samaria is instructive. In response to the preaching of Philip, they are said to have "received the word of God" (Acts 8:14), the same expression used to describe those converted on the

day of Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2:41). If those who responded to Peter's preaching in Jerusalem were Christians, those who responded to Philip's preaching in Samaria must have been Christians also.

Peter and John later prayed that these converts in Samaria "might receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:15). Although Simon Magnus also "believed" and was baptized, does it follow that the others also were still in the bond of iniquity"?

Those who place Paul's conversion at the house of Ananias should recall Paul's own testimony as preserved by Luke. Paul put the emphasis on his vision of Jesus en route to Damascus (Acts 26:12-23; cf. Gal. 1:11-17; 1 Cor. 9:1), rather than on the ministry of Ananias.

The case of Apollos is linked with John's disciples at Ephesus. Apollos was "instructed in the way of the Lord" and he "taught accurately the things concerning Jesus" (Acts 18:25). However, "he knew only the baptism of John." In view of the six passages which link the baptism of John with Jesus' baptism with the Spirit, the implication i8 that Apollos was a disciple of Jesus, hence had been baptized in water, but lacked Jesus' "baptism with the Holy Spirit." Noting this lack, Priscilla and Aquila "expounded to him the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:26). The implication is that they explained Jesus' baptism with the Holy Spirit to supplement the baptism of John which he had known. The result was similar to what the disciples experienced after Pentecost; he "powerfully (eutonos) confuted the Jews in public" (Acts 18:28; cf. Acts 1:8; 4:8, 31).

Likewise the believers at Ephesus may have been Christians, since for Luke, as already noted, "disciple" always denotes "Christian." They were Christians as truly as was Ananias when he baptized Paul. Both are described in the same way (Acts 9:10; 19:2). But like Apollos, they "knew only the baptism of John." As with Peter and John at Samaria, so here likewise when Paul laid hands on these disciples, "the Holy Spirit came on them," an expression elsewhere in Acts described as the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:4).

Any review of the Luke-Acts records needs to focus on Peter's perspective on the significance of Pentecost. When the events at the house of Cornelius, and those on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, are compared, the central meaning is that both Jews and Gentiles become Christians when they repent and accept Jesus as Messiah and Saviour: in Peter's words, "God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us" (Acts 11:17); "giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us; and he made no distinction between us and them, but cleansed (hathapisas) their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8-9). The same gift both erased distinctions and also cleansed their hearts by faith. The term "cleansed" could refer to initiation (John 13:10; 15:3; Heb. 9:14; James 4:8) but it seems more appropriate to associate it as a subsequent removal of indwelling sin (cf. 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:26; Matt. 5:8; Titus 2:14; 1 John 1:7-8), a completed work of sanctification.15 Consequently when "heart purity" is mentioned, it is really with reference to something to which believers are summoned.

When all the evidence is given, it seems fair to conclude that for Luke-Acts water baptism is linked with repentance, regeneration, initiation and rebirth in the Holy Spirit. The "promise of the Father" and the Son, to "believers" (Acts 1:5; 8:12; 19:2), is linked with the baptism in the Holy

Spirit, not primarily, as Dunn insists, for conversion-initiation, but rather for purity (Acts 15:9) and power (Luke 24:48-49; Acts 1:4-8; 4:31) in order that they might be effective as witnesses of Jesus and the resurrection. In none of the instances described by Luke can it be said that the baptism in the Holy Spirit" came to those with no prior acquaintance with the gospel (not even Cornelius-Acts 10:37). Even in Acts 2:38-41 there is no evidence that the "gift" was bestowed immediately at conversion (as Parrot has noted).

To the argument that there is no command in Paul's letters to seek the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" (cf. Eph. 5:18) one may respond, "neither did Paul say, 'you must be born again.' " Admittedly the evidence in Luke-Acts is ambiguous in places but the main thrust seems clear: converted persons still need the baptism and filling of the Holy Spirit for maximum effectiveness. This is available as the Father has promised; John and Luke-Acts are in agreement here. To His disciples Jesus said, The paraclete is now "with you," later He shall "be in you" (John 14:17); Acts records the fulfillment of this Promise.

II. The Wesleyan Tradition

A. John Wesley's Usage

The evidence that John Wesley linked the baptism with the Holy Spirit with entire sanctification and perfect love is as elusive as Wesley's testimony to his personal experience of the same.

In his Explanatory Notes at Acts 9:9, Wesley remarks, on the "three days" between Paul's vision and the visit of Ananias: "So long he seems to have been in the pangs of the new birth."16 Bengel, whose Gnomon formed the basis of Wesley's Notes thought otherwise; he placed Saul's conversion on the Damascus road. Calvin agrees; Paul was "suddenly changed into a new man, . . . framed by the Spirit of God."l7

With reference as to whether the baptism with the Holy Spirit comes with initiation into the Christian life, Wesley was not clear. In one of his letters he correctly insists that it is erroneous to equate Christian perfection with receiving the Holy Ghost: "the phrase, in that sense, is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all 'received the Holy Ghost' when they were justified."18 Wesley was reared and lived in a tradition which linked water baptism with the baptism with the Holy Spirit-"baptismal regeneration" especially as it applies to infants. He published his father's essay on the subject without qualifications. Later, he recognized that this may not be true of adults: "It is sure all of riper years who are baptized are not at the same time born again."19 Therefore it is not surprising that Wesley was reluctant to separate the "gift of the Holy Spirit" from justification. All who repent and believe are at the same time "born of the Spirit" (John 3:8; cf Rom. 8:9; Gal. 3:2). However, Wesley endorsed Fletcher's last "Check," in which Fletcher equates Christian perfection with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as Herbert McGonigle and others have demonstrated.20 In a later letter to Benson, as Lawrence Wood has noted,21 Wes1ey equated perfection in love with being "filled with the Holy Ghost."22 Likewise in a letter to Fletcher, Wesley refers to "fathers" (cf. 1 John 2:12-14) whose Pentecost had fully come.23 In his sermon on "Christian Perfection" Wesley quotes

Peter's description of Pentecost ("purified their hearts by faith," Acts 15:9) as applicable to those who experience "Christian Perfection" as distinct from the new birth.24

In his comment on Matthew 3:11 Wesley remarks, "He shall fill you with the Holy Ghost, inflaming your hearts with that fire of love, which many waters cannot quench. And this was done, even with a visible appearance as of fire, on the day of pentecost,"25 language similar to that used in "Circumcision of the Heart."26 The latter in turn was one of Wesley's terms for Christian perfection.27 Thus Wesley associated in his mind the baptism with the Holy Spirit, Pentecost, "circumcision of the heart," and Christian perfection. Wesley and most of his followers are less than precise (and biblical) when they say, "I was justified and later was sanctified"; they mean "entire sanctification." For all Christians are sanctified initially at justification, as Wesley agreed when he said sanctification begins at conversion. 28

William Arnett has gleaned from the writings of John Wesley several instances in which the work of the Holy Spirit is linked with heart cleansing and perfect love. However, the connection is not emphasized and ambiguities exist. Arnett concludes that while this is more prominent in Wesley than most scholars have shown, "there are areas of tension, perhaps ambiguity, in regard to his application of pneumatological phrases, such as 'receiving the Holy Spirit,' 'the baptism of the Holy Spirit,' and 'filled with the Holy Spirit,' . . . Wesley had not worked out fully every facet of teaching on the Holy Spirit."29

Nevertheless Wesley did not object to linking the baptism with the Holy Spirit with entire sanctification and sometimes he made the link himself. He only objected, on scriptural grounds, to the statement that Christians do not receive the Holy Spirit at conversion, and he heartily endorsed Fletcher's last "Check" in which the baptism of the Holy Spirit was seen as a "second work of grace." As Wesley's followers have gone beyond him in the direction of a more biblical and precise formulation in such matters as the distinction between original sin and original guilt (abandoning the latter), leaving baptismal regeneration for believers' baptism, so we need not fear to go beyond Wesley in the direction of a more biblical doctrine of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This was done by Fletcher, Adam Clarke, Benson, and their successors.

B. Usage After Wesley

Fletcher and Adam Clarke were, next to the Wesleys, the most influential among the early Methodist leaders in the formulation of doctrine.

Wesley wanted Fletcher to become his successor, and endorsed, with the exception already noted, all Fletcher wrote about perfection. After describing the "several degrees of spiritual life, or quickening power" set forth in Scripture, Fletcher summarized the sixth stage as the

> . . . still more abundant life, . . . of the adult or perfect Christian, imparted to him when the love of God, or power from on high, is plentifully shed abroad in his believing soul, on the day that Christ "baptizes him with the Holy Ghost and with fire, to sanctify him wholly, and seal him unto the day of redemption."30

In his distinction between the justified person and the one entirely sanctified. Fletcher thus describes the latter:

> . . . if . . . you mean a believer completely baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, in whom he that once visited as a Monitor now fully resides as a Comforter, you are right; the enmity ceases, the

> carnal mind and body of sin are destroyed, and "God is all in all" to that just man "made perfect in love."31

In his effort at precision in defining "one made perfect in love" it seems natural to Fletcher to use the words "baptized with the Holy Ghost" as one way of describing such a person; throughout it is the language of Scripture which he summons. In his last "Check," Fletcher endeavors to describe the privilege of all believers.

