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# An Existential Interpretation of the Doctrine of Holiness

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop  
*Olivet Nazarene University*

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AN  
EXISTENTIAL INTERPRETATION  
of the  
DOCTRINE of HOLINESS

by  
Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, Th.D.

Professor of Theology  
Western Evangelical Seminary  
Portland, Oregon

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Portland, Oregon  
1958

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## INTRODUCTION

### Preface

The purpose of this book is three-fold. First, to analyze and evaluate the status of the "holiness" message today. In this analysis the problems raised by the preaching of holiness will be faced squarely. Then, a fresh examination of the Scriptures will be attempted upon which the holiness message is based. Finally, a constructive theological statement will be proposed in which, it is hoped, some of the most serious questions will find a satisfactory answer.

This is not a book for the scholar primarily though it is hoped he will find it worth his time to examine either to approve, or, preferably to be challenged to a more adequate work in this field. It is first of all a study for the thoughtful and questioning minister and laymen of whom there are so many, who, desirous of maintaining theological loyalty are beset by problems raised by the preaching of holiness. Many of our most gifted young people have felt that intellectual honesty required their withdrawal from the "holiness ranks", however emotionally reluctant they may have been, because of insurmountable rational problems. It is the conviction of the author that many of these problems have acceptable solutions.

It is, also, a study undertaken in the interest of a more effective and dynamic presentation of the holiness message to this generation. We have lived in that message, breathed it, eaten it, slept through it, cut our teeth on it, received it, doubted it, analyzed it, put our faith in it, loved, preached and taught it for all the years appropriate to these things. When personal reactions have been exhausted and the vicarious

reactions of all sorts of persons have been added, it is felt that if familiarity qualifies one to speak about a matter, at least we are qualified in that respect.

Fortunately paradox has become respectable. In most responsible thinking, two or more rather widely divergent ideas must be accepted and in some measure brought into a harmony that does not violate the integrity of either truth. There is paradox in holiness preaching and also in the experience of the analyst who attempts to commend the doctrine. The tension between a morally transforming personal religious experience and the tremendous intellectual problems involved in it, keeps the author facinated, fearful, prayerful and restless. That tension echoes the paradox between doctrine and living experience.

Paradox and tension exist in all living situations. These are not things to be deplored. Creativity can only thrive in tension. The abortive demand for pre-mature intellectual peace is death to thinking. We are not attempting to solve difficulties but to restore them so that in the wholesome contest between doctrine and life, dynamic and productive and sanctified Christian activity may thrive and expand.

Perhaps, we had better explain this. Committed as deeply as the author is to that which the doctrine of holiness means to life, there is the most painful concern growing daily in respect of the limited hearing which the doctrine receives. We do not share the opinion of some that the holiness people have all the truth, even all the truth about holiness. We do feel that the doctrine of a "Deeper Spiritual Life", or "The Life Hid with Christ in God", or whatever name one prefers, is more adequately delineated by holiness doctrine. But "The Life" itself is shared by Christians in every tradition. Hence, the

question, Why are we not better heard?

More serious yet is the fact of a growing spiritual indifference among holiness people. Perhaps others also struggle against the weight of dis-interest but, to us, who, filled with the Holy Spirit presumably, ought to be the example of the world's solution to indifference, the lack is of particular seriousness.

In a word, the problem seems to resolve itself into a statement such as this, the doctrine of holiness has not made adequate provision for the human element in life. The paradox between theory and life has been too easily solved and the tension relaxed so that the normal and desirable ability to recognize problems and grapple with difficulties has been relegated to other areas of life and the religious life left all but isolated from reality. That holiness teaching recognizes the life problem is not denied, but only that the doctrinal provision of it is missing.

This is a harsh, bald statement but proposed here to stimulate thinking and to provide a piece de resistance with which to engage the reader and the author. This statement may not be true, but it has served to plunge the author into a fresh examination of the Scriptures. What does the Bible say about holiness? Does it resolve all tension? Can the Scriptures speak to our delemma? Is there a directive for practical problems?

The study will first analyze the problem, as we see it. That is, where is the problem and why is it a problem? It is necessary before examining the Scriptures for an answer, secondly, to defend our reference to the Bible. Biblical interpretation has produced many religious theories. What is the Bible and how ought we to use it? Is there a

stable and universally acceptable principle of interpretation? The answer to this suggests thirdly a philosophy of holiness which is proposed as a principle of interpretation. This philosophy is the result of a wide study of Scripture and does not itself determine the interpretation of Scripture. At least that is our hope. In the examination of key Biblical words which are necessary to the answering of the proposed questions, the Scriptural analysis, we believe, both confirms the philosophy and strengthens the interpretation by the philosophy.

This is not a systematic theology, hence the choice of subjects to be discussed is determined not by logic but by immediate need. However, there is a logic to the order in which the subjects are treated. The primacy of faith to all of soteriology requires a chapter before one on the work of the Holy Spirit who administers all grace if the previous one on the Philosophy of Holiness is adequately understood. Since Sanctification is the central concern, those sub-heads relative to it each will be examined, Truth, Cleansing, Perfection and Eradication before the analysis of Holiness itself. A chapter on Sin is delayed to this point on the assumption, to be defended, that no human definition of sin ought to dominate theology but should be defined in relation to grace. The problems relative to Crisis and Second in relation to Crisis will draw in some observations about grace, human personality and the nature of moral experience. A suggested approach to the preaching of holiness will close the study.



## Preliminary Definitions

Holiness is a loved and hated word. A more thorough analysis of it will be attempted in the chapter on Sanctification but this preliminary statement may help to get started. We begin with a general discussion about theological terms.

Theological "cover-words" are used freely to identify and characterize various segments of the Christian faith. It is not always so clear what the "cover words" cover. Intelligent use of these terms requires at least a minimum of understanding of such words as orthodox, fundamentalist, liberal, neo-orthodox and conservative, or whatever it is we are. At least it is doubtful whether one ought to call others liberal simply because they disagree with him. It is hoped that this chapter shall provide a basic vocabulary which will clarify conversation regarding the groups named and also shed light on the concepts Wesleyan and Arminian and "holiness" when referring to a theological point of view.

In order to engage in intelligent and fruitful conversation there must be an objective basis of judgment even for as common a term as Christian. There are two recognized standards by which to judge Christian truth; Scripture and the corporate experience of the Christian church. By definition, "Christian" must be derived from its only source of information - the Christian book. Apart from the Book it could not be Christian. The Scriptures must be the primary standard of Christian judgment. But Christian truth has another focus, that of experience. However it is not the subjective aspect of experience which is meant but the responsible thinking experience of the Church as it has worked out its apologetic and preaching problems in the light of the Book. The creeds have become the Church's interpretation of Scrip-

ture. Protestants do not feel as conscience bound to these human formulations as do Catholics to "tradition" but they do regard the creeds as expressing faithfully their Christian convictions.

But as soon as "creed" is mentioned the question must arise, "which creed?" Historically, the first seven ecumenical councils, alone, represent the formalized convictions of the Christian Church. When the East and West separated, councils were no longer ecumenical and particularly from the Reformation onward much less was each creed representative of the Church as a whole. In fact, from the time the great rifts in the church began to form each synod decree tended to widen and perpetuate the breach rather than to become the norm of Christian truth. Doctrines defined differences not harmonies. This statement would not bear the seriousness it does had the rifts only separated the Roman from the Protestant communions. The seriousness is made apparent when one recalls that Protestant groups defined themselves against each other and the demarcation was often - perhaps always - locally determined. In other words, standards of Christian orthodoxy were local, unrepresentative, often personal and lacking in historical perspective. Lutheran and various Reformed groups excluded each other by way of creeds.

What creed defines "Christian"? Only the ecumenical creeds can do so in an objective way. In the first 400 years or so of Church history the classic statements on Christology and the Trinity were painfully and painstakingly worked out. These formulations structure the peculiarly Christian faith of all the major branches of the Church, East and West. Though they are highly abstract and difficult to understand they stand as guardians around the Christian faith. No exception has ever been made to them by any group without eventual loss of Christian status. As

worded they guard against every heresy except formalism and no creed can guard against that.

Orthodoxy, in general, may only be judged against these two norms; (1) an acceptance of the Christian Scriptures as authority and (2) the ecumenical creeds formulating the conviction of the Church regarding the Divine-human nature of Christ and the tri-personal nature of God - or the Trinity, always with the underlying conviction in mind that Jesus Christ is Savior. But orthodoxy has lost this general meaning and now defines more exclusive groups on the basis of more particular but less universal articles of faith. There is a Roman Catholic and a Greek orthodoxy, the former referring to the Council of Trent and the Vatican decrees. There is a Lutheran orthodoxy, and a number of Reformed orthodoxies. But none of the Protestant orthodoxies, beyond the general Christian affirmations, are capable of bearing, with necessary conviction, the weight of that proper term, in debate with each other. It is not seriously possible to judge adversely all those who differ from a statement of belief which was intended merely to define a segment of the Christian church against another -- particularly when the segment was not representative of any significant number of people. The Synod of Dort against the Arminian remonstrants is a classic example.

It is this tendency to improperly define orthodoxy that gave rise to what has been called Fundamentalism. Fundamentalism was (or is) a spirit rather than any particular set of doctrines. It sought to determine orthodoxy without reference to the great ecumenical principles above mentioned. It was defective in several regards. It made peripheral truths central. Its historical perspective was distorted. It was

authoritarian in spirit requiring submission to the judgment of a small group of men--often to single individuals--as to what beliefs were central. Its tone was caustic, and arrogant and its nature was schismatic. By a narrow, individualistic perspective it failed to do justice to the grand basic truths of the Christian faith and it excluded from its circle of "elect men" equally good brethren whose differences of opinion were legitimate. It was reactionary. It rejected all science and any inquiry into its own doctrines. It assumed no responsibility to the culture which surrounded and supported it. It had little or no social conscience. It depended upon an enemy for its survival. If there was nothing to fight it fell apart or brethren began to fight each other. It was so busy about defining itself into isolation and restlessness that it forgot its primary purpose was to give Christ to a hungry world.

Liberalism, known also as Modernism and Rationalism and now, Humanism, was a reaction to the spirit that made Fundamentalism. Rather than retreating into exclusiveness it expanded into a world embracing Brotherhood. It disclaimed all external authority and made man the measure of truth and right. Liberalism as a religious philosophy must be distinguished however, from the more general connotation of the word. We are not now referring to that attitude of mind that holds all tradition under critical examination and which refuses to be lead around blindly by unauthorized and out-dated methods, and which is courageous and intelligent and discriminating with a mature sense of responsibility to truth. It is rather the liberal, who catagorically rejects any objective authority, that we mean. He rejects the transcendence of God in favor of an immanence that makes

supernaturalism and consequently special revelation impossible. He confuses his own thinking with God's truth and brands other men's thinking -- namely theology, as an enemy of progress. With his denials go the deity of Christ and the Biblical idea of sin and grace. His emphasis is on social improvement only and he majors on Ethics. The optimism, in this view, regarding man, leads logically into humanism and many have gone that way. Though the older unchastened liberalism has gone "underground" for the moment, its influence is detected in any theology that relegates evangelical sin to the status of immaturity, cultural lag or simply the weakness which renewed courage or "belief in God's loving forgiveness" can overcome. In its new mood it speaks of sin but not in the sense of a final and absolute barrier to God apart from the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. It speaks of divine love but not holiness. It has opened the Bible but it culls only useful phrases and cares little for exegesis. It may speak of the noble self-giving and God-consciousness of Jesus but the difference between Him and any of us is that of degree, not kind. The Incarnation is often described as the embodiment of a God-like spirit--not the union of God and man in the historic Christ. Its distrust of definitive statements of faith lies deeper than the stated fear of absolutizing temporal expressions from which all of us draw back. It is rather an evidence of its fundamental antipathy to accepting the Lordship of Christ and His authority over us and the acknowledging of our dependance upon a stable and dependable and objectively given revelation.

Neo-Orthodoxy, in turn, is a reaction to humanism and the rationalism of both liberalism and fundamentalism. At every essential point neo-orthodoxy stands opposed to liberalism but though it uses the

language of orthodoxy, roundly repudiates its basic tenets. Its purpose was to reconcile traditional theological dogma with the critical and evolutionary view of Scripture. It is thoroughly modern. Against the liberal immanence of God it stresses the Sovereignty of God to the point of absolute transcendence. God is the "Wholly Other" who will in no way permit himself to become the object of men's thought. His revelation of Himself, therefore, must always be His own experiencing of men, not in any way men's intelligible experience of God. The Bible is revered as God's Word but not in the sense of bearing in itself revelation but only in becoming the occasion of God's speaking. In this way revelation is never static but continuing. In its proper desire to emphasize the dynamic of God's relation to us and to draw us into a participation in revelation, the historic and objective aspect of revelation is virtually denied in favor of a disjunctive "Nowness". In religious matters history is simply history, past and gone. It can contain nothing of God's revelation -- even in the man Jesus. History embarrasses religion. Historical events are interpreted as symbol and all traditional terms are said to refer to ideas, symbolically, not to the metaphysically real. For instance, "the Cross" as a symbol of redemptive love is preferred to "Christ" because the latter is confused too much in the common mind with a historic personage. The Holy Spirit is a symbol of God in action. It is thoroughly pessimistic about man. It begins with sin and sin dominates its entire philosophy. The human predicament is sin and redemption is ever in principle only, never in fact. The strength of Neo-Orthodoxy is its reclamation of traditional and Biblical terms, its wholesome insistence upon the experiential dimension of Christian faith--our



personal involvement in the moral environment--, its stress on meaning and participation in revelation and its emphasis on the Word of God. Its realism and vitality has called the liberal religious world back to a measure of sanity. But its weakness is its view of the Bible and its denial of history which divorces its symbolism from stable moorings. As a result its "exegesis" is a return to allegory and its doctrines advisory only -- never capable of leading men out of the morass of sin into any kind of assurance. Perhaps no system of thought is better described than this, by the Biblical statement, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof".

May it be noted that in the cases of both liberalism and neo-orthodoxy the ultimate test of Christian validity is the attitude toward Scripture and Christ. Defects in these two areas permit corollary affirmatives and logical conclusions that in turn react back on the very life of the system. In every deviation from the standard lies the seed of its own disqualification for the rugged task of bearing the Christian message. The seed issues in death.

What shall we call the theological atmosphere which we believe is Biblical and sound and in which we humbly feel we stand and pray earnestly that we may adorn and not deface? It is conservative without being reactionary. It is evangelical without being narrow and bigoted. It is fundamental without being fundamentalistic and ignorant and obscurantistic. The standard is frighteningly high. It requires honesty and prayerfulness and devotion to Christ to maintain. It is both a spirit and an affirmation. It has both vitality and form.

1. It is self-critical and has, by the grace of God, a new humility. Spiritual and intellectual arrogance appalls it. Bragging

embarrasses and grieves it. This kind of conservatism feels a profound obligation to truth but it would speak truth in love. It does not glory in its own self-righteousness and claim special favors from God, it moves forward rather on its knees asking God to keep it teachable and useful. Its criticism is of itself not others principally, though it has intelligent self-consciousness in the light of the norms of Christian truth.

2. It accepts the Scriptures as the final authority for Christians. It believes in Special Revelation. Its first responsibility is to the Word of God which is its judge and light. Its confidence is in the eternal truth of Scripture and in the presence of the living Christ. It would be found faithful to the letter and to the spirit of the Word of God. It considers the Bible to be, not an end in itself but a means to the end, namely that men may know God, and His will for them.

3. It affirms the traditional doctrines of the Church--its Christology and Doctrine of God, its teaching on sin and atonement in Christ. But it holds all human formulations to be in some measure less than divinity inspired. Theology must always be under the scrutiny of the Bible and must be interpreted anew to every generation in its own language and experience.

4. It accepts critical scholarship critically, not with a blind acceptance of all the "assured findings of science". It is discriminating. It recognizes problems. It wants a "pure text" of Scripture. It thinks history is important.

5. It has a social sensitivity and an awareness of interpersonal responsibility. It lives intelligently in this world, with an ear open to its cry and its hands busy in its needs, yet with its eye measuring values against eternity and God's will.



6. It recognizes the need for personal interdependence, not isolationism. Individuals find enlargement and enrichment in the Christian community. It does not raise false barriers to fellowship but realizes that to the point where Christians can communicate in love and faith the world will believe in Christ and God (John 17).

The Wesleyan Arminian groups must define themselves in the light of this general outline. We feel that in its best attire -- at least ideally, it stands in the last category--as do many other Protestant groups. Our distinctives from here on must be held in a Christian spirit and with our thinking structured by the deepest possible understanding of the Word of God. None of us, Calvinist, Lutheran, Wesleyan, may equate ourselves exclusively with "Christian" and exclude the others from that status. Our differences represent interpretations of Scripture and must always be held under the judgment of Scripture with an understanding of our own fallibility, as well as a commitment to a denominational insight.

When "holiness" people call themselves Wesleyan-Arminian they are obligated to define those three terms. According to the spirit of the above analysis this group hesitates to call itself by the name of any man. The heavy reliance upon Scripture for its existence as a theological point of view justifies this hesitancy. When the names of these two men are used it is done simply to identify a point of view not to rest its faith in the leadership and authority of these men. Those who follow this theological position do not build a structure of theology upon the teachings of Arminius and Wesley but try to be as faithful to the Scripture as they were and the insights which they caught have become their insights. They do not slavishly follow them.

Arminius is still, as he was in his own lifetime, grossly misunderstood. A careful reading of his exceedingly meticulous discourses will reveal that he was not Pelagian or Socinian, though in modern times these groups have attached themselves to his name and have brought it into theological disrepute. Arminius was a Calvinist by training and conviction. He rebelled against the extreme predestinarian views of Beza and Gomarus which he showed by Scripture and by reference to the church fathers not to have been the view of the Church at all. Beza out-Calvined Calvin and Gomarus followed in his steps. Arminius called the church back to the Bible and the ecumenical view of the church on the matter of God's grace and human responsibility. When an evangelical group calls itself Arminian it refers to its belief in conditional universal atonement and in the moral responsibility of men in the face of that conditionality. Men are not forced by grace but aided by it. The final choice must always lie in the hand of every man. The Sovereignty of God exaggerated to the place where He is unable to delegate moral responsibility to his creatures is not the Biblical idea of God. Arminianism simply recognizes man as a truly moral creature under the providence of God. The term Arminian is relevant to a wider theological orientation than Wesleyan. It distinguishes those who recognize a real freedom of human will (however limited it may be) from those who do not so understand human nature and God's way with men. It is quite erroneous to equate Arminianism, as such, with liberalism as is so often done. Non-evangelical groups may call themselves Arminian but historically the name ought rather to be reserved for the solidly evangelical groups who are unable to harmonize predestination with Scripture teaching.

Wesleyanism does not rest primarily in the teaching of any individual but is so called in order to identify the emphasis which Wesley so carefully delineated. Wesley was a "man of the book" and wished only

that his preachers also be thoroughly Biblical. As an identification, then, the term Wesleyan will be used to refer to those who hold the following convictions:

1. That "salvation from all sin, properly so-called" which is the love of God shed abroad in the heart, is the New Testament standard for the normal Christian life; and

2. That the realization of this relationship to God need not to take a life time to achieve but may be consummated at the moment of total commitment to God when the Holy Spirit is permitted to take full possession of the personality, properly termed a crisis experience.

In this study "holiness" theology will refer to that emphasis which Wesley revived, restated and taught. The two terms will be used interchangeably to mean the same thing.

Two explanations will be necessary however. Since "Wesleyanism" is variously interpreted we cannot presume to speak for all who call themselves by his name. The term "holiness" must define Wesleyan.

But, since "holiness" is variously understood, it too is ambiguous. In fact, it is to clarify the term that this study is engaged. When the term "holiness" is used it must be understood as the author's interpretation of what constitutes the central affirmation of the holiness bodies. It cannot carry all the connotations of the smaller segments within it. "Holiness" and "Wesleyan", then, will be used in this limited and technical sense only.

Existential simply means moral relevancy. It carries with it the deepest measure of human response and participation. Merely intellectual and formal participation is considered totally inadequate. Only the whole man, challenged to the quick by Christ in dynamic spiritual encounter can

do justice to the truths of Scripture. The depth of this spiritual dimension is not terminated by crisis but continues to deepen and develop parallel to the enlargement of personality and the capacity for moral responsibility. Existential means a full involvement in moral experience which must include, not be exhausted by, crisis.

There has been an attempt on the part of the author to avoid stereotyped language. Fresh, meaningful expressions have been sought and utilized where-ever possible. This has been in keeping with the spirit of the investigation.

If there are verbal likenesses to positions which we deplore, that alone does not relate the ideas to the undesirable position. No theological system can corral words so decisively into its camp that no one else can use them. There is rather humorous proof of this. The word "existential" was borrowed and redressed by the "neo-orthodox" from philosophy. Now, it is considered theological plagiarism on our part to use the word, perhaps even theological sympathy. But the neo-orthodox writers also borrowed words such as "sin" and "grace" and "atonement" and all the rest of the old theological glossary and revamped them to their purpose. Now, the liberal calls the neo-orthodox a betrayer of the faith. By them he is relating himself embarrassingly to the fundamentalist. We prefer to use words which convey meaning to the contemporary mind and trust that the context will supply the theological sympathy of the author.

## The Problem Stated and Defined

Holiness, the most beautiful and desirable and winsome thing in a world of sin and blight and ugliness, is the central core of the Christian message. All Christian theology must and does take into account its imperative and privilege, "without holiness no man shall see God," and, "the pure in heart shall see God." But there is a wide difference of opinion as to what constitutes holiness, and when it is to be obtained and how. This difference of opinion probably lies at the base of all major divisions among Christians and the answer to the questions structures, not only theology in general but a doctrine of the church and salvation in particular.

Holiness, then, is as old a doctrine as Christianity itself and indeed, was pre-figured in Hebrew ideology and religion. But, the specific thing called "the doctrine of holiness" which distinguishes a segment of the Christian church within the main stream, is a conviction that evangelical perfection (or holiness) is obtainable in this life. The logic of the position is simple. If holiness is not to be completed after death as the Roman Catholic church teaches and death itself has no power to bestow it, it must be come by in this life. If in this life but not achieved by works as the Catholics also hold, but by faith, then it can be the work of a moment, hence, instantaneous and therefore possible "now". The defective logic arising from semantic ambiguity is not our concern at the moment (though it has to do with the whole investigation of which this book is a report), but the underlying conviction that holiness is relevant to life must be understood to be the central affirmation of those who call themselves "holiness people".

It is the concept back of "relevant" that concerns us. If holiness is relevant as we believe it is, there are different kinds of questions with which it must be qualified to deal than would be raised were it simply a philosophy or a science. No other approach to Christian faith raises the particular questions which it raises. The claim of relevancy puts it into a different frame of reference than these in which its sister Protestant theologies are required to move. The ideal must be specifically related to the practical details of human life. Theology must become experiential. Perfection must be defined so that it actually relates to fallible, imperfect, weak, ignorant men who will remain at least fallible and imperfect, and may never in this life acquire strength and knowledge in significantly measurable quantities.

This book is the written result of a life-long attempt to answer the practical problems arising in the tension between doctrine and life. The preaching of holiness arouses so much hope in the sin-tormented human heart that care must be exercised lest it seem to become a one step lift to heaven itself so that the actual practical steps of life seem to be a denial of the truth of the holiness message. Holiness is the answer to the sin problem, we believe, but how this is so becomes an enormously important matter to explain.

The practical problems lie, as has been said, in the tension between theory and practice. That there is such a tension has always been recognized by competent holiness writers. This recognition has preserved holiness doctrine from "perfectionism". Holiness theology is not perfectionism. It is its precise antithesis as will be seen. Holiness literature is seldom if ever caught deficient at the point of relating doctrine to life. But in the opinion of the writer the weakness of



holiness theology is that it has made no doctrinal provision for human fallibility and its need for growth and maturation. Consequently, the instruction given by its many interpreters in respect of human psychology has lacked consistency and has often seemed to be a denial of the ideal.

Some of the problems, too, have arisen because the language developed in a pre-scientific day has been misunderstood. Much of the terminology of doctrine is couched in terms of an older psychology which conceived of personality as quite a static, even materialistic thing. Hence sin and its "destruction" has often been interpreted corporeally in spite of the constant denial of this error by holiness teachers. Wesley had this problem. That he taught that sin could be removed as a diseased organ he vehemently denied but because of the language he used to describe freedom from sin he never quite cleared himself of this charge in the minds of his critics. Holiness theologians still deny the error but perpetuate the criticism for failure to develop an apologetic broad enough to cover both doctrine and psychology.

The question lying behind the practical problems to which reference has been made and which will be itemized presently, is of the relation between crisis and process in sanctification. This looks backwards toward doctrine and outward into human psychology. Holiness preaching emphasizes experience as a necessary adjunct to the equally essential rationality of doctrine. Crisis in this context refers to the "legal" transaction in God's mind regarding us, and the "existential" moment of being received and changed in our own conscious awareness.

What happens in this moment is very much the concern of holiness teaching. But it is here that a varying opinion about personality has caused difficulty. Some critics have felt that the psychology of crisis

has been a logical conclusion, not a Biblical teaching - that all persons cannot be supposed to react identically in such personal matters - that the methodology of crisis is not an essential part of the doctrine of holiness - or of the new birth. In other words, human personality is far more flexible in its appropriation of grace than was once supposed. The more rigid forms of Calvinism do not have this problem, because grace is not "experienced" but received. One is either saved or not according to election or faith (intellectual assent). If, on the other hand, conscious awareness plays an important part in "assurance," and there is a marked difference in persons (for whatever reason) as to how and when awareness clarifies and remains clarified, the process aspect of sanctification must be related to crisis in a commensurate and understandable way.

If these critics have properly analyzed the problem, and it is granted that they may have, it is simply needful to say clearly in what crisis consists and how process relates to it.

Holiness teaching, in general, speaks both of crisis and process as essential elements in Christian life. In this, all evangelical bodies would largely agree. But the failure to account for the experiential element which holiness theology emphasizes so centrally in its doctrine, actually sets crisis and process into logical antithesis rather than to harmonize them as it intends to do. An extreme emphasis on crisis logically leads to perfectionism, either in a legalistic and abstract way or in an unrealistic and antinomian sense. An overemphasis on process robs Christian life of any moral decisiveness and is repudiated by the holiness preacher. An attempt to relate the two requires critical definition and careful procedure.

Holiness theologians have always understood this but without the



stabilizing influence of an adequate philosophy of holiness the counterbalancing emphases between crisis and process, doctrine and life, have seemed to be antithetical elements within the ranks of holiness theologians. As one reads the scores of books which have molded "holiness" thinking, the two apparently contrary approaches give the impression of lack of unity.

If the lack of unity were only apparent there would be no problem. Actually, the particular emphasis has tended to react back on the position and two parties certainly united in central message, often somewhat estranged in spirit, have developed.

One would be optimistic, indeed, to hope by the writing of a book to effect a harmony between these two groups of persons who are, it is believed, united in Christian fellowship. It is the purpose of the study to suggest a possible underlying structure of thought, criticized at every point by Biblical exegesis, which might serve to harmonize the various elements in the doctrine and life of holiness and commend the doctrine to those who have found intellectual difficulties too great to be ignored.

To call it a philosophy of holiness is almost too ambitious though, poor as it may be it actually is an attempt at philosophy. But it is philosophy in a much broader sense - or a different sense, perhaps, - than classical or scholastic rationalizations. It will be a theory of criticism - or a search for and organization of the pre-suppositions which structure Biblical teaching and holiness doctrine. At no point in the study is there any slightest doubt about the truth of "Scriptural holiness", nor in the practical or experiential element of it. In fact,

it is precisely belief in this Biblical-experiential axis that prompts the study and seems to make it worthwhile--in fact, imperative in the light of the difficulties attending its teaching.

## I. "Who Said So?"

My brother had five sisters. All were older than he and all anxious to bring him up in the approved fashion through which each sister had reluctantly come. Each sister interpreted the parents' intentions in the way she had come to understand them. In any disciplinary emergency, in the brother's life, one or more sister was close at hand to interpret and put some measure of (un)delegated authority back of the enforcement of that interpretation on the unhappy person of the brother. One sister at a time was bad enough, but when any number more than one, and up to five, conferred on the matter, some confusion resulted. In case of dire necessity, the brother could and did, raise his own voice above the clamor with the demand that his case be referred back to the ultimate authority. He confessed he was confused by the honest differences of opinion among the doctresses of the law and before he submitted to the indignity of changing his proposed course of action he felt he had a right to hear the advice of his parents, straight from their lips. This always put the brother in a superior position and relegated the advice of the sisters to the periphery of importance. He could laugh at them whether he had to obey the parents or not. The final voice was the parents not the sisters and applied equally well to the sisters themselves.

## BIBLICAL PREACHING

There is a wholesome return to Biblical Theology in the contemporary religious world. Its most rewarding facet is a new interest in Biblical preaching and some very excellent analyses of what constitutes it have recently been published.<sup>1</sup> This should be of particular interest to holiness ministers since the doctrine of holiness is said to be a more than usual theological sense - Scriptural Holiness. A return to Biblical preaching could result in a wide return to the doctrine which holiness people believe is the most central Biblical truth. Now if ever, is the moment to commend the doctrine to those whose concern it is to seriously read and honestly interpret the Word of God. Here-to-for, the affirmative answer to the question, "Was Wesley Scriptural," was met with a shrugged shoulder and a, "So what?" Now, if ever a Scriptural apologetic is relevant, this is the day; "So what?" matters and deserves an answer.

But to claim a Biblical status for a doctrine or system of doctrines involves much more than may appear on the surface. Shallow Biblicism is bankrupt. Reference to Scripture as the ultimate authority for faith and practice involves the exegete in questions not the least of which has to do with the nature of authority. A discussion of authority would take us too far afield for this study but it is mentioned because it relates to the central problem for a Biblical theology, namely, interpretation which is informed by it. Contemporary conservative theology

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<sup>1</sup>J. B. Weatherspoon, Sent Forth to Preach, Harpers, 1954. John Knox, The Integrity of Preaching, Abingdon, 1957. Donald Miller, The Way to Biblical Preaching, Abingdon, 1957.

recognizes the intrinsic authority of the Word of God and does not attempt to defend it. At this moment in theological history it is not so much the right of the Scriptures to speak to men that is challenged as the methods of interpretation which have divided Protestantism for so long. When all sorts of theologies, contradictory to each other in vital respects, are said to be Biblical, a thoughtful person seeking truth is justifiably perplexed. There can hardly be conceived a less lovely sight, and one more confusing to a non-Christian, than to watch Christians hurling texts of Scripture at one another like petulant children, to widen and perpetuate rifts in fellowship. The fact remains that those who indulge in such bickering are being left on the sidelines of the world's deep concerns to fuss among themselves and those who can contribute to real human needs out of the Bible are speaking to us, sometimes without regard for the disciplines with which the Christian Church has always guarded theological truth from error.

It is with a genuine sense of eagerness that the holiness Biblical student meets the challenge of this day. With confidence and deep humility he examines his own approach to Scripture to test its validity and its results. No other theological tradition has less to lose and more to gain by a criticized exegesis and none ought to welcome the discipline any more warmly.

#### Wesleyan Use of Scripture

It is well known that Wesleyans use the Bible differently than do some other theological groups. Their distinctive doctrine is come by because of this difference. It is necessary, not only to be aware of this fact but to understand why it is so and, further, to defend it

rationally if one is serious about commending his doctrine to other Biblically informed persons. The Wesleyans' general approach to Christian faith results in a relaxed and confident trust in the inspiration of Scripture. He is seldom concerned about defending inspiration. He assumes it and feels that the Holy Spirit is the guarantor of Biblical truth. He does not spend time, as a rule, in proposing theories of inspiration. Such an expenditure of time and effort seem childish and useless to him. It is enough to know that Christ, the living Word is unfailingly introduced to men through the written word when it is properly read. Knowing Him, the Scriptures are validated to the heart and mind of the believer. It does not require a certain kind of faith in the Scripture to read it, the Bible engenders faith in those who do read it without moral rejection.

This more spiritual, less formal, or verbal, view of inspiration is reflected in interpretation. And it is precisely here, that the most vulnerable point lies for holiness doctrine. At the point of greatest strength lies the need for greatest care. Interpretation takes on the character of the presuppositions which inform it. A faulty view of Scripture is always reflected in the method of its exposition. Again, Biblical preaching must proceed along disciplined lines of interpretation built on a proper view of what the Bible is and how it can be applied to preaching situations and human need.

#### Taking a Text

It is considered proper and necessary that a preacher justify his message by the taking of a Biblical text. The implication is thereby made, that what the preacher says not only has the sanction of God but

is God's truth. That this is implied ought to put a guard on the preacher's heart and lips that is never permitted to relax. The obligation of the called minister is to deliver God's word to men. The exhortation to "Preach the Word," requires that the messenger know what God's Word is about. Nothing less than a most devoted and honest and painstaking and prayerful and thorough attempt to know what a passage actually says and means will satisfy the divine call to the stewardship of preaching. The thrust of any message must be so true to the intent of the text that the hearer can go home to his Bible and find it there, still warm and convincing, even after many days or even months have passed. A sermon's right to be called Biblical is suspect, when it is spoiled by a different translation of the text or by completing the sentence or verse or paragraph in the Bible out of which the text was chosen.

Biblical preaching is not easy to come by. There are basic disciplines that structure it. These must be known and practiced. Failure to do so has brought much preaching into reproach. If and when the preaching of holiness has erred at any of these points some of the questions raised about the doctrine can possibly be accounted for. One is made to cringe when a preacher attempts to defend the second crisis experience of holiness doctrine on the basis of Paul's reference in II Corinthians to the proposed "second benefit". This is in the same category as exhorting people to intensive Bible study on the basis of Jesus' words, "Search the Scriptures." Eternal security of the believer can hardly be convincingly taught from the words "God cannot deny himself," when the previous verse declares that the man who denies God will himself be denied by God (II Tim. 2:12, 13). The denials in these two cases are totally different and to attempt to confuse them is a sign of careless

thinking. These are all glaring examples of less spectacular but equally faulty exegesis committed with monotonous regularity in all denominational pulpits.

### What "Biblical" Does Not Mean

Biblical does not rightly describe the kind of preaching whose only claim to it is the generous use of Biblical words and phrases. It must be remembered that the devil was quite adept at quoting Scripture to Jesus during the period of His temptation -- accurately, too, but not in keeping with the original intention of the passage.

Biblical preaching, more over, is not the result of culling a series of congeneal texts from the Bible into a logical or systematic arrangement. It is a curious thing that the letter of Paul to the Romans has become the proof-text book for the differences between Lutherans, Calvinists and Wesleyans. How can this be? By the simple device of careful selection of texts and by interpreting the whole according to the principle of selection. The truth is that likely all the central affirmations of each theological tradition can be found in the book of Romans but to put them into unresolved contradiction is to do violence to the intellectual competency of Paul -- and no scholarship concurs in that. Some elements of the Christian faith are known only by way of proof-texts, e.g., the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, but systems of theology cannot be said to be Biblical by virtue only of a logically organized selection of Biblical texts taken out of their historical setting.

Biblical does not mean, moreover, that any one word has precisely the same meaning from one book to another from Genesis to Revelation, or even in every context within one book. A variety of meanings and enriching



of meaning and actual change of meanings is clearly observable throughout the Bible and even within the short scope of one book. Words are tools of thought and adjust themselves to a context serving the varied purpose of the author. The word "grace" in the New Testament is used in many senses. It would be a sign of real incompetence to arbitrarily impose one meaning on every example of the use of that word. When the principle "Scripture interprets Scripture" means either an artificially selective correlation of texts or a uniform interpretation of words, the interests of a Biblical theology are not served. Scripture often helps to clarify other obscure passages but just as often a thorough study of the context is the primary need for both of them.

Biblical preaching is not simply skimming over the surface of a book making running comments on the words without regard to the meaning they had for the human problems to which they constituted an answer. Nor is it Biblical exegesis to reconstruct the historical Sitz im Leben and fail to relate the spiritual truth which the passage carries to contemporary and personal needs.

Not all preaching which is graced by the name "expository" is Biblical preaching. Donald Miller, in his exceedingly valuable book, The Way to Biblical Preaching, establishes his thesis that all truly Biblical preaching is expository in that it is true to the sense of the passage and is itself an unfolding of Biblical truth. But dull, barren, wordy, wooden, stuffy comments on a passage can hardly be classified as Biblical. It is possible, and all too customary, to lose the view of the forest by rubbing one's nose on each tree trunk. Yes, this kind of preaching stays close to the words but never finds the underlying, life giving, heart changing, mind enlightening sense of them. Words are

important to meaning but words can assume an improper autonomy which obscures rather than interprets meaning.

One of the ~~most~~ subtle temptations in preaching, and the one least obviously dangerous but the most disastrous to Biblical preaching is the tendency to read back into Scriptural words all the accumulated theology which church controversy and scholarly thinking and human experience and cultural change has added to the meaning of words in the past 2000 years. Whenever the word "saved" occurs in Scripture for instance, we assume it to mean "salvation" in the theological sense. Then the analogy of the man who is "saved" though his works are burned up (I Cor. 3) is made to teach eternal security, regardless of the fact that Paul was not talking about personal salvation here at all. In the same letter, the words "sanctified" (describing those to whom he wrote), and "carnal" are attributed to the same persons and occasions endless theological problems. Actually, a problem can only arise here. when these terms are lifted out of the context and defined out of a modern theological textbook and then imposed back into the Biblical text and the text compelled to conform to the word's 20th century meaning.

Is it any wonder that distorted exegesis has torn theological brethren apart and made mockery of the term "Biblical"? Perhaps the author's sensitivity at this point has been unduly heightened by the change of heresy for the proper (to her) return to the Scriptures itself to establish the original meaning of these terms. Such a procedure can hardly be called, in truth, "another gospel," which is anathema. It must be granted that real Biblical preaching, arising out of an honest, painstaking search for Biblical meaning may sound like another gospel to those whose ears are tuned only to familiar, pat, comfortable phrases.

But it is the divine genius of the Word of God that it can startle, shock, probe, enlighten, heal, goad, when it is allowed to speak for itself. Certainly, the vast perspective of church thinking as recorded in its theology and massive commentaries dare not be ignored or disdained. No single insignificant individual has the scholarly or moral right to disclaim all dependence on, and freedom from the heritage of Christian culture and presume that he can improve on or even duplicate in one short, limited lifetime the accumulated wisdom of his fathers. But he always has the right and - in the Protestant circles - the moral obligation, to read for himself the Book which alone is the way to truth. The "great expounding books" which John Knox tells about in, The Integrity of Preaching, can "dull the fine taste" of the wine of the word of God by diluting it with too much human reason.

It is the preacher's task to "Preach the Word". This means that with the help of all the scholarship at his command he digs deeply into the inexhaustable riches of the word and discovers for himself the dynamic of its spiritual message. Preaching, then, will be inspired and exciting and relevant. To change the figure of speech, too much reliance on dogmatic interpretation (which is human after all) may drain off by tragic short circuit the inherent "charge" of the passage and leave nothing but cold, dead, harsh, uninspired preaching. Handling the Word of God is much like working with a "live wire," (as J. B. Phillips suggests). In the best sense, we do not determine the laws of its manipulation. It does. None of us can put a fence around the Bible and say, "I know what it means, what it can only say and what it cannot say." When we are the most complacent about it, the most assured, it strikes us the hardest. Such is the unspent thrill of reading the

Bible through the "innocent eye", as Ruskin expressed it. All advances in the Christian church have been born in a return to a fresh study of the Word of God. It can take care of itself - and men, too.

One other distortion of Biblical preaching seems worthy of mention. Its peculiar application in holiness preaching makes it particularly dangerous to holiness doctrine but it has a counterpart in other theological traditions as well. It is the tendency to interpret scripture in terms of human psychology and consequently, theological dogma, rather than being Biblically grounded, is but a reflection of generalized personal experience.

The preaching method of both the Calvinist and the Wesleyan today was largely molded in the furnace of the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy of the early part of this century in America. In contrast to the liberal rejection of systematic theology and supernaturally revealed Biblical truth, a rationalistic theological approach was utilized by the fundamentalist to give clarity and form to his faith. An impeccable logical structure secured Biblical teaching from all intellectual attacks. The assumption was that truth and logic were identical and that the human psyche was principally intellectual and that all subjectivity was error since it partook of carnal nature. Christian faith was interpreted as adherence to a creed intellectually conceived and verbally acclaimed. Without challenging the basic presupposition of either the liberal or the Calvinist, the Wesleyan, aware of the inadequate religious experience of the Calvinist, though sharing with him the traditional Christian body of doctrine, stressed the personal experience of Christ and the inwardness and vitality of faith. But as is true with most reactions, the tendency is to over state the case and in the interest of the personal, experience

as such was not guarded carefully enough. Experience, as a psychological pattern, tended to become an end in itself determined orthodoxy. The Calvinist interpreted the Scriptures according to a pre-determined logic and the Wesleyan interpreted it in the light of personal experience. In both cases the principle of interpretation imperiously determined the meaning of Scripture and often distorted the message of it. The fundamentalist tended toward a radical dispensationalism and the Wesleyan to an immediate examination of his psychological status. The dispensationalist read the morning newspaper with his Bible - he became fanatically eschatological - a future deliverance from sin. The Wesleyan read his Bible emotionally, determining his present deliverance from sin by his emotional reactions.