> . . . it is . . . undeniable, from the first four chapters of the Acts, that a peculiar power of the Spirit is bestowed upon believers under the Gospel of Christ; . . . and that when our faith shall fully embrace the promise of full sanctification, or of a complete "circumcision of the heart in the Spirit," the Holy Ghost . . . will not fail to help us to love one another without sinful self-seeking; and as soon as we do so, "God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us," (l John 4:12; John 14:23.)

> Should you ask, how many baptisms, or effusions of the sanctifying Spirit are necessary to cleanse a believer from all sin, and to kindle his soul into perfect love; I reply . . . if one powerful baptism of the Spirit " seal you unto the day of redemption, and cleanse you from all [moral] filthiness," so much the better. If two or more be necessary, the Lord can repeat them.... And if one outpouring of the Spirit, one bright manifestation of the sanctifying truth, so empties us of self, as to fill us with the mind of Christ, and with pure love, we are undoubtedly Christians in the full sense of the word.32

When discussing whether Christian perfection may be experienced gradually or instantaneously Fletcher is open to both alternatives; it may come in both ways. He finds no difficulty in the view that it may be instantaneous. In his words.

> May not the Sanctifier descend upon your waiting soul, as quickly as the Spirit descended upon your Lord at his baptism? . . . if the dim flame of a candle can in the twinkling of an eye destroy the flying insect which comes within its sphere, how unscriptural and irrational is it to suppose that, when God fully baptizes a soul with his sanctifying Spirit and with the celestial fire of his love, he cannot in an instant destroy the man of sin, burn up the chaff of corruption, melt the heart of stone into a heart of flesh, and kindle the believing soul into pure, seraphic love.33

It is obvious that Fletcher thought it consistent with the New Testament to include baptism phraseology of Scripture when describing, not

justification or initiation, but the perfecting of believers in love and in their cleansing from inward depravity.

Fletcher, obviously, has Peter's analysis of Pentecost (Acts 15:9) in mind when he remarks:

> If our hearts be purified by faith, as the Scriptures expressly testify, if the faith which peculiarly purifies the hearts of Christians be a faith in "the promise of the Father," which promise was made by the Son and directly points at a peculiar effusion of the Holy Ghost, the purifier of spirits; if we may believe in a moment; and if God may, in a moment, seal our sanctifying faith by sending us a fullness of his sanctifying Spirit . . . does it not follow, that to deny the possibility of the instantaneous destruction of sin, is to deny . . . that we can make an instantaneous act of faith in the sanctifying promise of the Father, and in the all-cleansing blood of the Son . . . by the instantaneous operation of his Spirit? which St. Paul calls the "circumcision of the heart in [or by] the Spirit?"34

As John A. Knight has pointed out, John Fletcher deserves to be called "the systematic theologian of Methodism."35

In a series of unpublished letters in manuscript, researched by Dr. Timothy Smith in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, one gleans further light on Fletcher's use of the term "baptism with the Holy Spirit." Writing to Charles Wesley in November 1771, he says,

> I shall introduce my, why not your doctrine of the Holy Ghost and make it one with your brother's perfection? He holds the truth, but this will be an improvement upon it, if I am not mistaken. In some of your pentecostal hymns you paint my light wonderfully.36

In this illuminating facet we detect Methodist doctrine in the process of formulation: "improving" that of John and finding confirmation in Charles.

On August 5, 1771, Fletcher wrote to Charles: "I still want a fountain of power, call it what you please, Baptism of fire, perfect love, sealing, I contend not for the name . . . In short, I want to be established."

In this, Fletcher is in the process of linking Scripture and theology with his own experience.

Still seeking and searching for the appropriate language he wrote to Charles again, January 16,1773.

> Perfection is nothing but the unshaken Kingdom of God, peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost, or by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Now Query. Is this baptism instantaneous as it was on the day of Pentecost, or will it come as a dew, gradually? Nothing can set me clear herein but my own experience. And suppose I was clear by my own experience, would this be a sufficient reason to fix it as a rule for all believers? . . . If I consult Scripture I rather think it is nothing but the Spirit dwelling in a believer in consequence of an instantaneous baptism.

In July of 1774 Fletcher wrote again to Charles Wesley, saying:

> I am not in the Christian Dispensation of the Holy Ghost and of power. I want for it, but not earnestly enough; I am not sufficiently straitened till the fiery baptism is accomplished . . . Christian perfection is nothing but the full kingdom in the Holy Ghost.

As late as 1776 he expressed to Charles Wesley his appreciation of his hymns, saying in part, "I think that there is a gradual rising to the top of John's Dispensation, and that when we are gradually risen to that top, and are fit for the baptism of Christ, it is an instant conferring."

Obviously, for Fletcher, "the baptism of Christ" is the same as the baptism with the Holy Spirit and it is for believers who have been previously regenerated. It was a conclusion which came gradually and strongly. Mean-while he continued to cling to Charles for support. John Wesley agreed with this linking of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, with cleansing and perfection in love, but John did not press for this linkage.

Thus Fletcher, far from linking the baptism with the Spirit with conversion-initiation, associates it rather with entire sanctification as a work subsequent to regeneration. He views the language of Luke-Acts as appropriate to describe Christian perfection or maturity, and finds it consistent with Pauline usage.

Repeatedly, Charles Wesley in his hymns calls on the Lord for instant and complete deliverance from sin, but he seldom invokes the Spirit as the sanctifier. However in the hymn, "The Promise of Sanctification," Charles Wesley prays,

Perform the work thou hast begun,
    My inmost soul to thee convert:
Love me, for ever love thine own
    And sprinkle with thy blood my heart.

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

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

From all remaining filth within
    Let me in thee salvation have,
From actual, and from inbred sin
    My ransom'd soul persist to save.

Holy, and true, and righteous Lord,
    I wait to prove they perfect will;
Be mindful of thy gracious word
    And stamp me with thy Spirit's seal.37

The influence of Fletcher on American Methodist theology has been traced effectively by John A. Knight, in which he demonstrates that, next to John Wesley, John Fletcher was the major factor in the development of Methodist theology. As an example, the Illinois Conference in 1827 recommended Fletcher's Checks along with Wesley's Sermons and Notes and Clarke's Commentaries.38 He notes also that Fletcher's last "Check," the "Treatise on Christian Perfection," had an influence second only to Wesley's Plain Account, in the formation of early Methodist definitions of Christian perfection.39 In his last "Check," Fletcher urges believers to seek entire sanctification and perfection in love. He suggests this prayer for their complete cleansing:

> Lord, I want a plenitude of thy Spirit, the full promise of the Father, and the rivers which flow from the inmost souls of the believers, . . . I do believe that thou canst and wilt thus "baptize me with the Holy Ghost and with fire:" help my unbelief: confirm and increase my faith, with regard to this important baptism. Lord, I have need to be thus baptized of thee, and I am straitened till this baptism is accomplished.... O, baptize my soul, and make as full an end of the original sin which I have from Adam, as thy last baptism made of the likeness of sinful flesh, . . . thou canst save from sin to the uttermost.40

In a stimulating essay, Allan Coppedge has demonstrated that, contrary to John Peters, the doctrine of Christian perfection was prominent in the early nineteenth century among Methodists in America.41 For example, Nathan Bangs preached on Christian perfection in 1819. The biographer of Michael Ellis believed that Ellis in every sermon introduced "the doctrine of Christian perfection as taught in the Bible and preached by Wesley and Fletcher."42 Likewise in New England Laban Clark "spoke of the gift of the Holy Spirit in 'its renewing and sanctifying influence' on the 'pardoned believer, to purify him unto God.' "43

Fletcher's last "Check" (on Christian Perfection) was published in America in 1791 and again in a six-volume set of his Works in 1809. These were avidly read and had a wide influence. Adam Clarke, another early advocate of holiness, published his influential Commentary in 1826. Francis Asbury ardently sought for himself and preached on Christian perfection. Thomas Webb linked "receiving the Holy Spirit" with entire sanctification. As early as 1814 the Cumberland Presbyterians spoke of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as entire sanctification. Their historian reported:

> Our fathers believed in an abiding baptism of the Holy Ghost as a distinctive blessing after conversion.... Of all the doctrines held . . . the one about this abiding baptism of the Holy Ghost was most esteemed by them.44

In 1826, at Ithaca, N. Y., after hearing a sermon on "have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" one of the Methodist preachers determined to seek the experience of a clean heart.45

One of Methodism's early saints was Hester Ann Rogers, whose testimony for full salvation was printed and widely circulated in England and in America. In her prayer for entire sanctification she prayed,

> Lord . . . make this the moment of my full salvation! Baptize me now with the Holy Ghost and the fire of pure love. Now "make me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." . . . Now cleanse the thoughts, desires and propensities of my heart, and let me perfectly love thee.46

These and other evidences fully support the conclusion of Coppedge in his over-all assessment. The sale of the works of Fletcher and Mrs. Rogers,

> One on the theological level and one on the popular level had the effect over the years by their consistent and wide-ranging influence of predisposing the Americans to equate the biblical data on entire sanctification and Christian perfection with that relating to the baptism of the Holy Ghost and Pentecost.47

The two factors which effected this linkage of baptism language with entire sanctification was the language of Luke-Acts and their own experience.

Wesley had said many times that the three criteria of doctrine are Scripture, reason and experience. Hundreds of Christians who knew they had been "born of the water and of the Spirit" later saw the need of heart purity and perfect love. They sought and experienced what they thought appropriate to describe as the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," not for the remission of sins, but rather for purity and power, an experience like that of Jesus' disciples at Pentecost. They had moved away from Wesley's "baptismal regeneration" language to concepts more in harmony with the New Testament, and with the implications of Wesley's own position. Later, when earnest Christians realized the possibilities of grace, and when they realized it comes by faith as a gift, rather than as an attainment, they found the phrase "baptism with the Holy Spirit" one of several biblical formulas appropriate to define their experience of full deliverance. In this they were joined by devout leaders, from Asa Mahan, Charles Finney, R. A. Torrey and Dwight L. Moody to J. G. Morrison and H. C. Morrison, to mention a few. This "cloud of witnesses," is not to be discounted when attempting to formulate a biblical doctrine of Christian perfection.

Notes

1J. H. Greenlee, "The Greek New Testament Message of Holiness," in Kenneth Geiger, ed., Further Insights Into Holiness (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill, 1963), p. 83.

2James D. G. Dunn, The Baptzsm in the Holy Spirit (SCM Press Ltd., 1970), pp. 90-115. similar conclusions are reached by John R. W. Stott, The Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit (Leicester, England: Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship, 1964).

3Donald Dayton, "The Doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Its Emergence and Significance," in Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring 1978, pp. 114-26.

4Merrill F. Unger, "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit," Bibliotheca Sacra, April-September 1944, p. 368.

5Unger, The Baptizing Work of the Holy Spirit (Chicago: Scripture Press, 1953), pp. 116- 19; Stott, Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirzt, p. 18.

6Stott, Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit, p. 18.

7Unger, Baptizing Work of the Holy Spirit, p. 116.

8Dunn, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, pp. 90-102.

9R. E. 0. White, The Biblical Doctrine of Initiation (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), p. 190.

10Cf. J. K. Parrot, "In Luke's view there does not seem to have been any necessary connection between water-baptism and the effusion of the Holy Spirit." Expository Times, 1971, p. 235.

11F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I, The Acts of the Apostles, 5 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1922), 4:237; Oxford Bible at Acts 19:1.

12R. A. Torrey, The Baptzsm with the Holy Spirit (New York: Revell, 1897), p. 12.

13Dunn, Baptz'sm in the Holy Spirit, pp. 176-80.

14Parrot insists that even in this verse there is no essential connection between baptism and the gift of the Spirit, op. cit., p. 235.

15Should the "cleansed" of Acts 15:9 be interpreted in the light of "cleansed" in 10:15; 11:9? If 90, it may mean only a change of status (as in justification), as changed relationship. But the reference in Acts 10:15; 11:9 is to "unclean beasts" and their removal from that category. In Acts 15:9 the reference is to God-fearing persons and applies to their "hearts," i. e., their moral natures.

l6John Wesley, Explanatory Notes on the New Testament (Epworth, 1958), p. 428; cf. The Works of John Wesley, 14-vol. ed., 9:93.

l7John Calvin, Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, ed. Henry Beveridge, 2 vols., reprint ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 1:372. This view is supported by many scholars; cf. Interpreter's Bible (9:118, 123); International Critical Commentary (27:178); Interperter's Dictionary of the Bible (3:684); Expositor's Greek Testament (2:505); Encyclopedia of Ethics (9:682); Anchor Bible (Acts, p. 81); Pulpit Commentary (18:283); J. R. Lumby, Acts in the Cambridge Bible.

18Wesley, Works, 12:416.

19Wesley, Works, 6:74.

20Herbert McGonigle, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring 1973, 68ff.

21Lawrence Wood, "Exegetical-Reflections on the Baptism With the

Holy Spirit." [Editor's note: Present plans are to include Dr. Wood's paper among those to be printed in the second number of this current volume of the Wesleyan Theological Journal.

22The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, ed. John Telford (London: Edworth, 1931). 5:215.

23Ibid., 6:221.

24Standard Sermons of John Wesley, ed. Edward Sugden (London: Epworth Press, 1956). 2:171.

25Explanatory Notes.

26Standard Sermons, 1:279.

27Ibid.. 1:265.

28"The New Birth," Standard Sermons, 2:240.

29William Arnett, "The Role of the Holy Spirit in Entire Sanctification in the Writings of John Wesley," The Asbury Seminarian April 1976, p.18.

30John Fletcher, Checks to Antinomianism (New York: Phillips and Hunt. n.d.). 1:160.

31Ibid., 1:167-68; italics his.

32Ibid., 2:632-33.

33Ibid., 2:636.

34Ibid., 2:637.

35John A. Knight, "John Fletcher's Influence on the Development of Wesleyan Theology in America," Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring 1978 17.

36The "Pentecostal Hymns" are found in Wesley's Poetical Works, Vol. II, following p. 162, "Hymns of Petition and Thanksgiving for the Promise of the Father"; they are commentaries on John 14-17, and were often referred to as the "Pentecostal Hymns."

37 Cited in John Wesley's sermon, "On Christian Perfection," Standard Sermons, 2:175.

38Knight, op. cit., p. 22.

39Ibid., p. 23

40Fletcher, op. cit., 2:656; italics his.

41Allan Coppedge, "Entire Sanctification in Early American Methodism: 1812-1835," Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring 1978, 34-37.

42Ibid., p 37

43The Methodist Preacher, 2:95-96, cited by Knight, op. cit., p. 37.

44B. W. McDonald, History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, p.

105, cited in M. E. Gaddis, "Christian Perfectionism in America" (Ph. D. dissertation, U. of Chicago, 1929), p. 299.

45Christian Advocate, October 14, 1826.

46Thomas Coke, The Experience and Spiritual Letters of Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers (London: Milner and Somerby, n. d.), p. 41.

47Coppedge, op. cit., p. 46.

THEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF WESLEYANISM'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

by
Mildred Bangs Wynkoop

Introduction

The Wesleyan movement in America is coming of age. It is maturing to the point where exploration into its roots and into the implications of its theology and philosophy is possible. There are differences of opinion among Wesleyans. Rather than deploring differences it is now becoming clear that dialogue can enrich the movement. Differences usually lead to the discovery of deep presuppositions that can be exposed, analyzed and evaluated.

Our problem has to do with the specific reason John Wesley has been our mentor, and whether it is a strength or weakness as Christians to accept him at this time as a theological leader.

The genius of John Wesley, and Wesleyanism if it be authentic, is that it is not only grounded in sound Christian theology but that it also transcends formal theology to link into the dynamic of practical living. Such Wesleyanism would not be burdened by an excessive scholastic

"definition-itis" that absorbs so much energy and occasions so much divisiveness that it cannot do its saving work.

John Wesley's Wesleyanism crossed the Atlantic to the American shores and became the foundation of the Methodist Church. However, the wider religious influence of John and Charles Wesley was also evident. Many in other theological traditions were captivated by the holiness message and clustered together in a spiritual fellowship that came to be known as the "holiness movement," affecting to some extent even the largely Methodist National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness organized in 1867 in Vinland, N. J.1

The Wesleyan movement in America had in it from the first a "great divide." On the one hand was the Wesleyanism of Wesley, largely Methodist as would be natural, nourished by Wesley's own writings. On the other hand there was a vigorous Wesleyanism composed of theological interpretations from other traditions. Many of the so-called holiness Classics were produced by this non-Wesleyan side. An examination of the

long lists of books and pamphlets printed and recommended for the holiness people shows that as the nineteenth century progressed there were fewer and fewer of Wesley's own writings made available.3 Today, Wesley's works are so limited and expensive that most of the holiness preachers and students have never read Wesley and often stoutly maintain that they are not really Wesleyan. A precious heritage is going by the board.

With all the theological differences in the early eighteenth-century holiness movement, one overarching factor unified Wesleyans-a belief in and experience of sanctification, designated "entire" to distinguish the second work of grace from the sanctification that is the heritage of every Christian.

The American holiness movement has never been a homogeneous entity, theologically, sociologically, economically, culturally or denominationally. Holiness is too much an integral part of Christian faith to be limited to any selected segment of human society. However, the teaching that holiness could become a reality in this life, by God's grace, through faith, was an emphasis beyond that of much of Christendom. And among holiness advocates, spiritual fellowship always transcended doctrinal variations.