In the interest of a proper emphasis on experience, but because the dangers inherent in experience, as such, were not recognized, a whole philosophy of holiness arose which has presented problems which careful Biblical preaching could never have raised. Basically, it was a defective view of holiness as a psychology that created the problems. Carnality was sought in the emotional life and not in a heart attitude. Hence, anger, impatience, irritability, quickness, slowness, timidity, boldness, doubt and all such movements were made signs of the carnal, and the perfectly logical question arose, how then can I tell the difference between the carnal and natural traits? An over emphasis on the emotional tended to lead the mind away from the essential moral concerns to the superficial and passing secondary matters which obscured the true intent of Biblical holiness altogether. This whole psychological orientation has tended to color Biblical exegesis so that proofs for holiness dogma are often psychologically determined and Biblical exegesis is compelled to conform. To prove two works of grace by saying that it is impossible for a person to repent and dedicate himself at the same time

is not Biblical preaching to say the least. And to confuse a personal pattern of experience with Biblical truth and insist that everyone must conform to "my experience", is damaging to the claim - Scriptural. This analysis is not a generalization of holiness teaching as a whole but does describe the aberrations of it which give rise to the most serious problems.

The author recently heard a prominent holiness preacher describe ministerial instability, that is, an indecision regarding place of service, length of pastorate and such like, as a sign of carnality. It would seem more true to fact to say that one of the signs of a carnal heart could be an unstable spiritual vision but that instability as a trait could also have physical and psychological causes. It is important to put the horse on the right end of the cart.

#### What "Biblical" Means

Very frankly, it is much easier to say in what Biblical preaching does not consist than to offer a constructive alternative. Fortunately, a full treatment of the subject is not required here. Knowledge of the well recognized and currently emphasized criteria of sound Biblical exegesis and preaching will be assumed. There are, however, some important considerations to keep in mind regarding it that need to be recorded in this study. All of them have a direct bearing on holiness preaching as it comes under the judgment, "Biblical".

In what, then, does Biblical preaching consist when it issues in a presentation of truth suitable to being called holiness preaching? Prior to a detailed study it may be said in general that Biblical theology, which structures Biblical preaching must arise from sound exegesis

informed by an intelligent historical sense, a clear spiritual perspective and an intuitive ability to grasp the total Biblical message. The intensive exegetical discipline necessary must derive its character from extensive factual information and a deep and fundamental participation in the Christian commitment necessary to spiritual life and understanding. This is simply another way of saying that there is need to recognize the experiential dimension of Biblical truth in order to understand it and to have put one's self within the framework of that experience.

If holiness doctrine is inextricably woven into the warp and woof of the Bible, as we believe it is, a sound exegesis will find it and no theological, logical or psychological manipulation can long obscure it.

Biblical preaching, then, arises out of a way of thinking first, which is structured by a profound acquaintance with and a deep understanding of the spirit of the whole Bible. This takes more than a mere knowledge of the words or history or literature of the Bible though responsible exegesis cannot by-pass these things. No more could I interpret Buddhism authoritatively as an outsider looking in than a Buddhist could build a Christian theology as a Buddhist. One must stand within its truth and message as a participant not as a cold scientist. A scientist can only count and weigh the external, superficial features and classify them on the basis of logic or sociology or some scientific principle or psychology. Only one whose moral commitment permits him to sense the spiritual currents which sweep through the Book can he begin to adequately weigh the parts against the whole. If it be said that this is too subjective a consideration for serious thinking it must be recalled that all spiritual things or meaning lie deep in the

common experience of men, far below the test tube, and that in that experience stable norms of communication exist. Only a committed Christian can be a Christian theologian.

This existential understanding must, of necessity, be related to a concept of Scripture as communication. Whatever theory of inspiration one holds, to fail to see that God is saying something to someone whom he intends shall understand, is to forfeit the right to claim rationality for one's thought. There may be and are things difficult to understand but the difficulty is not intentional on God's part. Paul's "mystery" is not the Greek "gnosis", hidden from the uninitiate, but that which is revealed by God's Spirit. We have trouble because the human mind is limited in its ability to fully grasp some truths. God will always exceed human capacity to fully understand Him. But to see the Bible as communication is important to a true Biblical theology. This seems almost axiomatic.

### Experience and Interpretation

Of particular interest to this study is the further observation that communication must procede along the lines of human experience. This does not define inspiration but recognizes the ground of mutual understanding. Wesleyans think that experience is an important foci of theological truth. This does not mean that personal experience is the source of truth or that any pattern of human experience becomes the norm of all experience and orthodoxy. It simply means that the Bible message was given in human experience and to understand it it is necessary to share in some way in that human Christian experience. Experience, here, means the total involvement of a person in any event in distinction from any limited involvement such as emotion or intellec-



tion only.

If the Bible were simply a textbook of abstract theological statements, our appropriation of them would be on the level of intellectual comprehension only. It would lack the moral element so necessary to Biblical understanding. The Bible is a book of experience. Its events occurred in history, among people, in profoundly human involvements. It was not handed down to us on golden plates but lived out among people. Revelation was not given in a vacuum but concretely, in experience. Jesus was a man who was seen, heard, touched, loved, hated. He spoke to real persons enmeshed in the web of life and sickness and family concerns and labor and social involvements and death. The language of the Bible is the language of experience. Because this is so it is timeless and able to bridge the passing cultures without loss of meaning. There are not many occasions in it where words were given apart from human cooperation. The Ten Commandments were etched by God on stone, and then the plates were broken. Jesus wrote on the dust of a street and busy feet obliterated the words. It is well that it was so. Only that which is lived through is really understood.

This in no sense means that experience itself is revelation. This is not a naturalism. It assumes that God introduced into the stream of history, events which He intended as revelation. It means that divine revelation, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was given to men in a universal language -- human experience, which included the heart as well as the mind. In this way, meaning transcends language barriers and divine inspiration structures any serious translation and gives the possibility of the Word of God to all men.

This has significance for Biblical exegesis. History is important

to the revealed message. It is not simply the words of the speaker that bear importance, or some isolated fact in the story but the whole complex of event, as recorded. In other words, the context is as important to the message as the words. Where the context is spelled out, that fact must be taken seriously in exegesis. The context is inspired, too. It matters very much about the problem to which the text is an answer. One may know very little about the situation in Corinth which archeology is gradually unfolding for us, we will have to wait patiently for that story to be finished and it will help us a lot. But the things which are told us in the letter are vital to an understanding of the message of the book. Marriage counselling, or decisions about feminine dress or participation in worship service or law suits for Christians, or instruction about the Lord's Supper and the importance of "tongues" requires a profound understanding of the situation in the Corinthian community. We would like to know much more than is told us, but what is told us, by Paul, cannot be lightly dismissed if one presumes to apply truth from that book to local problems under the label, Biblical preaching. Actually, a great deal is shared with the reader, but it takes sanctified diligence to find it. Failure to apply this diligence has resulted in useless and harmful and divisive teaching from the book.

Biblical exegesis which structures Biblical preaching must look behind the words to find the human situation to which the words are addressed in order to properly apply the truth of the words themselves. Those who hold as high a view of inspiration as evangelicals do, will understand the force of this statement. When this principle is honored interpretation is stabilized. "Literal" interpretation is no longer simply an inflexible, grammatical absolutism imposed on the dynamic

Biblical text but is a proper transposition of the meaning resident in the original life situation to our situation when it is comparable to the first one. A human judgment here is required and implicitly assumed in the interpretive act. A thoughtful analysis of Biblical stories shows clearly the reason people so universally recognize themselves in the Bible. The emphasis is not, mainly, on the temporal, the local, the cultural. There is no bondage to false scientific ideas, or the passing philosophical systems of thought. True, the whole environment in the Bible is authentic and we are comfortably assured by this that the Bible people were actually live people on this earth, but standing out from the environment we see people who think and observe, and feel and react just as we do. The Bible is, fundamentally, the heart pilgrimage of humanity and what God said to people three and four and five thousand years ago is just as relevant to us as it was to them. The passing cultural contingencies seem to fall away from the eternal truth of the message. Yet the cultural forms cannot be sealed away as uninspired for they contribute a vital kind of meaning.

#### Flexibility of Biblical Language

The reason it seems important to take time to say these things that are so commonly understood is that we tend to forget that the passage of time is not a sufficient reason for investing the flexible Biblical language of experience and devotion with absolute scientific precision. This does not mean that we are free to take liberties with the text and mutilate the record by deed or spirit, but it does mean that the word must recreate a situation in the human heart today comparable to the situation out of which the word was given, before the true

meaning can come through in interpretation. It is just as false to Biblical meaning to woodenly literalize the poetical phrase "the four corners of the earth," into a scientific judgment, as to define God or sin philosophically or to inflexibly absolutize, theologically, such terms as grace, love, justification, or even sanctification. None of these terms can properly be lifted out of their environment - or context - and frozen into immobile, lifeless, hard, polished scientific nomenclature. They were put into a setting which would, when respected, preserve their warmth, and relevancy and dynamic quality. The human element in the Bible to which the divine speaks is the common life blood that keeps the divine meaningful to all who partake of life. The story is the flesh around the idea. It preserves the idea from becoming so detached and irrelevant and intellectualized that it loses all contact with reality. It saves justification and sanctification from abstraction. It saves redemption itself from becoming a museum piece which men may only study scientifically and write learned tomes about but never partake of.

Again, this does not mean that the inspired Word of God can be separated from the fallible human element in the Bible. It does mean that the human element is itself inspired in such a way as to be inseparable from the divine and to be the avenue of communication to all men. The divine message requires a thorough understanding of all the context provided by way of history, culture, event, problem, teaching and all together it is the "given" which is called the Word of God. It is a revealing experience to see how much meaning Acts 15:1-11 gives to the 8th and 9th verses which are usually considered totally apart from the context.

## Two Approaches to Exegesis

Biblical preaching is particularly effected by this element of the experiential in exegesis. There are two divergent attitudes toward experience in evangelical Christendom. One builds its whole system on the supposed stability experience gives to Christian faith, the other resolutely avoids an experiential dimension for the same reason to preserve stability and objectivity. Evangelical theologies, both experiential and non-experiential, claim to be "Biblical" but mean very different things by that term. One type finds in the Biblical record a living experience and theology is the structure of thought which attempts to analyze, rationalize and promote that Christian experience. The other "stylizes" the Biblical expressions into premises which are then used as terms in a logical structure. The first must always permit the Scriptural presentation to challenge and correct and enrich its theology. The second tends to rigidify theology and equate it with the Scripture texts upon which it is built. One seeks the inner vital, spiritual meaning; the other attempts to stabilize and objectify formal expression. One preaches for an "experience", the other for decision. One is not happy without some evidence of heart change. Tears are in order and a lingering around the altar in prayer until a "witness" comes. The other is impatient with emotion and places great stress on verses of Scripture and "confession with the mouth."

Holiness preaching, of course, is characterized by the first of each of the above contrasts. Its understanding of the Bible gives it this emphasis. If the experience of men today can become a participation in the knowledge and experience of Christ which the New Testament

people knew, by the same obedience and faith and commitment then the danger of unguarded subjectivism is minimized. As a book of Christian experience, it is believed that Christian faith must always seek to relate itself to the Christian Book. Holiness preaching proceeding on the confidence to keep truth experiential--available to the whole man, the moral man -- it must include in its connotations and applications the whole meaning it had for the persons receiving the message in the first place.

Wesleyan theology attempts to use Scripture in a way that does justice to the experiential element both in the Bible and in Christian faith.

### Holiness Theology and the Bible

The doctrine of holiness is based on a very broad understanding of the total message of the Bible. It does not stand or fall on any one or any selected groups of Scripture, certainly not on any philosophical premise which would itself determine the conclusions. Many ways of presenting the truth are employed and many different analogies used, all of them obviously the concern of the Bible.

In a unique sense Wesleyan theology is totally dependent upon the Bible for every facet of its structure. The Apostolic experience of Christ is normative for all Christian experience because there is but one Christ to know. Nor is it sufficient that the historical Christ, alone, should be known. It is only enough when the Christ Himself becomes a part of the human experience.

The relationship of great preaching and the formal theology out of which it springs may not always be obvious. Preaching that moves men

to God and holy living must stay close to the idiom of life and is in that sense more universal and gripping than the carefully worked out theological formula which structures it. One is vital, the other is formal. The two need not be antithetical. Wesleyan preaching and theology partake of this apparent ambiguity. In a measure not so true of any other theological tradition, Wesleyan preaching must stay very close to life and be deeply realistic for it relates to life and human experience. In this it is distinctive. As a religion of life its theology is less logically structured than Biblically grounded. It must lie close to the existential Biblical teaching to remain close to the common experience of men everywhere in all times. In this sense theology is subservient to Scripture and experience.

Once more, the disclaiming of a logical structure does not mean that it is illogical. Logic is but one element of rationality - not its whole essence. Holiness theology claims to be rational, through and through. Love does not partake of logic but true love is rational. God is not a logic but a Person. Holiness is not an abstract conclusion at the end of a syllogism but a person loving the Person. This is a "reasonable service", and consistent with truth but not always philosophical speculation.

In a sense more important than any other, Holiness preaching, if it is Biblical, will be Christ-centered. If we take a cue from Paul, and no better example can be chosen, preaching Christ includes the historical aspects of Christ's ministry but goes far beyond that to the spiritual significance of Christ to our lives. I believe it is not unfair to say that holiness preaching tends to neglect the essential place of Christ in its message. Certainly, to Calvinists it often sounds too much like a



moralism than a gospel message. To make a personal confession, it has occasionally been my experience to have some one come up to the pulpit after I had preached a "holiness" message to announce to me clearly and solemnly the number of times I had referred to Christ. The total was all too low, I grant. I always felt the implied criticism was superficial and I wondered how much of the message the "accountant" could possibly get while tabulating words but I have never failed to be stung deeply by the comment.

If Christ is not our message, we have none to preach. But preaching Christ is not a matter of multiplying words or of anaesthetizing the conscience by magnifying the work of Christ out of its moral environment and so lulling men into moral stupor. It is the recreation of a moral tension between God's provision of grace and responsible human hearts. No preacher can force decision but his message, if it is Biblical, can be used by the Holy Spirit to do so. When Christ be truly preached a situation is created which compels decision regarding Him. Preaching Christ is to confront men by the moral imperatives by which men were confronted in His presence. Biblical preaching must begin with and culminate in Christ. One cannot preach Biblically without preaching Christ. It is the deep, ultimate demand on sinner and saint alike, that characterizes the Christ-appeal. Jesus not only saves men but He crowds them into the deepest sanctuary of their souls, and demands total moral commitment. Holiness is, essentially, Christ-centered.

#### Interpretation and the Interpreter

This whole philosophy of Biblical meaning and interpretation has a relevance for the preacher which must be recognized in any serious

discussion of Biblical theology and preaching. If what has been said is true, then the preacher to be a faithful messenger must first be a participant in the truth he declares. His task is to preach God's Word to men, not his own word in Biblical dress. It involves the important word "interpretation."

Now, if Biblical truth is not only verbal symbols and rational concepts but moral experience, no mere intellectual interpretation of Scripture is adequate. Biblical interpretation is far more than an academic search for truth which can be systematized into a formal theology. It is a positive confrontation of personalized truth by the Holy Spirit, with the deepest human self. Biblical interpretation is not of grammatical forms and historical situations, centrally, but of spiritual truth. This truth is reserved for the surrendered heart and obedient mind. "Scripture is not given," said Andrew Murray, "to increase our knowledge but to change our conduct" (McQuilkin, Action, Nov. 1, '56). Only an eagerly seeking, and hungry heart and one which has tasted of God's rich grace can be sure that he is discovering God's truth. It is too easy for the stubborn, balky, unyielded heart to blind the mind to what the Bible actually says. Biblical preaching requires a preacher who is more anxious to know what the Bible says than what it can be made to mean. He is, to quote McQuilkin in what the author considers to be a spiritually sensitive article,

constantly testing and re-examining, perfectly willing to discover the truth in conflict with the sanctions of tradition. It purposefully ousts opinion - even widely held opinion - and demands that it return only with the authorized credentials of solid Biblical evidence. It fears the bog of semantic stagnation - traditional statements and terms that hide or obscure the pure biblical statements, or that have lost their vitality or accuracy through common use or misuse. (p. 347)

The preacher, in other words, must himself have experienced the spiritual renovation of which the Bible speaks before he can interpret the Biblical message which is itself spiritual. He must be more than an intellectually committed person, he must be a morally committed person. This means that he has squared up to Christ to the deepest reaches of his being - at least as far as he is aware. It means that the Biblical message is personalized in himself so that he is his sermon, as Paul was.

This principle is important to the stability of interpretation which exegesis seeks. "Abstractized" theological statements, isolated from the human problem to which they are answers tend to lose vital touch with men as men and leaves the application of truth to a-personal considerations. Theology is extremely important. It gives us an objective norm of communicating our faith. Nothing that is said in this respect is in derogation of the proper scope of theology. But theology must always interpret its truth in terms of whole experience and only by recovering the whole experience which gave it birth can the meaning be universalized. The abstract must again be personalized. The truth must engage the whole man and live again in his fully human existence.

It need scarcely be said at this point that it is not meant that all the cultural accompaniments of any Biblical experience be imposed upon our lives. But the moral and spiritual situation of any age in any circumstance regardless of the level of culture remains the human experience to which the Biblical answer gives an authoritative answer.

To put it simply and clearly, the gospel appeal, by which holiness preaching is defined, was always in the Bible practical and morally

clear to the New Testament church. It spoke to life situations. It was a light, not only to the mind but to the hands and feet and heart. To be Biblical, preaching today must be morally relevant and practical. It dare not fade off into abstractions and platitudes and generalities and vague terminology. It was made for life, it must remain in life.

#### Problem of Theological Words

All of this has relevance for this study. We are seeking the meaning of all that is implied by holiness. Theology has utilized Biblical words and has also adapted other words to its technical use. Some of the questions raised by holiness theology become questions because the terms are not fully understood. If holiness theology is "Scriptural" the meanings should be found clearly in Scripture.

But language is both formal and vital. That is, language comes out of living situations and gradually gathers local connotations which are rich and high in communicative value among those who understand the overtones. As anyone knows who has travelled from section to section in one country or the world, the inflections of meaning are not automatically carried in the word itself so that a thought barrier is raised across the sections though the words are the same.

This is particularly true in religious circles. Each strong leader tends to express himself in a certain way and to mean certain things. His followers pick up the pattern of expression and it provides a medium of communication. When very vital theological truths are under discussion the language expressing these truths becomes set in a mold in the interest of preserving the particular truth involved.

When the influence of two leaders with strong language patterns

begin to touch and intersect, though the truths may be identical, the words and phrases are not the same and it may look as if the theology clashed. Often the judgment regarding truth has been superficially made and the different language patterns have actually served to create divisions among brethren that a more discriminating analysis could never have justified.

Denominational semantics follows the same trend. If care be not exercised orthodoxy can become a matter of linguistics rather than basic ideas and those who may express themselves differently are considered heretical.

The serious result may be that the evangelistic outreach of the denomination may be hindered by the "ingrown" but very sacred language of the group which carries no meaning whatever to those who listen. To the writers knowledge a recent publication of a book of sermons written in a strongly denominational language pattern and understood with deep appreciation by those familiar with it, is totally incomprehensible to others who should be receiving the message of the book. While the intimate "family" words are precious to those inside the circle, a more universal and mature expression needs to be cultivated when matters as vital as religious truths are involved.

Theological words are actually family words. They arise in the warm atmosphere of a close association with life. But they tend to rigidify and as the family separates the words and original connotations drift apart.

#### Interpreting Theological Words

Theological terms have a way of dropping out of the fruitful avenues of communication. Their necessarily technical nature required

for precise meaning tends to separate them from the dynamic flow of a living language. This is true of all intellectual disciplines. The tendency is to either force a gulf between theological language and the everyday world, so that people say, "I see no vital relation between Sunday and Church, and my work-a-day world," or, all the rich heritage of theological language is discarded and the new terminology substituted which has neither character nor stability and Christian communication is impaired. The irony of this paradox is that theological language was once the idiom of the work-a-day world.

Most religious conversation is an attempt at interpretation of theological terms. There are two forms of it. One is personal. "This is what theology means to me," we say, and preach with warm-hearted zeal. Preaching can never dispense with the personal experience of the preacher, but the danger here is that the preacher's experience begins to be confused with the message itself until methodology becomes as sacred as the Bible and if one challenges the method he is thought to challenge the doctrine, too.

Interpretation of doctrine, moreover, can be at the level of the scholar's desk. If care be not taken, here, the danger exists that not simply the archaic words will be translated into contemporary idiom but that the message itself be not properly distinguished from the temporal and that more than the temporal is discarded to the detriment of the message.

It is everlastingly the preacher's task to interpret theology to people. This means that Biblical preaching is orderly, sensible, aware of central Biblical issues, rational, consistent. It is also relevant, meaningful, vital. But interpretation dare not proceed on merely personal

and subjective principles lest the Word of God become in the preacher's mouth the word of man.

Holiness theology suffers the same foibles to which any scientific body of knowledge is heir. The need for interpretation is just as pressing - perhaps more so because of the existential dimension of holiness. The only safe and wise thing to do is to clarify the terms by reference to the Scriptures out of which they came. This takes the erratic and divisive subjectivism out.

### Is the Bible Theology?

There is the belief in some quarters that there is no difference between doctrine and Scripture, that Scripture is itself doctrine. It seems scarcely worth while to devote time to this idea but if this concept should by any chance produce misunderstanding a word or two is well spent. It is well known that some segments of the Christian church do consider the Bible to be finished theology. Those who hold to a more rigid type of verbal inspiration are inclined to so do. In this view there cannot be recognized any significant element of subjectivity in interpretation either in the persons of the original writers or in the reader. Truth is totally objective and hence theology cannot be deduced but discovered. Underlying meanings are presumed not to exist in that all the same words have the same meanings, fixed and unalterable and a collation of texts in which these words occur would constitute systematic theology. One does not read the Bible for principles to be applied in the varied and changing situations possible in life but in a purely grammatical and historical sense in which no spiritual relevance is recognized. Application, then, of truth is external, forced, legalistic,



or when completely impossible it is assumed to be eschatological. In this view, human interpretation is actually engaged in but without recognizing the function. Because of this, human interpretation is confused and equated with Biblical teaching and a subtle but dangerous pride substitutes for humble dependence on the Word.

A more generally accepted view understands theology to be a deductive science. Whether systematic or not, theology is the human interpretation of the teachings of the Scriptures. The Bible is, then, the source book which is carefully examined. Meaning is presumed to lie in the words because meaning has structured the whole complex of life behind the words. Grammar is a tool of clear thinking not its prison. History is a context of event which contributes meaning to all intelligences in history. Theology is what we say about Biblical teaching understood in this way.

An example or two may help. Everything that goes into a doctrinal statement regarding the Trinity, or the divine-human nature of Christ is found somewhere in Scripture. But no doctrine of the Trinity or Christology is articulated anywhere. It took the Church many years to properly formulate them. In fact few, if any, of the Articles of Faith are found as such in Scripture. The deity of the Holy Spirit, so explicitly delineated in our creeds, is in the Bible a fact of experience not a philosophy. As H. Orton Wiley so wisely says, these most sacred Christian beliefs were experiences of practical religion before they became theology.

Therefore, when Biblical status is claimed for any doctrine it is proper to seek again the sources of that doctrine, not simply to challenge the claim but to enrich our understanding of it. It is a proper and

necessary task to return often to the Bible for the light its own context casts on the theological words we have borrowed from it.

It is our intention, then, to undertake a fresh examination of the Biblical material out of which holiness doctrine is built. It must be an exegetical rather than a wholly theological enterprise. In this it will gladly note that,

at length the day is drawing to a close, when dogmatic and speculative opinion so dominates exegesis that its party names can be applied even to the processes and results of interpretation, on the assumption that theological opinion should, of course, settle the meaning of a text.<sup>1</sup>

We desire to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to do so requires that we lean heavily on the Scriptural presentation, extracting the meaning out of the human experience which forms a common bond between all people.

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<sup>1</sup>Geo. B. Stevens, Pauline Theology, p. 156.

## A PHILOSOPHY OF HOLINESS

The rational problems which accompany the doctrine of holiness all seem to converge on one point, namely, a lack of understanding of the moral nature of man and the fundamentally moral nature of every step in redemption. Whenever the essentially moral nature of the doctrine is obscured by any incidental part of it, logical questions begin. "Holiness" theology by the very commitment which the name gives to it is morally structured and must be kept so, consistently, in every facet of its doctrine and expression. This is absolutely foundational and we cannot go behind this truth to any other for support except to the person of God who guarantees the meaning of holiness.

Holiness theologians and preachers so universally relate these two concepts that it seems unnecessary to spend time defending the statement. But at this point it is evident that questions arise which need to be recognized and answered.

The Doctrine of Holiness is not primarily a logic in the way that a set of conclusions systematically drawn from syllogistically arranged premises would be. It is rather a rationally formulated system of theological convictions which at every point require the critical analysis of Scripture to defend and maintain. The system does not inform Biblical exegesis, but is informed by it.

This is not a repudiation of philosophy but a statement of the philosophy which lies behind the doctrine of holiness. (It must not be supposed that any such formal statement is clearly articulated in any authoritative work, but it is the deduction of the author made on the basis of a very wide examination of the extant holiness literature and

a life-long acquaintance with holiness preaching). More specifically, it may be said that the attitude toward Scripture which makes it so uniquely important to the preaching and systematization of holiness doctrine, arises out of a conviction that the Bible speaks primarily to the moral condition of men and not simply to any one part of man, e.g. to the mind or emotions apart from the whole man.

Although "moral" is not a Biblical word it is a term which well expresses the central concern of the whole of Scripture. It is the conviction of the author that "moral" when properly understood can bear almost the whole weight of the meaning of the Biblical message and hence becomes a proper word to use in a statement of the philosophy of holiness. It can, it is believed, explain the doctrine and become a principle of Biblical interpretation. In defence of this it is only necessary to point out that the central thrust of Biblical teaching is moral responsibility, not ever a relaxing of moral sensitivity.

The word moral has been chosen because it expresses, popularly, an existential dimension. It has been seen that the Bible is vitally related to human experience and human experience is only intelligible in a moral environment. Moral is a word that helps to emphasize the unitary principle of personality. Biblical psychology does not permit a metaphysical distinction of entities within human personality. Men do not think apart from will or make decisions without the approval of the whole man. One who is dominated by emotions, alone, is irrational and not a normal human being. No scientist can be so objective and detached from moral concerns that his judgment is unaffected by what he is in himself. He is first of all, as a person, morally committed, and his entire life is a reflection of the kind of commitment he has

made.<sup>1</sup> Moral commitment is the whole man in practical devotion to an object - or objects - which in turn, gives quality to his judgments and actions. This whole-man commitment to a governing center is a sort of moral presupposition, (presuming for the moment that moral can be distinguished from, hence become an analogy for, an intellectual or philosophical presupposition), to which every thought, word, deed, imagination and desire is indebted.

The word "moral", however, must be, for our purpose, carefully stabilized in meaning. It is an arbitrarily chosen word because its connotations are useful. But it must be meticulously guarded from unwanted and undesirable meanings which neutralize and actually pervert the central idea. Etymologically, it shares the history of "ethics". Moral, is the Anglicized equivalent of forms which support either word. One is the synonym for the other. In common usage however, there is detected a distinction between them which will be forced for the purpose of this study. For the moment, the simple statement is enough that ethics with its practical expressions will be deleted from the fundamental principle of action, or behind that, the spiritual dimension of personality which makes it human. It is to unnecessarily prejudice the whole study of holiness doctrine to confuse or equate it with a moralism. Holiness cannot be divorced from ethics as above described but it is not itself ethical conduct and to fail to make this important distinction is to make an understanding of the doctrine quite impossible. In this, again, holiness is not to be confused with perfectionism.

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Carnell, Christian Commitment, Macmillan, 1957.

Clarity may be achieved, we believe, by carefully distinguishing elements within the expression of holiness doctrine. It has been stated that there is a moral and psychological aspect. One stresses the essential nature of holiness, the other stresses the human experience of it. In the formalized expression of the doctrine, "second crisis" is centrally emphasized along with "cleansing from all sin". Now, these two verbal elements must be properly evaluated to prevent a logical distortion. "Second" and "crisis" are psychological elements each with its own apologetic needs, and "cleansing" and "sin", moral elements with a like need for an apology but on a different level entirely.

If "second crisis" is not distinguished from and put into proper relationship to the more fundamental moral element, it can easily assume autonomous pretensions and raise questions totally foreign to the divine intension resident in the Biblical concept, "holiness". "Second" is not prior in importance, nor can it be defended apart from its total dependence on the central issue, namely, the "moral". In other words, it is possible to distort the true meaning of holiness doctrine, by stressing the psychological pattern, namely, "second", in such a way as to obscure the fundamental and crucial moral issue. The moral gives meaning to the psychological, not otherwise. It may, therefore, be affirmed that where "second crisis" is preached, the obligation of the preacher is always to show the moral meaning lying behind it. Finally, the "absolute" is moral, not psychological. That is, moral issues determine the experiential pattern, never does a pattern of experience condition moral issues. Therefore, the central truth of holiness doctrine should be moral not psychological. The psychological is a

deduction which must not be allowed to obscure the moral, but rather support its practical application.

It would be more true to the central insight of holiness doctrine to emphasize the moral dimension that informs the experiential involvement, for the moral is that which engages the whole man in its implications. Salvation is not a legal matter in God's mind only; neither is human intellect, will or emotion capable of satisfying God's requirements; only the whole man in responsible relationship to God will do. To stress this moral responsibility gives not only the right but the obligation to consciously relate it to practical life, hence both the moral and the psychological are needed, but must be kept in proper perspective.

If this analysis of holiness doctrine is correct, we may state simply the basic presupposition which must structure holiness preaching and which is capable of providing a rational answer to the questions raised. It is this: The most fundamental quality of intelligence is moral responsibility. The essence of the rational is moral. In view of this moral view of human nature, every aspect of soteriology, from God's provision of grace to every step which is required by God of men in redemption is in the interest of moral integrity. This defines holiness. When the implications of this are consistently related to theology, it becomes its unique distinction from other Christian theology. It is the hall-mark of holiness preaching.

#### In Defense of the Premise

The basic assumption just stated is not a philosophical presupposition in that it does not partake of the speculative nature of discussions relative to human free will and determinism. It is wholly



practical and derives both from experience and the Scriptures. In human experience, we are conscious of entering situations which require of us the judging between conflicting elements - genuine alternatives that are open to us. We do not speculate as to whether we were pre-determined to a certain decision, we only know that within ourselves the full measure of authentic moral decision was fought out. We know why we did what we did. We feel we were capable of a contrary choice. It seems just as sensible to trust the sense of freedom as to trust the sense of coercion which accompanies other choices. The Bible speaks to men who are inwardly aware of this power of contrary moral choice. It reveals sin as rebellion against God, for which men are personally responsible. It gives no comfort to anyone who sins and who does not repent of his sin. All men, though sinners, are responsible. The gospel appeal is urgent, pleading, backed by terrible warnings, as if men could reject. The exhortation to believers suggests the possibility of forfeiture of grace at this point. The Bible drives straight through every external situation into the moral dimension of life and speaks to the inner man. It treats men, sinners or saints, as moral creatures, capable of moral decision, obligated to moral integrity. This fact defends holiness doctrine. An inductive study of the Bible could equally well produce holiness doctrine (which has probably not been done).

But what is "moral", and why is it important to an understanding of holiness?

## The Meaning of Moral

### 1. Moral is personal.

"Moral" presupposes the personal in contrast to "thing-ness". Whatever it is that distinguishes the spiritual from the natural is personal. In this contrast, spiritual is identified as that in self-conscious awareness that is not bound into the cause/effect matrix of the natural. It is precisely in freedom from cause/effect continuity that it escapes naturalism and becomes spiritual or personal. It is that which transcends the natural and can say. "I", meaning, "there is a difference between I and you and between I and things."

Martin Buber's discussion of "I" and "Thou" in a book by that name is suggestive and semantically useful here. A very free interpretation is given. Each "I" is a center of the universe, seeing everything from its own perspective, personal to the core in the sense that there is a sharp distinction from all other entities in personal self-awareness. "I" am not a "thing". I may be dependent on other-than-myself for existence and maintainance but I am not free to disclaim personal responsibility because of that dependence.

The "I" is self determining and self-conscious. The "it" is determined. No "I" is an "it". When two self-conscious "I's" confront each other, two contradictory universes vie with each other for existence. Two self-conscious, self-determining worlds try to occupy the center and trouble brews. There can be a clash of "rights". When one "I" treats the other "I" as an "it" and tries to dominate and control the other - an immoral situation exists. Particularly is this true when the "I" tries to control and use the "Thou" - God. Without passing judgment

upon the philosophical use Buber makes of this idea, it is useful in pointing out the need to see the personal element in the meaning of moral. Astronomy can never be the locus of a study in ethics (astronomical patterns are not criticizable) but the astronomer is.<sup>1</sup> No sensible farmer worries about tomatoes appearing on wheat stalks. Nor does a rational carpenter beat a roof that leaks in the rain. But the farmer is entirely liable for the answer to the question, "Why are you a farmer? or, Why did you plant wheat instead of tomatoes?" and the carpenter can be penalized severely for beating his wife no matter what she does to displease him. It is in the personal in contrast to "thingness" that moral begins to have meaning.

## 2. The personal is moral.

Moreover, to be personal, is to be responsible by created necessity. Men have wills, and the will is an integral part of personality. And the will is rational not simply a mood, instinct, or passing desire.

The one thing which distinguishes man as a man is his capacity to make decisions which are good or bad, right or wrong, on the basis of principle, irrespective of desirable or undesirable consequences to himself. It is precisely at the point where the cause/effect determinism of the natural body makes its demands upon the human spirit that responsibility begins. Natural law is impersonal, that is, it operates apart from will. Spiritual life is simply distinguished from the natural by its personal nature--it requires a rational will to maintain its existence. In fact, persons are not free not to be responsible. The more that is

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<sup>1</sup>Albury Castell, Science as a Goad to Philosophy, College of the Pacific, 1953, pp. 35ff.

discovered about human personality the more certain we become that will operates even in the lowest, most primitive, levels of consciousness, and we are told that in the deepest hypnotic state that moral responsibility and will is not lost. The operator cannot force the patient to violate his will. Rather than to say, men have wills, it might be more true to say, to be human is to will responsibly.

### 3. Moral Capacity as an awareness of "Ought"

Not only are men personal and responsible but also they are aware of themselves as facing the tension of ethical situations. In fact, moral awareness is precisely in the consciousness of being in oneself, the locus of moral tension. Not only do we say, "I can choose", or "I must choose", but, "In this choice I am violating, or approving the right." We may not know which of several possibilities may be best, or, we may not want to do the right were we to know it but we know that there is a right and a wrong and that we ought to do the right and ought not to do the wrong. A moral being recognizes these ethical demands in interpersonal situations. It is a recognition of the need for a right relationship and at least displays a need for self-approval and the inner balance as a result of that approval.

It would be to impoverish ourselves were we to fail to recognize the critical contribution Emmanuel Kant has made to the subject. Though he could not "establish" the categorical imperative with the same assurance that undergirded his postulates of empirical knowledge, the "ought" to him could be assumed as the basis of all rationality. It was that maxim of judgment which governed ones actions which could be willed to be universal law. Morality, to him, was not obedience to law, which could simulate goodness without willing the good, but it was the will to

will the universal good whether it could be put into action or not. This totally disinterested principle of right human interaction was the regulatory principle of all intelligence.

4. Moral is a two-foc relationship.

Moral capacity and responsibility requires a relation to another person to complete its meaning--to come into true existence. Goodness is never the autonomous achievement of a person within himself. Men were made to fellowship with God and with other persons. This Kant did not see.

Men were made to fellowship, is the basic truth. True personality is dependent upon the ability to communicate with others, responsibly. This fact draws the concept of "moral" into a definition and realization of personality. "Self-realization" alone, though important in a number of ways, is not and cannot be the expression of the person as a moral being. Any weed or animal by surrendering to the laws of its being, "realizes" itself, but personality cannot be so defined because the very identifying element, the moral, is ignored. Even apart from sin, uninhibited self-development is not valid. Contemporary psychology recognizes the absolute need for interpersonal communication for whole-some development.

Moral quality can only inhere in persons, never things. Personality is not a thing and only in the relations which characterize freedom of persons can morality have meaning. The self which develops apart from responsibility to other persons is not moral and not truly a person.

The "relationship" which determines the quality of moral is the interpersonal dependence and interaction of "I s", which give significance to each unit in the organism. Contemporary psychology recognizes the

foundational need inherent in every human unit of consciousness to love someone and to be loved. The self is only completed and integrated and wholesome when there is rapport with others. Mental hospitals are full of people who cannot communicate with others. It is this fact that makes it necessary to give them treatment. The need for fellowship is much deeper than sentiment, it is basic to mental health and ultimately to truly human existence.

Just as fellowship is necessary to human relations, so it is necessary in the spiritual dimension which, actually is the only truly personal dimension. Men seek an object of affection to complete themselves. They must love something. If the searching self settles for things, it idolizes - makes a god of - material things and the moral existence is thwarted and distorted. If the self fastens on other human beings moral life is improperly developed. If one loves himself the result is moral perversion - grotesque, destructive, ugly. Augustine was right when he saw that men are made for God and cannot find rest until they rest in Him. It is no idle thing to say that men were made to fellowship with God. To cut off that fellowship is to throw personality off balance, to say the least.

It is probably true to say also that human nature was never intended to appear apart from the presence of the Holy Spirit. That is, the personal fellowship, the mutual rapport, and harmonious response of God and man was the natural and intended atmosphere of fellowship and holiness. In fact, holiness could be defined by this state of affairs. In the atmosphere of fellowship with God, holiness consists. Moral life has two foci, not one. Only as men trust and love God is morality valid and holiness possible. A refusal to use the moral capacity to

maintain this relationship is sin. Holiness and sin are, thus, two kinds of relationship to God, one positive, the other negative, but both active because it is the person, forced to decision, choosing the right or wrong object of his love. Holiness theology rejects the Augustinian concept of concreated holiness--an impersonal goodness--in favor of a more Biblical idea of holiness which is a proper personal relationship to God. It does not seem proper to think of persons created in such a way that they, apart from this personal fellowship, are holy. Holiness, or morality, is never a quality of impersonal substance but the way one reacts to a person. To understand this is to help prevent the idea arising that sin has substance or is a thing which can be--or cannot be--removed as a deceased part of the body. Holiness is not metaphysically conditioned substance, but a proper relationship to God - by the Holy Spirit. In this relationship to God, holiness is moral integrity, and sin is the lack of moral integrity. This is responsible consciousness at its highest and shows the proper context in which moral has meaning.

If this is true a serious challenge to Christian morality loses its force. The vicious charge against the church is that it requires the surrender of moral integrity rather than the strengthening of it. If one must obey an imposed moral code, it is said, the very structure of integrity is violated. That is, if one surrenders his own active judgment to that of another he is no longer a moral man but a puppet. Kant, Tillich and Fromm among others argue in this way and with telling force if their interpretation is true to fact. None of these persons, it is believed, would reject the moral law as such but do question the source of law and one's attitude of irresponsibility to moral existence.