So outstanding was this emphasis, that holiness doctrine began to take over Christian theology in a way that seemed to disregard the context of the Christian faith from which it derived its authenticity. Wherever Wesley's Wesleyanism survived, the Wesley context remained intact-the "whole Wesley." But where the holiness emphasis became detached from its Wesley context, other theological roots were needed to structure the holiness message. There were roots at hand into which holiness theology could be and was grafted.

Holiness theology grafted into non-Wesleyan roots produced interpretations of sanctification that clashed with historic Christian faith-and with it, Wesley. Wesley, of course, is no more a final authority than any other human theological mentor. What Wesley contributed was a well-examined and tested way to tie fallible human life into a formal theology without losing the integrity of either.

Wesley's strength lies in the fact that he achieved his synthesis of theology and life within the Hebraic biblical context rather than in the Hellenistic dualism which has continually plagued the Church. Dualism could not have provided the unity of thought and life which Wesley taught.

On the basis of a study of the kinds of differences of opinion which have been observed in Wesleyan circles, I am proposing that the changes from Wesley, deplored by some but rejoiced over by others, lie on philosophical grounds. The experience of Christ when explained systematically is put into the philosophical framework of the interpreter. This has not always been understood.

Basically, the difference between Wesley and the holiness movement lies on ontological lines; Wesley taught the essential oneness of God, though he accepted the biblical trinitarian distinctions without trying to explain them, and the unity of personality which is now understood as being a Hebraic concept.

Quite a different Wesleyanism took root in the early American scene-The Second Evangelical Awakening began in the urban East goon after

independence, but it quickly spread to the frontier, among the fugitives from the cities and the backwoods immigrants from the seaboard, and attracted radicals, some criminals and adventurous young people. The Cane Ridge revival, breaking out among the Presbyterians in Kentucky, spread quickly, and with hurricane force, into all denominations, and into wide geographical areas. The camp meeting format originated in this awakening, and was soon taken over by the Methodists. Among them the sanctification theme was heard.

People from various other doctrinal traditions experienced sanctification, and the difference in their interpretations of sanctification began to clash with Wesleyan interpretations. What I have called "the whole Wesley" began to break up in America under these conditions. To trace the specific sources is beyond the scope of this brief paper, but to recognize the effects of the break-up should engage some of our attention as we seek to understand, if not restore, a Wesley Wesleyanism today.

That there are various and somewhat contradictory Wesleyanisms today need not be debated. There have been three main and recognizable streams which have intermingled in various ways.4 The central "return to Wesley" stream i8 almost wholly from the academic community with "heart warmth" interest measured from personal experience on the right to more leftish political and social interests with varying degrees of religious passion.5 On one side of center is a Puritanical, legalistic, moralistic concern laced tightly with scholastic rigidity and stereotyped terminology. On the other side of center is a strong emotional emphasis-a mystical flavor prevailing. Defining or describing "Wesleyanism" is difficult in this situation. When the "distinguishing" doctrine of Wesleyanism is said to be entire sanctification and this is lifted out of the "whole Wesley," its supports are lost and its meaning confused.

Before analyzing the "broken" Wesleyan context, the observation that the brokenness can probably be accounted for in some measure should be made and explained. Quite simply, Wesley literature was not used widely in the mainstream of the holiness movement outside the Methodist Churches. An examination of the lists of recommended and available books and pamphlets for the holiness movement reveals so few from Wesley's pen as to startle the researcher. Some publishing was obviously done in America but the listing of holiness books did not widely include these. Eventually more popular paperbacks of Keswick writers, dispensationalism, sermons, general devotional and biographical accounts prevailed.

Holiness preaching of the great releasing experience of spiritual victory and vitality was done outside the context of Wesley's help. As George Turner has said, the holiness movement produced many tracts and much devotional literature but very little scholarly material.6

Without the Wesleyan background, the rationale for the holiness message and experience had to be grafted into whatever theological and philosophical root-system the sanctified person brought with him. Frustrating experiences today, in attempting to reconstruct a true Wesleyanism in contrast to the specious "Wesleyanisms," would be understood were it remembered that the holiness movement has not had, nor does it have now easily available Wesley's own works. Many seminary students have never read Wesley, because his works are not in all the

libraries, and even in holiness seminaries the students may suffer the varying interpretations of professors who, themselves, may not have had any better introduction. From this proceeds the fractured Wesley.

Distorted Wesleyanisms, issuing in "problem" holiness understanding, are obviously the fruit of grafting them onto non-Wesleyan philosophical roots. Some examples of the fruit become evidences of the root. Two related errors (at least always rejected by the Church) are detectable arising from dualistic presuppositions. One is the extreme ontological distinctions between the Persons of the Godhead issuing in a practical tritheism. The other is trichotomy in anthropology. Tritheism makes it possible to say that Christ is our Saviour and the Holy Spirit is the Sanctifier. Trichotomy makes it necessary to suppose that the multiple entities in human persons account for the need for multiple works of grace to achieve entire sanctification. This is probably behind the idea of discontinuity of grace in relation to the "works" of grace.

As a consequence, it has been possible for some to isolate holiness preaching from gospel preaching and to study holiness as a doctrine separate from Christian theology as a whole. To follow the logic through, the event of entire sanctification as a second work of grace began to absorb the whole meaning of sanctification so that no aspect of development could be included in it. When the continuity of grace between conversion and sanctification was lost, it became necessary to make clear distinctions between them so that one could refer to emotional evidences to be sure of standing. In fact, the very complex human structure of personality became an increasing problem to be solved in theology as the psychology of personality was better understood.

On dualistic presuppositions, an extreme supernaturalism weakened the Wesleyan moral interaction between God and man in the conversion experience. The historical Pentecost became the model for all personal experience, and the question was raised about how one would know when the baptism of the Holy Spirit would be received. There was in the baptism language no inbuilt mandate for discipleship and service. Obedience in terms of legalism and moralism and often emotionalism gained priority over agape. To observe this is not to deny the reality of the experience of entire sanctification but does indicate the weakening of the rationale for the doctrine which needs recovery.

A Critique of the Whole Wesley

There is a widespread interest in John Wesley today, far exceeding the relatively small number of people who belong to the several holiness denominations. Wesley is emerging as a great ecumenical and churchly figure, bigger than history had recognized before and bigger than can be contained in any denominational enclosure.

This return to Wesley is in no sense a reactionary, parochial, fundamentalist movement, but precisely the opposite. Ironically, the return movement causes some alarm among some Wesleyans in the holiness movement. The reason for this reluctance is that a discovery or recovery of the "whole Wesley" might threaten the distinctive identity of some distorted Wesleyanisms.

Any fair perspective of Wesleyanism should take into account some of

the theological milieu out of which Wesley came and concerning which he spoke and in which he permitted himself to become involved, and the deep sense of responsibility which he assumed in leading men and women into the spiritual depth he had discovered in "Scripture, Reason and the Antiquities. "

Wesley's concept of the "second blessing," properly so-called, was by no means his major obsession, but the means through which the goal of the Christian life could be realized here and now. Entire sanctification cannot be abstracted from the "whole Wesley" and retain any living meaning. Of interest is the fact that not just the older holiness people are attempting to recover Wesley but the young and young-in-heart see the importance of doing so.

Of these younger scholars, Free Methodist Howard Snyder says,

> . . . the reasons for studying Wesley today are more pressing and pragmatic than merely historical curiosity. Wesley's role in bringing spiritual renewal to a rapidly industrializing society, and his understanding and practice of Christian discipleship suggest some aspects of his continuing relevance.7

Snyder cites the increasingly recognized theological stature of Wesley-long denied-as a practical theologian. His theology had points in common with some modern ones that are "tied to praxis and grew out of praxis." Wesley too was a radical reformer, desiring to restructure the life and experience of the Christian community in matters of discipleship, life-sty!e, gospel obedience and the "shape of the Church."8

Turning the pages of time back to our earlier years, such sentiments as the following appear. This one is from the pen of H. Orton Wiley as editor of the Herald of Holiness and is dated in 1933.

> Dr. Dale, the theologian, once remarked "that there was a doctrine of John Wesley's-the doctrine of perfect sanctification-which ought to have led to a great and original ethical development; but the doctrine has not grown; it seems to remain just where John Wesley left it. There has not been the genius, or the courage, to attempt the solution of the immense practical questions which the doctrine suggests. The questions have not been raised, much less solved. To have raised them effectively would have been to originate an ethical revolution which would have had a far deeper effect on the thought and life-first of England, and then on Christendom-than was produced by the reformation of the Sixteenth Century." What Dr. Dale seems to have meant was, that the doctrine of perfect love and full devotement to God should have carried life to ever higher levels, and permeated like leaven the whole social structure. Instead of shrinking from politics, it should have purified them. It should have become creative in art and literature instead of distrusting these fields of endeavor. It should have permeated business and social life, instead of becoming content to merely attach a divine sanction to virtues already recognized. A religion flaming with divine love should have called into full play all the heroism and devotion of life.