The fallacy, as we see it, in this criticism of Christian morality is in supposing that law to which one is to surrender is impersonal and arbitrary. The word surrender is used advisedly, for it is precisely in the idea of passive, a - moral renunciation of personal responsibility that the error lies. And can it be said that the church has not been guilty of giving just this impression? Surrender is not a Biblical word and ought never to be used in relation to salvation, at least without limiting its popular meaning carefully. Obedience, in the evangelical sense, is not heteronomy, in the sense of surrendering moral integrity to an impersonal law. But, neither is it an expression relative to autonomy, in which the person makes himself the object of his obedience. Christian morality is the person-to-Person rapport which is the relationship of harmony and love and mutual will which requires moral integrity to enter and to maintain. One wills to will God's will which puts the self creatively within the context of true morality. This does not by-pass moral law which has objective existence but it is a reestablishment of the personal fellowship which makes the law a normal and desirable expression of love. It is precisely this view of relationship to law that was a correction in the New Testament of the Old Testament moralism. No Christian is ever asked to surrender to the law, to the Church, to a creed, or to persons. It is precisely a rapport with God that is to be established at whatever cost to human autonomy which is the evangelical message. This is not anti-human. It does not violate the normal. It is not immoral. It does not tear down the structure of integrity. It is simply that which men actually desire by deepest created need. Law is not abrogated but fulfilled. Obedience is the back side of love. Love is structured by obedience. Moral

experience is completed by this relationship, not destroyed.

##### 5. Moral is structured by love.

Everything said thus far about the meaning of moral leads directly into the fact that the commitment which makes any person a moral person is that he has made a whole-man commitment. This commitment, to constitute it a moral act, is simply the whole man in responsible decision. It does not matter whether the chosen "center" is right or wrong (according to any particular standard) but that one has desired a certain thing enough to have pledged himself wholly to it. He may be moral or immoral depending on the religious or cultural norms in which he lives but by this act he becomes moral in the sense which we are trying to develop. The cohesion of this commitment is integrity.

All of this defines that illusive word love. Love is a hard word to define. It is usually described by some illustration or figure of speech. Both it and moral can be defined in relation to each other profitably, we believe. Love is the integrity which gives commitment its stability. The essence of love is not emotion, not simply will, not sentiment, but man's full attention on some object. A divided attention is a divided heart and is the essence of an unstable moral life--the source of moral breakdown. To be moral is to love wholly. Certainly everything the New Testament says about agape answers to the personalizing of moral as we are using the term in this study. Moral, abstractly, is integrity. Love is the personalizing of moral integrity which relates it to a practical expression of man's relationship to God and men. "The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned" (I Tim. 1:5).

That one cannot have integrity in any other commitment than that wholly to God is the contention of Søren Kierkegaard and his point is

well taken. "Purity of heart," he tells us by a title to one of his books, "is to will one thing," and the only object which can engage the whole of man's devotion is He for whom men were made. Any other love is duplicity and confusion and hence not pure and not moral.

In a word "moral" is single-heartedness by its very definition.

#### 6. Moral life consists in crisis-decision tensions.

Deep in the heart of "moral" lies a vital characteristic that gives it the unique strength and character which it possesses, namely, decision. To be moral, life must proceed on the basis of crisis and choice--not simply cause and effect flowing indecisively from one moment to another. Moral integrity is maintained by decisive action and even the loss of integrity is by a series of wrong decisions, not simply an unobstructed path downward. The Scriptures recognize this extremely important truth and call all men to deep and farreaching moral decision. Wherever men seek to avoid this clean-cut personal choice by hiding behind custom, religion, family, morality, philosophy, etc. -- the Holy Spirit tears away the deceptive device and requires responsible personal declaration. To avoid it is to make a responsible decision.

Moral decision, then, cannot end in this life. There may be crucial and formative decisions which overshadow others seemingly less important and which consciously determine the course of life, but the cruciality of the unbroken series of less spectacular crisis/decision events must never be forgotten. If one could picture the movement of responsible life it would look something like stairs. To go up requires vision, purpose, determination, effort, consciousness. To go down requires the same things in reverse. One cannot slide down without meeting the painful protest of the edge of every step. Moral decision

is not terminated by grace, but constitutes the life-long probation necessary to character formation.

7. Moral integrity is the goal of redemption.

God deals with men as responsible persons and every step God requires of man from the first stirrings of conviction to the last responsible act in life is in the interest of moral integrity. This means that every individual must square up to God personally. The Holy Spirit seems to force man into a fully conscious, deliberate, personal, voluntary decision. At least, so far as the Bible teaches us, it is the rational man standing responsibly before God with which we have to do. The proper prayer never seems to be, "Give me an experience like someone else, "but, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Every step in grace is taken in sharp conscious awareness, and clear rational insight and the most deliberate moral decisiveness. Consciousness is not by-passed, submerged or violated. All the powers of the personality converge with full rational responsibility upon those moments, to which the Holy Spirit carefully and imperiously draws us. Nor is there any relaxation of this moral responsibility within the Christian life--rather an ever deepening capacity for it. In the Bible the lowest allowable level of obedience is the highest possible capacity for it at any one moment. The capacity may vary, deepen, become senile, but the responsibility is always equal to possibility. When one says, "perfect obedience", and "perfect love", it does not mean that fully mature capacity is expected. A child can qualify in spite of his imperfect development. What is required is all one is at any time.

But more important even is this, that all we can contribute by way of moral responsibility is required. It is not the faith we do not

have which is demanded but that which is ours to exerceize by way of a full commitment.

It is this understanding of moral that gives holiness its Biblical meaning and preserves justification from abstraction and antinomianism. Holiness relates the provisions of Christ's death to practical life. Grace must be met by faith. God does not treat us as automatons or chessmen on a board, but as persons. Redemption is never impersonal, always related in the most practical way to life. "Moral" guards holiness from two opposite errors. On the one hand holiness defined philosophically, or abstractly, theoretically, ideally, simply robs it of any real meaning. Philosophical or abstract holiness is "perfectionism." The experiential dimension, or the moral, is as necessary to its definition as child is necessary to the definition of parent. On the other hand, it guards holiness from the charge of self-righteousness and an easy view of sin. Holiness is never the product of the good will alone, it is not so much something that happens to us as it is Someone who unites Himself with us.

It is the moral atmosphere, the spiritual climate, which is created in us when the Holy Spirit's ministry is allowed to bear fruit. In this atmosphere, so long as the Holy Spirit abides, cleansing takes place and is maintained, growth in grace proceeds, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, fellowship is deepened, character is strengthened, moral capacity is enlarged and responsibility becomes ever more intelligent. Holiness is not static. It is the life of God in the soul. It is love to the core of its existence. It is not sentimentally but the whole personality centered in God, drawing his spirit, actions and purposes from a dynamic contact with God.

If holiness is basically a moral concept, therefore, it is an intensely practical matter. The term holiness, and others relating to

it, will not be abstract but relevant to life.

If this analysis of moral is correct and if it answers to the Biblical concept of holiness several observations relative to it are pertinent to this study.

Holiness, expressed in terms of philosophical absolutes is not the Biblical concept. The Biblical idea of the holiness which is required of men is wholly within the possibilities of human experience. Both Calvinist and Wesleyan tend to extreme positions. Actually both describe soteriological matters much the same. But one says, this cannot become human experience in this life, the other says that it can become so. In spite of the claim to be Biblical both were apt to fall into the intellectual trap of philosophizing Biblical statements. God is defined philosophically for fear that anything other than a semantic ultimate or some human concept, than which no more perfect can be conceived, will result in a finite God--which is not God at all. He is philosophized into immobility for fear an internal movement will destroy him. The Bible does not know anything about that kind of God - or fear. Sin is philosophically defined so that it must include every thing that is not as perfect as God; every imperfection, immaturity, fallibility, limitation, weakness, every ethical ambiguity, ignorance or failure is sin. That is not a Biblical doctrine. The requirements are so unrealistic (not high) that no human experience can contain them, absolute obedience, absolute love, absolute everything. When the absolute is philosophical, the tension between it and human experience is morally and intellectually destructive. The Scriptures know nothing about this. Those who say the commands of Scripture are impossible because of these concepts are under the logical necessity of interpreting Scripture accordingly. Either it is said to hold up a standard which is impossible, to keep us humble, or by an extreme dispensationalism conveniently separ-

ates us from the age in which these moral demands can be relevant. Either way results in a lack of seriousness regarding the Bible that is morally undesirable. Those who say these commands must be kept and can be, either attempt to reject or "reform" human nature in order to square up to the absolute (asceticism) or reinterpret sin and so tend toward antinomianism. One sins cheerfully in order to permit the glory of God's forgiveness to be revealed, the other has little place for post-conversion confession of sin confident that God would not be glorified by doing so.

It is our opinion that the illogicalities and lack of practicality and realism and moral seriousness arises, not because men are not serious or devout or Christian, but because the Bible has been interpreted philosophically and not existentially. Moral, when understood, relates all these soteriological truths to practical life. Holiness, when seen as a moral matter, is not something so unrelated to life that one must either be baffled and discouraged by it or reject it in the interest of honesty. Sin is not something that even God can do nothing about except pass judgment on or cancel out on the books or reinterpret in Christ. All of these things are related to human experience. They are to be worked out in the ordinary life of ordinary people. To make this impossible is to make a farce of Christian faith. If God says, in His word, that those in fellowship with Him are cleansed from all sin, this fact must be accepted if one claims to be Biblical but only a Biblical interpretation of sin can keep this sublime statement from absurdity, and the full moral fallibility of human nature and temporal probation must also be kept within the concept.

This understanding of moral obligates believers to an ever deepening moral experience which is as necessary to soteriology as the grace



which is given us by God through Christ. This is the genius of Wesley's contribution to theology. Moral is relevant in holiness. The benefits of grace are put into life. Holiness is a matter of experience. Grace has implications for human relationships.

The relevance of crisis and growth are established by the concept of moral.

Perhaps the foregoing analysis will be accepted in the main by the majority of readers as true for the ordinary daily life of humanity. But to apply it to the Christian experience may not be as easy to do. But it is precisely this point for which we are contending. Christian faith is not an activity or function that can be relegated from the total personality. This understanding of moral proceeds into a discussion of Soteriology and becomes an integral part of all aspects of redemption. This concept of moral, then, links God's grace and human life. The law of the moral runs into every factor of redemption from the creation of man, through the matters pertaining to sin, into the truth structuring the Atonement and extending the whole length and breadth of Justification, Sanctification and eternal salvation.

The moral is a concern of God for men in this life. Whatever moral is, it is the ground for probationary existence and probation is not ended by justification or by sanctification, but only by earthly life.

Therefore, no theology that dulls the conscience or relaxes the moral imperative or in any sense abrogates the moral law is quite true to the New Testament Soteriology.



## "BY FAITH"

Christian faith is an introduction into Christ. Believing, we are baptized into Him. This means that we are to live as He lived towards the world of sin and towards God. It means that we surrender ourselves in a spirit of glad obedience to be moulded after his pattern. If our believing does not lead us to this new living, beyond all question it is a spurious thing and none of the Christian privileges attach to it.<sup>1</sup>

No word or idea in the New Testament carries so much significance to men as does faith and its cognates. No word has been more abused. No word better ties into the whole concept of moral as it is beginning to develop in this study. No word is more important to the whole of redemption than this one.

A good synonym would be "appropriation". On one side of faith lies the objective atonement. Into that "mystic" realm where God has done so much for us, we cannot penetrate with our finite intelligence. The full truth of what God has done must always escape our rational grasp. We have pictures and analogies which help to relate it to our world of understanding; the law court, the temple sacrifice, war techniques, family relationships, and many more, none of them the whole truth, all of them together helping us to know that God loves us and desires our redemption. All this is grace.

On the other side of faith lies a great world of sin and defeat and despair and fear and death. In this world live people whose capacity for good and evil is their unique raison d'etre. They know themselves to be responsible to God and to fellowmen. The capacity for nobility is itself the sharpest judgment for what they are. And great evil in men

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Gore St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. London, 1909, p. 179.

is called sin because that same genius could have been used for good. Men are moral and this is their condemnation. They loved darkness rather than light.

God's grace is on one side, men's love is on the other. Salvation is offered -- to sinners who are morally responsible. To keep the integrity of both of these truths is the heart of the Gospel message.

The church early saw the dangers in a failure to keep these truths intact. God's forgiveness, they saw, could be too lightly regarded and so the problem of how to handle sins committed after baptism had to be met. How many times could one sin and be forgiven? How far does forgiveness reach - past sins only? or to all sins reaching into the future? If God's forgiveness could be implored for sins after baptism, how would it be known that repentance had been sincere enough? In other words, the danger of a moral insensibility creeping into the hearts of those who could too easily presume on God's mercy was recognized. Whatever one thinks of the whole penitential system, certainly the insight of our Church Fathers into the human peril immanent in the divine judicial acquittal unguarded from unprincipled human appropriation is to be sincerely respected. Easy, cheap, shoddy ideas of God's mercy were deeply deplored. But gradually there arose a well-organized and detailed system of penance that missed the proper moral point of the early church and stressed too much the ability of the penitent to earn merit -- to pay for his own sins. The commercialized aspect of this, we believe, is a distortion of the true intent, even today, of the Catholic church.

However, when Luther failed by all his efforts to find peace with God, and he saw that righteousness was by faith, not works, he recovered

the Biblical message preached so strongly by Paul in particular. But, as is true with so many insights which correct old extravagances, the pendulum swung too far.

The term "By Faith" took on an extreme either/or antithesis with "works", in the Reformation period. In absolute contrast to the abuse of the Catholic system of human merit stood the reformation doctrine of "by faith alone", and no human effort could be granted as of having value in any sense. So great was the contrast between faith and works that all moral relevancy -- all subjective desire -- all human striving -- was denounced as itself sin. This characterizes much evangelical theology today.

Of course, this reflects a definition of faith which recognizes the objective aspect of atonement but which fails to do justice to the moral experience of men. It stressed the forensic meaning only of righteousness and justification. Unrighteousness is imputed guilt and righteousness is the cancellation of that guilt, irrevocably and eternally by God's decree. This tends to make justification abstract and lacking in human relevancy. Faith then would be, and is so conceived, as intellectual assent or the acceptance of an idea which, apart from all subjective considerations, permanently places the "faihee" in a position of absolute safety from the wrath of God and judgment by virtue of the imputed merit of Christ. Not only logically, but actually, this position forces one into antinomianism on the one hand which reevaluates sin in the believer, or, on the other hand, affirming the unrealistic and difficult position of automatic sinlessness or perfectionism.

This extreme faith/works antithesis, occasioned by controversy with the Roman Church has made it difficult for the Calvinist, particularly,

to appreciate the holiness interpretation of theology. To the Calvinist, holiness theology and testimony is liberal and arrogant and in the light of the historical development of the reformation, it is easy to understand his attitude. The excesses of the Catholic idea of merit and the moral irresponsibility of some Arminianism and Unitarianism makes a less rigid distinction between faith and works unthinkable and seem to be a complete capitulation to humanism.

Wesley, again concerned with the problem of how to maintain the balance between grace and the moral nature of men, saw that not only justification but sanctification as well was "by faith". This added the moral dimension to justification which reformation theology had failed to retain and yet it was saved from playing into the hands of the Pelagians who would see no need for grace at all.

But "sanctification by faith" raises different kinds of problems than those raised by Luther's emphasis on justification by faith and it is these problems which we want to examine in this chapter.

Christian righteousness is "by faith". The pseudo-righteousness to which this is the only alternative is self-righteousness or salvation by works. To this basic affirmation evangelical Christians adhere and in it lies the basis for theological unity. But in respect of it there exists also differences of opinion that keep Reformation groups clearly distinguished theologically from those who follow "holiness doctrine." It is at this point, namely, the meaning of faith, that holiness theology begins to take its form and defines itself against other evangelical bodies.

Holiness theology presupposes a vital relationship between faith and works. This does not mean that it teaches that any man can in any

way merit salvation by what he does or thinks. It does hold that faith is an act which engages the whole of man, not simply his intellectual faculty alone, or his emotions or will but all the personality interacting as a unit. An abstract idea of personality is rejected in favor of a dynamic one, that is, men are only essentially men as they are moral creatures. Hence, faith, or lack of it, is a moral fact. The antithesis to saving faith is not inertness, or passivity, but active rejection. Holiness theology presupposes a unitary view of man as does Calvinism generally but stresses the spiritual relationships as the determining element rather than causal, non-personal elements. This, of necessity, adds to the forensic meaning of justification, an ethical dimension also (which does not imply incidentally, that we have it in our power, by good works, to reform and make ourselves righteous.) Unrighteousness is more than imputed guilt. It is a person rejecting God who by this rejection incurs guilt and culpability. How he comes to do this -- original sin or carnality or inherited sin -- is not here the question. That he does reject is both a Biblical declaration and a fact of human experience. Righteousness or justification is most certainly the removal of guilt and is hence, juridical, but it also has a subjective aspect which is the concern of this chapter. At this point it is well to be reminded that if "moral" means any serious thing, we may expect to find that God's dealings with men will strengthen rather than weaken the concept of moral integrity and this fact will have a bearing on justification and faith and the security of the believer.

We are saved "by faith", but what does it mean to believe? And what is it that is believed? Is saving faith different in kind than the other experiences of faith which every person exercises? Is it

faith itself, that saves? Is faith a gift or is it a faculty over which a moral person has responsible control? These and other factors in the problem lie before us.

We have related faith to appropriation. At least, it may be said that faith is the link between grace and man's need.

Now faith is a distinctly human reaction, that is it is something that men do. It is significant that righteousness (or justification) is "by faith". This means that God's approval of us awaits in some way our appropriation of His approval. Apparently, the objective (to us) act of God in Christ by which reconciliation was made a fact, remains tentative and potential until faith materializes it in experience. Whether saving faith is different in kind or source ("the gift of God") than other expressions of believing is not here the question. The fact remains that, so far as men are concerned, salvation is not by divine decree, nor even by the work of Christ (though its possibility is only through Christ) so that whoever He died for would inevitably be saved (unconditional atonement), but "by faith". Salvation, therefore, cannot be wholly objective, unrelated to human character or personal response. This certainly does not mean that any degree of human character or goodness is necessary to salvation or merits it in any sense, but it does mean that in exercising faith for salvation, something begins to happen to character. Salvation is not merited by any human excellence but it is impossible to be its recipient apart from a consideration of moral integrity. "By faith" is the beginning of God-centeredness in contrast to self-centeredness. It is a moral commitment and has moral implications in life. One cannot believe in God in the intellectual area of personality without all parts of his being sharing in that commitment. "By faith" is the shift from one

basic pre-supposition to another -- from self as God, to God as Lord -- and life and thinking proceeds out of the new pre-suppositions and is given character by it. In other words, "by faith" is dynamic, not formal and static.

Faith is dynamic. Jesus usually required faith of the sick for healing. Often he said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Justification is by faith and the just shall live by faith not the works of the law. The heart is purified by faith, not circumcision (Acts 15:9). Sanctification is by faith in Jesus (Acts 26:18) Propitiation is by faith in Christ's blood (Rom. 3:25). Our access into "this grace" in which we stand is by faith (Rom. 5:2). By faith we stand (II Cor. 1:24). We walk by faith (II Cor. 5:1). We receive the promise of the Spirit by faith (Gal. 3:14). We are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26). Christ dwells in the heart by faith (Eph. 3:17). The life Paul lived in the flesh he lived by faith in the Son of God (Gal. 2:20). Faith shields us from the fiery darts of the enemy (Eph. 6:16). These are a few of the benefits of grace actualized by faith. It is exegetically impossible to interpret these and other passages eschatologically only, which would define faith in terms of hope and defer the benefits to another life. Faith and hope are never confused in Scripture. Faith is not a merely intellectual affirmation. It is a moral commitment with moral consequences. It is a this-life concern.

#### Faith or Works

Works and faith represent two ways - and opposite ways - to achieve a legitimate - and necessary - acceptability by God which is what justification or righteousness really is. If we keep in mind the central

import back of all the various figures of speech having to do with redemption we can say that the intended goal is fellowship with God - the end of alienation - in which by the blood of Christ cleansing is realized (I Jn. 1:7). "Works" is one way to achieve this proper relationship with God. Faith is another way. The question arises as to whether either one, alone, is adequate, provided the two can be separated in fact. That is, is one without the other actually what it purports to be?

The philosophy back of "works" is built upon the presupposition that the estrangement between God and man is forensic and not moral. It cannot see that sin is a degeneration of moral integrity which destroys the possibility of spiritual affinity. Love for God-Personal has been short-circuited in favor of love for law and the impersonal and deceptive approval of law to the conscience. It may be said that moral integrity has become an end in itself - a god - rather than a means to the end, namely, of being right with God. This is a subtle difference but a very real one. In no case does Paul - or Jesus - intimate that moral law is wrong, or that it can be dispensed with - ever. It is the form, structure, pattern of knowledge and truth (Rom. 2:20). It is never suggested that obedience to it is to be neglected or superceded. What is taught is this, that the keeping of law, alone, cannot achieve righteousness -- or the personal approval of God and cleansing fellowship with Him. In a word, the philosophy of works proceeds on the assumption that legal impeccability can substitute for personal moral relationship. It is thoroughly objective, discounts all subjective, spiritual considerations and lives on a plane below the personal. It raises the non-personal to the status of duty. Law becomes Lord. It is easy to "manage" law by human



interpretation and hence human standards of approval. The Lord of the law who can and must interpret the law in inner experience is imprisoned in His law and hence reduced to servanthood. "Works as deplored by Paul in Romans, has made a God of law and a servant of God.

Faith, on the other hand, refers to an attitude toward God which the philosophy of works has neglected or rejected. It seeks the same approval of God, the same fellowship with Him but it operates on a personal, not an impersonal level. Faith is personal through and through. The philosophy of faith represents an entirely different approach to truth than that of works. It sees the Law-giver back of the law. Or if there be no objective law it sees the Person and respects the integrity of that Person in terms of response to Him. Faith, interpreted as a mental acceptance only of some proposition or idea, falls far short of the Biblical teaching regarding it. Abraham, the father of the faithful, had no proposition to accept. He had no revealed law to keep. He trusted God and the trust not only issued in but was expressed by obedience. Faith and obedience were, to him, inseparable. Faith which terminates in concepts and not in action is not the kind of faith Abraham had which has become a pattern of righteousness for both Jew and Gentile for the Christian age.

#### Faith and Works

Biblical faith as a way to righteousness is classically illustrated by reference to Abraham. Hence, a brief study of what constituted righteousness and faith in relation to him is in order. In Romans 2:4, the absolute contrast is drawn between the Jewish ritual righteousness which was external and moralistic wholly, and the spiritual nature of righteous-

ness which was of the spirit - or inner man, primarily. One was a dependence on and obedience to the letter of the law, the other was a heart attitude toward God even in the absence of written law. One localized the possibility of acceptability by God to a chosen people. The other opened that possibility to universal experience. The advantage of being a Jew was offset by the responsibility it entailed in knowledge and opportunity. The disadvantage of being a Gentile was offset by the basic law of righteousness which, back of it all, was true for the Jews as well as the Gentile. By law or without it, righteousness is only possible by faith in God. And Abraham, before there was a Jew or law, in believing God was considered righteous in God's sight. This effectively reduces all people everywhere to the same standard of responsibility and sin and the possibility of redemption.

It is a mistake to consider this section, primarily a philosophy of sin. It is, centrally, a presentation of the grace of God in Christ Jesus which is available to every man by faith. The fact that all have sinned is simply to show that atonement has been made for all sin, by Christ, and that the universal condition of receiving the benefits of grace is faith in God - not works. None are saved by works.

Now, it is also a mistake to identify all human effort and co-operation with works on the basis of this passage and contrast it to faith. The disparagement of works in this section is not a rejection of human activity and response as such but a dependence on them without faith and all faith means. It is not true to fact to define faith, in contrast to works, as cessation of activity, or passive "acceptance". This is a false comparison. The writer to the Hebrews with another purpose in mind for speaking of faith gives us what Paul had no occasion

to say in Romans, "By faith Abraham when he was called, obeyed . . . and he went out not knowing whether he went"(Heb. 11:8). The need for clear definition is evidenced by the possibility of error in the use of the word "works" and in the word "acceptance" as will be seen.

It is a mistake to define faith as "acceptance" if acceptance be too narrowly understood. It is often taught that salvation is by "accepting Christ", or accepting what He has done for us. Geo. Ladd says in an article in Eternity (July, 1958), entitled, "Justification",

The means of justification is faith . . . It is received by faith, by acceptance of what God has done for us in Christ. . . . when a man has received the work of Christ upon the cross and has exercised saving faith, for him, the future judgment has already taken place (*italics, his*). . . . Freedom, release, peace came only from the acceptance, by faith, of what God in Christ has done for me . . .

L. Nelson Bell in Christianity Today (June 9, 1958) says, "Righteousness is not a matter of doing but of accepting that which has been done for us," and "Righteousness is not a matter of achieving but of receiving." (p. 19).

Interesting enough, no New Testament passage gives the slightest hint that we are to "accept" Christ or "what He has done for us." We are exhorted to believe in Him. In the occasions where "accept" refers to a relationship of men and Christ (or God) it is man who is to make himself acceptable. The tremendous exhortation of Romans 12:1 is to the effect that we present ourselves, holy and acceptable, to God. In 14:18 it is said that he who in specified ways serveth Christ is acceptable by God. Peter says our task as lively stones in a spiritual house, or (to change the figure with Peter) as a holy priesthood is to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God (I, 2:5). The writer to the Hebrews exhorts (12:28), "Let us have grace where-by we may serve God

acceptably." In none of the several places is a sinner ever asked or exhorted to accept Christ. (Phil. 4:18; II Cor. 5:10; Eph. 1:6). It would be quite inaccurate to equate "accept" and "believing". Such problems are raised by doing so, as, What does it mean to accept Christ? Is it to simply believe in the historical Christ and that he died for men? How can our acceptance be a determinative factor in salvation? Is this not works? If, as Ladd points out, our acceptance is of the verdict, "Acquitted," and the consequent man of faith is on the "heavenward side of the day of judgment," and, "it is as though [he] had already entered heaven," and; as L. Nelson Bell says, "when God looks down from above and sees the Lamb of God over me I am then righteous in his sight," why are the most morally demanding exhortations in the New Testament addressed to believers? Is not "acceptance theology" dangerously near perfectionism?

#### Faith is Moral-Obedience

The moral structure of faith is indicated by two key words, obedience and love. It is obvious that obedience alone is not itself a semantic or moral synonym for the faith which is requisite to justification. Obedience must have the ingredient of faith in it to result in righteousness. Conversely, faith must include obedience to make it saving faith. James' vivid and dramatic teaching that "faith without works is dead," is not antithetical to Paul's theology. To the Roman church Paul writes (6:16) that righteousness lies in the path of obedience and he thanks God (6:17) that they had "obeyed from the heart." "Obedience of faith" is twice mentioned in the same letter, once of Paul himself (1:5) and once of the gospel message (16:26). Paul's deepest concern for

the Corinthians was that every thought should be brought captive to the obedience of Christ (II, 10:5). The writer to the Hebrews virtually identifies faith and obedience in 5:8-9; "Though he were a Son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. To substitute "they who believe on him" would not be out of keeping with the whole of New Testament teaching.

That faith is morally oriented and not some magical, morally disjunctive method of assuring ourselves of salvation is further indicated by another consideration relative to human attitudes. We mean by magic, any confidence in the power of word, thought or act to effect super-historical results or any attempt to achieve effects without a cause. When Ladd says that "the future can hold no possible condemnation," for the man who has "received the work of Christ upon the cross and has exercised saving faith [because] for him the future judgment has already taken place," he is interpreting faith as magic in that by it moral men are thought to by-pass moral responsibility by verbal symbols. Magic is always a-moral and a-causal whether it is religious or otherwise. Some critics of evangelicalism have called supernaturalism belief in magic. This charge cannot stand up under scholarly investigation but supernaturalism that supposes it can by-pass the moral dimension of human experience is belief in magic. The Bible stands squarely opposed to just such perversions of truth. Its supernaturalism is preserved from the a-morality of speculation precisely by the Incarnation and the involvement of human experience in truth. Faith as taught in the Scripture, is not credulity, but is intellectually and morally relevant. Supernaturalism is not super-history but God's grace met by human faith.

## Maintaining Faith

The moral relevance is indicated in several ways none more interesting than by grammar and verb forms. The need for maintaining faith is indicated by the overwhelming preference for the present indicative or participle in referring to believing and indicates the dynamic character of faith in contrast to any static view. A few examples of this will suffice. John's gospel is notable for its teaching about believing on Jesus. 1:12 says that the power to become children of God is given to those who continue to believe. The 3rd chapter has several such passages (e.g., v. 15, 36), with the familiar 16th verse a striking example, "whosoever continues to believe in him . . .," not, "shall have" eternal life, but, subjunctive, "may have" it. That is, eternal life is dependent upon the continuance of faith. The Greek makes dramatically clear what the English fails to quite fully reveal. This contingency of effect to the continuing qualification of believing is expressed in a number of passages, e.g. 6:35; 40; 20:31. In Acts we are told that those believing persons of the circumcized were amazed that the Holy Spirit was given to Cornelius (10:45), and Paul in preaching at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:39) states clearly that those who are believing are justified. Paul says, in Rom. 1:16, that the gospel is the power of God to salvation to those believing (see also 3:20-26), and this same tense is used in Rom. 4:5 and 24. The tenth chapter is a commentary on the faith/works tension making clear that it is a continually believing heart that is considered righteous. In this chapter no obedience is recognized as valid that does not have in it the "heart that believes." If one takes the time and effort to trace the tenses of the Greek in relation to believing he will find the above observations are borne out in the majority of cases. These examples of aorist or perfect tenses

seem to refer to the fact that those in the faith had had a beginning of faith and that having begun they continued into the present to believe.

Every New Testament teaching strengthens one's understanding of the necessity for a "walk" of faith and discourages any reliance on an a-moral, intellectual definition of faith. Whatever is involved in faith, it certainly makes a difference in life. It is this difference that holiness theology is interested in.

### Faith and Holiness

Not all persons by any means who believe in the contingency of faith - or some real measure of freedom of will - subscribe to holiness theology but it is, perhaps, significant that all who hold to the doctrine of holiness, also hold to the contingency of faith. It is a fact which guards holiness from philosophical necessity and absolutism as well as opens the door to its possibility when Biblically understood. It keeps holiness, morally structured and preserves it from perfectionism.

The contingency of faith determines the continuance of the Christian walk. This is clearly taught in the New Testament. John's "if" (15:6) cannot be lightly regarded. If a man does not abide in Christ, he is cut off from the branch. No interpretation of Paul's "if" in Romans 8 and 11, which assumes it to be simply a rhetorical hypothesis quite does justice to the moral earnestness of these passages, "if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit keep mortifying the deeds of the body, ye shall live,"(8) "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but



toward thee, goodness, if than continue in his goodness: otherwise than also shall be cut off"(11). Again, "You . . . hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight, if ye continue in the faith . . . ." (Col. 1:20-23). No Biblical passage when taken in context gives the slightest ground for assuming that by a single act of faith (which has not gone deeper than an intellectual assent) eternal salvation is assured. Believing must be both a moral act and continuing moral commitments. That is, faith is a life not merely an affirmation. It is hard to see how D. G. Barnhouse can say, "God's promises to a believer are unconditional" (Eternity, Jan. 1958, p. 27), or that Ladd can write, Justification "has nothing at all to do with the correction of my conduct; it concerns my relationship with God" (Ibid., July, 1958, p. 10).

#### Faith is not Irrational

Faith as active obedience is not necessarily or even properly to be confused with the irrationalism of some contemporary theology which defines faith as commitment only, with no intelligible object of faith. Biblical faith is rational without being rationalistic. It is the whole man response to an appeal that engages the approval of the whole gamut of human consciousness. (See discussion of Biblical interpretation). Abraham did not abandon his comfortable family heritage to venture into a strange country on a vapid whim or a nameless, vague "feeling". He may not have known where he was going but he knew why he went - that He believed God and His promises. Faith is neither the exclusive activity of the mind in "accepting" a proposition, apart from the rest of the



personality, nor is it any activity of the personality apart from the mind. It is a motivation for all action which is based on confidence in a Person. Being personal through and through it is, therefore, moral in the most ultimate way.

### Faith is Moral - Love

The moral structure of faith is also indicated by its relation to the heart and to love. The heart is a common symbol for the moral center of the personality. The heart is never, in the Bible, distinguished from the seat of thinking by an emphasis on mere feeling. It is the "inner man" where moral considerations are tested and where the "atmosphere" of the whole person is determined. It is the seat of moral judgment and the arbitor of action. God makes all moral appeals to the heart. Jesus said it was out of the heart that evil proceeded and it was the heart which was to love God wholly. Paul speaks of the heart as being darkened and foolish and lustful and hard and impenitent (Rom. 1-2) and the heart into which the Holy Spirit sheds love (Rom. 5). To him it is the heart that obeys (6:17) and the heart that believes (10:9) unto righteousness. That Christ may dwell in the hearts of the Ephesians, by faith, was Paul's prayer (3:16) and this is related to a "rooting and grounding in love." To the Galatians Paul said it was not the external things whether circumcision or no circumcision - but "faith working by love" (5:6) that availed with God. Faith is put in the context of love in I Cor. 13, not contrariwise.

One of the most remarkable and significant teachings about the Christian life is that it is not faith that satisfies the law, but it is love that is the fulfilment of the whole law. This does not mean,

obviously, that one could love without faith but that in love faith comes into its moral significance. It is remarkable the number of times these two words are conjoined. Paul had heard with delight about the Ephesians faith in Christ and love to the saints (1:16) and his parting blessing is, "love with faith from God" (6:23). The Thessalonians were to put on the "breast plate of faith and love" (I, 5:8). To Timothy he wrote that the grace of Christ had been abundant to him in faith and love (I, 1:14) and that Timothy was to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness (I, 6:11). Philemon was highly commended for his love and faith toward Christ and all the saints (5).

If faith is a moral act and its maintainance a moral concern, the righteousness which it brings is related most directly to the moral life. It is commonly said that righteousness, or justification, is a purely a legal and eschatological matter, that is, (1) atonement is objective only and not in any sense at all connected with human renovation or human sin or human will or actions. Donald Barnhouse in Eternity (Jan. 1958) says, "God cannot improve human nature (italics his) . . . God will not improve the old sinful nature of man. God has never been interested in moral reform" (p. 26). And (2) the future judgment, for the one who "accepts Christ," is past so that nothing can be charged against him no matter what he does, and that in the next life full redemption will be experienced. To put it in a modern metaphor - a believer enters a sort of time capsule which insulates him against all the cause/effect relationship of sin to life and puts him into a sort of pre-mature heaven where temptation's force is lost by a re-evaluation of sin. As Ladd says, "It is as though we had already entered heaven." This is perfectionism.

Now, it must be conceded that justification is a forensic matter. It, with righteousness and unrighteousness is a legal term. They are borrowed from the court-room. Though we cannot force a full analogy from the halls of justice for the tremendous spiritual truth of God's redemptive work, still some real light is shed on it by our experience with law. One of the most central truths is that the terms of the court-room are symbols of the facts of human experience. The symbols may be objective and impersonal but the situations they describe are thoroughly real. These terms have moral connotations or they are bloodless and totally irrelevant. An "acquitted" young criminal who continues to sin, makes the court a farce when that "acquittal" ties the hands of the court from further trial of him. Everyone knows that the court terms are attempts to describe facts of experience. When the terms no longer describe the real, truth no longer exists, and the terms are irrational--actually immoral.

This truth must be clearly distinguished from the corollary truth in soteriology that no sinner can atone for his own sin or commend himself to God by anything that he can do. He stands condemned for his own sin and, by disposition, inclined to commit more sin. He is a sorry figure and entirely helpless so far as his relation to law is concerned. But here, in redemption, the analogy of the law court breaks down. It is not primarily the law that we have broken, but a Person whom we have hated. The relationship is primarily personal, not legal. It is here that the pregnant phrase "by faith" transcends the law court and enters the moral realm. Justification cannot be "by law", no matter how willing the Judge or repentant the prisoner. "By faith" breaks the legal logic which so often dominates soteriological theories. "By faith" means that

the prisoner now lives in "newness of life" because he "reckons himself dead to sin and alive to God" and has yielded himself to God "from the heart" (Rom. 6) in the obedience of faith. Righteousness, then, which is the ruling of the divine court regarding him, is not a reversal of all the revealed moral law of God, and a violation of truth but an example of the righteousness of God. The sinner was not confirmed in his immorality by an amoral judgment but compelled to be what God says he is. The legal judgment describes a real, by the grace of God.

It is popular to brand this kind of thinking as liberal and humanistic. A recent article in a popular religious paper (Bell, Ibid.), in stressing the legal righteousness which Christ provides as being unsullied by any effort on man's part to achieve it, said that human pride glories in its supposed ability to achieve goodness and its power for personal reformation and to make the self righteous. But rather than this sort of alternative being the only other one to a wholly supine and a moral reliance on the merit of another, the Biblical teaching seems to make us uncomfortably aware that God requires the ultimate of us when we meet Him in the encounter of grace. How easy it would be to relax all moral effort and expect Christ to do for us what in all good conscience we know we owe Him. Salvation is of grace and no human excellence can achieve it. We cannot initiate salvation. We cannot commend ourselves to God. "Our best" is looking to the wrong source for righteousness and it results in ugly self-righteousness. But faith is not the cessation of all effort or the relaxing of all moral tensions, or the loss of any personal integrity. Faith is a reversal of all dependencies from other than God - to God Himself. It involves obedience, not primarily to law but to God whose spirit interprets law spiritually to the inner

heart. "By faith" is a new direction of all of life's activities and love. It initiates the life-long, yea, eternity-long, serving of God. Faith is not the surrender of moral responsibility but the beginning of real moral maturation. It is not necessarily a change in activity (it is conceivable, though not likely, that one could keep all written law), but it is a change in the moral atmosphere of the person -- a change of the object of affection. It means that instead of living for the approval of others, or the self, or pride of personal integrity measured by the letter of the law, we now look beyond these things -- not to dispise them, for they are right in their places -- to God who has been made Lord of the whole life. There is a growing sensitivity to His approval or disapproval. We "take orders from God," without taking advantage of that apparent freedom from external restraint. Taking orders from God does not liberate us from social obligation and Biblical teaching and common human responsibilities. It does not permit us to disentangle ourselves from the interlocking human relations that constitutes normal and proper humanhood. We cannot fly in the face of convention and push away the hands that cling to us for strength and help. "Taking orders from God," in the life of faith means that all our thoughts, words and actions, stand under the constant judgment of God as to the motivation, intention, moral quality of our obedience. Paul describes this life of faith in a clear and forceful way (I Cor. 4:1-5) when he said it is required of a steward that he be found faithful. The faithfulness was not a judgment which another could make, either favorably or otherwise. It was not even enough for the personal conscience to approve. The final word must be spoken by the Lord.

"By faith" is the moral link between the provision of Calvary and sinful men. It makes the juridical term justification a true

description of the redeemed life. It prevents moral complacency by demanding moral relevancy. It undercuts all possibility of spiritual pride or the possibility of a religious aristocracy. It prohibits isolation from the world and forces full participation in it. It robs of any comfort from verbal symbols, or intellectualism, and compels a continuing, faithful, patient, prayerful, sensitive growing awareness of God's Spirit and His directive for daily life. Some kind of idolatry is the only alternative to the Lordship of Christ and idolatry is the essence of sin. Justification is a falsehood if it is imputed to an idolatrous man. No idolatrous person can say, "I accept Christ as my Saviour and Lord." The saving Christ is not a proposition to be accepted but a Person to be loved and obeyed.

Faith, then, is the continuing atmosphere in which all the benefits of grace and steps in salvation are made possible. We could say with Hannah Whitehall Smith that the believer has everything provisionally but nothing is actually his until by faith he appropriates it (Christian's Secret, p. 52). And this appropriation is morally structured. It is of the essence of obedience and love. That is faith gears into moral experience.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A very marked peculiarity of the dispensation of the Spirit is that, as a rule, the surface of life is so undisturbed . . . The man talks and laughs and plans a shrewd trade and takes his evening in pleasure and seems to be careless of all spiritual demand; but there is another chapter you cannot read. Motives are being used, great self-decisions are now and again being made, silently there is deposit after deposit in moral character; and all this is watched and treated and lifted into full redemptional bearing by the swift and profound agency of the Holy Spirit. And there is philosophy in this quiet, undramatic method, too; for were there constant noise and upheaval and terror there could be no genuine self-decision (Olin Curtis, The Christian Faith, p. 340).

Personal experience is the self, conscious of itself, in relation to someone else. The ultimate in conscious awareness is the self in the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit awakens any dormant or hidden element essential to true personality and imperiously drives the person to genuine self-decision. It is highly significant that Jesus was said to have been lead (Matthew and Luke) or driven (Mark) into the wilderness to be tempted or tested. Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit (Luke), entered into that ultimate experience in which the deepest purposes of his being were exposed and explored. He could never meet any event in life which had not been prefigured in that testing. It was moral preparation not only for the terrors of the crucifixion from which, humanly, he drew back in fear for a moment, but also for the more dangerous and subtle inducement to short circuit his ultimate goal in the interest of a pre-mature and spectacular and superficial victory. That he was tempted in all points like as we are, relates this kind of testing to ourselves. And it is under the ministry of the Spirit that this occurs. We have said that faith is an intensely moral act and important to us as men in appropriating the benefits of the

atonement, but it is by the ministry of the Holy Spirit that we are enabled to exercise faith in this saving way.

"When He is come . . ." Jesus' own work was to have been personalized in individuals and enlarged - universalized - by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Nothing of the philosophical problems implicit in the doctrine of the Trinity or the person of the Holy Spirit in relation to the God head is to be attempted here. To the early church the Holy Spirit was a matter of practical experience, not theoretical speculation, and it is this practical aspect which is important here. In the course of progressive revelation, any possible speculative idea about God became "existential" in the Incarnation. God now was seen to be real, an empirical fact as well as an intellectual concept; "That which was from the beginning . . . which we have seen and heard declare we unto you. (I Jn. 1:1-3)." In the Holy Spirit the personality of God is revealed -- in the ultimate sense of that word person. Rather than the personality of the Holy Spirit becoming an intellectual problem, to the early church He was the final solution to such a problem in relation to God, in this, that the presence of God was actualized deep within the personality of man by the Holy Spirit. He is himself pure person. The person and work of the Holy Spirit was religion before it was theology or philosophy.

The religious dimension of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit must be kept alive by the church and holiness theology in particular rises or falls in respect of that imperative. The entire work of redemption hangs on the ministry of the Holy Spirit but the view one holds of Him determines one's view of redemption. If the absolute sovereignty of God prevails over the existential relevance of the Holy Spirit, salvation



is by decree and not by grace. Redemption is a philosophical concept, then, with no relevance for moral experience. If the physical and historical fact of Christ and the cross alone is central and the Holy Spirit is God's agent in applying the benefits, then salvation is wholly objective and the sacrifice of Christ on the cross an exact equivalent of objective sins and redemption is a monetary matter reserved for certain specified individuals covered by the transaction. The relation between God and man is legal and not moral. It is economic and juridical, not of grace. If the Holy Spirit, alone, is central -- as is true in many charismatic groups - there is no objective guard to the emotional subjectivism which results and salvation is determined by psychological phenomena not objective facts. It is sentimental only. The only safe means of preserving redemption from rationalism, antinomianism and psychologism is to maintain a balanced view of the Trinity which includes both the objective and subjective and personal aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit. It will be seen how this relates to redemption teaching.

Who and what is the Holy Spirit? No convenient analogy helps to answer this question as the Father and Son analogy aids our minds in this case. A brief Biblical study may contribute some light.

#### Old Testament Concept

In the Old Testament the spirit represented the life and activity of a person and never an independent entity. The Spirit of God was the strength, vitality, guidance, life, of God. In Mosaic times the Spirit was the energy of God, not a separate person. There was no distinction between God and "His Spirit" as there is in the New Testament. Men,

possessed of "the Spirit of God" were men made capable by God of unusual strength, wisdom, leadership and sanctity. The prophets were "men of the Spirit", and were the mouth pieces of God, forth tellers and fore tellers.

The Messianic Kingdom was to be a nation in which everyone would be filled with the Spirit. The Kingdom was to be a Spirit possessed nation. Everyone would be possessed and everyone would be unusual in strength, wisdom and sanctity as a result. This common Possessor would give cohesion to the nation and make it capable of unusual and peculiar accomplishment. The Messiah - the Anointed One - would be permanently possessed of the Spirit of God giving him spectacular and tremendous physical and moral powers which would set him apart as a Leader before the world and he would be able to endue others by His own power. There were to be signs of this possession in both Leader and people; exstacy, visions, prophecy, healings, powers. It is no small wonder that the Jews sought after signs and found some hope in Jesus' acts of miracles but only disappointment and disillusionment in his death. The signs they looked for were materialistic not spiritual and it was because of this fact that Jesus rebuked them so roundly.

Old Testament teaching pointed to the true meaning of the coming of the Spirit but since spiritual truth is necessarily couched in analogy the truth was often misunderstood. Zechariah saw the seven lamps burning in the tabernacle and was told they were the eyes of the Lord which range through the earth and that it was "not by might nor by power but by my Spirit" that God was to conquer. These eyes gave the idea of God's immanence. The figure of an ever-widening river was common. "I will pour water on the thirsty and floods on the dry ground" (Isa. 64:3),

is an analogy of "pouring my Spirit on thy seed." Joel records God's promise, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh," under the analogy of the river or an abundant source of life-giving water. Hence, the woman of Samaria would understand something of the "living water springing up to everlasting life," and Jesus could preach convincingly to the crowd by saying, "If any man thirst let him come to me and drink," and "He that believeth on me out of him shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7). The people then would have known that which John supplies to those who would read his story outside the Jewish fold, "This spake he of the Spirit." They looked for just such a Messiah. John the Baptist's message was relevant, too, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." It was announcement to the Jews and spoken in a language they understood.

Peter simply said in explanation of the events of Pentecost that the Holy Spirit had come. "This is what you have looked for. This is the Kingdom and these are the promised signs of it." The Hebrew people had been thoroughly prepared for this. Pentecost conformed to the pre-arranged pattern. Its' truth could not be denied by the alert Hebrew who looked for the redemption of Israel. The Holy Spirit was the life of God in men.

It is significant, perhaps, that the "signs" accompanying the coming of the Holy Spirit were to Gentiles different than to Jews. The signs meaningful to the Jew would not be so to the Gentile. Appropriate external signs remained in the church only so long as they validated the new order to those who needed the confirmation. To insist on their perpetuity beyond this point of need is absurd. Those who seek for these signs today simply fail to understand the function they served.

## Pre-Pentecostal Teaching

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is introduced for the first time as a ~~separate~~ entity, an agent of God, with an independent will -- a person with specific functions. He was involved in Mary's pregnancy. He assumed leadership in Jesus' life and ministry.

Jesus' baptism with the Spirit was highly symbolic for this was the external sign of Messiahhood calculated to introduce the people to the fact of the Kingdom which was at hand. Jesus' "signs and wonders" validated Him as the Spirit anointed Messiah and showed "his glory". In answer to John's question, "Are you He?" the answer that the sick are healed, the demons are cast out and the poor have the gospel preached to them was to say, "Yes, John, the signs are right. I am He." The signs were those expected by one filled with the promised Spirit.

So important and convincing were these signs that Jesus could cry out his most solemn and terrible warning to those who, seeing the signs, could dare to say, "this is the work of a demon and not the Holy Spirit." The nature of that rejection was blasphemy. It had no forgiveness, not because sin as such could not be forgiven but because the last trace of moral integrity was forfeited by this deliberate violation of revealed truth. The life and cohesion of the New Kingdom was the Holy Spirit and to attribute the Messianic signs to the demons, rendered a person incapable of further moral discrimination. "When He is come, he will testify of me." Christ cannot be known savingly, apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He provides sufficient "signs" to convince. That is His ministry. Apart from Christ there is no salvation. To interpret the Holy Spirit as a demon is simply to cut one's self off from

the atonement. It is "the lie".

Paul was concerned about this matter. The Corinthians had an abnormal desire for the powers, gifts, signs, and psychological ecstasy which the Holy Spirit's indwelling was supposed to provide. To them, however, it was the showiness and emotion that intrigued them and they gloried in the spurious effects. Ecstasy itself has no moral guards and the Corinthians had no spiritual discrimination. When, said Paul, in ecstasy, one says, "Jesus is accursed" (precisely what they said of him in Mark's gospel), it has a demonic source. Only by the Holy Spirit can a man say, "Jesus is Lord." The test of the Holy Spirit's presence is not ecstasy, but the sharpened awareness of Christ and his demands of Lordship on us.

The Holy Spirit is important to the inner life of men, to his moral life. Only in His illumination is it possible, in the midst of conflicting pseud-truths, to know The Truth. It is not that one Person or another of the God-head is more or less important ontologically than the others but that in distorting truth by personal rebellion the channel of spiritual life is destroyed and the Holy Spirit cannot guide into saving truth.

#### The Promise of the Father

Jesus foretold the coming of the Holy Spirit's coming to all men. He said that the Father had promised to give men the Holy Spirit. It was the "promise of the Father," that was important to Him. Strangely, Jesus did not seem to consider himself the ultimate gift to men, though salvation was through him alone, but he pointed to the spiritual immanency and dynamic of the promised Spirit who would bring the Christ-event

to completion. The Holy Spirit was the ultimate revelation of God because by Him Christ would be available spiritually to all men.

In Luke 11, Jesus answers a searching question about prayer, "teach us to pray." As is so commonly the case in the New Testament answers to simple questions became the occasion for profound analyses and teaching. The answer is bigger than the question. So here, Jesus was talking about real prayer, the ultimate concerns of prayer, and not, as is so often supposed, a discussion of how to obtain material things by prayer. Scholars believe that this whole 1-13 section is a unit of thought in contrast to Matthew's record. If this is true, the answer to the question. "Your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him," sets the purpose before us. Prayer, to Jesus, was union with God by the Holy Spirit and this is what he wanted the disciples to know. Remember, it was a characteristic of the Kingdom that the Holy Spirit would be available to everyone not just a select few. If we follow Matthews chronology it seems apparent that the subject of conversation just previous to this story had to do with Jesus casting demons out in the synagogue and the bitter criticism of the Jews. Significantly, the Lukan passage is followed by another like event. The subject under discussion was the kind of signs which would indicate the kingdom had come and one of them was the presence of the Holy Spirit. All the rich exegesis of this whole section must be reluctantly by-passed, except the point at issue. Prayer, in this kingdom, was a vital communication between God and men. The term "Father" indicates the approval with which God meets us. This is a fellowship and the greatest gain from prayer was not food but mutual love -- the Holy Spirit -- God, Himself.

The great truth Jesus was teaching is that God wants to give Himself to us. Assurance of this is the deepest concern of this bit of teaching. Contrary to common interpretation, it seems more in keeping with the whole spirit of the passage to see in the analogy of the reluctant friend a contrast to God's ways. A friend may be slow in awakening and recognizing the urgency of our need, but even he will finally stir himself and give us what we ask for. Then Jesus clinches that point with the assurance of God's willingness in v.v. 9 and 10. It is not good exegesis to press the application farther than Jesus did. We are not taught to beg, but that God is more available than our friends.

But there is more to say. God is not just a friend, he is Father and as a father he is not only anxious to be loved and addressed and trusted but wants to give us better things than we ask for. The application of this analogy goes beyond the first one. God is not only instantly available to our cry but he answers our real need -- a need for himself. The whole point of prayer is fellowship with God, for our needs and responsibilities. The promise of the Holy Spirit is the answer to the question posed. The Holy Spirit is God in us. Prayer is not forcing a reluctant friend to give us what we need, but it is entering the presence of our Father who eagerly gives us what we most need - Himself. The highest reach of prayer is for God's Holy Spirit. That is the essence of Christian communion.

This Holy Spirit was promised by the Father. Jesus was to send Him forth. "I will send forth the promise of my Father," he said (Luke 24:49). "Wait for the promise of the Father," he continued (Acts 1:4), "for you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence." Apparently it is this event Jesus had in mind in Luke 11:13. The ful-

fillment was on the day of Pentecost when he (the ascended Christ) shed forth this, which ye both see and hear" (Acts 2:33) according to Peter.

God's promise of the Holy Spirit was not simply to the early Jewish disciples. Peter assured those whose hearts were quickened on the day of Pentecost, that "the promise of the Holy Spirit is to you and your children and to all that are afar off" (Acts 2:38), on the condition of repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins. Paul said the Gentiles, through Christ, could receive the promise of the Spirit through faith, as well as the Jews (Gal. 3:14). In this remarkable passage, "the blessing of Abraham," which is righteousness by faith, is equated with "the promise of the Spirit," made available by Jesus Christ. "By faith" is righteousness, and sonship, and "because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts . . ." (Gal. 4:6). We have here the identification of the promise to be both the Spirit and all that is available by the Spirit. The promise of the Father is not simply an "experience", but the soteriological content of all God's provision of grace. That is, when the Holy Spirit is come, He brings with Him all that God has provided for us. This is borne out by the passages having to do with the promises of God and those referring to the "Holy Spirit of promise."

#### The Function of the Holy Spirit

The function of the Holy Spirit is well defined. He was to abide with men in contrast to the temporary presence of the physical Jesus. But in no way was He to supplant the presence of Christ. Through the



Holy Spirit, Jesus said, "I will come to you" (John 14:18), obviously in a more effectual and universal sense than physical.

The Holy Spirit was to be a "Comforter" (King James translation) or Paraclete (Helper, Advocate) or Counselor (RSV) (Jn. 14:16). No English word quite conveys the meaning of the Greek term. There is nothing of the sentimental or emotional in the word. It, rather, suggests a change of a basic situation for the better. The presence of the Holy Spirit would create a new atmosphere in which to live out the implications of the gospel -- not easier external circumstances but a heart strengthened from within to meet any outside emergency. The disciples would not be tragically orphaned by Jesus' departure because, though absent physically, the Lord would be permanently present in the individual through the Spirit. All temporal and spacial limitations are transcended in this new order.

The Holy Spirit was the Spirit of Truth and the divine Teacher and prod to the memory (Jn. 14:26 and 16:13). He would glorify Christ, never speaking of Himself but witnessing to Christ always (John 15). He is always self-effacing, throwing light on the Saviour instead of Himself. When we become aware of Jesus and sense His tremendous claims upon us, we know (if we remember it), that the Holy Spirit is operating. He does not make men conscious of himself but of our Lord.

The Holy Spirit not only gives dynamic effectiveness to the Christian's witness (Acts 1:8) but, Himself assumes the responsibility of convicting and convincing the world. Jesus said, "If I had not come, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloke for their sins" (John 15:22), but when He left the Holy Spirit would universalize this knowledge, "He will convict of sin, and righteousness and judgment."

The Holy Spirit's coming hung on the finished work of Christ on the Cross. He could not come until Christ's atoning work was done. "If I go not away the Holy Spirit will not come to you" (John 16:7). John, in explaining Jesus' promise of the "rivers of living water" (John 7:39), said, "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." The Holy Spirit came to a reconciled world and could not otherwise come.

#### Post Pentecost Teaching about the Holy Spirit

On the day of Pentecost, and following, the promised signs attested the phenomenon of the coming of the Spirit. Jesus became the central message of the Church. The power of articulation - utterance - was of the Spirit. That which was articulated was Jesus Christ the Lord.

In Jerusalem - (land of orthodox Jews) "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." Jews - by blood and by proselyting - saw the signs and heard the message. They were amazed and "pricked in the heart," and asked what to do. Peter interpreted the events as a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. The Spirit was to be "poured out" on all flesh. The qualification for receiving the gift of the Spirit was repentance and baptism in Jesus' name.

Philip went to Samaria - (land of renegade Jews) and preached Christ to them with Kingdom signs validating his own ministry and the people believed. Peter and John were sent to them and under their ministry the Holy Spirit was given them with no recorded demonstration.

In Caesarea the Roman army officer, Cornelius, a Gentile who was a religious man (at least), was, with his household the recipient of the

Holy Spirit under Peter's preaching. The "tongues" mentioned seemed to be a convincing evidence to Peter and the Jews that this was indeed the gift of the Holy Spirit. Cornelius seemed to need no such confirmation. Subsequently to this experience they were given Christian baptism indicating that previous to this event they were not Christians, but simply religiously devout persons.

In Ephesus, Paul found disciples of John the Baptist, possibly made so through the ministry of Apollos, loyal to John but ignorant of Christian teaching. Paul saw something was not quite right with them. His question is more interesting than the English translation is quite capable of revealing. It served to "locate" them. The action of the aorist participle, (in this case, "believing"), is customarily understood to have preceeded the main verb. Therefore, it can read, "When you became believers - or began believing, did you receive the Holy Spirit?" or (less literal but more true to the meaning), "What did baptism mean to you? By it, did you receive the Spirit?" The answer is illuminating, "We never heard about there being any Holy Spirit," or possibly, "We did not know the Holy Spirit had come." This immediately called for the question, "Then, to what were you baptized?" The reply, "John's baptism," revealed that these persons, had missed the point of John's teaching altogether, if, indeed, they had ever heard it.

Perhaps, they were among those who hearing John and being baptized by him continued their travels to other countries. No better way could be devised to appeal to these loyal supporters of John, of whom there were many (John 3:22-25; Luke 7:19; Matt. 14:12), than to ask about the results of their faith. Paul could then say, "John taught that his disciples should transfer their faith to Jesus Christ who was coming who

would in turn give them the Holy Spirit." The Ephesian disciples were then baptized in Jesus' name and under Paul's hand received the Holy Spirit with the most full validating demonstration of any other than the original event at Pentecost. The testimony of God to the Christian believers was the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Paul's question to them was sharply diagnostic. It asks the most revelatory thing about faith. It distinguishes clearly between Christian and all other kinds of religious faith. Did your faith give you the Holy Spirit? It does not ask whether their faith in the Holy Spirit resulted in His coming. It points to the fact that only faith in Christ can result in the coming of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the Holy Spirit validates Christian faith. If one believes in Jesus the Holy Spirit confirms that faith. Faith in Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit are truths that validate each other. That is, the fact that one does not have the Holy Spirit points without question to the fact that alleged faith is either not really faith or that the object of faith is other than Christ.

There is one other record of an initial filling with the Holy Spirit and it is the only record we have of an individual, alone, being filled. Ananias (Acts 9:17-18) came to blinded Saul with the express ministry of opening his eyes and that he might be filled with the Holy Spirit. Only his physical healing is then mentioned except that after he arose he was baptized. We may judge that he was filled with the Spirit but nothing is told us about the details of it, either as to what was required on his part or the results. It is interesting to note that baptism followed as it did with Cornelius' household.

## Results of the Holy Spirit's Coming

The New Testament gives a few hints as to the results in the church and in individuals of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

There seems to be no semantic significance in distinguishing between the terms "filling", "baptized", "endued", "fell upon", "gave", "received", or "poured out." At least, in all cases, the terms are used interchangeably with no apparent difference in meaning. For instance, Jesus said that the disciples would be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5). He also said, according to Luke (24:49), that they would be endued (literally, clothed), with power and also that the Holy Spirit would come upon them (Acts 1:8). All of these terms (different Greek words) were used by Jesus as reported by Luke. Luke's term referring to the actual event was another word altogether, namely, filled (Acts 2:4), and Peter reported it as a falling upon. Incidentally, baptism in reference to the Holy Spirit's coming is only used in prospect never in retrospect or to describe the event of the Spirit's actual coming. John the Baptist foretold the event by the use of the term, saying that Christ would be the one who baptized with the Holy Spirit and possibly his water baptism was an analogy for the spiritual event. Jesus is said to have used the word in referring to John's teaching, but he said, "you will be baptized" (Acts 1:5). Peter recalls this whole complex of usage in Acts 11:16 where the only other occasion of the use is recorded.

On the day of Pentecost the disciples were "filled". Peter's sermon quoted Joel's word, "poured out." The Samaritans "received". On Cornelius' household the Spirit "fell". Ananias prayed that Saul might "be filled." Peter said God "gave" the Holy Spirit, uniting the "fell"

of the account of Cornelius experience and the "filling" of the Pentecostal event to add up to three separate words for the same event. And the Spirit "came on" the 12 men in Ephesus. A different word is used in every case, yet the essential fact is the same, so it would be quite impossible to press dogmatic distinctions between the words. It proves to be equally difficult in all cases to show any difference on the basis of grammar.

This points up a needed observation, namely, that these figures of speech must not be unduly literalized. To do so caricatures into absurdity the sublime truth which is being taught. Where spiritual matters are taught no single figure of speech is used in Scripture, undoubtedly to prevent just such heavy-handed literalism into which we are so apt to fall. For instance there are well over a quarter of a hundred symbols of Christ's redemptive relationship to us, from one who pays a ransom, through the birth analogy and marital relationship to a ritual sacrificial offering and vital vine and branch figure. So here, there are possibly a dozen different words to describe the same event, each contributing something to the total concept.

However, the results of a vital union with the Holy Spirit are not so difficult to understand. The references in which verbs are important follow. Peter, "having been filled (aorist, pass. participle), with the Holy Spirit," spoke to those who had imprisoned him, with courage and power (Acts 4:8). The disciples prayed for boldness to speak while God was "stretching forth his hand to heal," and for "signs and wonders" to be done through Jesus' name. And having prayed "the place was shaken . . . and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" and spoke the word of God with boldness (Acts 4:30-31). Paul, having been

filled (aorist, pass. part.) with the Holy Spirit fastened his eyes on the sorcerer (Acts 13:9) and rebuked him sorely and pronounced a curse on him. Paul and Barnabas, after being expelled from Antioch met with the disciples in Iconium where all were "filled with joy and the Holy Spirit." In this case, the passive imperfect indicative of the verb "filled" suggests a state of having begun and continuing from the past into the present. The following passages use an adjective or substantive so that the time element is not a matter of concern. In Acts 6:3 we are told the church sought a man "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom", and in v. 5, it is Stephen who is chosen as one "full of faith and the Holy Spirit." Later (7:55), it is Stephen "full of the Holy Spirit" who while being stoned to death, saw Jesus standing at God's right hand. Barnabas, also, was said to be a good man, "full of the Holy Spirit and faith" (11:24).

More specific statements are made in the Epistles regarding the ministry of the Holy Spirit. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit" which had been given (aorist part.) to us (Rom. 5:5), said Paul, as a result of justification. To Titus he writes contrasting "the works of righteousness which we have done" with the true righteousness stemming from God's mercy, namely, "through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit which he [had] poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour (3:5-6). To the Galatians, Paul writes that Christ came in the fulness of time (4:4-7), to redeem them under the law, in order that they might (contingent) receive the adoption of Sons. Because they became sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into "our hearts".



## Signs of the Spirit's Indwelling

It is the Holy Spirit, as we have already noted, who assures us of our salvation, and whose presence is the test of salvation. In Romans Paul says that "the Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God"(8:16). In the same chapter he says it is the presence of the indwelling Spirit that signifies that we are spiritual and not carnal (v. 9), and that the test of being Sons of God is being led of the Spirit. These are dynamic rather than formal tests of salvation. John, in his first letter strongly applies the tests of salvation identifying the presence of the Spirit with the love which we have. It is a solemn test by which to judge ourselves.

John, moreover, makes the attitude men take to Christ a test of the Spirit's indwelling (4:1-3), as does Paul in I Cor. 12.

The Holy Spirit is, also, a pledge, a seal, an option, an assurance of ownership. "Having believed in Christ," Paul writes (in Eph. 1:13-14), "ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Again, the aorist tenses in both main verb and participle indicate simultaneous action initiated in the past. This same sense of a pledge is found, also, in II Cor. 1:22 and 5:5, and the warning against grieving that Holy Person by whom we are sealed (Gal. 4:30).

Personal matters are the Spirit's concern. He convicts for sin (Jn. 16:8) and leads to truth (Jn. 16). By Him we are to put to death the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13). He manifests Himself through those who are in the body of Christ (I Cor. 12). He leads the Christian (Philip, Paul). He leads the Church ("It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us," and, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul"). The fellowship of Christians, to God and to each other is by the Holy Spirit. He is the



spiritual and vital and organismic unity and cohesion in the body of Christ. To violate this is to "destroy the temple of God which is holy" (I Cor. 5) for which individuals are themselves destroyed.

### Receiving the Holy Spirit

How is the Holy Spirit received? What conditions must be met? John tells us in 7:39 that the Holy Spirit was to be given to those who believed on Jesus. To those who were quickened by conviction on the day of Pentecost, Peter said, "repent and be baptized . . . and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Peter, again, in another early sermon (5:32), disturbs the complacency of the orthodox Jews by saying that it is to those who obey that the Holy Spirit has been given. Peter later reasons, "If God gave them [the Holy Spirit] like he did unto us when we believed . . . (Acts 11:17). The promise of the Spirit is through faith, Paul says (Gal. 3:14), and believing is the condition in Eph. 1:13. In a word, faith in Christ is the condition of receiving the Holy Spirit with the added commentary that faith includes obedience. There is no grammatical evidence to indicate that there is a time lapse between the inception of faith and the coming of the Holy Spirit. The intervening time element is a theological problem. This much must, however, be noted that no other condition than faith and obedience is mentioned anywhere as being the necessary prerequisite to the coming of the Spirit. Certainly faith is logically prior but not necessarily chronologically separated from the coming of the Holy Spirit according to the N.T.

Ought believers to seek to be filled with the Spirit? Of this much we can be exegetically sure. The disciples were commanded to "tarry

until", wait for (not ask for, or seek), the Holy Spirit, according to the text. He was promised and He was a gift, and faith in the One who promised assured them. Peter and his company were surprised when the Holy Spirit came on the house of Cornelius. Ananias came to Saul to be instrumental in giving him the Holy Spirit. Saul did not seek it. In fact, we have no command anywhere to seek or ask for the Holy Spirit, nor are there any occasions related in the New Testament where by the direct prayer for the Holy Spirit he came on those praying. The only evidence that it is in order to ask for the Holy Spirit is in Luke 11:13 and this passage must not be neglected, though it must not be interpreted too far afield of its own particular teaching or in such a way to do violence to the more specific teaching abundant everywhere. Probably, it would be safe to say that under the conditions given above, and with a deep understanding of what is involved, the highest reach of prayer is to ask for the Spirit. Certainly, no more holy matter could be transacted in the inner heart of man than to prepare for and receive the Holy Spirit. If this is the ultimate in personal prayer life it is in perfect keeping with all subsequent teaching about the abiding Holy Spirit. However, to substitute a prayer asking for the Holy Spirit, for the more difficult prayer for forgiveness and cleansing is nowhere in Scripture given a warrant.

One more segment of truth remains to be noted in relation to the Holy Spirit. Aside from the single Lukan reference to a praying for Him, the exhortations regarding the life of the Holy Spirit within us, are relative to maintaining His presence. In no case, is it ever suggested, let alone taught, that the Holy Spirit's presence or sealing is in any sense automatic or on non-moral conditions. We have already noted that

blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is impossible of forgiveness. This blasphemy is not verbal or against the person of the Holy Spirit as one would swear in Christ's name. It is turning the truth He teaches into a lie. It is deliberately interpreting light as darkness, Christ as a demon. It is never a sin of ignorance or doubt or despair but always a sin of studied rejection and deliberate distortion of moral truth. A study of the few passages that deal with it indicates that mainly believers commit it since it is against the light He brings that this particular sin is committed. It is peculiarly and solemnly the possible sin of a once enlightened Christian.

Paul's Ephesian appeal, "be filled with the Spirit," must be taken in context, not separate from it. It lies in the midst of an exhortation to Christians, practical and earnest. Do not be foolish in these evil days, Paul says, but understand what God's will is. The contrast is the foolish rioting of the drunken and the glorious spiritual strength of the Spirit filled man. This exhortation is not that a believer without the Spirit should become filled with Him, but that the Christian should maintain the Spirit filled life once begun in the past. This is indicated by the tense of the verb "filled", it being an imperative in the imperfect indicative, indicating an action begun in the past and continuing to the present. This tense would not be proper were this a command to now begin an action.

In the letter to the Galatians, Paul's urgent appeal is to "walk in the Spirit" which distinguishes the believer from those who "walk in the flesh". These two walks cannot be maintained in the same person at the same time. The Spirit-filled life is not a static thing but exists in continuing and pursuing the life of the Spirit. Only in this

active life can the lust of the flesh be avoided. There are two ways and only two, "he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the spirit reap eternal life." (6:8). This absolute contrast is also described in Romans 8. "Quench not the Spirit," Paul told the Thessalonians and apparently meant that the energy of the Spirit as He worked through human personality was to be honored and cherished. This exhortation is to believers and cannot well be interpreted as a rejecting of the Holy Spirits conviction for sin which a sinner feels as is so often the use made of it in the evangelistic pulpit.

The most explicit counsel is given in Eph. 4 regarding the believers attitude toward the Spirit. To "grieve" Him according to the context would be to fail to "put away . . . the old man," and to "put on the new man." It would be to fail to put away "the lie" and to speak truth and to "put away bitterness . . . and malice" and "to be kind one to another." It is these things that the Spirit is prompting us to do. To refuse to do them is to forfeit His presence.

In a word, it seems to best express Biblical teaching to say that, rather than praying for the Holy Spirit, it is the believers moral obligation to studiously seek to create a place in his heart and life suitable for the dwelling of the Spirit. Whatever hinders His abiding must be put off. This care and sensitivity must be developed and maintained and exercised throughout life.

This leads to the further observation that the coming of the Holy Spirit marked the end of the alienation existing between man and God. The Holy Spirit is the bond of fellowship in the God-head. Now fellowship can be a proper word to describe the divine-human relationship.

When the estrangement ended in the body and spirit of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:15-22), God was again approachable -- immanent in the world, morally. God's love (abstract) becomes grace in Christ (concrete) and fellowship through the Holy Spirit (spiritual). The intention is made possible of a restored moral union with God from whom sin had isolated us. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (II Cor. 5), and this reconciliation is applied -- made available -- by the Holy Spirit. In Him, all the benefits of grace are available. Everything the atonement is objectively and provisionally is made personal and possible by the restoration of the Holy Spirit's activity in men.

The Spirit's field of operation is in the inner hearts of men. He strives, leads, convicts, enlightens, testifies of Christ, always forcing moral tensions and demanding moral decisions in the center of responsible consciousness. He forces personal matters. The Spirit's activity is the most deeply personal relationship possible to men. He preserves the objective atonement from abstraction and artificiality and antinomianism. In the ministry of the Holy Spirit all intermediaries, ritualistic, legal, sacerdotal, organizational or creedal, are pushed aside. In His presence men's souls are immediately confronted by God. This is not metaphysical -- or mystical, but moral in the ultimate sense. The Spirit applies truth morally, not simply intellectually as thought or empirically as experience, or moralistically, as law. It is a Whole Person to whole person confrontation.

This immediate personal confrontation - (not identity, or loss of personal awareness) -- was impaired by the fall. Divine alienation was not withdrawal of God's creative or preserving power but withdrawal of fellowship - a fellowship which could not exist in the fact of moral

rebellion. The law was the form of fellowship, but not its essence, and hence only a "stop-gap". In Christ the moral gap was closed because in Himself both the parties concerned were vitally united. In the Spirit this moral union is potentially universalized and the door opened to personal moral union with God. All impersonal and temporary aids and forms ended in Christ's involvement with the race and death on the cross. In the Spirit, the immediate personal confrontation is again established and the responsibility now lies in the hearts of men. The Biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit emphasizes a personal responsibility that robs the doctrine of the imputed merit of Christ of all its false hope. No moral being can borrow the personal righteousness of another to substitute for his own personal responsibility. "Moral" has no meaning in this sort of intellectual game. But Christ's obedience has opened the door for our own obedience to mean what it should - not as "works of righteousness" but as the minimal moral responsibility of rational man. Our obedience simply is a sign of moral integrity. We would dishonor Christ's work by our acts and attitudes were we to meet it with less than our moral minimal. And that Minimal is made possible by the Holy Spirit. In fact, every step in grace is made possible by the intimate personal ministry of the Holy Spirit. The atonement provided by Christ may be free but it is not cheap.

The progressive revelation of God and His redemptive will, to which the ministry of the Holy Spirit is the climax, is not primarily an intellectual education. It is rather a moral revival which leaves no part of life untouched. It is the Holy Spirit who makes the more objective aspects of revelation relevant to the continuing moral life of the race. Revelation, as the written word or the living Lord, can

never become static, dated, irrelevant, so long as the Holy Spirit personalizes it. The New Testament makes us aware of the importance of this truth and warns us, as Jesus did, of the danger of sinning against the Holy Spirit. The lie of Ananias and Saphira (Acts 5) was to the Holy Spirit and the consequent punishment was a sign to the new church of the seriousness of such a sin. Stephan accused the Jews of resiting the Holy Spirit as their fathers had done (Acts 7:51). Paul's only touch of severe warning in the otherwise genial first letter to the Thessalonians is that those who reject the call to holiness actually reject God who has given us His Holy Spirit. There is an echo of this same warning in the second letter. Since it is God's original plan to save us by sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, to not love truth is to be "damned". Only through the Spirit of Truth is salvation possible - to reject truth is to quench the Spirit and close the door to hope. The letter to the Hebrews is full of solemn warnings against apostacy. Heb. 6:1-8 is one passage and 10:29 another of shocking import. Both teach that to reject the ministry of the Spirit is to forfeit the protection of the blood of Christ because it is precisely for the sanctification of the people through the Holy Spirit that Jesus died.

### The Test of His Presence

A practical question remains, how is one to know when the Holy Spirit has come? and how may one know it is the Holy Spirit who has come? The answers have been suggested already but must be made explicit.

The answers to these two questions are closely related but will be distinguished for the sake of clarity. Fully aware of the theological expressions which we may seem to be challenging, it must be said that



at this point the importance of how we pray for the Spirit becomes a vital matter. If it is the Holy Spirit that we pray for directly, we must also be able to judge whether it is the Holy Spirit who has come or another spirit as "an angel of light". By thus praying, we are supposing that when He comes we will know it. How can we know it? Only by way of the ordinary physical and psychical channels over which every other knowledge comes. We are not equipped to distinguish the source and character of the matters that come to us via our senses, apart from some objective reference. A good many pleasant emotions are able to possess us and history is full of those who have interpreted these as God's will only to be lead blindly into tragedy and disgrace.

We feel that the failure of the Scriptures to give us a clear command to pray for the Spirit is a protection against our own incapacity to make the necessary discrimination at the point of sense experience. The Scriptural failure, moreover, to tell us how we could know when we were filled, by some emotional demonstration or spectacular manifestation is in the interest of our protection from the spurious. Since the Spirit is intangible we need tangible assurance. Otherwise, we have no test at all, therefore some have imagined that speaking in tongues or shouting or some other "evidence" would give the assurance necessary. But it is obvious that any manifestation of the emotions or subjective conviction of the mind can be duplicated in any one of a number of ways and is duplicated constantly in ways far outside the religious life. The Holy Spirit's presence cannot be compared with the erratic emotions of the sub-conscious though the effects of both may "feel" the same.



The direct question regarding the assurance of the identity of the Holy Spirit is akin to another question which will be answered in the proper place. "How does one know when the 2nd blessing has been experienced?" Both questions require an answer, and a good one but if the answer is given on the level of the question, the same pit-falls will be encountered -- a dangerous and irrational subjectivism without any rational or moral guards.

There are two tests of the presence of the Holy Spirit and neither of them can be counterfeited. The first is a pre-occupation with and a love for Christ. When we are filled with a sense of the nearness of Christ, the Holy Spirit has come. When we love God, the Holy Spirit is by that identified. We know He has come and we know it is He. But how do we know Christ? Not by mystical contemplation, all the testimony of the æsthetic saints to the contrary notwithstanding. We have an objective source of knowledge - the Scriptures, and this must absolutely determine any content of what we profess to know. True, the objective record is not, itself, Christ and He comes alive only as the Holy Spirit illuminates Him. But this serves only to emphasize a most important point. One does not know the living Christ by absorption only in the historical and physical facts of his existence. As important as this is it is not any more than what one could learn without the Holy Spirit. Mysticism is irrational. Biblical literalism and historicism is sterile rationalism. "When He is come," the moral imperative of the Lord Jesus Christ is pressed home to the "quick". Jesus was much more than history. He was - and is - the ultimate in moral demand. The Scriptures objectify all of this and the Holy Spirit personalizes it. There can be no counterfeiting this.

The second test follows naturally from the first and elaborates it. When the Holy Spirit comes, moral readjustments invariably accompany His coming. There is a current emphasis on the importance of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in evangelical circles. This is as it must be. But one often misses the moral dimension of the presence of the Spirit. It is well to pray for the Holy Spirit and acknowledge our helplessness without Him but He is not a Power we may coerce to our will, however spiritual and fine our plans. When we ask the Holy Spirit to convict sinners it is not to be imagined that we may escape the same searching exploration into our own motives and procedures. We do not bid the Holy Spirit, however humbly we may phrase our request. He bids us, for He cannot leap over our willfulness to do our will for us. If He comes, our whole inner life of personal responsibility will square away to His approval. We do not need the Holy Spirit for the execution of highly organized machinery, advertizing, psychological effects, turning big wheels. We can do that and our hidden, wrong motives may never show in all the fanfare. But, when we ask the Holy Spirit to come, He wants to see the private records, He insists that we be good. And, this, only the Holy Spirit can do and the goodness He helps us to maintain cannot be counterfeited.

How can we know when the Holy Spirit comes? We are assured by the Word of God that when we repent and believe and obey, God will give Him to us. There is no burden of proof on us any more as to the identity of Him who comes. What is the proof of His presence? When we love God and do His will and increase in moral sensitivity and genuine humility, then we know He is near. When we hate sin and love righteousness it is the Holy Spirit who is abiding. When Christ is Lord -- actually control-

ling us, -- it is by the Holy Spirit. He never calls attention to Himself. He spotlights Christ. He will not remain in a heart which is satisfied to dull the edge of the distinctions between right and wrong. He quickens the moral conscience. He forces moral tensions. He demands moral decision. It is He who confronts us with the disquieting presence of Christ. He heals, not by sentimental comfort but by purging. He it is who sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts. In His fellowship we are cleansed by the blood of Christ.

Faith is the transfer of the moral center of life from self to God. It is the Holy Spirit who lights the dark corners of motive and forces us to the clean commitment which is faith. Neither faith nor the ministry of the Holy Spirit is less than wholly personal and absolutely moral.

## THEOLOGY OF HOLINESS

Theologians enter the field of "sanctification" with a deep sense of wholesome fear. H. Orton Wiley deplores any spirit of controversy which might desecrate the holy ground upon which one treads (Christian Theology II, p. 441). Olin Curtis felt that this was one place where a weak argument would be more wholesome than a vitiating spirit (Christian Faith, p. 373). If sanctification is believed to be the description of normal Christian living there is a practical demonstration of that life required of the holiness theologian that may well vote against the theology. Wesley defined it as love to God and man. If he was right, the holiness preacher is impaled on the uncomfortable horns of a dilemma -- to fight for his faith he must be consumed by the nature of his faith, namely, love, which sharply limits the allowable weapons -- and the spirit in which he fights.

But love is not weak, nor blind, nor filled with false fear. Prayerfully, and with the utmost honest care, we seek the answer to the human quest, what does God require of me?

Theology has localized the meaning of sanctification to describe certain specific things within soteriology. Wesleyan synonyms are Christian Perfection, and Perfect Love, and corollary terms include Cleansing. A careful Biblical study of these terms and others follows.

## Truth and Holiness

We are seeking an answer to the question, "What is holiness?" As is true with all abstract words, definitions which simply multiply other abstract words do not really help much. One of the best ways out of the dilemma is to carefully note the contrasts to the word under consideration, the synonyms for it and the qualities associated with it which, themselves, have fairly stable communication value. One of the most illuminating ways to help define holiness is to study its relation to the word truth. Now, truth, itself is highly abstract. It is a temptation for theology to borrow its definitions from philosophy and there-by permit unreal meanings to prevail. But its antonym, "the lie" is useful in pinning down the meanings of all three words. Lying is a very human word and if it is a contrast to truth we gain a real concept of what truth may be by reference to it.

It has been noted that the Bible is written in the language of human experience and that for this reason it is the most universally understood book of any ever written, spanning the centuries with its relevance for all people everywhere. If holiness is important we may expect that its connotation will be made very clear in the Bible. It will not be left a vague, ambiguous idea which never settles down into workability. It will be understandable in any culture because its meaning is made available and stable by experience everywhere. A study of the New Testament abundantly satisfies this expectation.

Pilate asked, What is truth? and apparently did not stay for an answer, or sceptical of any answer he left it a rhetorical question, or, perhaps, it was a sneer in response to Jesus statement that he was born

to witness to truth. In any case, we ask the question again, and stay by until the Scriptural usage throws some light on the matter.