The "call" of Bishop Ellis of the Free Methodist Church when he was chairman of the program committee of the Christian Holiness Association, which was answered in the 1975 Convention, is significant. He said, in part:

> Mr. Wesley placed primary emphasis upon Christ's definition of the ultimate demands of Christian discipleship in terms of love. He defined the sanctified life, holiness of heart and life, in terms of "perfect love." It seems to me to be significant that, at a time in history when society seems as corrupt as in the day of Wesley, there comes from several sources a new call to a biblical definition of Christian love and the evangelical Christian's responsibility to social concern and action.
>
> Also, the relational concept suggested by the word "love" is right on target for any discussion which moves toward the purpose of opening up Christian holiness and love as realities which concern the entire church of Jesus Christ in the world.... Therefore, I am persuaded that the theological position that we take as teachers of holiness must be moved from the area of debate about the definition of terms into the home, the community, the market place, and the personal life of the individual-in other words, the arena of dynamic action and creative relationships.

To Wesley, "life was greater than logic." But what he contributed to the church was not a theological hodge-podge, an eclecticism, but a synthesis which did justice to important truths usually made to stand over against each other.

By a "whole Wesley" is meant a grasp of the whole interaction of his theology with what human persons really are in their own being and with their human problems, and in society and its problems. None of us can divorce ourselves from our context to be a "holy" person. Every individual brings to the trysting place with God all he is, with all the relationships he has with himself, his culture and his earth. "Souls" have no reality apart from the whole person. Grace pervades all that a person is, never merely a part of him. Theology, to Wesley, should reach all that God is in His redemptive relationship to humanity and all that humanity is in its relationships.

It is a commonly made and accepted observation that John Wesley's major contribution was the uniting of life and theology. In a real sense, Wesley, for all his conservatism, lived "on the boundary." His innovations, extemporary prayer, hymn-singing, outdoor preaching, etc., were extreme in his day, but were not revolutionary.

Synthesis is the word. Note some of the areas of its relevance.

1. The Church: parochialism, for Wesley, was forced to yield its narrowness to the wideness of the gospel.

2. Theology was made to open its doors to the real life of real people This put a new complexion on theology and engaged people with new possibilities and responsibilities.

3. Individual sanctity was stretched out to encompass social holiness.

4. Crisis in religious life was joined irrevocably to the growth of personality and the process of moral development.

The key to these unions was agape, a love which was based not in feeling or sentimentality or even in the fellowship of congenial people, but in all that is involved in moral integrity, both personal and corporate, breaking down the many barriers between people, living the life of reconcilers. Love was a Christ-centering so real that there was left no place for morally superficial mysticisms. Love for Wesley was the very heart and core of moral life personal involvement and responsibility and the denial of any reliance on impersonal concepts of grace which operated on the soul below the level of rationality. Love catches our whole selves up into a true integrity, leaving nothing out.

In the early part of the nineteenth century this wholeness, or synthesis began to break up, and the great divide began to be seen in the holiness movement. Numbers of elements in American society can be pointed out as possible occasions leading to this breakup of the Wesley synthesis. At least one pair of influences was prevalent in popular thinking-the difference between an historical and an apocalyptic interpretation of existence which touched on an interpretation of grace. The historical interpretation emphasized the continuity of events to provide the meaning of the present. The apocalyptic stressed the discontinuity of events, the breaking in on history of new, unrelated forces and events. The historical has to do with the ongoing, day-by-day, moral, responsible linking of human choosing into character. Apocalyptic is the intrusion of crises that force a change of direction which is not linked to any human choice. The historical is morally related. The apocalyptic is amoral.

1. Wesley understood God's grace as operating in the context of human experience-in history. This informed his concept of the way the Bible was given and the way it was to be read. To him (though he did not express it in the way we do today) crisis experiences were only valid and meaningful in the context of the on-going process of human development. He was very concerned about those who trusted in "experiences" as such which were not an integral part of the rational, moral life. God's grace works in connection with the rational, moral life and can be tested for its authenticity in that context. The Spirit of God begins His work in the life before it is recognized that such is going on. In the context of that "prodding" toward right choice, there can come the "great moment of conversion" with the person in full responsibility (as of his development at any point in his experience). Conversion does not occur in the fog of emotion when the person is morally unconscious or standing off in the corner looking on. There is a history of moral decisions into which the conversion experience comes in all the understanding which the person involved is capable of contributing. It issues in a new direction of life which begins with the whole consent and interaction of the person in full responsibility and dedication, including every relationship of life. This trysting hour engages not just the "soul" but the whole involved complex fabric of a person's life and links into every contact of life's relationships. Wesley's great theme of LOVE encompassed the historical involvement as an essential aspect of the meaning of the "instantaneous" which he most surely Pressed. The prayer of the Christian and the search of one's heart should be

to achieve "perfection of love," a moral wholeness and integration that engages the entire life. Perfect love has to do with turning all the energies and interests outward toward the world rather than providing a hiding place from it. These crucial "moments" are only possible in the context of the process of "historical" continuity. Forgiveness is not merely a personal event but the entrance into a community in which forgiveness is the prevailing atmosphere. It is a social connection as well as a personal event. Perfection of love is only "individual" as it becomes the expression of new relationships under the Lordship of Christ.

2. In extreme contrast to this is the apocalyptic interpretation of Christian experience. In this view, crisis experience "happens" but cannot be made to mesh with life prior to the experience. There is a total qualitative disjunction between God and man, grace and human nature, supernature and nature. What God does to us, or in us, is thought to be a divine invasion cutting across our existence as rational beings, unrelated to our understanding and responsibility, resulting either in a new status in God's sight, or in some mutation of human nature below the level of consciousness. The Keswick terms, surrender and possessed by are favored over the very active terms, "present your bodies," "yield your members," and "put off" and "put on." In the apocalyptic view the human nature is not considered a real asset to the life of Christian grace, in stark contrast to the biblical and Wesleyan understanding of the full need of the whole human person to be the bearer of grace to the world.

This apocalyptic view differs from the older neo-orthodoxy only in the results which are expected. In holiness circles (wherever this view prevails these invasions result in subterranean personality mutations which should produce, automatically, holy character, the graces of the Spirit and the removal of distracting emotional disturbances. The call to holiness, in this context, is to begin the search for a specific kind of experience. It is not the pilgrimage toward love which engages the whole of a person's moral relations (with the crises that love precipitates) but a dis-attachment from these relations-a moving inward toward oneself-the kind of separation discouraged by Jesus and Paul, at least.

In the apocalyptic view it is difficult to account for the relation of crisis to growth. That relation is often rejected. When this rejection is made, the meaning of crisis and process cannot be contained in the same theology because they are contrary movements. Is it possible that the unrelatedness of crisis to process, and the belief that something happens to the "soul" so that what one does from then on is somehow right, exempting the "sanctified" from the ethical standards expected of others, could explain the careless behavior sometimes observed in our circles?

3. The Synthesis. Neither crisis without process or process without crisis can survive any moral development. It is a principle of life, on which pattern the Christian religious life is laid. No religious crisis can partake of salvific significance that is not solidly imbedded in total life involvement. The dis-attached, unrelated crises, floating free of the personal interaction with the Spirit of God, do not integrate into strong, dependable, incorruptible Christian leadership. Any experience that comes tumbling down "out of the blue," sought for or not, that cannot be checked out for source, must always be distrusted. All experiences come over the same "track."

Experiences that have not intermeshed with the moral interaction of the self with the Spirit of God in the context of personal and interpersonal relations cannot be checked out for validity (as the charismatic "experience" indicates). "Perfection of love" is a testable content by which to judge Christian experience, and that love is the "fulfilling of all the law"-a right relation to God, to others in the home, in business, as we interact in all ethical respects, in our society and community, in our nation-well, simply everywhere.

Love, in Wesley's meaning, could not "pool up" in one's self to be hoarded and claimed as a possession. And here is the significance of Wesley's concept of the nature of mankind.

Of vast importance is his understanding of the solidarity of the human race, not only genetically but socially. Sin, in this view, is the breakdown of this social unity. It is an "aggravated alienation" from God which then puts a man out of joint with society, himself and his earth. Wesley would, no doubt, agree with Os Guiness, when he says:

> It was Augustine and then Calvin who used the concept of alienation to emphasize that the problem of sin was not just theological but relational-a breach of man's relationship with God entailing a breach of all other relationships. The alienation of evil is theological, between God and man; sociological, between man and other men; psychological, between man and himself, and ecological, between man and nature.9

The sin of an individual cannot be limited to the individual. Its destructiveness flows into every human relationship-everything the individual touches. Conversely, holiness-or sanctification-cannot remain in any individual but must flow outward to the social connections of which everyone is a part-including the social institutions which encompass us. Perfection of love, Wesley's favored term, cannot be pooled up into a mystical "love for God" which goes nowhere except to get stirred up into an t motional flurry once in a while. Love (agape) is not merely a consequence of being "in Christ," but the condition of being in Him, since it is the end of alienation.