Truth is a common and significant word in Scripture, particularly in the New Testament. Jesus' glory was grace and truth (John 1:14). In contrast to the law given by Moses - grace and truth came by Christ (1:17). Truth is analagous to light and evil to darkness (in 3:18-21), so that evil is the antithesis of truth giving it a moral connotation to add to the philosophical concepts which theology is prone to borrow. Jesus said that true worship of God was "in spirit and truth", and must be (John 4:23-24). In another place Jesus indicates the moral nature of truth when to the Jews he said, If you continue in my words you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free (Jn. 8:32). To the bewildered answer, "we have never been in bondage, from what are we to be free?" Jesus answered, whoever sins is a slave to it, and no slave lives in the Son's house unless the Son should make the slave free. Here Jesus seems to equate truth and the Son for both are said to be able to grant freedom and the freedom is, by implication, from sin. Sin then is bondage but in what way? The test of their bondage was that they did not recognize and understand the message of Jesus who told them of God. God, as they knew rationally, was the author of truth. But the fact that they did not understand Jesus who came from and witnessed to God revealed their disordered moral nature. The only alternative to truth is "the lie", which is the very nature of the devil. These who, like Satan, (not because of him), "abide not in truth", are of the devil. The devil is the very epitome of sin because he repudiated moral union with God and whatever he says in this context is sin. Jesus is the very epitome of sin because he repudiated moral union with God and whatever he

says in this context is sin. Jesus is the very epitome of truth because he and the Father are one and what he is and what he says is truth. The bondage of sin in men can be broken in men if and when they believe Jesus who is the truth. The difference is a radical change in heart, not simply in mind. Truth for men is heart harmony with God, expressed in faith, and obedience - moral clear through. Sin, its antithesis is alienation from God because the heart is oriented about, "the lie" which supposes one may claim God as Father and not submit the heart to Him. "The lie" is complacent, self-satisfied moral disunity with God. "If I say truth, why do you not believe me?" is the indictment against "liars," as Jesus calls them (John 8). Truth consists in moral relationships, if this passage is properly understood. and not in the mental acceptance of a written word alone (the Jews did that) or in intellectual knowledge (the Greeks taught that). Clearly Jesus identified himself with truth. "I am . . . the truth . . . (14:6) he said and indicated again the personal nature of truth in contrast to an abstract, philosophical, a-personal and hence a-moral concept.

In remarkable passages about the Holy Spirit, Jesus even more forcefully emphasizes the personal in relation to truth. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth (14:17), who would "testify of me" (15:26), and "guide you into all truth" (16:13), and "glorify me" (16:14). It is significant that the work of the Holy Spirit (16:8-11) has to do with the quickening, enlightening, and comforting of the inner heart. The Holy Spirit's ministry cannot be objectified in the sense of acting apart from the personality of men. He does not have to do with things but persons. He operates in the heart -- the absolute center of human moral judgment and action. He faces men with truth in moral judgment. The encounter of

the Holy Spirit and the human heart represents the ultimate in moral experience. For this reason the world cannot receive Him or know Him though it is convicted by Him. Truth, again, is personal. It is Christ of whom the Spirit speaks. His task is to confront men by Christ who is Truth.

Jesus prayed that the disciples might be sanctified in the truth, with the explanation, "thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). Perhaps theological dogmatics must always be divided in opinion as to all that Jesus meant here by sanctification and the personal decision about it must be made on other grounds than is possible by an exegesis of this prayer alone but the fact remains that the relationship of truth to holiness is seen to be exceedingly close by this passage. At least one may say that sanctification has vitally to do with truth, and as has been already seen, truth has to do with a proper moral relationship with God of which Jesus is an integral part. Is it too much to say, at this point, and on the strength of Jesus' previous (and related) discussions that by joining truth to sanctification in this petition for men, a repudiation of "the lie" is implied? Everything sanctification is, stands squarely opposed to everything sin is. If "the lie" is sin, truth is holiness. Neither is formal, both are ultimately moral.

Paul concerns himself also with the truth/lie - truth/holiness complex. In Romans 1:18ff, he traces the course of human sin from "holding the truth of God in unrighteousness" (v. 18) or "hindering it" (ASV), to "changing the truth of God into 'the lie'" (25) with the explanation that in doing so they "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator." Here, truth is equated with a right relationship to God and "the lie" as a repudiation of the authority of God - the idea that



one could dispense with the absolute Lordship of God and maintain personal integrity. In the second chapter truth is contrasted to unrighteousness (v. 8), which puts a moral, not simply rational, connotation on truth and lays the whole in the context of responsibility. They do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, a matter which must be seen in the light of the "goodness of God" leading to repentance (v. 4) and the day of judgment (v. 6). In the Christian life, Paul stresses the right relationship with truth as essential. The Ephesians were to "put off" the old man and "put on the new man" which after God is created in righteousness and "truth holiness" (4:22-25). The "old man" is described in 17-19 much after the manner of Romans 1:18ff. The mind had been darkened by moral ignorance. The root of the trouble was a hardness of heart which resulted in an alienation from the true relationship with God — "the life of God". The Christian walk demanded a complete reversal of this unspeakable moral debacle. a renewing of the spirit of the mind. a deliberate "putting on" of "truth holiness" which involved putting away "the lie". This is, Paul said, the way they had been taught, "as the truth is in Jesus", and he expected them to follow this pattern. Just as the Gentiles' sin was literal and demoralizing so the Christian reversal was to be literal and integrating. One was a life lived in the context of "the lie", the other "the truth". It was sin or holiness; self as lord or Christ as Lord. The construct is a moral absolute.

In another illuminating passage Paul speaks again about the absolute contrasts involved in the lie and the truth and the close relation between truth and holiness (II Thess. 2:10-13). Salvation is only possible by (v. 10) receiving the "love of the truth" which is equated with "believing the truth". Because they did not love the truth

they finally believed the lie and ended in damnation. Again rejection of truth is related, not to ignorance, but to unrighteousness (v. 12). Those who "love not truth" have "pleasure in unrighteousness". What, we ask, is the way to salvation? "Sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." (13) This is the eternal pattern of holiness and relates truth to holiness.

Godliness and truth also are related in Titus 1:1.

In all of these passages (and others), truth is equated with righteousness and holiness - and never with merely knowledge. It is a moral insight, the rejection of which plunges the person - not into error or ignorance, but into unrighteousness and "the lie". In every case, reception or rejection lies in responsibility. Truth in relation to holiness is never primarily a proposition to be accepted, though propositions give rationality to faith, but a relationship to God which involves the whole man in its appropriation. The truth and the lie are mutually exclusive ways of responding to God. One results in "life in God," the other "alienation from the life of God." Truth is a life-long moral integration of the whole self about the love of God as a governing center. The lie is the attempt to live in defiance of God. One issues in the fruits of the Spirit, the other the works of the flesh. Christ is the personification of truth and the Holy Spirit's ministry is to confront men by Christ. Hence when we speak of the work of the Holy Spirit we speak of the Truth which is Christ and all of this is involved in holiness. Nothing of the lie can be tolerated by the Holy Spirit. Where He is there is truth and consequently holiness.

## Perfection

In this study, at certain points, perfectionism has been pointed out and rejected. It may serve the interests of clarity to digress enough to define perfectionism before discussing Evangelical or Christian perfection, and closing with a comparison of the two.

## Perfectionism

Almost any book which analyzes denominational relationships mistakenly classifies all holiness groups as perfectionists. If there is a common tenet of faith it would be an emphasis on the inability of man to save himself and the need of the Holy Spirit in salvation. But beyond this the divergence is radical. The problem is confused by an ambiguity. There is a false interpretation of holiness teaching which relates it to a view antithetical to its real nature and there is a view which is properly perfectionism from which we wish to distinguish holiness.

Basically, perfectionism defines all theology in a-moral terms. Stressing the importance of an absolute solution to the Sin problem (sin, not sins), it relies on non-moral and impersonal means to achieve it. Salvation terminates probation. In the interest of a "serious view of sin" it includes all non-moral divergence from perfection in its concept of sin. In this view, the will is totally impotent. Salvation, consequently, is non-moral in that the Holy Spirit activates the will of man and in the course of redemption "removes" the sin in man so that he no longer sins. The substance theory of sin prevails on the one hand, and the sub-rational or juridical deliverance from it is emphasized on

the other. No personal responsibility to either element can be granted.

The corollaries follow more or less logically. If God does everything He does it perfectly. There is no place for development or progress since God's work is perfect. Christ's righteousness substitutes for ours and therefore law is abrogated. This, of course, leads to antinomianism.

There are two opposite extremes stemming from this reasoning. One is an over emphasis on the objective aspect of salvation. In this view, no human relevance can modify the thing God does for us. We may continue to sin (though we ought not to do so), but God's promise to save us cannot be altared, "God cannot deny himself." We are eternally safe. Therefore, our sins are no longer culpable. Actually, in the evangelical sense, a Christians sins are no longer sins. George Ladd, already quoted, expressed this idea succinctly.

Justification frees us from guilt not only of the years before we believed in Christ, but of our entire life up to the day of judgment. Nothing is omitted. The Judge has said: 'Acquitted! Justified!'

This means that the man of faith is already on the heavenward side of the day of judgment. For the man of faith, the last judgment does not belong to the future; it has already taken place . . . The future, therefore, can hold no possible condemnation. When God has acquitted, no one can condemn. It is as though we had already entered heaven (Eternity, July, 1958, p. 12).

Ladd's guard against the antinomianism inherent in this position only entrenches it more deeply into a-moral perfectionism when he says that there is no ground for carelessness about conduct because

justification can never be separated from the new life which is in Christ. The justified man has by virtue of his justification also been crucified with Christ, raised with Christ, and therefore must live a new life in Christ (Rom. 6:3-4) . . . We may say that the living

of the new life in Christ is proof of the believer's justification, . . . [he] will live the new life in Christ. (Ibid.).

This statement takes all personal responsibility out of the relationship we sustain to Christ. Salvation is secure because it is totally unrelated to moral concerns. If taken seriously it relaxes all moral guards. And it fails to define the "new life" in terms of moral responsibility, sin or character growth.

The other extreme is to over emphasis on the subjective. Any and all impulses are interpreted as the voice of the Holy Spirit which must be quickly and fully obeyed. There are no rational tests by which to identify the impressions that come. It follows that conduct is judged solely on the basis of personal desire. The immoral excesses and self-righteous justifications for all kinds of unethical conduct is not a pretty picture.

Neither group actually needs the Bible for an objective rule of Christian life and faith. The first is secure and needs no law. The second has exchanged "Holy Spirit's leading" for Scripture. The Bible in both cases is mainly read for eschatological information. Neither one, therefore, is amenable to moral law. Both find that the keeping of law, or whatever can substitute for it, is an automatic accompaniment of grace. Neither one has any real sense of personal obligation to God or men because redemption is conceived in terms of privilege and freedom and not in moral responsibility.

There are erratic variations of perfectionism which need only to be mentioned. Monasticism with its ascetic emphasis, where ever it is found, follows the Gnostic dualism. As one is able to deny and eradicate human impulse the spirit is made more free to pursue holiness

which is its natural condition. Any theology which conceives of the possibility of sinlessness in the spirit, concomitant with sinfulness in the flesh, partakes of Gnostic perfectionism.

Extreme emphasis on healing and freedom from economic need when "in grace" is perfectionism as is also the tendency to withdraw from the world in order to keep pure.

Responsible holiness teachers always, in every way, repudiate these and all other forms of a-moral perfectionism.

Jn Fletcher warns

Avoid all extremes. While on the one hand you keep clear of the Pharisaic delusion that slights Christ, and makes the pretended merit of an imperfect obedience the procuring cause of eternal life: see that on the other hand you do not lean to the Antinomian error, which, under the pretence of exalting Christ, speaks contemptuously of obedience, and "makes void the law through a faith that does not work by love." . . . Many smatterers in Christian experience talk of a finished salvation in Christ. . . . while they know little of themselves and less of Christ. (Checks to Antinomianism, Abridged. p. 22).

Wesley defined Christian perfection as loving God with the whole mind, heart, and soul (A Plain Account of Christian Perfection).

Perhaps a characterization of evangelical perfection as distilled from many sources will be sufficient at this point since a Biblical study of the term is to follow. Christian perfection, or Perfect Love stands for a full measure of personal obligation to the whole will of God, rather than an acceptance of Christian status without a commensurate responsibility attached. It stands for "obedience from the heart" rather than an abrogation of law. It requires the highest moral integrity and rational responsibility rather than a dulling of the conscience, a reinterpretation of sin, a surrender to blind impulse and irresponsible individualism.

In a word perfectionism is non-moral and conceives of redemption in extra-historical terms or non-relevance. Christian perfection is moral to the core and understands holiness to be thoroughly relevant to every area of life and not repugnant to the possibilities in Christianized human nature.

Of course, if the interest in moral integrity is classed as perfectionism, either the definitions of terms has been by-passed or a judgment about the relative importance of integrity has been made.

### Biblical Perfection

A word that gives a good deal of trouble in theology is perfection. The philosophical implications of the word tend to divorce it from practical life and hence the Biblical use of it is affected. A survey of the New Testament words which are translated, "perfect" in the English will precede a more conclusive definition and a suggestion of its meaning to holiness theology. A discussion of perfectionism contrasted to Christian perfection will follow.

*ἀκριβῶς* is translated "perfectly" (adverb) in the KJV and has the meaning of diligent, or accurate, and does not refer to redemptive truths. Apollos was instructed "more perfectly" in the way (Acts 18:26) is a usage which is typical of all the examples.

*ἄρτιος*, fitted, or qualified, is the term Paul uses in II Tim. 3:17, to describe the goal toward which the "man of God" aspires and which is provided by a proper attitude toward and use of the holy Scriptures. This obviously refers to personal fitness and educational training and not salvation.

*τέλειος* must be defined specifically in relation to its use in the context. The lexicon gives the meaning as, "an end attained",

or fulfillment, realization, completion or maturity. Jesus said that the disciples were to be (future tense) perfect, as the Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48). Sometimes the future tense in the Greek carries the imperative force. If this is, then, a command (which is not an impossible reading)<sup>1</sup> the exhortation to moral maturity is in keeping with the whole passage. Everywhere in this sermon, a right motive, and impeccable sincerity of love is taught. It is not to require that men should be quantitatively, or ontologically, as perfect as God, that Jesus is teaching here. It is "your Father in heaven" whose paternal love toward his children, becomes the pattern of right motive and conduct. This verse cannot be divorced from the preceding section (43:47), in which the meaning of this perfection is spelled out, namely, extending our love and good will toward those who persecute us, "that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." As a father loves the good and the bad child so we are to extend our good will to everyone. The emphasis is on God as Father and men as sons of God. As His Fatherhood is revealed to us, our sonship is to be patterned. And that pattern is love - a new dimension to human relations which Jesus came to give us. We are not free to carry that word "perfect" away somewhere to define it after our human judgment and then bring it back to cause havoc with exegesis and interpretation. The commentary is in the context. It is not without point to recall that in Luke the parallel passage says; "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is also merciful," and the ethical implications are then clear.

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<sup>1</sup>The American Revised Edition says. "Ye therefore shall be perfect . . ." but the RSV prefers "You, therefore, must be perfect . . ."



In Matt. 19:16-21, there is told of a young man who asked the way to eternal life. The answer did not by-pass the ten commandments but went into and beyond them to the spirit of the law. "If thou wilt be perfect, sell what thou hast and give to the poor . . . and come, follow me." Keeping the commandments was the way to life, Jesus said, but keeping the commandments meant a very practical life commitment which changed law keeping alone to "perfection". In this passage perfection is defined as obedience to Christ, a quality of moral life which had to be added to an already outwardly perfect obedience to law. It was personalized goodness.

The next occasion of the use of the word in our New Testament is in Romans 12:2. Paul's exhortation is in the interest of proving what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. In this case, it is the will of God which is perfect and clearly refers to the ultimate end of God's provision for us. We are "to present" (aorist) ourselves and "be transformed" (present tense, indicating long, faithful application to the task of renewing the mind) to prove or test by experience that God's will is utterly desirable -- perfect.

In Eph. 4:13, Paul again refers to the fully matured "body of Christ". It is to this end that Paul exhorts to unity and mutual helpfulness. God gives each man a measure of grace (4:7) and puts some men in places of leadership (4:11) for the "perfecting" of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, "till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that we be no more children . . ." "Perfecting" (v. 12) is *καταρτίζω* and means to knit together, to unite completely and refers to the relationship of the

"saints" or "sanctified ones" to each other and all of them together as an adequate expression of Christ whom they are representing in the world. The "perfect man" here is not singular nor the work of a moment but the goal toward which Paul sought to bring those in the church as a church. Once more, the definition is clearly given us in the context by way of the contrast, "that we be no more children" and indicates maturity that "grows up into him in all things, [him] which is the head, even Christ (4:15). The personal application looks toward fellowship within the Church. This is holiness in its interpersonal dimension.

Paul in Phil. 3 gives us a helpful suggestion as to the meaning of perfection in spite of - or perhaps because of - the apparently ambiguous use of the word. In this chapter we have an excellent example of the lack of bondage to inflexible word meanings that characterized Paul's use of language. Twice words from **τέλος** are used; he disclaims perfection in v. 12, and puts himself among those who are perfect in v. 15. In the first case it is the resurrection body, or future redemption of all things that he has in mind. In the second reference, maturity is meant. In neither case is Paul speaking of soteriological matters. In this church, as in so many of the early churches influenced by the surrounding Greek philosophies, the Philippians were inclined to confuse immortality and resurrection. The Greeks taught that the soul was immortal, and the Philippians being saved assumed that they now lived in the assurance of eternal bliss. A false type of perfectionism prevailed in that they saw no more need for ethical responsibility or spiritual development. Paul refutes this with vigor. All mortal concerns were expendable. That we might gain Christ and know the power of his resurrection is "the prize of the high calling." Not simply endless

existence is the Christian emphasis, but being conformed to Christ's death and so attain to resurrection through Him. Paul had not yet entered that resurrection perfection. nor could he in this life, but he "pressed on" toward that goal. And this is the "mind" of all who are mature.<sup>1</sup>

**Τέλειος** as a completed thing in some sense equal to the Philippian passage, is indicated in I Cor. 2:6. However, in the light of the whole discussion, to say, "we speak wisdom, among them that are perfect," could mean as the American revision put it, "the fullgrown" or mature persons. This would help to understand the Philippian passage and indicate that Paul understood maturation to be both a state and an activity. One not only can become mature, but must continue in maturity. It is proper to say, "He is a mature person." But maturity evaporates into senility the moment it ceases to grow. There is no point at which maturity comes to a final and unchangeable end. The very structure of maturity is "coming into relation" to a changing environment. When that movement ends death begins.

In I Cor. 13, the perfect is contrasted to the partial and seems to have an eschatological significance but not soteriological.

Again, in Col. 1:28 and 4:12, Paul's use of the term gives good evidence of its meaning. It is to full realization of the will of God in each of the lives of those under his ministry that Paul and Epaphras labor, preaching, warning, teaching and praying. One could not conclude that this maturity is anything less than spiritual and moral but it seems quite clear in the light of the tenses used in the surrounding verbs that

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<sup>1</sup>See Oscar Cullman's article on "Immortality or Resurrection", Christianity Today, July 21, 1958.

it is not a specific experience that Paul means but a Christian life successfully lived out that is his concern.

The writer to the Hebrews makes much use of the various forms of **τέλος** with the general idea of consummation, or bringing to perfection, an idea which is central to the message of the whole Epistle. Of the various New Testament applications, one general meaning stands out, that the one who is perfect has attained the end set before him, maturity, development, privilege, knowledge. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the partial is made complete, the imperfect is made perfect, the undeveloped babe is brought to maturity. Christ comes to perfection through suffering and obedience. The sacrifices for sin, transitory and provisional is made perfect in Christ. Men are warned to continue on to perfection and a magnificent list of those who did so are delineated in the eleventh chapter. And it is Christ who brings men to perfection.

The most striking use is that relative to Christ and in this use a large measure of allowable application is suggested as well as a hint as to proper Christology. As a man he was brought to perfection by normal development, physically; by sharing with humanity its absolute dependence on God and its need to come to this dependence and fellowship; by absolutely sharing in the full participation of humanity in death and the fear of it. As God/man he, through suffering and death, perfected salvation and makes his people perfect. Then, everything Christ had been and was, his participation in all our experience is a pledge of His ability to strengthen us in all our human needs.

James uses the word to mean a disciplining measure. In 1:4 he says the development of patience is by the trying of the faith and that these together may (subjunctive) make you, "perfect and entire, wanting

nothing." The definition is supplied by the context very clearly. In 1:17 and 25, it is the gift of God that is designated perfect and appropriation of it on man's part that is contingent on his faithfulness. A definition of a perfect man is given in 3:2 as one who does not offend in word. And the whole chapter is a dissertation on the sins of the tongue with the conclusion that the truly wise man reveals that superiority by works in "a meekness of wisdom." Again, perfection is related to ethical matters growing out of a right relationship to God.

John draws love into the orbit of perfection in I Jn. 4. By dwelling in God and God in us love has been made perfect and those whose love is not perfect have that fact revealed to them by the torment of fear of the judgment. In other words perfection in this passage is related to a quality of love which in turn reflects our relationship to God. If there is no hindrance to love - no wrong spirit or hidden antagonism or pride--love is perfect and fear of God's judgment is completely gone. The existential element is love for brethren. Love for God is mirrored in love for others.

**ἑπιτελέω** or putting into practice, is used twice. Paul exhorts the Corinthians (II. 7:1), to "perfect holiness in the fear of God," meaning to bring holiness into practicality, into daily living. Perfect here is not aorist as one might expect, but present, indicating a habitual attitude of life having begun in the past. To the Galatians, Paul poses the question, "Having begun in the Spirit are ye made perfect in the flesh?" (3:3). Here agains, "perfect" as a verb, is in the present tense, indicating a working out of a principle, not the terminus of the action. Can the spiritual life, he asks in other words, be brought to fruition by unspiritual means?

*καταρτίζω* (as in Eph. 4) meaning knitting together or to thoroughly adjust, is used a number of times. Paul's concern for the Corinthian church is expressed (in I, 1:10) by the words, "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment," and this referred to their mutual human relationship. The same thought ends the second letter, "Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace" (II. 13:11). His prayer was, for the Thessalonian situation, that he might be permitted to return to "perfect that which was lacking" in their faith. This wish followed a most high commendation of their faithfulness. Now, it is the deepening of their love that seems to constitute the need. And as love deepened, holiness was established.

The aorist form is again found in the benediction in Heb. 13:21, to the end that they might be "made perfect in every good thing to do His will." And Peter uses it in an interesting and informative way. The "God of all grace . . . after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Perfect here, in the midst of the other three verbs all having to do with maturation, itself bears part of that meaning. It is related to the discipline of suffering, and in the future tense, suggests a consequence to be enjoyed rather than a state in which to live.

The Ephesians (4:12) reference to "perfecting the saints", has to do with this knitting together with an interpersonal fellowship in mind, which is so common an idea in the New Testament. This is the same word Paul used in his prayer for the Corinthians, namely, "their perfecting" (II, 13:9), and in the light of the Corinthian problem can have the same meaning of adjustment to each other, the unifying of the spirits of the individuals in the church, as it has in the Ephesian letter and as the writer to the Hebrews uses it.

The verb **ΤΕΛΕΙΩ** to make perfect, or to complete, follows the same general pattern of meaning. Jesus told the Pharisees, that after three days he would be perfected (Luke 13:32) meaning the completing of his earthly ministry. In John 17:23 Jesus prays that the disciples may be "made perfect in one", with obvious meaning. Paul's strength, in his weakness, was made perfect, or brought to a peak of efficiency, by the power of Christ resting upon him (II Cor. 12:9). Heb. 2:10 tells us that Christ, as the captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering. Being made perfect (5:9) he became the author of salvation. A passage or two further in Hebrews shows the perfection of the new covenant over the old one. The yearly sacrifice could make no "comer" perfect (10:1), but by "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ" (10:10) God hath perfected forever them that are sanctified (10:14). "Perfected" is in the perfect tense, an action completed in the past and continuing into the present; "forever", or perpetually, continuously; and "sanctified", being a present participle, actually makes the phrase read, "Jesus offering of himself, once (in contrast to the oft repeated, ineffectual animal sacrifices), is always effective in bringing to perfection those who are being sanctified."

John (I. 2:5) says that the "perfecting", or completing of the love of God within us, is tested by our keeping God's word. (See also I. 4:12).

**ΤΕΛΕΙΟΤΗΣ** used twice, lends aid in our quest for specific meanings. Paul, in Col. 3:14, among other practical instructions to believers, says, "and above all things put on love which is the bond of perfectness." The verb "put on" is added as an extension of the main verb of the passage and is probably a correct gloss. The nature of this perfection is accurately defined by the cohesion at its heart, namely,

love. And again, the interpersonal fellowship of believers as the body of Christ is emphasized.

"Leaving the first principles of Christ, let us go on unto perfection" (6:1). A wide reference to the context shows that the evangelist was pressing upon his readers the absolute need of completing that which had been begun in them by grace. The goal is perfection, the path to it a plodding, faithful, determined, continuous "pressing on". In this case, "press on" is not aorist, but a subjunctive present, indicating, not one momentary step, but a "forward movement toward" the goal, conditioned by their own application to the task. Not to press on is so serious to the writer that apostasy is the result, and the obligation to press on is urgent and serious. Fruit, he says, is expected by the one who planted and tilled the ground (6:7) and failure at this point precipitates "burning" (8). Spiritual maturity, responsibility, service, "better things that accompany salvation" (6:9) are some of the elements of the goal. This pressing on to perfection, or maturity, with the consequent danger of loss of God's redeeming grace is one of the most solemn warnings to spiritual complacency to be found in Scripture.

Some observations are appropriate relative to perfection.

1. The initial statement that evangelical perfection is very different than philosophical perfection is borne out. Never is perfection absolute in an abstract sense but always relative to an end appropriate to any particular case, that is, in respect of a particular standard. But it is equally true to say that the end as a goal is in harmony with the nature and possibility of that which is to be brought to perfection. Perfection is something that ought to be the case, in any particular situation.



2. This leads to the further observation that, according to the content of meaning supplied in the Biblical passages, no abnormal, absurd, impossible or dehumanized thing is ever indicated by perfection in Scripture. To be perfect does not mean stagnation, distorted physical appetite or life, unwholesome psychology or any of the fantastic aberrations imagined by some careless critics of the Christian faith. A claim of sinless perfection, freedom from sickness and economic need, or a direct and infallible access to God either by way of supposed leadings or an amoral ignoring of means (such as the Scriptures), is not be equated or associated with Biblical perfection.

3. Perfection, in the Bible, is an absolute requirement, in the sense that Christian status implicates one in the quest for it. It is to this end that redemption drives. The word is often at the end of Paul's pen. It cannot be ignored in any serious Biblical emphasis on the Christian life.

4. Perfection has a double thrust. It refers to a heart relationship to God which is wholly satisfactory, that is, it has attained the condition which is required. And it is a moral quality which must laboriously but faithfully be adapted to living situations. It is guarded from the destructive inroads of pride, complacency, and perfectionism by the living demand that the implications of this heart attitude be worked out in the daily grind of life -- both toward God and toward others. A perfect seed that does not germinate and grow loses its claim to seedhood.

5. That the full meaning of Biblical perfection cannot be exhausted by reference to a momentary "experience" is clear and follows from the preceding observations.

6. Evangelical perfection has no meaning Scripturally apart from an understanding of its this-life relevance. No exegesis can find textual warrant for deferring the Biblical understanding of perfection to another life. Its terms, or the norms which determine it, have to do with the powers, relationships and provisions of grace encountered in "this present world."

7. Perfection has a moral connotation (as defined in Chapter ), hence has no relation to a life which is exempt from the human in all its ramifications, weakness, ignorance, defective judgment, temptations, disciplines. It is meaningful, then, in relation to our communication with persons both God and men, here. It is precisely in these relationships involving all the human powers and drives to which we are heir that perfection has meaning.

8. It is necessary to notice explicitly the clear distinction all these observations make -- which is made implicitly in Scripture -- between Biblical perfection and Perfectionism. For lack of careful scholarship and in some cases because of the absence of sheer honesty, those who take the Biblical command relative to perfection seriously, have been classed together with those who are perfectionists -- a very different position, in fact. a position contradictory at every point to the Biblical view.

To repeat, perfectionism is any view of redemption which by-passes the moral element. It conceives of grace in a-personal terms and hence in absolutes. Perfectionism says that the soul is eternally secure regardless of its involvement in sin because the legal status has changed in God's mind because of Christ. All sin, past, present and future is

forgiven. In effect, it abrogates law and moral obligation so far as soteriology is concerned, though usually a good moral life is encouraged - but not as necessary to salvation. It is perfectionism when it is taught that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is metaphysical rather than a moral union, so that all the impulses after one becomes "perfect" are to be interpreted as the voice of the Holy Spirit and to be obeyed. It is perfectionism that encourages a disregard for sensitivity to social situations and holds back the tongue from confessions of failure and wrong and humble asking for pardon.

Perfectionism substitutes external and a-moral demonstration for inward grace. It may be fanatical philanthropy, or moralism, such as an undue concern about dress and adornment and austerity of life and actual desire for persecution because of one's "standards". Or it may be an obsession for emotional displays and experience such as shouting, tongues, visions and ecstatic trances.

One may question anything proposed as "an evidence" of grace, that can be duplicated by any human effort. Everything perfectionism insists on can be duplicated by some other means. Nothing that Christian perfection is can be counterfeited by any other means than God's grace and power.

Perfectionism either acknowledges no sin in anything one does, or it claims sin for everything one does. Either extreme discounts the moral seriousness of sin and is a practical perfectionism. Spiritual pride is the essence of perfectionism in each of the above cases. One glories in his personal righteousness the other glories in his humility. Both are equally repulsive and repugnant to that which Christian perfection teaches.

Christian perfection is of the heart and was called by John Wesley, perfect love. He preferred that term but was forced to use others many times because his enemies distorted his meaning. Instead of by-passing the moral, it is moral to the core. Instead of abrogating law, it is thoroughgoing obedience to the law. Instead of reference to the excellence of the self, it rests wholly upon God and loves Him with the whole heart. mind, soul and strength. It desires to please God in all things. This desire issues in a sincere compliance with God's understood will. It holds steady in doubt and ignorance and darkness, pressing relentlessly for more light and guidance. Acceptance of discipline and humble seeking for truth is its atmosphere.

Rather than Christian perfection standing in danger of perfectionism, it is the guard against it. Everything in Christian perfection stands in absolute contradistinction to perfectionism.

## Cleansing

None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with himself. (Wesley, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection.)

We teach, not a state of purity, but a maintained condition of purity, a moment-by-moment salvation, consequent upon moment-by-moment obedience and trust. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin' all the time by cleansing us every Now. (Thomas Cook, N.T. Holiness, London, 14th ed.. 1950, p. 43.)

That the human heart may be cleansed from all sin is perhaps the most important affirmation of holiness theology. Cleansing then is a concept which must be analyzed and explained. Its meaning will then help to throw light on the problem of the sin from which one may be cleansed.

Theologically, sanctification has two meanings: To set apart, or consecrate and to make pure in heart. The primary OT usage is consecration, or a ceremonial meaning (though there is an ethical aspect, also, in the Prophets especially). The New Testament presupposes this meaning as it applies the term to human life. The ceremonial and ethical become, in the N.T., moral and spiritual. The external ritual becomes a matter of inner reality. The problem of this section of study is two-fold, namely, what is cleansing? and, what relation does cleansing sustain to consecration? Since these matters are concerned with sanctification, at least theologically, the chapter should help to prepare for the discussion on sanctification.

In the N.T. the English words pure, purity, purge, clean, cleansing and such like are used to translate a number of cognate Greek words. It

will be necessary to examine each instance of the use of these terms. The concordance to the King James Version was used to locate these instances because of the relative ease of doing so and the reasonable assurance that all the examples would thus be found. In no case does the version itself determine interpretation. The analytical concordance provides the following classification.

1. Clean - *καθαρός*, is found 10 times in the N.T.
  - a. Of objects, 4 times, Mt. 23:26, 27:59, Rev. 19:8 and 14.
  - b. To have no blame, to be clear of responsibility, 2 times, Acts 18:6 and Luke 11:41.
  - c. In John's gospel, Jesus made physical washing an analogy for a spiritual concept (13:10-11).

When Peter wanted his head and hands as well as his feet washed Jesus told him that the act of washing cleansed the whole man. But an unguarded ceremonialism was carefully avoided by the words, "But ye are not all clean." This did not refer to the failure of the washing to make the man wholly clean, but did refer to one of them, Judas, who, though washed, remained unclean.

In the vine and branch analogy (John 15:3) Jesus declared that the disciples were clean (present indicative, or an on-going condition) through the word he spoke to them. This seems to be the result of the purging (actually the same word as "clean" and also in the present indicative) of the previous verse, "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it." While they are purged they continue clean.

2. To be made clean, *καθαρίσω*, is used three times, once in each of the synoptics to report Jesus words to the leper, "Be thou clean."

3. To make clean, *Ka Qap'igw*, occurs 5 times.
  - a. Three times the cry of the leper (in the Synoptics) is mentioned, "If thou wilt thou canst make me clean."
  - b. In Matt. 23:25 and Luke 11:39, the hypocrisy revealed by the clean cup filled with evil intention is mentioned with a clear indication of the moral responsibility involved.
4. The same word, *Ka Qap'igw* translated "cleanse" is found 16 times.
  - a. Eight of these occurrences describe the cleansing of lepers in the Synoptics.
  - b. Twice, in Acts (10:15, 11:9) the clean and unclean animals are referred to in Peter's vision.
  - c. Matt. 23:26 is an exhortation to cleanse the inside of the cup.

This has a distinctly moral connotation and clearly states that men have an obligation to moral purity. Clearly, also, is the meaning, namely, that no act is better than the intention. Both must be in perfect harmony.

d. The last five passages are distinctly moral exhortations. Paul exhorts the Corinthians (in II, 7:1) to cleanse themselves (aorist, subjunctive, passive) from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit and so perfect (present participle) holiness in the fear of God. There is, here, the recognition of a personal responsibility to God's grace. The subjunctive indicates the human contingency involved. The aorist bears the weight of moral decisiveness in contrast to simple process. The whole exhortation stands in relation to the process aspect of holiness (but not cleansing), as indicated by the present tense of that participle. Cleansing, in this passage, has to do with a proper use of the body as it is

regarded as a temple of the Holy Spirit and by which God is to be glorified, and also the establishment and maintenance of fellowship with Christ and his body, the Church. While separation is the strong meaning here, Paul strongly indicates that the essentially moral and spiritual connotation is the important one. The Corinthians were not to separate physically from those who were sinners, "else they would have to go out of the world," but to maintain such an atmosphere of purity of body and spirit that the spiritual cohesion would itself be a barrier to sin in their midst. Though the exhortation may be somewhat personal, it is the church as the temple of God (II, 6:16) concerning which Paul speaks in this case. This corporate meaning must not be lost sight of in the interest of the individual.

In Eph. 5:26, Paul says Christ came that he might sanctify the church having previously cleansed it. Sanctification here is aorist subjunctive indicating that the goal of Christ's coming was the sanctification of the church which in this case would be a decisive act but contingent upon human response. The preparation for this act was a cleansing (aorist participle) "by the washing of water by the word." The American Revised Version probably translates this the most nearly true to the Greek meaning, Christ gave himself . . . "that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it . . ." The whole passage emphasizes the submitting of the self to the authority and love of Christ and the identification of men with the Lord defines the purpose and means of all Christ did. Again, cleansing is a decisive act. It is prior to and separate from the act of sanctification and, in this case, performed by Christ on our behalf. It parallels John's reference (in 15:3), in that both places Jesus cleansed the disciples by his word prior to sanctification -- at least logically prior.



John's epistle (I, 1:7 & 9) speaks of cleansing. In the relationship of fellowship the blood of Christ cleanses (present indicative) from all sin. That is, cleansing is maintained so long as fellowship is maintained. It is clear in this passage that sin is lack of fellowship which, in turn, is darkness, and darkness is hatred and hatred breaks the law of love which must be kept if one would walk in the light and so have fellowship - and cleansing. Cleansing is thus defined as heart harmony with God. Furthermore, cleansing is not a static, passive thing which exists apart from the dynamic of personal encounter. Nor is cleansing progressively achieved, little by little. It is not something impersonal, that is, a character impressed on the substance of the soul, a metaphysical real which has objective existence apart from moral relationship. It is akin to love, if it is not itself love, -- an atmosphere in which mutual love interpenetrates and preserves integrity. It lives. This is the principle of cleansing, namely, a moment by moment reliance wholly on Christ. This Wesley taught.

In practice it works like this -- "if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Both "forgive" and "cleanse", in this verse, are in the aorist subjunctive form indicating the contingency of the "if" but the decisiveness of the moral change. It is God who forgives and cleanses. Whether the forgiveness and cleansing are simultaneous or separated in act and time is a matter for theological decision. Certainly the demands of grammar could not provide a dogmatic ground to make a case so far as this passage is concerned. The exegesis of the passage requires our understanding of the Gnostic heresy to which this passage is an answer.

James exhorts sinners to cleanse their hands and the double-minded to purify their hearts. Both terms obviously refer to acts and motives which were not honest and which needed to be brought into integrity. Again, this cleansing is decisive (aorist) and to be done by the person. The hands are made clean by *καθαρίξω*, but the heart made pure by *ἀγκυρα* which signifies a more inner and spiritual concept—innocence, blamelessness which has to do with sincerity. Here, again, is a tacit definition of and commentary on the term cleansing.

There are a number of Greek words translated pure or purity or purging.

5. Pure, chaste - *ἀγνός* (4 times).

In Phil. 4:8, Paul exhorts to a selective type of mental subject matter — "if . . . think on these things." Stability of character demands a disciplined thought life. Among the other things worthy of entertainment, such as the true, the just, the lovely, the virtuous, stands "the pure", and is to be a consciously permitted and chosen object of thought which conforms to the norm of holiness.

Paul's council to Timothy in a famous "charge" to him, was "keep thyself pure" (I Tim. 5:22). It is obviously ethical and not soteriological.

James, again, by contrast (3:13-18) defines and explains it. The wisdom "from above" is pure and peaceable in distinction from the alleged wisdom of those whose tongue betray their bitterness and devilishness and strife.

John (in I Jn. 3:3) uses this word to indicate the progressive likeness to Christ which the living hope of Christ's return generates within a believer. Certainly, the use of *ἀγνός* indicates the possibility

of a guarded, disciplined thought life which must ever characterize chaste and sincere Christians. It is an alternative open to moral beings but whose selected ends are irreconcilable contradictories.

6. *Kaθapós* is not only translated clean (#1) but pure. It must borrow from and interchange meaning with "clean" as we have analyzed it. Jesus called the "pure in heart", blessed. Those who are clean, single-hearted, will see God. (Mt. 5:8). Paul uses the word (Acts 20:26) to indicate his faithfulness to his obligation, "pure from the blood of all men." In Romans (14:20) Paul says that material things are "pure" in themselves, that is, neutral of moral character, but becomes the occasion for evil when used by "a brother" whose intentions are not pure but selfish.

In Paul's letters to Timothy he unites *Kaθapós* with heart and conscience, each twice, and with faith each time. I, 1:5 speaks of love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith as being the fulfillment of the whole law. The deacon should hold the faith in a pure conscience (I, 3:9), Paul's pure conscience commands him to Timothy (II, 1:3), and his exhortation to young Timothy is that he, too, follow righteousness, faith, love, peace with all who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (II, 2:22). The meaning supplied by the context is clearly an open, sincere, honest. motivation in God's sight.

The Roman reference as well as those in the correspondence with Timothy help to shed light on the reference in Titus 1:15. The "pure" man is a man living in truth. To him everything is clean. But, by contrast, to the man who is defiled and unbelieving and deceitful all things are evil. Both profess to know God, the pure man lives consistently with his profession, the impure man denies his affirmation by disobedience.

James says (1:27) that pure and undefiled religion (piety, worship) is practical in its outreach and maintains integrity in the one professing it.

Peter exhorts those who have purified their souls by obedience to truth thru the Spirit, to love each other with a pure heart (I, 1:22) fervently. Again, purity is related to truth. The aid is of "the Spirit", but the act is a moral one, obedience, and must issue in love consciously given.

#### 7. To cleanse out, ἐκκαθαίρω

The Corinthian church had harbored an incestuous man within the fellowship (I,5) and by so doing had defiled the temple of God (I, 3:17). The failure to assume the responsibility of rebuking sin was a leaven that had to be removed in order that the witness to Christ be unsullied. "Purge out," or "clean away" from you the leaven of malice and wickedness (or a bad attitude and evil disposition of mind) so that the Lord's Supper (for that is the background idea) can be eaten in sincerity and truth. The exhortation certainly has to do with the sinner himself, but it is to miss the whole import of the passage to let this personal matter exhaust the meaning or even to eclipse the real thrust in this passage. Centrally, Paul is charging the church itself with insubordination. "To cleanse away" is much more, here, than to punish the erring man, it is rather to rectify the very heart of the church from evil irresponsibility to a mature and sanctified and responsible attitude toward truth itself. The "purging" is personal most certainly, but a purging of individuals constituting the church from malice to sincerity. In like vein, Timothy is exhorted to preach to his people that they must purge out "vain babblings" and "profitless strivings", in order that they might be vessels sanctified, meet for the masters use (II Tim. 2).

# 8. Καθάρσιμος to make a cleansing.

Christ, after having made purification for sins, (Heb. 1:3) sat down on the right hand of God -- or in the place of authority and power. The purification was made once for all (aorist), the cleansing was an expiation or an objective, ceremonial cancelling out of guilt. Peter refers to this purging from sin (II, 1:9) saying that our God and Saviour has granted to us all things pertaining to life and godliness and the great promise that we should partake of the divine nature (v. 4) and in this knowledge we add faith, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, love of brethren to fruitfulness, and to lack this is to forget the cleansing from old sins, which forgetting and consequent failure to "add on our part" may forfeit our "calling and election."

# 9. To make clean, ἀγνίσω

Ceremonial purification relative to the passover feast or some temple ritual, accounts for John 11:55, Acts 21:24, 26 and 24:18. Three times (James 4:8, I Pet. 1:22 and I John 3:3) the purification is on the part of men (see above, no. 4). Two times it is a cleanness derived from a divine source.

a. Acts 15:8 and 9 are interesting verses. In the midst of a discussion as to whether Mosaic ritual cleansing for the Gentiles was necessary. Peter testified to what he had observed. Ritual purification had never worked, he said, "a yolk . . . which our fathers nor we were able to bear." Only the purification resulting by faith in Christ, by his grace had proved adequate. Faith in Christ purified the heart, and God who knows the heart - the inner man - bore witness to this fact and gave them the Holy Spirit as he did to the Jews. Purified is an aorist participle putting the action prior to the main verb. It reads, God

having cleansed their hearts by faith, witnessed this fact to them by giving them the Holy Spirit. In keeping with the contextual relation these points seem clear: (1) The central problem has to do with the basis of salvation; (2) the required purity is not by Jewish circumcision (apart from which "certain men said ye cannot be saved," v. 1) but by faith in Christ, both for Gentile and Jew; (3) it is the inner heart which is important, not the outer flesh and God knows the hearts, both Jew and Gentile. This is the real test of acceptability before God and its norms are determined by God only, not by ritual; (4) the gift of the Holy Spirit is on the basis of this kind of purity, namely, faith in Christ and not in works and the Holy Spirit is the witness of God to this proper relationship; (5) purity is defined by this whole discussion, absolute trust in God for salvation; (6) the conclusion of Peter's argument relates back to the statement made by "certain men from Judea," (v. 1) "Except ye be circumcized after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved." Peter concludes, (v. 11), "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved (we who are Jews) even as they (the Gentiles who had obviously been saved in ways other than that prescribed by the gentlemen from Jerusalem). This is an interesting reversal of the argument. Whatever teaching there may be in this passage about the relation of Pentecost to the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit to cleansing, the central problem around which the Petrine discussion revolved must be kept in clear focus. The whole passage is important.

The Spirit's coming to the Gentiles indicated to the Christian Jews, two things of striking importance to them. (1) The Gentiles could qualify for receiving the Holy Spirit on the basis of faith not circumcision and Mosaic ritual. In fact, the coming of the Holy Spirit to them

was itself the witness to the cleansed heart, a witness recognized by the Jews. God, in answer to their faith, cleansed their hearts and the gift of the Holy Spirit was the seal of that fact. (2) The implication of this, to the Jews, was of tremendous moment, namely, "We are saved by grace, even as they." The astonishing fact that God was accepting the Gentile on an equal basis with the Jew was more significant to the Jew than to the Gentile. It shifted the whole soteriological pattern from Jewish supremacy to an equality of all people. This altered emphasis was a much greater shock to the Jew who had, then, to acknowledge his own religious limitations than the mere fact that the Gentiles were acceptable to God. Here was a standard which was permitting the Gentiles to find full acceptance with God, to which the Jew also must conform. This truth was akin to the possible upset a Quaker would have were he to first be willing to grant that the Baptist emersion was not only right for a Baptist but actually required of the Quaker - or contrarywise, the Baptist granting the Quaker view of spiritual communion would suffice for the Quaker and find, also, that he himself must commune spiritually and not by the use of any symbol. Peter was saying, in this passage, God is showing us Jews, something about our own salvation through the Gentiles whom we have despised.

b. Titus 2:14 gives further definition of cleanness. In the midst of a block of ethical teaching which Paul expected of Timothy ("These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority," v. 15), to the effect that "they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (v. 10), Paul introduces the saving Christ as he so often does, "who gave himself for us that he might redeem us (subjunctive) and purify (aorist, subjunctive) to himself, a people zealous of good works."



The purity, here, partakes of the general meaning of the term, but stresses a separation from iniquity and a devotedness to good works which would, if we would deny ungodliness and should live soberly and godly in this present would, be his own possession.

10. **καθαρότης** - (ceremonial or a quality of cleanness) becomes a commentary on atonement (Heb. 9:12-13). An analogy from the OT lights up the parallel but superior N.T. teaching. If the blood and ashes of sacrificial animals sanctified to the cleansing of unclean flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ purge or sanctify your unclean conscience. Again, this is a contrast between the old way of works and the new way of faith - between unclean flesh without moral connotation and conscience which is all moral -- between passive goodness and dynamic goodness -- between the merely ceremonial cleansing and moral renovation.

Several points of emphases follow this Biblical analysis.

1. Jesus' sacrifice was to effect cleansing from sin. This he did once for all. It is absolute and final but provisional. It may help to recall other aspects of the purpose of Christ's death: "To save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21); "to make reconciliation" (II Cor. 5 and Eph. 2); "to sanctify the people" (Heb. 13:12); he was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification (Rom. 4); our old man was crucified with Christ "that we might not have to serve sin" (Rom. 6:6); "to make purification for our sins" (Heb 1:3); to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people . . . (Titus 2:14). There is an objective or judicial cleansing which means that our sins are no longer a barrier to the presence of God.

2. A cleansing precedes the witness to it by the Holy Spirit. And this cleansing is "by faith". That is, everything indicated by faith,



namely, a new center of moral orientation, God and His will, in contrast to self-righteousness is cleansing. This faith is the appropriation of the cleansing mentioned above and commits the person to Christ existentially.

3. There is a constant demand that men purify themselves, obviously meaning to maintain moral integrity and this is the personal cost of being perfected in holiness.

4. The clean, or pure, heart is necessary. Sometimes this purification is men's task, "purify your hearts you double minded," meaning a maintenance of single-hearted love. The condition of purity of heart is often mentioned, usually indicating a "ground" of love. That is, only a pure heart can love properly. Love proceeds out of a pure heart. Love describes the character of a pure heart.

5. The emphasis on a heart being pure is significant. Purity is a quality of "hearts". Briefly, it may be said to mean that the whole man is in moral integrity. Purity of the body or mind is a bringing into integration all parts of the personality and each part derives purity from this central orientation. Obedience to truth constitutes purity. A clean heart is one whose deepest purpose has been wrested from all other affections and centered in Christ.

6. Purity or cleansing is a moral relationship to God, not a quality in the substance of the soul. In fellowship is cleansing. It is not an independent real which can maintain its character apart from this relationship. Cleansing is maintained, "moment by moment," as fellowship is maintained. It is not passive but dynamic. It is not abstract but existential. It cannot be bestowed but only experienced. At no point is cleansing conceived as a state apart from obedience and

love which are not states. It would be improper to say, "I am cleansed," and suppose that this could be enjoyed apart from active fellowship with God.

7. Although nothing is said about the Holy Spirit cleansing the heart, since the Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the heart, it is proper to say that by the Holy Spirit's indwelling cleansing is mentioned. To reiterate, a clean heart is a single heart, which is love, which is fellowship, which is guarded and nourished by the Holy Spirit. Impurity is a violation of moral integrity which grieves the Holy Spirit, and breaks fellowship and changes love to lust which is the essence of duplicity or double-mindedness or sin.

In the context of moral relevance and holiness, purity cannot be a sub-rational impersonal "something" that happens to the substance of our souls. It must always be a right moral relationship which gives birth to love, in which obedience is the joy of the heart, and truth is the atmosphere.

Cleansing is not a static thing but a continuing relationship. The relationship is characterized by a separation from duplicity which is only the back side of separation to God. Together this describes cleansing and sanctification. How this relates to sin is now suggested but the development of this thought must await a chapter on sin.

## Sanctification

The terms, Holiness and Sanctification, structure the doctrine of holiness in a more decisive way than any other evangelical approach to theology is structured. They are certainly not the exclusive property of the holiness theologian but he does use them in a unique way. They have come to stand for the Wesleyan position. But by a strange but common semantic reversal, instead of the meaning of holiness being a description of the Wesleyan view, it is the reputation of the Wesleyan (whatever that may be), which determines the popular conception of holiness. Herein lies the problem in theological conversation.

These words give difficulty because of the connotations attached to them. They stand in a related way to perfection, and cleansing, and together form a theological system which is totally rejected or totally accepted depending on one's intellectual disposition. To the friend of holiness theology, they are absolutely indispensable. To the critic of holiness doctrine they are often like a red flag to a bull. To both they are emotionally charged words always good for a lively debate.

Some Biblical words, when used theologically, have been necessarily circumscribed, because theology is in some sense a science needing terms with exact and stable meanings. However, the tendency has been to interpret every passage of Scripture in which they occur in the light only of the narrower theological sense. If this has given rise to problems, then an examination of the Biblical text itself ought to reveal the original meaning back of the theological terms and actually enrich the theology and resolve the difficulties.

As common a word as sanctification ought not it would seem, need to be extensively examined. But it is possible that any word which has

become a theological label may come to cover more ground than the original usage intended, or less. This does not disqualify the word but does require that the original meaning be uncovered lest the accumulated or accommodated meanings be read back into the Biblical passage and it thereby became a source of misunderstanding and discord rather than an avenue of spiritual communication.

This study, then, is in no sense a criticism of the doctrine of holiness much less its denial but is an attempt to get behind the theological words, to the Biblical teaching which structures them. We wish to recover the moral questions in the lives of those to whom it was written and to which these Biblical passages were the answer. The observations which are made in relation to the words are not judgments about theology but only about the actual usage of the word in any one context. This report after clarifying the problem further will examine the passages in the New Testament in which these words are found, and then evaluate the meaning in the interest of a sound theological expression.

Sanctification, and holiness, are words which have acquired extra-Biblical meanings. In Catholic areas holiness refers to "His Holiness" the pope, and to the clergy in a modified way. In certain areas of the United States "holiness people" are the snake handlers and emotionally erratic groups. In foreign lands "holy men" are the dirty professional beggars and religious zealots -- a far cry from the Wesleyan meaning. In more evangelical circles holiness has come to be identified with "speaking in tongues", or with mystical visions, coma and sometimes with other emotional demonstrations in religious service. Too often "holiness" defines a withdrawal from the world, asceticism and denial of human impulses, powers and expressions. Sometimes holiness is made to mean

emotional tension, a strained disapproval of all normal joys, relaxations and fun. It has been associated with certain peculiarities in dress and behavior, either a "habit", quality of clothing, absence of color, ties, adornment of any kind or 50 to 100 year old clothing styles.

Perhaps careless and unguarded enthusiasm in preaching has given rise to the charge that holiness means "sinless perfection" or a deliverance from human fallibility. The use of the term "eradication" has sounded as if "holiness" removed "something" from the personality. A "holier than thou" attitude is not the exclusive characteristic of "holiness people" but when it does appear among them it is particularly offensive and is not a necessary or desirable accompaniment of that profession of faith. Spiritual pride and arrogance has also been noted among those who claim sanctification and is deeply deplored by Wesleyans. Wesley warned against this sin sternly.

Perfectionism, though not taught by middle-of-the-road holiness teachers, is a variant of doctrine which has been carelessly charged against the Wesleyan. Responsible holiness theologians have universally repudiated it with good apologetic. No misunderstanding on this point more thoroughly caricatures holiness theology than to class it with perfectionism.

Among evangelical groups, all believing in sanctification, numbers of views regarding it are held. Some confuse justification and sanctification maintaining that by one act of God's grace both aspects of soteriology are received at the same time and in the same way by the believer. This is the absolute imputationism of Zinzendorf.

Most evangelicals distinguish between justification and sanctification clearly but are not agreed in what sanctification consists and when

or how it occurs. To some the progressive improvement of the Christian is sanctification. Completed sanctification is recognized as a requirement for heaven but its full attainment is not considered consistent with present human experience. Hence, the growing toward it is a life-long task. It is described as a gradual tearing down of the structure of sin and a gradual building up of the structure of righteousness so long as life progresses. Since there is no "Protestant purgatory" death must be conceived as marking the moment of the completion of the process (though it cannot effect sanctification itself, it is generally held).

Others hold that the ontological presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart is sanctification. It is his peculiar ministry to control the evil nature and so give moral victory in this life. But there is a constant warfare between the sinful nature which cannot be changed and the Holy Spirit. While the Spirit reigns by the consent of the person, the carnal nature is successfully subdued. In this view there can be no actual improvement in the basic evil nature. It teaches a dual nature in the Christian. "Spirit possession" is a common expression and a trichotomous view of personality is assumed.

There are many variations within and between these positions.

Evangelicals are also divided over the definition of sanctification. Is it consecration only or does the element of purification also enter in? Some define it as the "separateness to" God which is implicit in the very idea of justification. The more ceremonial meaning is central and "consecration" the proper theological synonym and the proper preaching approach. Others feel the idea of "making pure" is also an essential and added meaning.

Holiness theology is distinctive in one particular point - the moral relevance of sanctification for this life. This conviction colors

every aspect of its theology and becomes the ground for its whole gamut of emphases. This is actually not a departure basically from the main stream of Christian teaching but a uniting of its various elements into a whole. To it sanctification is juridical and existential. It is crisis and process. It is separation and cleansing. Humanity is both sinful and savable. Grace is appropriated by faith. It is theology and experience.

To unite these apparent contradictions into one system creates logical problems. While the contradictions are resolved in living situations because life is greater than logic, in the doctrinal expressions and theological dissertations it is inevitable that some will favor one approach over the other and apparent differences of theological position occur.

Within holiness circles these apparent differences do exist. A close examination of the differences fails to disclose an actual theological breach because it is the vital, inner, spiritual life which all of them agree is the central point of importance, but the way this is explained varies with the background and intellectual make-up of the persons concerned.

At every point of tension there will be found an area in which differences of opinion exist. Perhaps the most noticable one has to do with the way process and crisis in sanctification are related.

In reaction to the growth idea in sanctification which never actually issued in mature moral righteousness in this life a strong reaction actually created a movement called the American Holiness Association in the mid-1800's in the interest of the crisis aspect of sanctification. The human and progressive element was seldom if ever entirely

missing but it was not strongly emphasized because the need, at the time, did not demand it. The tendency has been, therefore, to neglect this element and the criticism is raised that the doctrine of holiness is doctrinaire. It must be granted that this is occasionally the case and where it is there is usually a tendency to overly emphasize the importance of precise and undeviating terminology. While it would be difficult to prove that the persons concerned actually had no answers to practical problems (they did and do), but it does remain true that the teaching has not always been carefully enough guarded from the language of perfectionism and wrong impressions have been made. It is possible that the perfectionistic language has in some cases reacted back on the understanding of the doctrine in the minds of the people.

On the other hand, persons more closely following Wesley's other emphasis, namely the development of the life, have tended to stress the process aspect of sanctification, apparently (though not actually) neglecting the crisis element. (Some, of course, have actually dropped crisis from their theology and in the context of a more optimistic view of man than Wesley would have approved, have developed strong Pelegian tendencies. All "holiness" theologians call this liberalism.) Such early writers as Hannah Whitehall Smith and John Fletcher engaged themselves in clarifying the problem areas in the tension between doctrine and human life and on the surface seem to underplay crisis. Actually they assume crisis and clearly say so, particularly Fletcher.

The first group tends to limit the meaning of the word sanctification to the second crisis experience and work out precise verbal distinctions within the doctrine such as "initial" and "entire" to describe the steps in sanctification, and to elevate such terms as



"blessing" when related to "first" and "second" to theological status. Distinctive types of sin characteristic of sinners or unsanctified believers are carefully described and distinguished. It is customary to identify ones state of grace by means of an examination of psychological reactions. There is rather heavy emphasis on the emotional and mechanical aspects of Christian development which are considered unvarying in every person, and a code of ethical behavior and dress is developed and often made a test of grace. In fact, this wing of holiness theology shares with the Calvinists a tendency to use Biblical terms in an almost scientifically precise way in the interest of a faithful preservation of the doctrine and there is greater reliance on logical structure and inflexibility of language than the other wing of the holiness groups.

On the other hand such writers as Hannah W. Smith (A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life, accepted whole-heartedly by the first group, incidentally), avoided with studied deliberateness the formal theological terms. She does not use theological words, and seldom calls "the life hid with Christ in God" (her preference) sanctification and plays down the sharp distinctions in methodology which the above group calls "works of grace". She says, "Theologically and judicially I know that every believer has everything as soon as he is converted, but experimentally nothing is his until by faith he claims it" (p. 130, Ibid.). Wesley preferred, "Christian perfection" or "Perfect love" to sanctification: Upham called it the "Interior Life" and A.B. Earle, "the Rest of Faith." The "Deeper Life" is a common term and many others have described that which "sanctification" means to many.

Following the more formal cast of mind, the first group expresses theological truth in more static language than does the other group. The

impersonal "state" of grace is the usual expression which has some warrent in the light of Scriptural usage. However, even Wesley used this term with care lest a static view of sanctification be implied. Regarding it he said. "We are every hour and moment pleasing or displeasing to God, according to our works!" Hannah Whitehall Smith speaks warmly to this point;

We are not preaching a state, but a walk. The highway of holiness is not a place, but a way. Sanctification is not a thing to be picked up at a certain stage of our experience, and forever after possessed, but it is a life to be lived day by day, and hour by hour. (p. 130)

Some holiness groups put great stress on the use of the term sanctification in testimony and preaching as quite essential to the integrity of one's faith in the doctrine of holiness. The author recalls clearly the inflexible insistence upon the specific prayer for sanctification and the specific testimony to the experience by that word, in her early association in a holiness church. The word was sacred and definitive. C. W. Ruth was particularly adamant at this point. Others are able to maintain identification of the doctrine by less formal expression. Those who look for that one word have difficulty in finding a testimony to the grace he preached in Wesley's own writings. Certainly he never left a written testimony to it by the use of the word. It is interesting to note, at this point, that no New Testament writer gave a personal testimony to his relationship with God by reference to the word. Paul, who often testifies, and whose works most particularly structure holiness doctrine, never claimed sanctification by the word itself. The nearest he came to it was a reminder to the Thessalonian church of his walk before them, "how holily we behaved ourselves," but even here the word is not in the Greek that from which sanctification comes.

On the other hand Fletcher, who was concerned with practical matters and who is almost the apostle of the common man said that for failing to testify to that grace publically. he forfeited it five times.

John Peters, in his thorough and scholarly study, Christian Perfection and American Methodism (1956) provides an analysis of theological variations in Methodist holiness circles which need not be repeated here. The reader is referred to this work. In it he says that the American holiness movement tended to develop an unvarying methodology which became as distinctive and definitive a sign of orthodoxy as the doctrine itself and that to question the method was considered a challenge of the doctrine itself (p. 190).

It must be stated, however, that there has never been a time when a substantial number of holiness advocates were not preaching the doctrine of holiness faithfully without the rigid methodology just mentioned. Distinctive names are on the roster. Currently, a great surge of spiritual dynamic is pressing the movement into a more Wesleyan pattern and, it may be said, toward a more Biblical emphasis.

Only (relatively) recently have the differences indicated by this analysis been considered real by those in Wesleyan circles. Each side emphasized a truth within the expressed doctrine. But the tendency has grown with the formalizing of expression to consider one who over stresses methodology as reactionary and one who fails to stress it, liberal. The resulting tension calls for a return to Biblical sources for its criticizing and leveling effect.

In the light of these problems it seems proper to seek again the Biblical meaning back of the theological terms which are grounded in Scriptural usage.

## Sanctification in the Old Testament

Very briefly in the Old Testament. sanctification was the means by which the nation, the people and special objects became holy. Sin had separated men from God. God was holy, separate, shining, unapproachable, fearsome. He stood in awful judgment against men's sins. The estrangement between God and man was complete. It took centuries of divine education to build concepts into words which could and would be used to convey the moral meaning of the redemption which was to make communication possible between God and men. At first, physical separation from the common, according to rigid divine regulations constituted things and days and men and a nation, holy. Certain ritual acts permitted men to come into the presence of God and to be accepted by him.

Under the Law, obedience was emphasized. Perfection was defined in terms of physical, and ethical behaviour. Cleanness consisted in a total separation from forbidden things, and total dedication to God and His service. This was sanctification. This is not to say that the moral meaning was missing for it always lay in the background, but ceremonial observance was most prominent and important.

The prophets stressed a proper attitude which was considered of more importance than acts of ritual without the right spirit. "Obedience is better than sacrifice." Perfection was of motive, intention. Job was "perfect" because his integrity before God was unbroken. He dared to trust God in the darkest hour. A proper fast is not to do without food only, said Isaiah, but to give this food and clothing to the hungry. Sanctification came to include personal obedience and social obligation which were strong ethical considerations.

Geo. A. Turner summarized Old Testament teaching by saying that

in essence it was a religious concept the central idea being separation from the common and unclean and devotion to God. Holiness was the God-likeness required of God's people. It was derived and not natural. It was conditioned upon obedience, hence could be forfeited. Turner adds,

Holiness is equivalent to godliness; godliness is akin to goodness; man may become like God; hence, the holiness required of man is essentially godliness or goodness.<sup>1</sup>

#### New Testament Use of Sanctification

A general contextual study will precede a more technical analysis and conclusion.

1. Ceremonial and largely impersonal meanings are to be found in Matt. 23, where Jesus speaks of the temple and altar sanctifying the things in and on them; in I Cor. 7, where marriage is made holy and the children legitimate by the believing partner; and in I Tim. 4, where meats eaten with thanksgiving are made holy.

2. The central purpose of Jesus' ministry and death was for the sanctification of the church. Every other element in redemption is incidental to this in that they are supporting parts of this one thing. For instance, forgiveness is to make sanctification possible and is not an end in itself. Paul said, in Eph. 5:25-6 that Christ gave himself for the church in order "to sanctify and cleanse it" with the washing of water by the word." The Greek forms are not fully expressed in the English. However awkward it may sound the Greek reads something like, "Christ loved (aorist) the assembly and gave up himself (aorist) for it, in order that he might sanctify it (the subjunctive indicates purpose and possibility) having already (or first) cleansed [it] by the washing

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<sup>1</sup>Geo. A. Turner, The More Excellent Way, Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1952, pp. 30-31.

of water by [the] word" (aorist participle). Whatever custom the figure of speech referred to, the preparing of the church as a bride is the fundamental idea, and perfect fitness as a bride is the goal. "Without spot or wrinkle" parallels "holy and blameless" and shows the moral connotation intended by Paul. Two major emphases stand out. (1) It was a corporate body, a fellowship, which was Christ's concern. This idea of the unity of the church is the central idea in the Ephesian letter. (2) It was for the sanctification of this body that Christ gave himself. He looked past the individual to the total body of believers.

In Hebrews 13:12 the same idea is expressed as a climax to the whole letter. As the OT yearly temple offerings were to sanctify the people, in prospect of Christ's coming so now once for all "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered outside the gate." Again, the central purpose of the cross was to sanctify "the people". These two passages draw into the meaning of sanctification much more than is often included. In fact the whole scope of redemption benefits belong to the term.

These passages throw light on Jesus' prayer in John 17. The prayer in general is for the nucleus of believers and all others who would believe on Him through their word, that they might be so fitted together in union with Christ and to each other and together with God that their witness would glorify Christ on earth. Thoroughgoing oneness is the fitness and is reiterated several times in the prayer. Spiritual unity is its characteristic. Effective witnessing is the goal, "that the world might believe." Jesus had no complaint in regard to those for whom he prayed. They had not failed or disappointed him. Rather the opposite was true. It was not to correct anything that was wrong with

them so far as the prayer reads but it was in respect of the tremendous responsibility which he left with them that he prayed. The sanctification of himself in v. 19, is a personal appropriation of the sanctification received by him of the Father (10:36) in preparation for his redemptive ministry. In verse 18, Jesus says, "As thou hast sent me, so I send them into the world," and this comment, standing between v v., 17 and 19, relates sanctification to the divine commissions mentioned. His part of the task is finished. He commissions his disciples to carry out their part. The Father who sanctified Him for this task is asked to sanctify them for theirs or to devote Himself to them and set them apart and anoint them for their task. Jesus rebuked the Jews in one of the most serious passages in the New Testament (10:19-38) for saying he, sanctified by God, was a blasphemer. His works should have convinced them. Now, in the 17th chapter, the work of convincing the world was laid upon those whom Jesus left. The sacrifice of himself on the cross was the summation of his preparation in their behalf. Prepared men were to become spokesmen for Christ; "The works that I do shall [you] do also, and greater works than these shall [you] do . . ." (Jn. 14:12).

There seems to be no exegetical demand that the meaning of sanctification change from verse to verse, i.e., from one meaning in relation to Jesus and another meaning in relation to the disciples. It is precisely the analogy carried from one to the other that gives point to the passage. Rather than imposing a formal meaning on the word and requiring the passage to conform to it Biblical exegesis ought to be informed by the emphasis in the text. There is rich significance to the word here if this approach is allowed. Notice the parallels.

- a. That they may be one . . . . . as we are one (v. 11).

This is repeated in vv. 21 and 22.

- b. As Thou art in me and I in Thee . . (so) they may be in us (21).

- c. They are not of the world . . . . . as I am not of the world.

Twice is this mentioned, vv. 14, 16.

- d. As thou hast sent me into the world . . I have sent them into the world (18).

- e. I sanctify myself . . . . . that they may be sanctified (19).

- f. The glory thou gavest me . . . . I have given them (22).

- g. I in them . . . . . and I in thee (23).

- h. As thou hast loved me . . . . . (so) thou hast loved them (23).

- i. Thy love for me . . . . . may be in them and I in them (26).

All of this gives concrete meaning to the word sanctification as Jesus intended it. That it is more than ceremonial is obvious. The prayer was not for their removal from the world but for their being kept from evil in the world. The prayer was not for the disciples alone, but for all who would believe on Christ through their word. And that it was for earthly not supra-earthly matters is indicated by the purpose, "that the world might believe."

Some of the meaning of sanctification, then, can be derived from this analysis of this passage.

- a. What sanctification meant to Jesus it is to mean to us.

b. It meant a God ordained commission - God's choice of persons for a specific purpose. God sanctifies. It is objective.

c. It meant also a personal dedication to God's will, a response, and total faithfulness to the specific task. We are sanctified. It is subjective.



d. Dedication is a very strong word - not the cheap popular meaning of today. It includes a very real commitment of the self to God so that there is no contrary purpose in the heart. It is moral union. The passage is particularly strong at this point.

e. As Christ was one with God in moral rapport and singleness of love and purpose, so our oneness with Christ and with each other constitutes the moral integrity which structures sanctification.

f. As with Christ so with us, sanctification was more than an ordination by God, or the internal felicity of fellowship. It was also an outward expression which must always round out the meaning of love. Love, by obedience, must be expressed. Its essential nature absolutely demands this.

In fine, the meaning of the word derives from the parallel in the analogy, not from any difference between Christ's experience and ours. If it be insisted that "to make pure" must be deleted from the meaning in relation to Christ and added in relation to men, it must be said that this idea betrays a false concept of purity. This passage is a definition of purity. It is given existential and highly concrete meaning by the text. What purity meant to Christ it must mean to us, namely, a single-heart, and that is precisely what sanctification means. The objective and subjective aspects of sanctification are not two things, but one thing, looked at from different sides. The ceremonial, prefigured in the Old Testament was personalized in Christ in whom we are sanctified. If we are "in Christ", subjective moral renovation is as necessary as moral rightness is in Christ. Sanctification is in truth not falsehood. In the atmosphere of Truth every idol is cast down, every area of personality is made to center in Christ. This moral fellowship is purity. In this

fellowship is cleansing from sin. John 17 does not permit by grammar, or sense, a formal imputation of sanctification as a standing, only. No impersonal, a-moral interpretation can stand. Moral relevancy is stamped on every phrase. Sanctification is not abstract and impossible. but existential and ethically relevant. It is not a striving after purity but a relationship in which purity is experienced. It is a relationship made possible by Jesus' mediatorial work, but contingent on our reponse (as indicated by the tenses of the Greek verbs).

This parallels the Ephesian passage remarkably. (1) Jesus had in mind a spiritually unified body of believers (2) that would bring glory to himself. (3) He died to sanctify them. All other elements of redemption were included but incidental to this. (4) Sanctification was in the word and truth. This word obviously was not the "Scripture" primarily but by an intimate fellowship with the living Word, who is Himself truth. (5) The commission was accompanied by a moral fitness - for the unity of spirit indicated in both passages is moral clear through.

In the interest of clarity it is well to note that Jesus in John 17, did not indicate the manner in which sanctification would take place. He did not equate it with the coming of the Holy Spirit, in fact the Spirit is not mentioned in the prayer. Though theology is inclined to relate them it is of interest to note that so far as any specific Scripture is concerned, the Pentecostal experience is not said to be an answer to Jesus' prayer. In fact never is sanctification directly identified with the coming of the Spirit on that day. This does not mean that these three things are not related but it does mean that on the strength of the passages cited the identification cannot be made. The great overwhelming and overarching truth is that sanctification is inclusive of everything

Jesus was and did for us and that a church perfected for its commissioned task is the purpose. These central truths must be kept sharply in focus however we add them to other truths in a systematic theology.

Paul further shows the source of sanctification as being in Christ, in the Corinthian letters. The ideals which both Greek and Hebrew vainly tried to achieve was found in Christ - wisdom, righteousness, sanctification redemption (I. 1:30). This does not suggest that the elements of atonement are these four things and in that order, but is a summary of the virtues men seek and cannot find of themselves. In 6:11, Paul contrasts the Corinthian Christians as they were against what they had been in heathendom to show how inexcusable were their present actions, "but ye have been washed and sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." It further complicates the already difficult theological problem in Corinthians, namely, calling them both sanctified and carnal, if one limits the meaning of sanctification here only to a second work of grace.

3. God's pre-creative plan for man's redemption was "in sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth" in stark contrast to the progress of sin--unrighteousness because of rejection of truth (II Thess. 2:13). Peter makes use of this same unusual expression (I. 1:2), "Elect . . . in sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." In both cases the reference is to the divine plan of redemption which was sanctification by the Spirit's ministry on the one hand and the moral response of the people in obedience and right relationship to truth on the other. Sanctification of the Spirit included and lead to obedience and the "sprinkled blood". It was not, according to this passage, dependent on them.

4. All believers are in the New Testament called holy, or sanctified or saints irrespective of spiritual maturity or any other qualification. Examples are found in I Cor. 1:2, II Cor. 1:1 and 13:13, Eph. 1:1 and many others. No reference is ever made to unsanctified believers in distinction from sanctified believers so far as the express statement of Scripture goes.

5. The Gentiles were to be included, by divine pre-arrangement, among the sanctified as indicated in Acts 20:32, 26:18 and Rom. 15:16. The inheritance of the sanctified was universalized to include those outside the Jewish nation. This refers to the promise given to Israel, the holy nation, but makes both Israel and its sanctification to be a spiritual matter which others than Jews could share. In Romans 15 that which was sanctified by the Holy Spirit was the acceptance of the Gentiles into the privileges of this inheritance. It will be noted that the grammar makes this interpretation sound. The feminine form of "sanctified" links it clearly with "acceptance" the only other feminine form in the sentence, and therefore what is accepted is the inclusion of the Gentiles. A premonition of this use was found in Jn. 17, God's active commissioning or blessing of a plan is sanctification. In this case it was the universalizing of the gospel.

6. Of the two prayers for sanctification, both were petitions in behalf of others and not for the one who prayed (Jn. 17:17ff and I Thess. 5:23). Both were prayers in behalf of a corporate body. Both asked that God sanctify that body of persons and both were prayers for groups which were first highly commended in spiritual matters and unblameable in these spiritual things. Neither group was spiritually defective so far as we are told.

a. Jesus' prayer. The meaning of sanctification in Jesus' prayer has been suggested. Is there contextual help in the Thessalonian letter?

b. Paul's prayer. This is the passage from which the term "Entire Sanctification" is drawn and the only passage where even the language gives any idea of partial or complete as modifications of sanctification. This textual analysis is not a criticism of the theological use of the phrase "Entire Sanctification", which is an idea deeply grounded in Scripture when it is properly understood, but an examination of the passage itself to see what it contributes to the meaning.

The word "Entire" when attributed to sanctification, has given some trouble. Some have said that it is sanctification that is completed giving the idea that the end is reached and all that sanctification means is accomplished and by implication (I think not by direct word or teaching) that there is no process aspect at all beyond this. This would contravert the earlier statement in the letter (3:12-13), that an increase and abounding in love was to "establish their hearts unblameable in holiness" and it is this for which Paul prays as if it were the establishment in holiness that the Thessalonians needed, not the holiness itself. It would also be difficult to make the finished nature of sanctification agree with the Corinthian exhortation (II. 7:1), "cleanse yourselves, . . . perfecting holiness (present tense)", which, as we have seen speaks of maturation. It is the person who changes in relation to it, rather than that varying degrees or amounts of sanctification are received or bestowed. Sanctification, or holiness, as such does not ever seem to be a matter which can be described in terms of degrees. Never does one have a little sanctification, more of it, or all of it. At least this passage does not permit this kind of interpretation.

I Thess. 5:23 can hardly be understood apart from the fourth chapter which is a two-fold exhortation. Both follow from the 3rd chapter prayer that holiness may be established by growth in love and both are linked with "further more" (4:1), a most suggestive word. First, they were to "abound more and more" in a "walk" that would please God. Holiness is not static. Then, they were to "increase more and more" (4:9-10) in love for one another. But since Paul said he did not need to write about this last matter because they excelled in it (v. 10) and were taught of God regarding it (v. 9), the elaboration of the "walk" of holiness to which point Paul spoke in vv. 3-8, will be of interest to us. It is the Biblical philosophy of holiness.

There are a number of elements mentioned and implied. a. Holiness has to do with the practical affairs of life. The "walk" is the daily quality of behavior. They were not asked to improve in their understanding of the doctrine. Their whole hearted acceptance of that is mentioned several times. There were some points in their lives that needed attention, however. b. Holiness and moral uncleanness were antithetical. In fact moral cleanness is defined by holiness and uncleanness is absence of moral integrity, or holiness. Coming out of Greek philosophies, some Thessalonian Christians carried into the Christian religion the idea that either physical sins were necessary to a full life and therefore not sin, or that the body did not and could not partake of spiritual sanctity and hence physical sins were no hindrance to grace. This Gnostic (or pre-Gnostic) heresy was the bane of the early Christian leaders. Holiness as a bestowal of grace was not necessary to prevent sex sins according to this passage (or any passage) but these sins were shown to be absolutely antagonistic to the Christian walk. A consistent Christian life in-

cluded in it the whole participation of man. Greek dualism was rejected.

c. Holiness is God's will. To it men are called. The gospel call is not merely to forgiveness but to holiness. The Holy Spirit is given to Christians to make holiness a possibility. To refuse to walk consistently is to despise God who has given us the Holy Spirit. There is no acceptable alternative to God's call to holiness. Uncleaness is moral revolt against God. Now, Paul is both adamant at this point and patient at the same time. Some of them were sanctified, but ignorant and engaging in uncleaness. Paul was giving instruction at this point and, for him, to know the truth was to constitute them absolutely liable for further sin. He could excuse ignorance but not rejection. To reject him, he said, was to reject God with all the serious consequences. The call, in this letter, is not abstract, but to practical consistency in holiness--namely, cleanness. And cleanness means bringing every power of the body into harmony with God's will and purpose for men.

Now, when we come to I, 5:23 in which Paul prays again, something of this background of understanding is needful. The prayer is two-fold. One petition asks for sanctification, the other for preservation in moral integrity(or without censure). He prays that everyone of them will be sanctified and that the whole personality of everyone will be held inviolate in this sacred relation.

To "sanctify them wholly" cannot mean that the whole person is to be sanctified in contrast to a part of the person, that is, quantitatively, so that some area within the personality is now to be sanctified - which was not before. A view of personality as a unit forbids that interpretation. "Remains of sin", "carnality," and such terms sometimes suggest a substance theory of sin which must be carefully guarded.



It cannot mean that now the body and/or soul is to be sanctified in the same way that the spirit is. Holiness is a moral matter and substance is neither holy or unholy of itself.

A. T. Robertson says (in Word Pictures) that "wholly" is not an adverb as it is so often translated, but a predicate adjective, agreeing in number with "you". The significance of this is pointed up by the contrast in grammar in the second petition of the prayer as Paul asks for the entire preservation of the "spirit, soul and body" of each of them. In this case the compound subject is followed by a singular verb and singular predicate adjective, indicating Paul's view of man as an undivided whole. ὁλοτελής modifies the plural "you" and not the singular verb "sanctify", so that it cannot be sanctification that is whole or entire but "you". And the "you" being plural does not permit an individual application of the modifier. "May every one of you be sanctified by God," would be true to the Greek forms. Luther added, "through and through (durch und durch)" but this must only strengthen the corporate idea. It cannot reflect a personal reference.

The prayer for the individual with its moral connotation is carefully guarded by the grammar. The first petition is general, the second specifies the personal relevance, "May your (every one of you, plural), Spirit, soul and body be preserved (singular) blamelessly entire . . ." The second petition is a divine commentary on the first. Blameless personal integrity, cleanness, is the content of sanctification. Paul has taught throughout the letter the need for a thoroughgoing and personal moral integrity. Sanctification has to do with character.

Paul is not teaching a trichotomous view of man in this passage. He is utilizing the common Greek expression because the Thessalonian



error stemmed from that idea. As elsewhere, Paul regards the spiritual, not a level above the physical and soulish levels, or a sort of aristocracy, but as being the very essence of man. In this passage Paul reverses the usual order. from body. soul and spirit (the ascending values) to spirit, soul and body and in this reversal reveals his antipathy to Greek thought. The body. to Paul, is not the prison of the spirit, but its instrument -- an instrument to be brought into the service of the spirit. The spiritual is betrayed by a body whose functions have not been dedicated to God's service and disciplined to its highest capacity. A "spiritual" person must include his whole nature in his religion, not exclude the unsavable parts, as they had believed they could. This explains the Corinthian passages also in which holiness or holy is used. Spiritual life was no esoteric affair out of relationship to the body, ["Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 6:19)], or in isolation from the corporate fellowship, ["Know ye not that your (plural, meaning corporateness) body (singular, meaning one fellowship) is the temple of God, . . . the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (I Cor. 3:16-17)].

"Sanctified Wholly " or "Entire Sanctification", as theological terms meaning the total moral relevance of God's grace to every part of the personality is a perfectly proper and useful concept when it is understood. But to make this a description of a personal experience on the basis of these English words in I Thess. 5:23, is incorrect exegesis. It is not, in this passage, sanctification that is entire, but "every one of you" who are to be sanctified. The thorough personal relevance is indicated in the second part of the petition.

This analysis does not discredit the right use of "entire" when related to sanctification. It is precisely that the Thessalonians and Corinthians climactically end the dualism which could quickly prove fatal to their Christian status. The urgency is so strong that no delay is permissible. The issue is a moral issue and must be faced and decisive steps taken. But the implications of this moral step would take a life-time of hard work to maintain and work out in every situation in life.

7. There is a human obligation to this relationship. We are to "sanctify in our hearts, Christ as Lord" (I Pet. 3:15). This emphasizes the demand that a Christian not only become a believer but that he very consciously make Christ Lord indeed. The Saviour must become Lord to him and that is only possible when He is made to be. Effective service, "good works", are only possible as one "purges himself" from the unworthy and entangling things which Paul itemizes in II Tim. 2 and, after the analogy of honorable vessels in a great house, he will be set apart as an honorable vessel, "sanctified and meet for the master's use." In this figure of speech, "master" is contrasted to the kitchen help or any of the menial slaves. It is for God's special use that we are to devote ourselves in contrast to any other devotion. Only one who has purged himself, that is, eliminated all other loyalties, is qualified to be sanctified, or (as with Jesus) commissioned for God's service. In this case, again, the ceremonial figure becomes useful to us as we see the spiritual significance emerge and the deep moral relevance.