If we return to Wesley, we will have to close the gap (if one has been opened) between the elements that Wesley held together in order to find the dynamic he displayed in personal life and in society. The division has been most obvious in the holiness movement since well-meaning leaders began to dismantle the Wesleyan synthesis. In the concern for the crisis, the context in which crisis occurs was almost totally neglected, leaving crisis a plaything for any way of interpreting Christian life, to be defined in any way one chooses.

The "whole Wesley" makes a lot of sense when he is allowed to speak his whole piece.

My thesis is that the return-to-Wesley movement, whether in or out of any Wesleyanism, must recover the Wesley synthesis first-the whole Wesley-and deal radically with that before any judgment is made, positively or negatively, about the pertinency of Wesleyanism for us today.

The synthesis will, in my opinion, provide a rationale for even the parts of Wesley which we feel are important and which become the calling we

claim as our distinctive message. But this rationale will, of necessity enlarge the basis of our thinking.

For lack of a supportive rationale, the treasured parts of Wesley do not have sufficient structure to sustain them in the practical life, in apologetics or in personal questions which might be raised. Without the Wesleyan context, theologies based on the "parts" taken out of context leave some of those who are asking penetrating questions with no center of gravity to hold them steady. All too many serious youths are gravitating to Pied Pipers and passing fads, such as Francis Schaeffer, Bill Gothard, amorphous charismatic groups, and movements arising out of philosophies which have at least intellectual order, but which are totally antithetical to the very genius of Wesley's contribution. Wesley's Wesleyanism makes the difference between a theology that can reach out to a world in bondage to sin and greed and alienation, to break through the barriers, and a theology that stratifies society and has no answer to the real problems of being human in a world hostile to grace. The latter is generally a retreat from conflicts, a submission rather than a personal challenge and courageous leadership, and an evasion of the real soul-wrenching issues of today into the quiet world of simple answers and uncomplicated situations.

The particular aspect of Wesley's thought now under analysis is his understanding of the relation of the Holy Spirit to entire sanctification. That John Wesley should have rejected the phrase "baptism of the Holy Spirit" in referring to the unique experience of entire sanctification has occasioned some Wesleyans to suppose that Wesley was either mistaken about the matter or had not progressed far enough in his theological pilgrimage to break into the truth which later American holiness movement leaders had the maturity to see. The urgency of this matter could be expressed as a question: Does Wesley's preference for the term "perfection of love" (with his meaning carefully noted) instead of "baptism of the Holy Spirit" (which meant something else to him) weaken or strengthen the doctrine of holiness as understood by the holiness churches today?

Such a question needs to be evaluated. Is it important enough to drain off the time and energy required to solve it? If it is simply (simplistically) an in-house debate serving mainly to divide the house, and has no significant word to say to us concerning our gospel mandate to "serve this present age," it were better to quietly lay it aside to rest among the other discarded debates such as counting the angels shoving each other around trying to get a foot on the head of a pin. When biblical exegesis and hermeneutical principles and historical exploration and practical results have been brought to bear on the question, we may find we have no problem, or one that is not worth the cost. But this decision cannot be made before some exploration.

Before attempting to attack the main theological issue, some attention must be given to "ground rules" and methodology. Major differences of opinion are created on this deeper level where we all operate but often without our being aware of what is going on. This step in our investigation is important, however tedious it may be. The "roots" of theology begin here.

A Methodology

The simple words, "I believe in the Holy Ghost" (Apostle's Creed) open up a Pandora's box of complex issues. With some thoughtful arbitrariness the following principles are suggested as important to the question.

1. History.

All Christian doctrines have a history which relates them to every other doctrine. There are no detachable parts that can survive authentically alone. Ideas of the Holy Spirit have arisen in the Church but have been discarded, sometimes contemptuously, because there was no "lifeline" to the Christian faith. "The Holy Spirit has been the step-child of Christian Theology," said Henry Van Dusen, in this respect.10

This does not mean that the question about the person and work of the Holy Spirit was not of concern. But it was among the questions which Geoffrey F. Nuttall calls "underground streams"11 which continue to flow below the surface. The question reappears periodically, each time with added color and shape derived from the historical context. Too often Wesleyans have attempted to theologize about the Holy Spirit without taking into consideration these formative influences and as a consequence "talk past each other. "

2. Semantic Dynamics.

Fruitful dialogue and communication cannot ignore some understanding of the dynamics of language. A growing recognition on the part of responsible Christian scholarship makes it clear that words are repositories of "packed in" understanding of shared human experience. As experience differs, changes, is enriched by, or filters through different cultures, the words used to describe that experience acquire different connotations. The connotations, usually emotional, take precedence over dictionary definitions or theological propositions.

All words are in some measure metaphors-figures of speech-not the thing itself. Words are code signals that must be decoded by those who hear or read them. This decoding procedure takes place in all human communication, in speaking, and reading, taking into consideration tone of voice expressions of face and body movements. Below the surface of words lies the variety of experience brought to the words by each member of the conversation, in prejudice, presuppositions and personal responses. Many factors impinge on words reminding us that language is a very flexible and effective tool of communication. No (grammatical) biblical word, even in the "autographs," remains unchanged from Genesis to Revelation. The rich context gathered in the pilgrimage of words through the events of biblical and collateral history makes a knowledge of these things the growing responsibility of the interpreter.

3. Theological Semantics.

In the process of transferring biblical ideas into theology, several intermediate steps are encountered. Biblical writers used language born in cultures unfamiliar to modern minds and idiomatic expressions difficult to translate. Hence, the plethora of modern versions, translations and paraphrases needed, from the RSV to the Cotton patch paraphrase. Biblical writers used the human words people understood, never leaving any major truth hanging on any one word but commandeering as many different words out of different familiar situations as were necessary to illuminate

the tremendous thing redemption is. The experiential orientation was of major importance.

When theological needs arose in the Church, biblical words were used. The tendency was to simplify the terms to meet the demand of brevity and definition- In this process, the original context of words dropped away. As the rich context i9 lost, dictionaries become theological tools clothing the naked word with some covering. Then, any deviation from "Saint Webster" constitutes heresy. But, it must be said, forthrightly, that in such a procedure, something of "divine revelation," once clinging to these words, is lost and truth suffers. This distortion is encountered whenever the living dynamic of language is surrendered to stereotype.

The ordo salutis, which created the distinctions between theological traditions, is an arbitrary and abstract logical device serving theological, not biblical purposes. H. Orton Wiley observes that no chronological distinction is inherent in such terms as justification, regeneration and sanctification but that each is a metaphor from some life experience enriching the concept of the tremendous thing redemption (another metaphor) is: the law court, home and temple. Catholicism puts sanctification chronologically first. Some Calvinists put regeneration first and most Wesleyans put justification first. That all of these are "concomitant" in conversion is clearly affirmed by Wiley.12 No one word can bear the whole weight of any single "work of grace." The false simplicity of theology must yield to the enrichment-and complexity-of the context out of which it arose. These considerations bear on the use of any theological terminology. Baptism is a prime example, particularly when used of the Holy Spirit and related to entire sanctification. Even the semantic consideration forces us into a deeper study of theological expressions used.

4. Scriptural Holiness and Semantics.

Being scriptural is not simplistic. Holiness theology, if it be biblical, cannot be simple. Its uniqueness, claiming to be experiencible here and now, requires constant adaptation and enlarging to cover the new and ever more complex issues springing up faster than we can stretch out our answers. The Bible is not simplistic. Why on earth have we been given such a clutter of history, exhortation, story and parable, poetry and hard words, war and peace, evil and good men, variety of cultures and gospel and apocalyptic mystery in the Bible if the goal is to reduce it all to the simplicity of baby-talk, and work harder to iron out the contradictions than to find out why they are there?

Proof-texting misses the point. Verses shaken out of the Bible and catalogued according to some key English word cannot be acceptable as theology in any tradition. The context is inspired, too.

Sound exegesis is the basic necessity. Exegesis goes far beyond the mere words. History has to get into the act, providing the background of what problem is under consideration, the cultural situation, the purpose of the author, the deep relationship of that context with what people experience today. Rather than to say, "The Bible says ," it is more accurate to say, e.g., "Paul said such and such to that specific situation."

Hermeneutics, or all that is involved in interpretation, must become a conscious part of the theological enterprise. Exegesis can be done with a respectable measure of objectivity but hermeneutics is more like the color

of one's eyes-much harder to change. But the case is not wholly lost. Scripture is given in such a way that what one sees can be changed, corrected, deepened, enriched. "If there is no struggle with the text," said Leander Keck, ". . . the text will degenerate into a useful tool with which the preacher hopes to sanctify ideas he already has.... Where there is authentic hearing the preacher risks being vulnerable...." "... unless the Word is heard it cannot be resaid."13

Christian [holiness] maturity includes the ability to do efficient exegesis and responsible hermeneutics together, with all the differing backgrounds and temperaments and prejudices typical of any scholarly community, with grace and courtesy.