The Corinthians (II Cor. 7:1) were exhorted to perfect or bring to maturity holiness "in the fear of God", by "cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." In the light of the promises

itemized in I Cor. 6, cleansing (aorist) the self, was the moral minimal required in the lives of believers to bring to completion (present tense, continuing action) holiness, in the fear of God. The Thessalonians were pressed to abound more and more in love in order that the Lord would establish their hearts unblameable in holiness (I, 3:12-13). In Rom. 6, Paul indicates that a self yielded to God in obedience leads to righteousness and has fruit unto holiness. In no sense is holiness achieved by personal striving but by a continuing attitude of reckoning ones self dead to sin and alive to God and by settled attitude of yielding to God and a life of obedience from the heart. The fruit of this is holiness and everlasting life.

8. Something of a further definition of holiness is given in Ephesians 1:4, where Paul gives us the pattern of God's purpose for the creation of men, "to be holy and without blame before God in love." The austerity of "holy" is personalized in the "blamelessness of love." These modify each other. The philosophical abstraction which often clouds the evangelical meaning is dissolved in the words, "before Him". This takes all definition and judgment out of our hands. Blameless is an existential word, too. Faultless would be the language of Perfectionism, but blameless is thoroughly Christian. This is no impossible and supra-historical standard. It has relevance only for this life of probation. Blameless, when joined with love, is not a certain code of conduct or quantitative excellence, it is a spirit, a quality of devotion that is "perfect" at every stage of its development. Holiness and love proceed together. Holiness is deepened by love. Love is the very essence of holiness. Neither is static or simply positional, but as obligated to expand as personality.

That the Church should be "holy and blameless" (Eph. 5:27) is Christ's purpose. The same words are given in Col. 1:22, "to present you holy and blameless . . . before him." It is to be "preserved blameless" that Paul prays for the Thessalonians (I Thess. 5:23). This is an oft-repeated thought in Scripture. Peter in his first letter (1:15-16), in the midst of various and sundry exhortations to proper Christian conduct, cries, "Like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves holy in all manner of living." This is no abstract, mystical idea. Peter is not given to speculation. It is a contrast to their former evil life. Obedience and Christian sobriety must characterize their conduct in keeping with their Christian faith and hope.

This has been a study of the words against the context with no attempt to analyze the words more critically. However, a study of the words themselves confirm the judgments made. An excellent word study has come into the hands of the author since making this contextual study, by Claude A. Ries. In his unpublished doctoral dissertation presented to the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1945, Dr. Ries (now Chairman of the Dept. of Theology in Houghton College, N. Y.) found that three words express the idea of holiness or sanctification in the Greek;

ἁγιασμός, ἁγιασμένη, and ἁγιότης (p. 57ff).

ἁγιασμός, ending in μα signifies the process of sanctification and indicates action. It connotes a process of separation. It has a social dimension and the ethical conception is strong. It appears ten times in the New Testament: Romans 6:19, 22; I Thess. 4:7; I Tim. 2:15; Heb. 12:14; I Cor. 1:30; I Thess. 4:3, 4; II Thess. 2:13; and I Pet. 1:2.

From the study of these passages it is clear that ἁγιασμός has, as its purpose, 'the setting up, advancing and preserving

of the life of fellowship with the God of grace and righteousness (Cremer)' (A Greek New Testament Approach to the Teaching of the Deeper Spiritual Life, p. 67).

ἁγίωσύνη with the ending *συνή*, denotes abstraction (p. 69).

It is a holy character. It cannot be transferred or imputed but it is built up little by little as the result of obedience and walking in the Spirit. Paul alone uses the word in the New Testament and that three times; Romans 1:4; II Cor. 7:1; and I Thess. 3:13. Once it refers to the character of Christ and twice the character of men, both the result of a proper relationship -- cleansing and abounding in love. It is the result of the process *ἁγιασμός*. It is manifested in conduct, in moral purity and is a creative principle within (Ibid., p. 70).

ἁγιοσύνης comes from ἅγιος and means holiness or sanctity (p. 77). It is found in two passages; II Cor. 1:12 and Heb. 12:10. It seems to signify a "divine quality given to man which possesses an uprightness that has no defects" (p. 78). In the Hebrews passage God's discipline leads to the separation from that which hinders a perfect relation between God and men and permits a "partaking of the divine nature."

Dr. Ries notes the interesting use of tenses, also, in the New Testament to indicate something of the "Deeper Spiritual Life". The aurist marks the historic fact. The present shows the continuous process by which the divine gift is slowly realized. The perfect expresses a state of abiding in its divine stability. The tenses of the three outstanding Greek verbs relating to the Deeper Life already studied are reviewed by Ries.

ἁγιάζω : John 17:17- aorist, 17:19- present and perfect; Acts 20:32- perfect; 26:18- perfect; Romans 15:16- perfect; I Corinthians 1:2- perfect; 6:11- aorist; Ephesians

5:26- present; I Thessalonians 5:23- present; II Timothy 2:21- perfect; Hebrews 2:11- present; 10:10- perfect; 10:14- present; 10:29- perfect; 13:12- present; I Peter 3:15- aorist; Jude 1- perfect. The present and perfect predominate. The aorist in the command of I Peter 3:15 seems to an ingressive aorist. ('This use is commonly employed with verbs which signify a state or condition and denote entrance into that state or condition.' Dana and Mantey, p. 196).

Τελεσιόω : John 17:23- perfect; II Corinthians 12:9- present; Hebrews 11:40- aorist; 10:14- perfect; 12:23- perfect; I John 4:17- perfect; 4:18- perfect; I John 2:5- perfect; 4:12- perfect. The perfect predominates here. 'The perfect tense implies a process, but views that process as having reached its consummation and existing in a finished state.'

Καθαρῶς : II Corinthians 7:1- aorist; Ephesians 5:26- aorist; James 4:8- aorist; I John 1:7- present; I John 1:9- aorist; Acts 15:9- aorist; Titus 2:14- aorist; Hebrews 9:14- present; 9:22- present; 10:2- perfect. Here the aorist predominates. The imperatives of II Corinthians 7:1 and James 4:8 seem clearly the ingressive aorist. The other passages containing the aorist are no doubt the culminative aorist. ('The aorist is employed in this meaning when it is wished to view an event in its entirety, but to regard it from the viewpoint of its existing results. Here we usually find verbs which signify effort or process, the aorist denoting the attainment of the end of such effort or process.') Ibid., p. 196. Ibid., p. 111.

An interesting fact begins to come clear as these words are studied in the immediate context, namely, that they do not raise any questions relative to the numbers of works of grace, "levels" of grace, temporal succession of "blessings", relative measure of permissible sin in any stage of the way, classification of Christian status by examination of psychological reactions or any other like matter. The moral, personal, practical obligation to God crowds all these peripheral concerns into the background. The moral imperative stands out clearly at every point.

The whole sweep of Biblical teaching relative to sanctification centers in one major concern - man's practical relationships to God and his fellowmen. Sanctification presupposes God's initiative in salvation and His provision for it. Nothing man could possibly do of himself, could

commend him to God. Sanctification has to do with every aspect of man's responsibility to God in the light of God's initiative provision, and invitation. Sanctification is God's answer to abstraction and antinomianism in regard to salvation. In the fullest sense, it circumscribes the whole measure of human responsibility. It is the one word that has in it everything for which a man is responsible to God, to himself and to others. Religion is not a compartmentalized thing, theoretical and abstract. It invades all of life and confronts every moment of responsibility.

The word sanctification, then, is richer in meaning than any limited theological term permits. It is not an academic word, or philosophical in the sense of being abstract and "schoolish". It is intensely practical and religious. Basically it means separation from sin to total devotedness to God. Its atmosphere is love. Its life is service, or an expression of love.

Note the complex usages in the New Testament. Sanctification sometimes is the epitome of the whole plan of salvation, sometimes it is a part of it. It is for the church as a corporate body. Christ died to sanctify the church. Sometimes sanctification is considered the only end of redemption--a holy people. Sometimes it is the method of making them morally fit. It is often one facet in the method but when thus itemized, there is no uniformity of classification. It is sometimes a status which is conferred, it is sometimes a life to be developed and perfected. Men never achieve sanctification. It is always given by God but must be appropriated by men and lived out painstakingly. It takes moral integrity to maintain it - "cleanse yourselves", and a growth and deepening of love for progress in it. It is objective and subjective. It



is a status and a life. It is a given and a process. It is the anti-thesis of sin and yet it fits the human frame with all its fallibility and imperfection.

#### Peculiarities in the Use of the Word

So far as the actual use of the word is concerned, sanctification as a status is always related to groups. At least never is any individual said to have received any particular experience called sanctification. Strangely, (though on other grounds it may be affirmed that the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was sanctification) the New Testament does not relate the two directly.

No passage exhorts believers on to sanctification - as such, or indicates that sanctification is ever to be sought. The only apparent exception are Heb. 12:14, and I Pet. 1:15-16. But here, the "following after" peace and holiness is in the progressive present tense, imperative in mood, and indicates an active and settled life attitude of keeping sanctification clear and clean. The words, "looking diligently" lest there be a falling from grace and lest a root of bitterness appear and that a profane person should forfeit his inheritance is from episcopas. A guard is to be kept lest these things rob of the only fitness for seeing God. Rather than an exhortation to a seeking of sanctification it is a serious warning against losing it (as in Heb. 6 and 10). The Petrine passage commands (imperative, future) to "be holy", not to seek holiness and the ethical connotations are graphically spelled out in the context.

So far as the word itself is concerned, sanctification is not related directly, in the New Testament, to the baptism of the Holy Spirit



though the whole process of sanctification is in the atmosphere of the Holy Spirit. He is uniquely central to every moment of a Christian's walk with God.

Strangely, no Scripture says that sanctification "cleanses", though it is related to cleansing in other ways. Nor is it said to remove, destroy or restore anything. It is never a "work of grace," a "second" experience or "blessing". These terms are useful but not to be considered Biblical.

So far as the use of the word is concerned sanctification is not a higher (or highest) level of grace in distinction from a lower level. There is no idea given in the New Testament of degrees of cleanness or obedience or acceptability with God or in holiness. Nor is there any hint that it is an alternative to anything else proper to believers. There is development within holiness of the whole man, which refers to the individual relationship to it, but not to mechanical levels or time stages in grace itself. It is, in other words, not static, but dynamic in that there is a moral relationship to God and His will involved requiring an active and total participation in mutual fellowship and personal and spiritual integrity. The striking Pauline exhortation in Rom. 12:1-2 to "present" the body a living sacrifice makes "holy" one of the qualifications of such a gift and apparently suggests that this condition is to be satisfied by the person.

By a careful analysis of the use of this one word against its context we are made aware that few if any of the rational problems which have been mentioned are raised by the Biblical use of it. In every case, except where it has obviously a non-theological meaning (such as a holy marriage), the original reader is given a specific moral meaning,

a meaning which makes a difference to his practical life. In these cases a spiritual meaning is added to the Old Testament connotation. It goes inward and presses against the conscience and requires a moral response. The exhortations in relation to the use of the word have to do with the moral obligations one sustains to God, never are the exhortations impersonal, i.e., in relation to an experience only or a theological belief. It is personal to the core and the obligations one sustains to God in it are moral obligations hence requiring decisive and inclusive moral response.

In general, then, sanctification is relational. It relates God's provision of salvation to man's human personality and real life. It is the whole process by which the abstract and theoretical is made actual and vital. In particular, sanctification includes every step taken toward God and his will on our part and the approval and inner renewal on God's part. Sanctification is needed to safeguard against antinomianism which inevitably arises where human responsibility is discounted or where grace is in any way restricted to God's act only. It is needed, also, to maintain the structure of moral integrity in God's world. Salvation is not a different way of looking at sin, but a different attitude toward sin within men. Moral distinctions are retained and strengthened, rather than weakened.

#### Holiness Preaching in the New Testament

Certainly the disciples, newly filled with the Holy Spirit, were holiness preachers. The content of their preaching should say something about the essence of holiness. Peter began, not by pressing "sanctification" upon the people but by pressing the moral claims of Christ upon

them. "God has made Jesus, whom you crucified, to be Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), he said. We are apt to miss the convicting force of this assertion unless we remember that the Roman Emperor called himself Lord and his subjects were required to do so also, with the acknowledgement of his deity implied. That Jesus alone was Lord and Messiah pressed home a conviction that was very great. It forced a practical change of loyalties that was very real indeed. To say "Christ is Lord", cut through<sup>10</sup> the very center of human life at that time.

Tracing through the book of Acts one is amazed at the way Christ is preached. He is central. History points to Him. He saves. Men have killed the Prince of Life. He is the stone set "at naught by the builders" but now is "the head of the corner." It is remarkable that it is not simply the fact of Christ as a historical figure in whose death they are to believe that is preached. Christ, in their preaching, made the most thoroughgoing moral demands which resulted in a radical change in life's pattern. Preaching Christ brought deepest conviction for personal sin.

Paul is Christ-centered. Were one to lift out of his letters the moral obligation which Christ imposes on men when they believe on Him there would be little left.

If Biblical preaching is preaching Christ as we have suggested, holiness preaching, being Biblical, is preaching Christ. If preaching Christ is in any sense to follow a pattern in the New Testament, that which the New Testament writers considered central is important to us as holiness preachers. Sanctification, being a work of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit's work being to confront men by Christ, sanctification must have deep affinity with Christ whose central purpose was to sanctify us.

It has been observed that the exhortations of the New Testament are not centered around the words holiness or sanctification but around the moral responsibility men have to God in the presence of the provision for and gift of sanctification. As truly it can be stated that nowhere are men to seek justification or regeneration or even the "new birth" but rather forgiveness in the name of Christ and by the mercy of God. Not, "Lord, justify me," but, "Have mercy on me," is the proper prayer. Similarly, not "sanctify me." but, "make me a fit place for thy indwelling," is the proper Christian's petition.

If the contexts are carefully noted around the words cognate with holiness two emphases are seen to stand out clearly. One is the centrality of Christ in so many of the cases and the call to responsible discipleship and the other has to do with moral rectitude. Two words structure this human relation to holiness, truth and love. Truth has to do with a right relationship to God, by putting away the lie and establishing faith in Him. or making Christ Lord. Love has to do with a right relationship with people as well as God and love is as central to holiness as truth. Both belong to practical life.

Leading out from the passages speaking of sanctification are exhortations to cleanse and purge the self; to present the self holy and acceptable to God; to enthrone Christ as Lord; to put away evil things; to put on spiritual things and to abound in love. In other words, the exhortations have moral content and are practical through and through.

The majority of all New Testament appeals are addressed to Christian believers. They press a moral demand on all, that is in the right sense, ultimate. Preaching Christ, was to the New Testament writers not so much the privileges provided to one "in Christ" as the

desperately serious demand to reject every sin and make a total commitment to Christ -- "until Christ be formed in you" is Paul's expression. And the warnings lest there be loss of spiritual life by indifference, neglect and apostacy are striking indeed.

To whom are these appeals made? To the unsanctified believer? so that the sanctified could say, "Now, I do not need these sections of Scripture; I have outgrown this passage and have stepped into the next higher level and will have no further use for that one? At least, there is no textual evidence that this is correct. The Bible was written for us and, in this life, we will not be able to discard any of it. Under the proper presentation of Christ which ought to characterize Biblical preaching, the sinner is drawn to the Saviour, the uncommitted Christian is plunged into deep conviction, the complacent saint is powerfully disturbed and the most devoted and faithful Christian is challenged to his fingertips, blessed, criticized, encouraged, enlightened, goaded, irritated, chastened, comforted and pushed into service.

It is a startling fact that many of the texts traditionally used by preachers for addressing sinners were written to believers.

Matt. 16:24-25 is usually directed to Christians but Jesus did not intend the 26th verse to be reserved for the sinner. The audience did not change. "What shall a man be profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" is the alternative to, "Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me."

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," is not a warning to sinners but to those who have the Spirit already and who could forfeit His presence by disobedience.

"Be not deceived", cried Paul to the "brethren" (Gal. 6:7-8), "God is not mocked. for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap, he that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption and he that sows to the Spirit. shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." We do not outgrow the need for this.

And, "how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" was not spoken to the unbeliever but to those in Christ (Heb. 2:3).

It is shocking to notice that the practical, earthy, "meddling" commands in Rom. 12:3 to "abhor evil", "curse not", "exchange evil for evil with no man", and "provide things honest in the sight of all men," was spoken to those who had "presented themselves" to God in the first verse and it never ceases to be an appropriate council for men in whatever state of grace they may live. Paul was an exceedingly practical man. He did not believe in moral magic or the by-passing of causes to obtain effects.

All of this, because it is addressed to Christian believers, is "preaching holiness". It is not exhortation without content but is in the fullest measure that which is the content of the term holiness. The following analysis is some of the content drawn from the context in which the words holiness and sanctification are used.

#### Observations Regarding Sanctification

1. Sanctification is the one word that by contrast most adequately explains the "awfulness" of the death of Christ. Only in it can a proper perspective be maintained concerning God's redemptive purpose. It cannot be merely said that Christ died to provide forgiveness for sin, or for our justification only. Nothing less than our sanctification

is sufficient to comprehend the mystery of the death of Christ on the cross. Jesus suffered without the gate that he might sanctify the people with his own blood. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it. To misunderstand sanctification or to consider it lightly or unbiblically is to set ourselves adrift from the central affirmation of the Christian faith. Justification does not exhaust the meaning of the Atonement.

2. Jesus' interest in our sanctification is further evidenced by the words given us in John 17 as he prayed. It is not trite to say that in this prayer the most urgent and profound insights to Jesus' purpose are revealed. It is sacred ground. The whole purpose of Jesus' sacrifice is that the world might believe on Him, but more, -- that the world might believe that God loved it. Back of every phrase of that prayer shines through the ultimate purpose--bringing God and man together into cleansing fellowship. The world's confidence in us (inspired by our unity with each other) must lead to Christ's love which in turn terminates in God. There is theology enough here to stagger the mind. Here is the progress of thought. Jesus was "to sanctify himself" in order that the disciples might be sanctified, so that the resulting oneness with God and man would convince the world of God's love in Christ. The majesty and scope of this purpose plunges us into the deepest humility and requires of us the most profound obedience. There is no room, in the face of John 17 for a shallow, trivial view of the Christian life or for any excuse for less than God's full possession of and mastery of our lives. Individuals may come into sanctification, but sanctification is not individualism.



3. The third observation follows from these two. There is a two-fold dimension to sanctification. It related (1) to God and the provision of grace which He extends via the atonement to us. It seems clearly to represent the reversal of the situation in which men find themselves because of sin. It is, in Christ, all that the Old Testament sacrifices typified by way of atonement for sin. It is God's restoration of His presence and fellowship with man. But in sanctification there is, also, (2) of moral necessity, a requirement that fellowship be mutual — that the oneness be real, not fictional. In redemption God offers all men salvation but all must be appropriated by the fullest measure of moral response on the part of man. The deeply personal nature of sanctification signified the deeply spiritual nature of the relationship. Fellowship is impossible apart from a self-giving on the part of each person. This giving cannot be forced, it must be freely and gladly given. God's offer cannot be culminated until men submit to the terms of fellowship. All the benefits of grace are appropriated by faith in God and appropriated only so far as faith takes hold.

4. There is nothing about the relationship to God to which sanctification refers that is earned, worked for, or achieved by our actions. It would appear to be more true to say that the steps to it include a clearing away of moral hindrances and the steps within it a progressive carrying out in all of life's relationships the implications of it. Sanctification itself seems to be a relationship to God open to us into which we are received when God takes us into His family. It is not properly a state, but a living vital relationship to God. The crisis and process refer to our own side of this covenant. It is a crisis in life when we are accepted of God. Within this sacred fellowship we develop



and grow according to the laws of spiritual life. The full, personal commitment to Christ, crucifixion of the self and the Holy Spirit's indwelling is by its very nature climactic and abrupt. It may take time to align our central self to God's will but when it is done a crisis has properly occurred. It is a crucial and formative act and has repercussions in all of life. But it is not sanctification which is again or in a deeper way experienced. It is rather ourselves conforming to the moral obligations native to the divine fellowship.

5. If we are properly observing the implications of sanctification an even more specific statement ought to be made. In all of God's dealings with us, in all of His requirements of us, He acts in the interest of moral integrity. In other words, we must respond to the new moral environment as Christians. There is no neutral "no-man's land" in moral experience. We are not free not to be committed, for commitment is the necessary act of moral persons. To stand in the sanctified relationship to God, as the New Testament uses the word "holy", is to stand obligated to actively commit ourselves to Christ as our Lord. This basically is the "law of the land". There is no Christian alternative to it. It seems proper to interpret Romans 12:1, 2 in this light. This commitment is reasonable. And reasonable meant to Paul, not simply an acceptable idea, but the conclusion to which all right thinking drives one. Another way to say it would be that in the Christian community Christ is Lord and since we are persons and not automatons, our active, personal acceptance of this fact is called for. To fail to do so is in some real sense a defiance of that Lordship. This Lordship is not dependent on our acceptance, it is a fact which must motivate our relationship to Christ, or exclude us from the Kingdom.

Paul's exhortation in Romans 12:1, 2, to the effect that "the brethren" present their bodies as living sacrifices to God, is not then an added "upper story" to justification nor a Christian alternative nor a luxury enjoyed by the excessively devoted and almost fanatical enthusiast. It is, rather, the theological point of his whole argument. It is not the maximum Christian attainment, but the minimal Christian commitment. As the Roman letter proceeds it is seen that all of Christian living, with all its problems and vicissitudes, lie beyond this point.

6. It is not clear from New Testament study that sanctification is a different kind of grace from the other redemptive provisions. All the benefits of the atonement provided by Christ's blood are rather appropriated by us according to our psychological abilities than that we are to think of any essential limitations of the application to stages of experience on God's part.

Every offer of grace on God's part to man must be met by the fullest possible measure of moral readjustment on man's part. The ultimate meaning of redemption is the restoration of fellowship with God in which only can holiness consist. In fellowship is cleansing, says John. The provision of grace in salvation is a unit, not levels of grace. But the appropriation of this grace required of man conforms to the ability he has of making moral commitments. From the first stirring of conviction for sin to the last breath of life on earth, the moral obligation is operative in human personality. There may be justly two crucial moments identified, not because God has structured sanctification that way but because he has structured man as a moral creature. The first truly moral act is an acknowledgment of sin and a plea for pardon--a turning of the

whole self toward God. The whole of God's grace is available at that moment because God is giving himself to ourselves. Nothing is withheld on God's part but it may fairly be said that the appropriation of grace at that time may be variously experienced by each person. Some are weak, left in the bondage of habits, needing a very great deal of divine help. Others seem to come into a far richer measure of spiritual life. Both must accept the responsibility of probation. It must always be held possible that the spiritual insight of some individuals is great enough, at that moment, to make the total human commitment which moral experience requires and the second distinctive kind of act performed. Wesley thought so. In any case, the deeply personal nature of the total commitment is usually more slowly and painfully realized. From the first stirring of conviction to the last act of life, moral tone is utilized and developed to the highest possible degree. In other words, the benefits of grace and our own place in the kingdom as effective commissioned ambassadors, do not automatically follow from justification. Grace and faith are personal matters and hence, intensely moral and require the fullest measure of response of which we are capable.

7. The preaching approach to this grace must be in keeping with the New Testament approach. The central truth seems to lie in the need for a deep moral adjustment to God which brings into integration the whole man. The New Testament does not distinguish legitimate levels of spiritual living. Only one way is right and that is "walking in the Spirit". We are not left in comfort "in Christ" or "in the Spirit" but only in "walking in the Spirit", with all the deep adjustments involved in maintaining this "walk".

There will be no question in anyone's mind as to the state of grace in which he may be if this goal is pressed home. There will be no counting "blessings", there will be no unbiblical barriers raised about methodology when the full measure of responsibility to God and to ourselves is presented. The hidden stronghold of self-righteousness needs to be uncovered in the most theologically fortified person. To press "sanctification", as such, on men is too often too abstract. It may obscure the concrete moral issue which the New Testament always lifts high.

8. This leaves the problem of time. When ought one to come into this cleansing fellowship with God? Rather remarkably this matter is not directly handled in the New Testament. It is significant that this question is not raised nor answered. The significance is understood when the absolutely moral nature of the requirement is recalled. In the New Testament no comfort is ever provided for any conformity to God's will less than the ultimate at any moment. There is no place to hide behind anything such as method, time sequence, levels of grace, etc. There is no trace of a double standard for Christians--or for any kind of a person for that matter. No less is permitted a young Christian, by way of moral responsibility than the mature and more perfect Christian. He does not have the same ability or insight or understanding but he must use all he has. It is not maturity that brings the fellowship but responsible decision. Time is not the question. Moral rectitude does not know anything about time. Decision is always, now. The newly born spiritual person steps into a world of moral responsibility. From the first step to the last, every movement requires that Christ be Lord indeed.

9. The responsibility which sanctification lays upon us is also indicated by the New Testament usage. In the sanctified relationship men become in the most deep sense, ambassadors. The personal dimension, necessary in itself, widens out into an interpersonal obligation and that, to glorify God--to finish the work of Christ on earth. There is no place left for debilitating sin or mediocre, selfish, uninspired living. In sanctification is the assumption of the personal responsibility into which all those "in Christ" are born. All of life lies in the creative matrix of Christ our Lord.

#### The Use of the Term, Sanctification

The problem with which those in the holiness group is confronted is relative to the use of the term, sanctification, which, of course, stems from an understanding of its basic meaning. If sanctification is limited to a second crisis experience so that the word can and must refer to that crisis point and no other aspect of redemption, then to challenge the propriety of the use of it in that way is said to constitute a challenge to the doctrine of holiness itself. However, not all holiness theologians and leaders understand the meaning of the word in that way.

A careful survey of the Biblical use of the word reveals at least one thing, that "sanctification" is seldom if ever used to refer to a second crisis. If this be challenged, it still cannot be denied that this meaning of the term is certainly not the only one by any means. And that is the point at the moment. Sanctification begins with and parallels justification. There are crisis points within it but it does not end at any moment in this life or probably in the life to come. Whatever the significance of the crisis moments (and they are significant as will be

seen) the process aspect must be taken into consideration, also. Very few holiness teachers would contest this. In fact such is the teaching of the doctrine. But it is for this reason that there is a growing number of responsible holiness teachers who feel it best not to confuse issues by the limitation of the term to one crisis moment. To take this position does not constitute a denial of the doctrine of holiness.

Strangely, the Scriptures are not semantically inflexible at this point or at any other point, for that matter. It is to be regreted that the richness of Scriptural terminology has been largely neglected in the preaching of the doctrine. Whenever this has been the case something of the relevance of the life has been lost and this tends to caricature the truth of the matter. If one could allow a rather general expression for the sake of putting up a sign-post, "an experience beyond conversion," would be useful. In fact, the author is borrowing this term from a leading holiness preacher whose official position makes his word respectable and indicates that his judgment is dependable.

An "experience beyond conversion" indicates that believers are involved. It says by implication that some kind of a crisis point was reached. It is intended to carry the idea that in the progress of the Christian life a notable point was passed that is worthy of mention and which intensified the reality of Christian faith. It was both a part of and an advance in the Christian life. If we could identify this point as the New Testament does, in terms of actual moral content, how much more meaning would be conveyed.

Jesus spoke of loving God with the whole heart, mind, soul and strength. He called his disciples, and us, to responsible stewardship. He urged men to deny themselves, take up their cross and to follow him.

No one could deny that to attempt this is not easy. It takes a thoroughgoing revolution in human personality. Nor is this sort of thing to be relegated to another life. If it doesn't fit this life with its demands and opportunities and responsibilities, what life does it fit? Neither can one who takes the Bible seriously (not exclusively prophetic) escape the personal demands this makes on the Christian believer. Most specifically, this kind of Christian life is not entered apart from a radical commitment to it. Furthermore, to comply however inadequately, is impossible apart from God's grace. But every Christian knows that grace is available to one who "goes through the very narrow gate" into a deeply committed life. And, yet, all these things are the content of what the holiness people have come to call sanctification.

Paul's terminology is also flexible. Righteousness "by faith", is the epitome of God's requirement for man, and faith is the key word here, in contrast to any other attempt at personal rightness with God. Love, to Paul, was the fulfilling of the whole law and expressed the deep inwardness of the Christian life. "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead to sin and alive to God" was spoken to the Roman believers and the "obedience from the heart" spoken of in Rom. 6, is the path to righteousness, holiness and eternal life. "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:1) is hardly less than what sanctification has been theologically made to mean.

Paul's testimony, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God," is an existential and effective way to say what is so prosaically and ineffectively said by, "I am sanctified."



It must be repeated that there is no exhortation to sanctification as such in the New Testament. Rather there are calls to "put off the old man," and "put on the new man," "Cleanse yourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus . . ." "He exhorted the Corinthians that every thought should be brought captive to the obedience of Christ," and the writer to the Hebrews urged, "let us go on unto perfection. . ." and "let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us . . ." Paul's most earnest appeal is that believers present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. There is positive exhortation enough.

These are but a few of the very many synonyms for the crisis and life of holiness and they shed necessary light on the matter. None of them may be neglected nor none isolated from the others to include the whole truth. Any stereotyped or monotonous approach is avoided by the freshness and relevancy of the scope of Biblical presentation.

The objection is made, to the effect that sanctification is the key word and must be required. To this we concur provided the entire meaning of sanctification is retained. To limit it to a single crisis experience is to betray the genius of New Testament teaching. Its meaning covers every aspect of redemptive experience.

To the insistence that according to the dictionary two meanings no more, no fewer, lie in sanctification and that both must be respected, again we concur. It is said to be both dedication, or separation, and a making pure. But, as we have seen, these are not two things but one. Separation, in the New Testament, is purity - moral rightness.

Holiness in God is not an attribute among others. He does not have holiness. Holiness is not a quality which stands against justice or



love. God is holy. Holiness is the nature of God in which all elements of His Being exist in perfect balance and relation. It is the white light which is the sum of all the colors of the spectrum. It is self-existent because it is not a secondary matter, or a-personal. Holiness is personal in that only that which is personal is subject to this appellation. Being personal it is not truly a status but a vitality-a life. Health is a status of a person whose body is functioning properly but in this case the status is simply a judgment about a relationship. It has no existence otherwise. So with God's character.

Holiness in men is analogous. It is not something imparted from without, as the superadded grace of Catholic theology. It is not simply the presence of the Holy Spirit which creates a moral dualism. It is not a change in the substance of the soul-an irrational, non-moral concept. It is moral health in the same way that a physical body is healthy, in that health is not a quantity which can be measured or counted but is a proper relationship of all parts. But holiness in man cannot be self-existent as in God's holiness because moral experience is not completed within the resources of the human personality. One of the points of moral integration is God himself so that spiritual health is absolutely dependent on a proper relationship to God and since this is personal, it must be mutual. If God is unwilling to accept us, our advances are fruitless, but just as truly, if God finds us unresponsive or willful, the situation cannot exist wherein "holiness" would be an appropriate word. But a mutual agreeableness constitutes holiness. In essence it is a quality of relationship. Quantity is always a by-product of this and is wholly dependent on secondary and temporal matters worked out from the center.

Holiness is moral integration which in man requires God as the center of moral life. Sin is basically the decentralization of this integration. Death is simply the absense of the cohesive power of life. Elements fall apart. Spiritual death is moral decentralization. Alienation and estrangement are proper words. Moral life cannot exist truly while God is separated from us. Redemption restores the possibility of the reestablishment of moral union. But it cannot be a one-sided affair. God cannot impute externally moral integrity on those who are not in spiritual union. Imputed righteousness is a limited concept and cannot bear the weight so often put upon it. Reconciliation is the healing of moral estrangement and requires that the union be morally mutual. Holiness must be initiated by God, but it cannot be a completed experience until a suitable response comes from men. Holiness is not a bestowed but a moral-mutual - relationship and a living involvement in that relationship. Therefore every requirement of grace is in the interest of moral integrity. Nothing is done for us that moral integrity demands that we do. Holiness is moral soundness, the precise antithesis of perfectionism. It is of deepest necessity, Christ-centered and the very negation of self-centeredness. It speaks of the whole-man relationship to God and men, not merely a juridical or intellectual or emotional or moralistic relationship. It is dynamic, a "way", not a state, a life not a static goodness.

In this sense, then, sanctification is primarily the process of redemption. It is process precisely because it is moral and personal and not simply legal. But, in the process, lie crises points without which "moral" degenerates into a non-moral naturalism.

## SIN

A discussion of sin belongs to the theology of holiness. It would not be possible, or necessary, to say all that theology can say about sin, here. But it is concerning the sin from which men may be free that the doctrine of holiness must be explicit. It is precisely at this point that the most serious misunderstandings lie which separate Christian brethren theologically. The Wesleyan thinks the Scriptures are to be taken literally and immediately which speak of freedom from sin. The Calvinist cannot accept this freedom existentially. To him sin is too much a part of human existence for immediate deliverance from it. Deliverance is juridical and eschatological and can be nothing else. Each is desperately sincere.

Simply to contrast one definition of sin to another is not the solution to the kind of problem which this study undertakes to handle. There seems to be adequate reason for exploring the presuppositions behind the definitions of sin because while the Wesleyan may incline to a view of sin too trivial for the Calvinist, the Calvinist's disregard for the whole moral structure of redemption as the Bible presents it looks to the Wesleyan like a trite view of Scripture. In a matter so serious there ought to be possible serious conversation.

The fact remains that both Calvinist and Wesleyan stand under the same critical judgment, that their solutions to the sin problem may be too simple. Both hold that sin is taken away by God's grace. That each explains how this is done in a very different way does not alter the fact that they both are said to be unrealistic. The Calvinist separates sin and guilt in a Christian hence sin without guilt (because guilt is taken away in Christ) is de-moralized by redefinition and one

can be saved without resolving the actual sin tensions in life. The Wesleyan tends to reinterpret the moral tension which is a part of moral experience and is tempted to "rest" unbiblically and pre-maturely. Both, it is said, lay too much responsibility on God and tend to isolate themselves from the social obligations of the world around them. Neither recognizes the importance of the moral struggle to character and accomplishment. Whatever truth may be in these assertions must be determined and evaluated.

Sin is real. Neither experience or Scripture permit us the luxury of ignoring it. Philosophy cannot define it or understand its purpose but does recognize that something is very wrong with men. (The Atheist, C.E.M. Joad, in God and Evil, reasons through from evil in the universe to the possibility of a God, but he cannot find the Christian God in his philosophizing and therefore he has no redemption.) Revelation in the Scriptures tells us all we know about sin. To the Bible we must go for our information.

But Scripture does not satisfy all our curiosity about sin. It does not explain the "cause" of sin. It is interesting to note that the familiar theological terms describing sin are not Biblical expressions. Such terms as Original sin, Carnality, Corruption, Depravity, and Inbred sin are not found in the Bible. All of these are generalizations or abstract words and abstract words are seldom if ever found in the Bible. Not even, "the Fall" is a Biblical term. Wm. Burton Pope, in his Compendium of Christian Theology (Vol. II, p. 17), tells us that this term probably came from an Apocryphal book. In Wisdom, X, 1, are found the words, "She preserved the first formed father of the world, that was created alone, and brought him out of his fall."

Aside from two or three references in Paul's writings to Adam, the Bible is silent about the Genesis account of "the fall". There is nothing to suggest that men sin inevitably because of that experience. In II Cor. 11:3, Paul expresses a fear that the believers will be drawn away from the simplicity or single-heartedness which is in Christ, as Eve's mind was corrupted. But in this passage nothing is said about the influence of her sin on the race. Rather the assumption is obvious that one need not to so sin. Paul's reference to Adam's sin in Romans 5 and I Cor. 15, is not a philosophy of sin but an occasion to magnify the victory of Christ over the effects of sin. Paul says that death came into the world by one man's sin, but life came through Christ.

The closest Paul comes to relating men's sin to Adam is in Rom. 5:19, "for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." But in this passage the counterbalancing reference to Christ makes universal sin as impossible to hold as universal salvation. What Paul does do is to show that all men do sin. In this he is intensely realistic. Even in Rom. 3:23 ("All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"), Paul says that in sinning men have fallen short. He does not say, having fallen short, men sin.

Strangely enough, the Bible says nothing to us about how sin is transmitted - or that it is transmitted. Certainly the influence of sin is far reaching, but the method is not explained. In fact, we are not given speculative answers to any of the intellectual problems relative to sin. Only moral problems are discussed and that seems to be all that is needed. Whatever we may say, therefore, beyond the express teaching of Scripture must be identified as human speculation so that the

Scriptural teaching regarding redemption may not be distorted.

The answer to the question, what is sin? has been deferred until this point in the study, mainly for the reason that it can hardly be discussed until it is put into a context. This, of course, betrays a thesis about sin which will now be declared and examined. The thesis is, first; that, whatever sin is practically, it can only be recognized for what it really is by seeing it against its opposite, holiness, or as a distortion against the normal. No realistic, impressionistic art or sordid novel can be produced by one who knows no other life but the kind he describes. Some contrast, by way of personal enlightenment or experience of another way is necessary to show him wherein lies the difference so that in the artistic production it is that point which is emphasized and by it significance attained. Second; a definition of sin attempted prior to a study of the provisions of grace which always lie parallel to sin would prejudice the evangelical emphasis of sin and also of grace and hence redemption. Third; the specifically theological premiss is that any serious discussion of redemption with its clear Biblical declaration that there is cleansing from all sin, must relate itself to and limit itself by a Biblical definition of the sin which can be taken away. The meaning of "cleansing" and "destruction" in regard to it must also be in Biblical context. This is just another way of saying that it is not sin that limits grace and our understanding of God's redemption, but God's revelation of grace and redemption that must help us to define and interpret sin.

It is absolutely necessary that there be a clear idea of sin. No moral experience is possible apart from a proper concept of sin. Apart from this clarity every vital truth about redemption is eventually lost and theology falls apart.

Sin is the outlaw in the universe of intelligent beings. It is hideous, destructive, the antithesis of everything God is and intends for men. It is the implacable enemy of God - "enmity against Him" - and it cannot be subject to Him. No theological or preaching approach which feathers the edges of a sharp definition of sin or which fails in any way to do full justice to its potential, has any right to be called Christian. A fuzzy, unrealistic view of sin results in an emasculated view of redemption. To lose the Biblical view of sin is to surrender the Christian message of salvation and a proper Christology.

But, in the interest of a serious view of sin, theories have been proposed that actually cut away the foundation for the very seriousness for which contention is made. Sin, to be sin, presupposes a real measure of personal responsibility. This means more than responsibility in an "original cause". it means that each individual is in an essential way his own cause for his own sin. While the author does not share the contemporary disregard for the historicity of the Genesis account of "the fall", there is a real understanding of the problem which an over-emphasis on "the fall" to "my sin" creates. We are soundly Biblical when we draw back from laying on Adam the responsibility for our sin. When contemporary theologians reject the historicity of the fall in favor of its symbolism for the individual fall of every man, the motive is not entirely antithetical to the spirit of traditional Christian teaching. However the universal human impulse to reject God is explained (and the Bible does not explain it), the fact remains that for that rejection each man is personally liable. In this respect Scripture takes a wholly moral view of sin and man.



The opposite view is a philosophical approach to sin, which effectively negates the essence of what sin is. This view includes all imperfection, immaturity, partiality and lack of perfection in any degree or kind, in its definition of sin, in fact, any deviation from the perfect will of God. This view supposes that the fall precipitated imperfections in the earth, and in the body and spirit of all mankind, which cannot be eliminated in this life. Sin is the essence of the "human predicament" and hence is hopelessly confused with natural evil and much in nature that is not evil. This idea is essentially Hellenistic and quite decisively undercuts the Biblical view of sin. In the interest of seriousness its a-moral elements rob it of seriousness.

Standing between these views are many attempts to do justice to the fact of sin. A failure to distinguish between sin and the consequences of it in natural life accounts for a very widespread view, which we feel is not true to the Biblical idea, namely, that sin is a substantial "something" which inevitably causes all men to sin. Probably Augustine with his Manichean background has contributed to Christian thought more than any other person the idea of sin as substance. To him original righteousness was a created quality in the substance of the soul. Hence when it was lost, the soul's substance became evil making real holiness impossible in this life. Wesleyans who share this idea of sin have difficulty in effectually refuting the charge that they hold sin to be a "thing" which can be "removed" as a diseased organ.

Sin defined as a legal imputation is just as inadequate. To cancel out sin, redemption, then, would have to be a legal imputation also which, indeed it is conceived to be. The danger is that the whole redemptive procedure be conceived as a transaction "on the books" having



no relevance for persons at all. This detachment from all moral concern not only dulls human conscience and relaxes moral tensions and robs law of any validity but it impugns the nature of God who is supposed to be the author of morality and justice. If righteousness be a legal imputation only, sin need<sup>be</sup> be, nor can be, any more "real" than the decree of righteousness. If deliverance from sin is legal only in Romans 8, sin in Romans 7 is only juridical. Paul was not interested in mere legal deliverance in Romans 7. He had that in Romans 5. What he needed and prayed for was "real" deliverance, a "walking around" kind. Too limited a definition of justification limits a view of the reality and seriousness of sin.