5. Wesley's theology.

Whether one finally agrees or disagrees with Wesley about his understanding of the relation of the Holy Spirit to sanctification, genuine scholarship requires at least attention to the above considerations. Wesley's conclusions were forged in the furnace of great personal erudition and sensitivity to the practical problems among his converts and the society in which they lived. His historical erudition made it possible to view the eighteenth century from a wide perspective. His "warm heart" laid on him a mandate to teach responsibly in that light.

It is not unlikely that had we been under the necessity of formulating a doctrine of the Holy Spirit in his day we would have said about what he did-had we been as informed and theologically sensitive as he.

Wesley's position about the Holy Spirit must be seen in the light of his wider historical-theological context which can only be hinted at here. Wesley was not an abstract theologian, though he revealed unimpaired ability to be such. He spoke to specific issues as did the Apostle Paul. It is wiser for us to ask what the questions were concerning which he spoke than to take his answers out of context and apply them to our questions which may have no relation to what he had in mind.

A Brief Historical Survey of Theological Concepts of the Holy Spirit in the Church

Vagueness which has traditionally attached to the concept of Spirit largely accounts for the failure of the Church to develop a doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Tracing the linguistic line from the Hebrew ruach (wind, breath, person) through the Greek pneuma, the Latin, spiritus, the German

Geist, the French esprik and the English ghost, is a fascinating study and shows the ways that "Holy Ghost" or, now, "Spirit," has suffered at the hands of language. Nuttal reminds us of the mediaeval symbolism of the Trinity in which the Father and the Son are anthropomorphically pictured but the Spirit is shown as a Dove.14 The New Testament development needs to be noted. From the natural neuter, "it" (Acts 2:16, touto) to the masculine "he" (ekeinos, John 16:13) the progressive Christificierung des Geistes is taking place in various ways.

The Incarnation makes the vague ideas of "God" come into focus, but Spirit has no analogy in human experience to aid the conceptualizing it. As a consequence, it is the effects of spirit which are utilized in the attempt to do so. Whatever word is commonly used to refer to these effects leaves on that word, and in the theology which uses the word, whatever "marks" are

in it. These marks reflect back on Spirit and become the identifying logo. It is no wonder that the unusual demonstrations of the disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) should have soon been misunderstood and the attempt made to duplicate them out of context. Not keeping Jesus' teaching about the identifying marks of the Spirit (John 14-16) in mind, or Peter's very important explanation in Acts 2, the interpretation of the Holy Spirit follows pagan lines.

It was not long before the emotional and irrational aspects of religious worship probably carried into the church by converts from pagan religions had to be dealt with firmly as contributing to disorder, and worse.

As the church settled into a pattern of orderliness, the "freedom of the Spirit" or "enthusiasm" needed to be curbed and brought under control. Enthusiasm was less theologically heretical than a threat to the authority of the Church in a pagan world.

As the Church extended its authority, the Holy Spirit was subsumed under that authority so that the individual was more and more lost in the encroaching power structure of the hierarchy. Of interest is the fact that Thomas Aquinas could treat the subject of revelation without reference to the Holy Spirit. There was little need for the Church to be more explicit about the Holy Spirit since it had taken over His functions.

The Reformation was fundamentally a return of interest in the Holy Spirit, a deeper matter than merely the authority of Scripture, though related to it. The Renaissance of learning encouraged people to think for themselves. As the Scriptures came to them in the vernacular, for the first time theological matters came to popular attention. The Bible contributed to a new and ecstatic personal religious experience. That which the Holy Spirit had failed to achieve through the Church, was experienced by the Spirit directly and vitally.

Having renounced the authority of the Catholic Church, Protestants were left adrift. Where was Christian authority? With the Holy Spirit, of course. But where was the Spirit? If not in the church, He might be in the individual, in experience; He could be in reason; He could be in the "inner light," in natural conscience or in Scripture. H. Orton Wiley gives a discriminating account of the kinds of theology that proceeded from each of these views.l5

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the foundation of modern theology took shape.16 In this period the principle of individuality and its consequences became the leaven of a new social conscience. The Reformation doctrine of justification by faith assumed-or developed(?)-a concept of individual responsibility not required in sacerdotalism. The Holy Spirit's function in this area of responsibility raised the question of how the Holy Spirit and man interacted. The mystical interaction, long in the church, took on a character derived from Reformation assumptions. While Catholic mystics could probably be said to find in mysticism an escape from the regimentation and depersonalization of the Church, it might be said that Protestant mystics could have been trying to escape the rigid scholasticism developing in Reformation theology, which was just as stifling.

In any case, the ancient problems relative to the Holy Spirit revived in the new forms contributed by the needs of the new day. The old problem of

the nature of the Holy Spirit and His relation to the Trinity was one of the "underground streams" running consistently through the developing of Christian doctrine. There is one God, nothing can change that fact and remain Christian. If, however, the Holy Spirit is God, is He not a sort of third god? This question remains unanswered.

Against this, Wesley wielded a telling sword. But he rejected the philosophical battleground and stayed solidly in biblical affirmations.

> It was an evil hour that these explainers began their fruitless work. I insist upon no explication at all; no, not even the best I ever saw; . . . I would insist only on the direct words, unexplained, just as they lie in the text [I John 5:7] . . . I do not see how it is possible for any to have vital religion who denies that these Three are One.17

Questions about the nature of the "inner light" arose. Was the heart enlightened and what was enlightenment, or was the Word enlightened? If the Spirit inspired the writers, did He inspire the readers in the same or a different way? Could anyone be saved apart from the Spirit's inspiration? Or did the Spirit need the Word? Should the Scriptures be interpreted by the Spirit, or should the Spirit's leading be tested by the Bible? To what in man does the Spirit speak, if, indeed He does speak? If the Spirit illuminates the Word of God, and/or He illuminates the reader's mind-or heart-what degree of infallibility is involved? The approach of H. Orton Wiley is quite Wesleyan, "The Holy Spirit was a fact of experience before it became a problem in philosophy."

The nature of the Holy Spirit is not a trivial matter. Thritheism is not dead. It continues to disturb the mind and determine the shape of much modern evangelical religion. Statements such as the following from holiness church leaders testify to the reality of our problem: "We must leave the Lordship of Christ and go on up to the freedom of the Spirit."

Of specific significance was the problem of "enthusiasm" in the eighteenth century. At this point failure to distinguish between emotionalism in religious services, and the interpretation of emotion as the evidence of the Holy Spirit's work, and any emphasis on the Holy Spirit as involved in the personal religious experience of individuals has created major problems.

Because of John Wesley's (1) recovery of the importance of the Holy Spirit in the personal and individual life of the Christian, (2) his teaching that men could experience the ministry of the Holy Spirit here and now, and (3) his claim to be led of the Spirit, he was accused of being an enthusiast with pejorative connotations.18 It did not help his cause to have had those among his converts who stepped over the bounds of good sense by excessive demonstration. Umphrey Lee and Ronald Knoxl9 describe some of the more bizarre experiences in the Wesley revivals. Being (1) fully and painfully aware of the seriousness of the charge, and (2) stung by the "most perversive and abusive of all Wesley's opponents,"20 Bishop William Warburton of Gloucester, Wesley wrote an extended letter showing step by step how the charge of enthusiasm was false. This letter becomes an important statement about Wesley's doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In his rebuttal Wesley says, "The question is of the office and operation of the Holy Spirit:

with which the doctrine of the new birth, and indeed the whole of real religion, is connected."21

The bishop had charged Wesley with making claims to "extraordinary" measures of the Spirit, with "every Apostolic gift," including power to do miracles, and having "ecstatic raptures."22 Wesley's answer is worth careful study. In brief, to him, the work of the Holy Spirit was to lead to a Christlikeness evidenced by love.

John Wesley lived in the midst of as troubled a world as our own. "We see on every side," he said, "either men of no religion at all, or men of a lifeless, formal religion."23 On one side was Deism, on the other the social indifference of mysticism. Unitarianism and a faulty Arminianism had dug deeply into the religious life of the nation. Standing as he did where these and other movements flowed together-conflicting ideologies coming up out of long, deep roots-his teaching would have to be carefully enunciated to preserve the integrity of the Christian faith. Against Deism he demonstrated the experiential validity of the completely changed lives of Christian believers. Against mysticism and enthusiasm which seemed the only way for the Deist to interpret the language of experience, he said, "All the other enemies of Christianity are triflers; the mystics are the most dangerous; they stab it in the vitals."24 Mystic divines, he said, utterly decry the use of reason. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit would have to be clearly distinguished from any taint of enthusiasm.

John Wesley was wisely alert to this need.

> Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions or revelations to be from God.... They may be from the devil. Therefore, "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God." Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm [fanaticism] every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain literal meaning of any text, taken in connection with the context.25

In a letter to Miss Bolton who was seeking high spiritual feelings, John Wesley wrote:

> George Ball, William Green, and many others, then full of love were favoured with extraordinary revelations and manifestations from God. But, by this very thing, Satan beguiled them from the simplicity that is in Christ. By insensible degrees they were led to value these extraordinary gifts more than the ordinary grace of God; . . . this, my dear friend, was what made me fear for you.26

It is possible to make conflicting cases for Wesley's position regarding "enthusiasm," depending on how the "autographs" are interpreted. Much needs to be understood about the psychological moods of the people in that day and the understanding of Wesley regarding this psychology. It is known that great sweeping emotional storms in crowd situations were not unusual. What was true generally would likely be true in religious events. Certainly the reactions of the audiences of Jonathan Edwards in America

were not wholly the reactions to what he said. Under the ministry of Daniel Rowland, Howell Harris and John Cormick, as well as in Quaker meetings great emotion was experienced. It was a common experience which religious gatherings shared.

What we do know about John Wesley is that he was not a rabble rouser deliberately creating situations in which emotion overcame reason. Though his sermons were not read to the audiences as we have them recorded, they were surely enlivened by manner and, probably, illustration. He sometimes let as many as five months pass before committing sermons to a final and publishable form.27 It seems likely, in any case, that he did not attribute the excessive emotion to the Holy Spirit as some did, nor is there any indication that such "convulsions" indicated spiritual experience.

We may have a solid clue in all this about Wesley's doctrine of the Holy Spirit. He saw, as it seems wise for us to consider, two aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit. One is the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit as the communicating function of God in the entire experience of mankind including the relationship of God's Spirit in all of history (Old Testament events as well as New Testament), and in every step in the pilgrimage of individuals in God's redemptive grace. There is a continuity of grace in relationship. The character of that relationship is love, personal and moral through and through, rather than in any way mechanical or superficial or impersonal. There is a situation established by God in Christ in which every individual is "kept savable" from birth, from the moral awakening of the sinner and his conversion to perfection in love and outward toward every aspect of growth in the Christian life. That there are crucial "events" (not necessarily

"clock-time" crises, but always decisive and radical), simply testifies to the fact that every step in grace is designed to engage the whole man in his growing responsibility and moral maturation. There are no impersonal "magic," works-in-the-drawer religious operations "deeper down and farther back" than the level of moral reality. God, by the Spirit wants that awakened person to be at the point of decision when spiritual deepening is going on. No proxy will do. Wesley, following the vocabulary established in theology, called this God's ordinary grace which included such matters as "fruit" and ethical considerations.

Along that deep, continuing line there may be "extraordinary" experiences in which the Spirit breaks into the normal routine of life to produce effects not usually expected-or needed. The Old Testament records some of these, such as Gideon's being "the clothing of God," or in Samson's exploits. All too often the less admirable occasions of loss of ego-control were falsely attributed to God's Spirit, facts which should not be generalized to mean that God's Spirit moved through Israel's history in merely temporary ways. Both the permanent and temporary are clearly distinguished in the two Testaments.

Sometimes one may be conscious of these "charismatic" events. To be the locus of such "gifting" easily becomes an obsession and results in a seeking for the excitement of them. We may feel superior, "blessed," special. Of greater value may be the times when we are in humiliation and rejection and frustration in God's service, but which may furnish those who

observe opportunity to enter into a fellowship of suffering and understanding not possible when we are in "the third heaven," untouchable and unreal. No one can properly judge the value of his own sense of "unction."

To seek such temporary elations and ecstatic experience is to seek the superficial. When these moments come, if they do, and if we are aware of them, they must come only "as the Spirit chooses." Paul's important passage related to this in II Corinthians 12 must not be ignored in this respect. The "third heaven" event had in it such moral hazards that Paul accepted gladly the humiliating thorn. His glory was not in his "gifts" but in his weakness, for in weakness the greatness of Christ could be revealed. Three times the Damascus Road event is recounted. The "third heaven" experience was an apology.

The distinction between the ordinary and extraordinary grace of God was, apparently, understood by Wesley. He was not captured by the extra-ordinary events accompanying the visitation of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost as described in Acts 2, but he interpreted that event as Peter did in his explanation, Christologically. "Our Lord's ever present, other Self," as Wesleyan H. O. Wiley expresses it,28 had come. We live in the extended "Day" of Pentecost in which the Spirit makes the presence of Christ a living possibility here and now for every spiritual need. The book of Acts glorifies the resurrected and living Lord. Christ is central. Christ is Lord.

It is this that comes through in Wesley. Enthusiasts called attention to the human "spectacularness" of their union with the Holy Spirit. Wesley saw correctly that the real test of the presence of the Holy Spirit is Christlikeness. Christlikeness is not an insipid, self-protective, retiring withdrawal from life's full involvement, but precisely, the vulnerable outgoing, self-giving, morally vigorous, involved life, capable of enormous outrage against sin and injustice and yet having the capacity of forgiveness and reconciliation and creative acceptance of those whose strength against temptation has been exhausted. It is no small thing to be a Spirit-filled Christian.

Wesley saw correctly that "perfection of love" must be the goal of grace, not in mere terminology but in life, and that love had in it the absolute mandate, to be the church, the body of Christ, God 's temple in which His Spirit dwells. The "whole Wesley " gives a good account of himself and is worth knowing.

In conclusion, it could be said with some reason that Wesley's rejection of the use of the term baptism in relation to entire sanctification was not a rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in every step in Christian life, nor a defective view of sanctification, perhaps not even as Daniel Steele supposed, to avoid missing the point of sanctification.29 Wesley simply did not find Scriptural warrant or theological necessity for making that identification. Neither his brother, Charles, nor John Fletcher could soundly convince him of this necessity. Prevailing over this terminology problem was the theological and biblical understanding that the prime meaning of redemption was a heart perfected in love and a life demonstration of this fact.

Conclusion

The theological stance of Wesleyanism is complex. John Wesley, by far the most informed, historically and theologically, of all his colleagues, worked within the Judeo-Christian framework in which the Hebraic concepts were known and respected. In this dynamic framework the goal of the gospel could be understood as agape love as the relationship of truth. Agape takes in the whole man. It unifies all that man is in relationship to God, to others and to the earth. It is morally oriented.

Progress in the spiritual life is moral, demanding profound crisis/decision events in life which engage every nook and cranny of the rational and responsible human person. The whole of God "speaks to" the whole of persons. In that dialogue God addresses us and calls forth the deepest response of which we are capable. In this on-going relationship presided over by God's Spirit we become increasingly aware of who and what we are and of ourselves as responsible beings and of our inner hidden commitments (hitherto unrealized). Openness and progress in this "walk" establish moral and spiritual wholeness and integrity. Progress in the establishment and maintenance of integrity is always "critical," never merely unchallenged and automatic growth. Life is full of crisis points, but in a real sense the beginning of integrity is unique. Integrity is constantly under attack, but attack is neither a sign of failure nor a threat to the fact of integrity. "Perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor. 7:1) emphasizes both the integrity of holiness and the process of extending that relationship outward to include in it ever-enlarging dimensions of the whole of life's relationships and responsibilities. The self does not end at the contours of one's physical anatomy, or with the self-defining interests that mark one off too radically from others.

In this structure of thought Wesley found the term baptism in relation to Holy Spirit descriptive not only of the initial sanctification included in conversion, but also of other significant events in the continuum of grace. At no moment in life could the work of the Holy Spirit be excluded. What occurs along the "walk in love" (Eph. 5:2) is prompted by the Holy Spirit deepening the personal involvement of love and extending it outwardly into every human contact. The ministry of forgiveness (acceptance and building up those who are alienated) and reconciliation belongs to the "conversion package" for which we become responsible.

Some Wesleyan groups failed in important ways to interpret this whole life involvement, which Wesley taught, by trying to fit Wesley's "holiness insight into a dualistic concept of God and man. In this attempt, the relationship of "states of grace" in man's experience became detached from each other. Parts of God were thought to have to do with parts of man. Inevitably a hyper-supernaturalism took the place of the profound interaction between God and man in grace. If God does something below the level of rationality why does He not do all that needs to be done at conversion? Dualism puts sin in various parts of man so that it is necessary to explain the "second grace" in ways sometimes more parochial than biblically theological. It raises ontological problems relative to the unity of God and the wholeness of persons. When baptism is couched in dualistic terms, it is isolated from the continuum of grace taught in Arminianism, and questions arise as to how to achieve the experience and what may be the evidence for

it. The "ordinary" grace of God, an abiding grace, driving a Christian out from obsession with his own sanctity to a life of self-giving and service, is lost as an inherent mandate in dualism.

Wesleyanism must recover its biblical and psychological rationale for such a life. Dualism is divisive; "wholeness" seals into the Christian life the process of sanctification which makes "critical events," of which "second" is a part, morally meaningful-perfection of love.

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