Contemporary theology is obsessed with the idea of sin. This is a very radical change in concept over the prevailing disregard for it in the past century. Sin had been relegated to the status of superstition suitable to the Dark Ages and men spoke of development and education, evolution, culture, Christian nurture as a cure for immaturity, ignorance, animality, cultural lag and the degradation of human life caused by sick personalities. World War I shocked liberalism into a reappraisal of the inherent evil in the human heart which could not be cultivated out. Sin became respectable and a member in good standing in theology. In fact, it might be more true to call contemporary theology, a Theology of Sin rather than of Grace or of the Word of God. Excluding the more thoroughgoing humanistic approaches to religion, it has become quite popular in the average pulpit to eloquently affirm the involvement of all of us in sin. To disclaim it is to be ridiculed. How, say they, can anyone be so arrogant and intellectually bigoted as to deny personal sin in a society which puts unChristian advertising in its magazines and on its

billboards and which permits and actually encourages unChristian (because de-human) corporations to dictate many aspects of life? So long as America tolerates segregation and big-city slums no one can call himself sinless. If one includes enough of these matters in a definition of sin which the average person cannot control, the Biblical seriousness of sin is lost.

Wesleyans view the contemporary emphasis on sin with some care. While they, with their Calvinistic and Lutheran brethren, regard the new theological recognition of sin as a wholesome return to Biblical truth, they also detect an element in it distinctly antithetical to the Gospel message. When sin is, according to Barthianism, the essence of the human situation so that any effort to escape it is itself sin and any claim to cleansing, even through Christ, is the very epitome of blasphemy, then it is time to call theology back to the Word of God. To define sin either as the inevitable - "though not necessary" - consequence of being a rational self in a non-rational body attempting to transcend the natural - or as any part of irrational evil whether in nature or in the sub-rational substance of the soul is to give it the respectability of absolute universal status and in the Bible sin is never respectable however universal it may be. When it becomes less moral to seriously attempt to be free from sin than to simply glory in one's involvement in it, the Wesleyan thinks that for all its claim to seriousness, the Neo-Calvinist has a far less serious view of sin than the holiness theologian who talks about being made free from it. Holiness theology is careful about the exaggerated and unguarded and almost arrogant descriptions of our "human predicament." It thinks that a human predicament which cannot yield to God's grace is scarcely that to which the Bible speaks.

It is assumed that sin can be defined, hence conversation possible about it. Sin is moral evil and only as such can it be rationally defined or discussed. To confuse it with any natural or philosophical concept which takes it out of the moral realm is to rob it of rationality and it ceases to be capable of definition and hence an object of conversation or serious concern. But, because sin is something other than simply the evil which philosophy and science are able to find, a more technical and precise definition is required. But no simply arbitrary definition is valid. Not even theology, with which sin has most to do, is free to define sin on its own ground and then to interpret Scripture according to its own idea of it. The Christian concept of sin is to be fundamentally derived from the word of God.

Preliminary to a brief Biblical study of sin an excellent statement regarding the basic essentials to an evangelical view of sin by F. R. Tennant in The Concept of Sin, is here given. To be constituted a moral evil or sin there must be:

a moral law to be transgressed; knowledge there of, by an agent, sufficient to render him a moral subject with regard to it; opposition between impulse and reason; and, lastly, intentional volition as an indispensable factor in all conduct that is rightly to be called moral (p. 45).

This clear, logical statement which is determined by the Biblical concerns with which a definition must be structured if it be Christian gives intellectual guidance and aids in eliminating the ambiguities that so often confuse theological discussion.

### A Biblical Study of Sin

The Bible does not discuss sin philosophically, or isolated from human experience. There will be, therefore, large reference to a Biblical

estimate of the moral capacity of human nature and the response God seems to expect from men to grace.

The most common word for sin in the New Testament as well as that in the Old Testament as translated in the LXX, is ἁμαρτία, "missing the mark". As is the case throughout the Bible words are used which were familiar to those to whom it first spoke. Key words, now important to theology, were once pagan words, lifted up by the Holy Spirit as He directed men's thinking, and utilized to the revelation of truth. This word for sin is one of them. In pagan thought it had the non-moral meaning of failure in some way to reach perfection. In the New Testament, however, a sound ethical usage always prevails and John's equation of it with lawlessness is probably true to the general Christian concept. Sin was defined as moral evil.

The clearly moral meaning of sin is obvious throughout the Biblical account of man's earthly pilgrimage.

The Biblical record of the fall of our first parents, is the source material from which the following brief analysis has been made. Man's relationship to God and things, depended on his attitude toward one law which God hung in the moral universe. It was simple, but it was law—"Thou shalt not . . ." By breaking that single law, man challenged God's veracity, integrity and authority. He no longer stood in the relationship of truth to Him, hence his holiness was lost. He doubted God's integrity and blocked the one avenue of fellowship between man and God, faith. He rejected His authority and set himself up in God's place and became a moral rebel in an orderly universe. There were natural results and divine penal sanctions. The natural results were depravation in every area of his being due to deprivation of the Holy Spirit, the source of holiness

and spiritual life. His intellect was darkened because he no longer was in contact with truth. His will was perverted because believing a lie he persisted in pursuing error. His affections were degraded because loving himself his whole life drive was perverted. He had sinned and became a sinner. But beyond the natural was the divine sanction, "Thou shalt surely die." Justly, the wrath of God turned upon the rebel. It was not an impulsive, ungoverned anger, but the just and solemn sentence of a righteous judge made in full accordance with a prearranged contract. Condemnation and the curse of death fell as a black shadow upon man from God's righteousness shining behind a violated law. "He lost the life of God: he was separated from him, in union with whom his spiritual life consisted. The body dies when it is separated from the soul; the soul when it is separated from God . . . ' He was alienated from the life of God.'"<sup>1</sup>

That even fallen man stands in a morally responsible relationship to God is the clear teaching of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. There is difference of opinion as to how man may meet that responsibility, depending upon traditional or individual theological presuppositions. Calvin and Jonathan Edwards were uncompromising advocates of the position Augustine conceived, i.e., that the exhortations in the Bible to right choice and holy living could only be directed to the elect who were regenerated and illuminated by the Holy Spirit and thus able to hear and to know. The genius of Arminianism is its emphasis upon true moral responsibility, not to the extreme of Pelagian moral autonomy but in affirming the universality of grace to all lost men, whereby each is

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<sup>1</sup>John Wesley, The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, Vol. I, New York, n.d., pp. 400-401.

afforded the power to know and choose or reject the provisions of Christ's offering. It is difficult to see how the New Testament can be intelligible apart from some measure of belief in moral freedom, extending beyond the change effected by the Fall. There are two Biblical appeals that give this statement weight: one is the appeal to the fact of conscience; the other to the fact of law and these become two witnesses to the responsible nature of fallen man.

The function of conscience in those outside the province of special revelation and law is clearly stated in the first three chapters of Romans. It precedes law. (Romans 2:14-15) It is as binding as law. (Romans 2:12; 14-16) Violation of it carries the same penalty as broken law. (Romans 1:32ff). It, apparently, represents the moral structure of righteousness, once active in Adam's inner nature. It remained in fallen man to approve or disapprove conduct in the light of objective standards of law. It must once have been the subjective "law written in the heart" (Romans 2:15) which, because of the progressive degrading of human intelligence, volition and affection, was rendered less and less dependable as a guide to truth. However, as a hand mistress to law, it is retained as a reliable remnant of that which God first planted in the image of God in man. Paul's frequent reference to a good conscience (I Timothy 1:5; 1:19; II Timothy 1:3; etc.) would strengthen this position. It is a factor of primal moral importance. A proper regard for its function in man is absolutely essential to human integrity.

The Law was undoubtedly given to preserve in objective form that which was originally implicit in man's proper relationship to God. Paul's statement, "having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth" (Romans 2:20) gives reason for saying that the law is the structure of

righteousness but not its essence or spirit. God put man in paradise under law, subjective, yet clearly known, but it rose up to condemn when it was violated. In like manner, Moses' law was not an innovation but the objectification of that which had always sustained knowledge of God and maintained truth (Galatians 3:19).

The law did not nor does it of itself, separate God and man. It has been shown that direct communication existed between them before the fall, in spite of, nay, because of the order sustained by law. Sin broke that fellowship by violating law, the structure of righteousness. Man has yet the capacity for fellowship but he has marred the facilities for communication. His facilities were set at right angles against the law of God. In that position from man's point of view, the law seems like a barrier to God. Rather, it is, as Paul told the Galatians, a school-master or tutor to lead men to Christ. Men lost truth when they lost God. The law is the "form" of truth which fallen man can understand. It is not the purpose of this study to develop a philosophy of law, as pertinent as it would be to the line of argument, but only to establish the fact that fallen man has, in God's sight, personal responsibility to law as a form of the truth he once sustained to God.

Jesus' idea of man and his moral capacity and responsibility is pertinent to this discussion.

#### Jesus' Estimate of Human Nature

Jesus said a great deal about man, for it was to him He came and for him He died and

His persistent use of the title, 'Son of Man,' for Himself marked His identification with humanity, and suggested the

truth that the final understanding of human nature must result from a knowledge of Himself.<sup>1</sup>

His teaching regarding human nature falls into two concepts, both of which are pertinent to this study: first,

those which reveal man ideally, or essentially, that is, according to a Divine purpose; and secondly, those revealing man actually or experimentally, that is, as Jesus found Him.<sup>2</sup>

Man, ideally, is revealed in the Man as He lived. Remembering the statement in the book of Hebrews to the effect that He "hath been in all points tempted like as we are, without sin," (Hebrews 4:15) the wilderness temptation becomes a commentary upon the nature of man. In that temptation physical life was recognized, "Command that these stones become bread" (Matt. 4:3). In it, also, the spiritual life was recognized, "Cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee." But beyond this, man's vocation, or the purpose of God, is implied, "All these" -the kingdoms of the world- "will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Jesus' answer to all these is His estimate of the worth of man and his place in the economy of God's creation. The true sustenance of human life is the Word of God, the true object of human life is the worship of God.

The fact that Jesus remained sinless in all his involvement in human life suggests that no essential experience to which humanity is heir is of itself sin. Jesus developed physically and mentally and spiritually from immaturity to maturity. In his immaturity, he was imperfect

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<sup>1</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, The Teaching of Christ (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1913), p. 113.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 114.



in that respect. But, in Him, nothing of the imperfect was sin. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet the temptability was not sin. He learned obedience through suffering but the need for discipline was not sin. This fact alone is helpful in eliminating the unessential elements in a definition of sin so far as men are concerned. There is never a hint of a problem in the New Testament as to how Christ could be a man and sinless. Only Hellenistically influenced speculation found this point difficult to rationalize.

The true unity of man's being is stated in the words of Jesus:

The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness (Matthew 6:22-23).

In other words, a single-hearted man, or one with a pure motive only, can realize the purpose for which he was made. James' exhortation to men who are "unstable," because "double-minded" points up the force of this passage.

Never does Jesus give any cause for supposing that he held to a dualism between flesh and spirit as the Greek or Persian philosophies taught. Light and darkness were moral matters to him and the single eye which produced light was possible because right moral relationships were the concern of the whole-man and not some detachable entity which could be in itself righteous leaving the rest of man evil.

The primacy of the spiritual over the physical in man is the teaching of Jesus in the following passage:

Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna (Matthew 10:28).

What shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life (Matthew 16:26)?

A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth (Luke 12:15).

The full implications of the probationary life of man has nowhere been more clearly stated than in the answer of Jesus to the questioner who wanted to know what constituted the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37-40). All the demands of a perfect law, He said, would be satisfied in the voluntary and deliberate response of a complete and thoroughgoing love to God. "The love of God is the master-law of life"<sup>1</sup> Equally as important to probation, in its recognition of self-consciousness as the ground of responsible choice, is the command to love others as self. This, too, is on a voluntary basis, and equates the personal estimate of self with the estimate in which he holds others. Only in this careful balance and direction of affection and attention, can the full dignity of man be realized.

Over against this "ideal" view of man stood actual man as Jesus saw him. Man, who possessed an active capacity for the highest as expressed in a love for their children were "evil" and hurtful and murderous in other relationships. "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children,--" (Matthew 7:11), was a recognition of the dual condition of human beings: the capacity for good, immorally occupied in dispensing an evil influence. This thought is even more vividly declared in another place where the idea of a responsible person is joined to the idea of an evil heart. "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? . . . (yet) By thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:34-37).

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<sup>1</sup>Morgan, op. cit., p. 121.

Jesus always located sin in the "heart" of man. In the same heart that should have been occupied with loving God, He discovered the source of evil. "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications . . ." (Mark 7:21; Matthew 15:17-20). The proof of man's defilement is the array of evil things which proceed from him.

The unregenerate, spiritually dead condition of men is revealed in the conversation with Nicodemus, "That which is flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit . . . ye must be born again." The natural appetite of the unregenerate is described, "Men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light."

The prodigal dissipation of the one faculty which links man to God, namely, his faith, will, according to Jesus be the final basis of judgment. "He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." This is not the unbelief of honest question, but of moral rejection.

He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life.

Jesus teaching on sin is nowhere better expressed than by his very presence among men and the message he preached--Repentance. He considered men blameworthy for what they were doing. He not only called men to repentance and treated them as if they could repent, but also forgave them and commanded them to sin no more. And more significant yet the repentance which made forgiveness possible was to be conditioned upon or, perhaps to include, a willingness to forgive others and an acknowledgement of personal responsibility for sin.

Jesus clearly taught that the law of Moses properly received, with the reading of the prophets should have led men to such an understanding of His Person as to command their acceptance of Him. To the two disheartened disciples on the way to Emmaus, He said, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory? And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:25-27). And in another place He said, "Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; . . ." (John 5:39). For failing to understand this Old Testament witness Jesus held the unbelieving Jews morally accountable.

There is a total absence in Jesus' teaching of any speculation concerning the origin of sin, the propagation of sin or its absolute universality. To him each man was wholly responsible for his sin. That he could not save himself was assumed. That God could and would forgive He taught and often put Himself in the place of Redeemer. And forgiveness as a part of redemption was morally structured as was every detail of Jesus' whole teaching program. Certainly Jesus' view of human nature and sin confirms the position taken in this study regarding the fundamentally moral nature of all aspects of redemption.

#### Paul's Understanding of Human Nature and Sin

Paul developed a more complex understanding of sin. It remains to be seen whether it is actually different than Jesus' view. To adequately cover Paul's teaching would require meticulous exegesis of almost every word he wrote for it was the subject of redemption from sin through

our Lord Jesus Christ that engaged his whole attention. Such exegesis is impossible here but the broad outlines of thought need to be traced in order that perspective may not be lost in the specific and often obscure passages. Paul is not always grammatically clear.

The following study will attempt to answer the question as to what Paul considered men were able to know and do in respect of grace. It needs to be recalled that Paul, though understanding thoroughly, and skilled in the use of philosophy was a Hebrew by blood and education. He did not speculate about the origin of sin or how it is propagated but was content with recognizing the fact of sin. It is a mistake to force Paul to tell us more than he intended.

Another point of care needs to be taken. Since Paul did not speculate about the fallen nature of man, it must be kept in mind that he spoke of humanity under grace, not humanity as it would have been had there been no grace. We do not know what human nature would have been. God's provision of grace anticipated and met the defection from created perfection and as a consequence no man has entered life to experience the full measure of God's judgment of sin. To make this hypothetical existence an element of contrast to grace is simply idle and futile and actually confusing in theological discussion.

According to Paul, what is expected of men?

Paul's Teaching about Human Nature. Paul's thorough understanding of human nature furnished a background through which a profound revelation could be made of the nature of sin in man. Among his figures of speech are these, "old man," (Romans 6:6; Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9) "body of sin," (Romans 6:6; 7:24; Colossians 2:11) "flesh." (Romans 7:23-24) "law of sin" and "body of death," (Romans 7:24 and 8:6) "carnal mind,"

(Romans 8:21) "bondage of corruption." Other descriptions include, "dead . . . in trespasses and sins," (Ephesians 2:1ff) "alienated from the life of God," (Ephesians 4:17ff) "spirit of the world," (I Corinthians 2:2) "the sin which dwelleth in me," (Romans 7:20) and "a reprobate mind," (Romans 1:28) "sin" (ἁμαρτία) in many places, "law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2) and "natural (ψυχῆ) man." (I Corinthians 2:14) It is in his more extended discussions, however, that a complete picture of the nature and results of sin is best seen.

The first picture is in Romans. (Romans 1:18-32). It is the story of the degradation effected through the perversion of the faculty of intelligence. The just wrath of God is revealed against those who "hinder truth in unrighteousness." The first challenge man hurled at God was against His veracity. (Genesis 3:1). Here in answer, the charge is made against man, capable of knowing truth, that he is hindering, or holding down or retaining (κατεχόντων) truth and that moral issues are involved in doing so. The measure of truth he may know is sufficient to incite him to the worship of God. Even natural man may know enough about the eternal power and "god-ness" (Romans 1:19) of God, (1) by natural revelation, (that which may be seen"), and (2) by intuition, ("the invisible things . . . are clearly seen"), to render his darkness, inexcusable. The charge is also made against man, that as one responsible for his volitional powers, and "knowing God" he refused to glorify Him as God. This parallels Adam's sin in challenging the goodness and worthiness of God and who willfully set about, in disobedience, to obtain wisdom which was, in his estimation, maliciously withheld from him by God. Paul said the result was a "senseless heart," darkened, because in professing wisdom it became foolish. The third charge Paul makes is that

man dethroned the Creator and set up other gods in His place. This substitution could only be tolerated by those who had exchanged a lie for the truth, and the result was an open door to unspeakable sensual depravity. The course of sin was from a refusal to acknowledge the sovereignty of God, (Romans 1:28), down to positive relish of sins known to be worthy of death (Romans 1:32). A thoughtful analysis of this passage reveals (1) that Paul considered men fully responsible for their deflection from righteousness, (2) that rejection of God's authority was deliberate and on an intelligent basis and (3) that perversion in every faculty was the consequence of this deliberate rejection. Paul was not describing Adam's sin but those who followed Adam who were already in a race subject to all that Adam might have contributed.

Another graphic Pauline description of the source of sin and the course of depravity is found in the book of Ephesians (Ephesians 4:17-19). Paul, in this passage, in exhorting the Ephesians to holiness, warns them against returning to the "vanity of mind" characteristic of the heathen mind. Vanity (*ματαιότης*) according to Thayer, is a purely Biblical word meaning devoid of truth, perversion, and depravation.<sup>1</sup> This condition characterized the blinded heathen mind (*νοῦς*). Resulting from this perversion of mind is a "darkened understanding" (*διανοία*). It is the "ignorance" (*ἄγνοια*) occasioned by blindness of heart, a moral condition, that has "alienated" (*απηλλοτριωμένοι*) them from the "life of God." Thayer translates alienate "those who have estranged themselves from God."<sup>2</sup> This estrangement, it may be assumed on

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<sup>1</sup>Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 393.

<sup>2</sup>Thayer, op. cit., p. 54.



the strength of the passive voice used in the Greek text, was volitional. It was a deliberate choice. They, having cast off from themselves all feeling, "gave up" to uncleanness and complete moral apostasy resulted. The depth is reached in the last phrase, "with craving." That faculty given for the purpose of loving God with holy abandonment, by a deliberate series of immoral choices now is used to love debauchery with the same abandonment. This is the progression, a mind devoid of truth, blind-hearted ignorance, and moral insanity.

Some further light upon the nature of this depraved condition can be gained from the parallel passage immediately following in which a series of contrasts is presented. (Ephesians 4:25-32). "Ye have not so learned Christ." (Ephesians 4:20). The first contrast is in relation to truth. Instead of a mind devoid of truth, by moral choice, there is a mind filled with truth "as it is in Jesus" (Ephesians 4:21). The second contrast is between a "darkened understanding," (Ephesians 4:18) occasioned by a hardening of the heart, and a renewed "spirit of the mind." (Ephesians 4:23). This thought is amplified by the terms "old and "new man". The third contrast is between moral insensibility with its evil works (Ephesians 4:19), and a high degree of moral sensitivity with good works (Ephesians 4:25-32). Those contrasts serve to sharpen the concept Paul had in mind, of what sin is and does.

A third passage illuminates the Pauline conception of the result of sin to the image of God in man. In Colossians, it is another contrast that provokes a deeper understanding of this truth. An alienated mind (*διὰ ῥοῦ*) is the opposite pole to one "holy, without blemish and unprovable before him." (Colossians 1:21-22). The deep inwardness of the perversion is strongly emphasized in all of these passages. A cast



of mind underlies the kind of life men live. And behind the cast of mind is an attitude toward truth and God as absolute Lord. And for it all men are held accountable and responsible. At no time is leniency in conduct ever justified because of perversion in intellectual or moral faculties.

It will be noticed that in most cases, especially in Pauline theology, that *νοῦς*, or some cognate, is associated with this source of perversion. There are numbers of related words and derivations of

but the following seem to be related more particularly to the subject at hand: *διάνοια* and *φρονήμα*. *νοῦς*, first of all, is translated simply, mind. There is, however, a more penetrating and discriminating analysis. Thayer says it contains the idea of perceiving, understanding, feeling, judging, and determining. It is an intellectual faculty, but also, a capacity for spiritual truth, of perceiving divine things, of recognizing goodness and of hating evil.<sup>1</sup> A review of its uses in the New Testament book by book, was helpful in ascertaining the peculiar inflection of meaning. God gave the heathen over to a reprobate mind. (Romans 1:28). A different law warred against the law of Paul's mind (Romans 7:23). With the mind Paul served the law of God but with the flesh the law of sin (Romans 7:25). In a burst of spiritual insight Paul cried, "O the depth of the riches of both the wisdom and knowledge of God . . . For who hath known the mind of the Lord? (Romans 11:33-34). Paul exhorts to be renewed in the spirit of the mind (Romans 12:2). We are to be fully persuaded in our own mind (Romans 14:5).

In the Corinthian letter the word is used three times. Believers are to be perfected together in the same mind and judgment. (I Corinthians

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<sup>1</sup>Thayer, op. cit., p. 429.

1:10) "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? (I Corinthians 2:16). Those (who are spiritual) have the mind of Christ. (Loc. cit.)

Elsewhere are the following: "vanity of mind," (Ephesians 4:17) "be renewed in the spirit of your mind," (Ephesians 4:23), and "puffed up by a fleshly mind." (II Thessalonians 2:2). Crass materialism ("supposing godliness a way of gain") characterizes the "corrupt mind" destitute of truth, (I Timothy 6:5) and men of corrupted mind withstand truth and become reprobate concerning faith (II Timothy 3:8). To Titus he said, "even their mind and conscience is defiled." (Titus 1:15).

From these passages it becomes clear that the  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  is a faculty which relates itself morally to truth. It judges between good and evil and chooses between them. When wrongly related to truth it becomes reprobate and corrupt, leading to immoral decisions. It needs renewal and transformation and when rightly related to truth approximates even the mind of Christ. Of the total of seventeen references, eight describe a depraved condition, two deal with renewal, and three with the condition of the mind of the regenerate. Four are miscellaneous references in the same vein.

$\Delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ , another cognate of  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ , means, according to Thayer, "a faculty of understanding, feeling and desiring," mind or spirit, a way of thinking and feeling.<sup>1</sup> It is found seven times in the New Testament. It is the word found in the synoptics to express the comprehensiveness of love to God, "thou shalt love God with all . . . thy mind." (Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27). The Old Testament promise of law written the mind is twice mentioned in Hebrews. (Hebrews 8:10; 10:16).

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<sup>1</sup>Thayer, op. cit., p. 140.

The believer's mind is twice mentioned by Peter, "gird up the loins of your mind," (I Peter 1:13) and "I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." (II Peter 3:1). Twice reference is made to the unregenerate mind, "desires of the flesh and mind" (Ephesians 2:3) and "enemies in your mind." (Colossians 1:21). From this, the deduction is made that this faculty of *διάνοια*, has to do with the bent of the mind, the direction of affection. It is not blind feeling but a moral persuasion. It is, in natural man, an enemy of God. It may be called to give account of itself by its possessor.

*Νόημα*, is used six times. The ending *μα* denotes result.<sup>1</sup> So the term means "that which thinks,"<sup>2</sup> or the thinking and purposing faculty. Three times in the Corinthian letter Paul uses it in connection with the blinding of this thinking, purposing faculty. The inability to understand the Old Testament was the veil by which "their minds were blinded" (II Corinthians 3:14); "the God of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving." (II Corinthians 4:4). This is the faculty through which Eve was betrayed, "I fear, lest as the serpent beguiled Eve . . . your minds (purposing faculty) should be corrupted" (II Cor. 11:3). *And to lead every thought (νοημα) captive to the obedience of Christ (10:5) is Paul's deepest concern.* Remembering this, Paul's benediction in Philippians is of special moment, "The peace of God . . . shall guard your . . . thoughts" (*νοήματα*). (Philippians 4:7). One of the most direct clues to the seat of sin is here revealed. This thinking, purposing faculty is the area where evil is introduced. Unbelief is the sin of this faculty. Unbelief blinded the minds of the Jews to the revelation of Christ. Unbelief permits the

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<sup>1</sup>William Douglas Chamberlain, An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Thayer, op. cit., p. 427.

god of this world entrance into the sanctuary of the moral life of man. It was this way that Eve was tempted and fell. It is here that corruption resides. It is this area that the peace of God can guard to preserve from sin.

The other Greek word translated mind in the English that is significant to this investigation is φρόνημα. The verb φρονέω will be considered first. Thayer says it means "to direct one's mind to a thing . . . to be intent within yourselves" to a purpose, to pursue.<sup>1</sup> Moulton and Milligan elaborates on this idea. "It seems always to keep in view the direction which thought takes."<sup>2</sup> They give an example from classical Greek "'Soueris changed her mind, left the mill and departed . . .'" The phrase νοῦν καὶ φρονῶν 'being sane and in my right mind' is common."<sup>3</sup> It is found nine times in the New Testament. (Romans 8:12; 12:16; II Corinthians 13:11; Galatians 5:10; Philippians 2:5; 3:15, 16, 19; 4:2). Five times it refers to believers having "the same mind" about things. Twice the exhortation is given to have the mind of Christ and twice the reference is to preoccupation with the things of the flesh and earthly things. With this review, the significance begins to develop. A cognate of φρονέω is the noun φρόνημα which with the suffix μα also indicates the result of that which the verb has done. It is, then, an inclination, or set of mind. Moulton and Milligan gives the content of "φρονεῖν (as) the general bent of thought and motive."<sup>4</sup> Its most

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<sup>1</sup>Thayer, op. cit., p. 658.

<sup>2</sup>Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament, p. 676.

<sup>3</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Moulton and Milligan, op. cit., p. 676.

significant use is in Romans 8:7. "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be (οὐδε' δύνανται)." There are three other occasions where this word is used and all of them are in this same chapter. The Spirit knows the mind of the Lord, obviously, the deep desire, passion of God's heart. (Romans 8:27). The other two are most revealing in their use. The "mind of the flesh" is death (Romans 8:6). This unquestionably refers back to the first commandment in the garden, "If ye eat . . . ye shall die." This death then is the curse for sin, and this sin is the one which was cursed. "The mind of the spirit, is life and peace" (Romans 8:6) is not only a poignant contrast but a promise of hope for the complete reversal, in this life, of that age-long curse. It is also significant that the "mind of the flesh" can become like to the mind which was in Christ when he emptied himself." (Phil. 2:5).

The specific instruction regarding "sin" as it is referred to by the various Biblical terms adds its measure of significance to a study of sin.

Without first defining "Old Man", we may say that its reference to some ineradicable thing from human nature is impossible to hold if a careful reading of Scripture is made. "Our old man" (Romans 6:6) has been crucified with Christ. The plural reference in the adjective and the singular number of the noun helps to show the universal personification of a condition which had once characterized the race. It is not, "my old man" or "your old man," nor is it "our old men". Even the Greek use of *ἀνθρώπος* suggests the humanity-wide sharing of whatever it was. The finished act, as the tense of the verb "crucify" indicates, was a completed act in the past (aorist). It is over and done. Men had

nothing to do with it. The passive voice indicates that Jesus' death was in respect of it. "Our old man" did not share in the act but received the effect of the action. It is not our personal crucifixion with Christ for usually whenever our participation is mentioned the voice is active and definite: "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin" (v. 11). Even the Galatian reference (2:20), "I have been crucified with Christ," is exceedingly personal and not to be equated with the thought in the Romans 6:6 passage. In the first place the verb in Galatians is a perfect which indicates an action in the past which continues into the present and the "I" participation, though passive, makes this Paul's appropriation of the benefits of Christ's death and not simply the blanket covering in which no personal responsibility is taken. In Romans the subjunctive tense "might be destroyed" that henceforth we should not continue serving sin (present infinitive), shows the contingency of the destruction of the "body of sin" when the benefits of the crucifixion are appropriated. The absoluteness is the "old man" crucified. The contingency, which must be relative to us, is the destruction of the "body of sin". Here is provision and appropriation, and the proper appropriation makes it possible not to continue serving sin.

This could be left in the abstract and be difficult but Paul probably never leaves us with impossibly difficult truth, certainly never when it has to do with salvation. The appropriation of the benefits of Christ's death is by "reckoning," a present indicative verb which extends the need for the continuance of our living as though we were as dead to sin as Christ is every moment of life. It is not something done once and forgotten. It is a life attitude, an existential matter. "Let not sin reign" is likewise a continuing command and involves personal

responsibility. It need not reign because of what Christ did (6:6) but its reign is made impossible only by our fully yielding to the reign of Christ. There is no third way. "Do not be yielding" Paul says, "to sin" (6:13) but "yield (aorist) to God." And lest yield should take on a passive meaning Paul strengthens the whole matter by the active word "obedience" and thanks God that they have already "obeyed from the heart." Thus yielding and obedience become together a true moral experience which leads to sanctification and eternal life.

Now, "our old man", and "the body of death" are related but not equated. Both are personifications of a universal experience of sin. "Our old man" has been crucified with Christ. Here is humanity-wide provision for the sin problem "in Christ". It is universal possibility guaranteed by Christ. The individual experience of sin, "the body of sin" may be (subjunctive) destroyed because of what Christ did. How this may be done is the concern of the chapter as we have seen, yield to God and obey Him. And it depends on whether or not we do this. The "destruction" of the "body of sin" is decisive and clean cut (aorist) not a long drawn out affair.

Destruction is a difficult word theologically. But let us find Paul's meaning before debating it. That we should not serve sin is the goal of destruction. Since Paul never puts sin in the actual bodies of men, he is not talking about a materialistic destruction. He is talking about a bondage to sin which need not be true of human experience and freedom from it is equal to a destruction of the bonds that hold us. Destruction can only be a problem when a substance theory of sin is held. Paul does not hold sin to be a thing, therefore, he does not pose a genuine psychological problem.



What Paul is talking about is a self in slavery to a master. It is a problem in moral commitment. The self is not apparently free not to serve -- not to be the servant of a master. But the choice is ours whom we will serve. It is assumed that the sinner is yielding to sin and it is declared that he may yield to God because of what Christ did in his behalf. But the transaction is not automatic, it is contingent on our obedience. The passage teaches that the quality of human life derives from the master one serves. The "members" are not sinful, but sin consists in yielding the members to unrighteousness, and holiness consists in yielding the same members to God in obedience to Him. Paul is not talking about the spirit pitted against the flesh but the whole man united in a servanthood.

Theology is concerned about the appropriateness of "suppression" or "eradication" to this passage and two streams of Wesleyanism divide at this watershed. A careful study of Paul's discussion, here, robs this debate of all point. Paul is not saying that "something" may be eradicated out of the personality. Nor is he saying that anything is to be suppressed or "rendered inactive". Both ideas lie in the same context of psychological error. Both would inhibit natural personality traits. A better term would be "sanctified expression". The whole man, delivered from the bondage of one servanthood (destruction) is committed wholly to the glad bondage of another servanthood in which every element of the personality is required in full and free and thoroughgoing devotion and active obedience. What the Keswick theologian wants to "suppress" and the Wesleyan wants to "eradicate", Paul wants delivered from the bondage of sin to serve God fully.



It is not without point to note that Paul thinks this new moral orientation is a possibility even after the bleak third chapter. He is not talking about moral autonomy but the deepest obligation of a believer to total moral commitment. He does not tell us what God does in us, but he does tell us what we are to do. And what we are to do lies in the deepest area of personality. There where ultimate choices are made which flow out into every part of life we are to decisively begin and continue to yield ourselves to God and obey Him from the heart. Out of this atmosphere comes the "fruit", righteousness, sanctification and eternal life.

The "old man", is, according to Paul in Eph. 4:22, to be "put off". Here he makes it clear that the old man is the spirit of the whole complex of life apart from God, the essence of which is deceit and corruption. "Put off" is an exhortation to the Ephesians -- something they are to do. It is precipitous and not a gradual slaughtering off of the old way of life. The "renewal of the spirit of the mind" is a life time task, but the "putting on" of the new man is again abrupt and decisive. The whole array of commands here is significant. Put off the old man, put away the lie (by which the old man or life was structured), put on the new man and be renewed in the spirit of your mind. Apparently the "old man" is not ineradicable in this life and it is important that this personification be not literalized into absurdity. The deeply spiritual nature of all the acts commanded here leads us into a moral understanding of "old man" and hence its relevance to this life.

The Colossian passage (3:9), confirms this opinion with strength. "Lie not to one another seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man . . ." Again, a life built on a lie is the

life of "the old man", and a life centered in God and a truth relation to Him is the "new man". This men are to do. The Ephesians were exhorted to do this. The Colossians had done it. Both were instructed as to how to live beyond that crucial change as if instruction were needed. Apparently the putting off and on had quality with no quantity and quantity was a commodity that would take time and continued effort to acquire.

The "body of sin" (Romans 6:6) which may be destroyed because with Christ the "old man" has been crucified is, as we have indicated, a personification of a bondage to sin which can be broken. The possibility of destruction by yielding our members to God in obedience robs us of any ground for a substance theory of sin. When in the seventh chapter, Paul dramatizes the human struggle with sin, his anguished cry, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" is no declaration of helpless despair, or submission to a life-long bondage to sin. It is Paul's effective way of making practical the prosaic 6th chapter. This body, he is saying, to which I am in helpless bondage (in Romans 7) and for which I pray for deliverance, has already been crucified with Christ, and deliverance is possible through Him. This prayer is not a confession of defeat but an effective literary device bringing the mind of the reader up to the place of deliverance in Christ. He had actually said the same thing in the early part of the 7th chapter in the marriage analogy. In the 8th chapter he says that the "law of sin and death" no longer obtains when the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" makes us free from it. This means that life replaces death and there is no other way to reverse the process of death.

Now, the "concurrent" theory which makes the situation in Romans 7 and 8 both true to the Christian believers experience at the same time is made necessary by and depends on a theory of sin as substance. If sin is a-moral and inheres in the human flesh then the Christian is subject to the impossible psychological condition of being the battle ground on which is fought out the warfare of flesh and spirit - his flesh and God's spirit. But Paul is never caught in the toils of this dualism. Paul never considers the body evil. It is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19). Through it we glorify God (6:20). We are to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God (Romans 12:1). The wording of the whole Roman letter as well as Paul's other discussions on this matter presents alternatives - sin or grace. Yielding to sin or to God, disobedience or obedience, death or life, works of the flesh or gifts of the Spirit, carnal mind or the Spiritual mind, the lie or the truth. Spiritual life has no tertium quid. Paul had a much more wholesome psychology than many of his interpreters.

This does not mean that Paul was a "perfectionist". But he did believe that some very vital decisions needed to be made in the exact center of the human personality which would turn the life energies in one direction or the other. Bringing all the complexities of human nature into a harmonious relationship was never in Paul neglected or interpreted as sin or confused with purity of heart. Paul's grammar is to be absolutely trusted in regard to these matters. The aorist, present, perfect, subjunctive and optative are highly significant in Pauline theology.

These illustrations are but a sample of Pauline usage. It has been said that Paul alone in the New Testament speaks of universal, generic sin and that reference to this is centered almost exclusively in

the early part of the Roman letter, that this is a carry-over from his Rabbinic background, that sin elsewhere is always a matter of personal responsibility. All this may be true. It does not seem necessary here to examine Paul's reputed idea of generic sin. But what is equally true and a thing that modifies any theological speculation on the basis of a Pauline concept of generic sin, is that Paul showed how this sin was cancelled out in Christ and that to it we were to be no more in bondage and from it we are to separate ourselves. Even for generic sin, sometimes called in theology, original sin, men have responsibility. But generic sin is never confused with human weakness, fallibility, immaturity, ignorance or stupidity. All these things were to gradually yield to the spiritual man's will. But in Pauline writings, no moral antagonism to God is permitted, no moral deception, no lying, no break in spiritual fellowship no schism in the body of Christ, no sin in the ultimate sense of that word can be tolerated in a Christian believer. This much is true if language means anything.

Since sin is not substance, and freedom from it a matter of moral relationship to God there is no ground at all for pride or self assurance or moral relaxation or independence. Actually it is the precise opposite of all these things and lays on the believer the most full measure of moral responsibility and personal dependence and spiritual sensitivity and humility and requires a confidence in God that is totally antithetical to all confidence in self.

There is one more striking analogy that no review of the sin problem can evade. That analogy is death. It does not seem to be vital to this investigation to question the entire scope of man's being which may be included under the curse of death. It may or may not include

physical death.<sup>1</sup> But it is almost universally agreed that spiritual death is most certainly the most significant fact of the condition of fallen man. It is a striking fact, also, that so many of Paul's descriptions of the sin nature include some reference to death.

God decreed death as the penalty for breaking law. Whatever else may be included in the condition of fallen man, death is most particularly the major one. As has been shown, death is associated with the idea of *φρόνημα*, which is the deepest disposition or inclination of the soul. All other faculties of fallen man are affected, secondarily, by sin. Perversion has resulted from a deliberate choice against God and truth. But here we find, apparently, the heart of sin, so far as man is concerned, for it is here he experiences death as the curse of sin in its primary sense. Whatever this death means, Paul says it is in the world because of one man's sin from Adam on to every human soul (Romans 5:12). This death is co-extensive and concomitant with sin (Romans 5:21). Eight times in Romans alone sin and death are considered as inseparable companions. The "body of death" made true righteousness impossible (Romans 7:24). All are under the sentence of death. We can know we have passed from death unto life (I John 3:14), because Christ died for sinners (Romans 5:8).

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<sup>1</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), p. 627.

Paul, no doubt uses death to convey various shades of meaning in different places, but he does not explicitly distinguish different senses of the word; and it is probably 'physical' death is meant and another 'spiritual' death . . . All that 'death' conveys to the mind entered into the world through sin.

It is not possible to present an extended analysis of the term death, here, but the general argument would be less convincing than otherwise if some suggestion of its meaning were not included. Albert Barnes suggested an answer. In speaking of the sense of the word, he said,

The passage before us (Romans 5) shows in what sense he intended here to use the word. In his argument it stands opposed to 'the grace of God. and the gift by grace' (ver. 15); to 'justification' by the forgiveness of 'many offences' (ver. 16); to the reign of the redeemed in eternal life (ver. 17); and to 'justification of life' (ver. 18). To all these, the words 'death' (ver. 12, 17) and 'judgment' (ver. 16, 18) stand opposed . . . The evident meaning is, that the word 'death' as here used by the apostle, refers to the train of evils which have been introduced by sin . . . In contrasting with this the results of the work of Christ, he describes not the resurrection merely, nor deliverance from temporal death, but eternal life in heaven, . . .<sup>1</sup>

This same idea of contrast is recognized by G. Campbell Morgan. He saw a three-fold contrast in the fifth chapter of Romans.

The first contrast is between the trespass and the free gift . . . the death sentence upon sin, and grace abounding. (And) The disparity is indicated by the phrase 'much more' . . .

The second contrast is between the issue of the trespass and the free gift, and therefore between judgement and justification . . . The disparity is again indicated by the phrase 'much more'; and the super-abounding victory of justification is remarkably indicated by the fact that judgement means the reign of death over men, while justification means the ability of men to reign in life . . .

The final contrast is between the reign of death and the reign of grace . . . the reign of sin in death, and the reign of grace through righteousness unto life. Again the disparity is marked by the phrase 'more exceedingly,' revealing the fact that in grace over-whelming provision is made for victory over sin.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Albert Barnes, Notes, Explanatory and Practical, on the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1866), p. 125.

<sup>2</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), pp. 72-73.

In the absence of more specific definitions, it seems wise to rest, for the time being, upon the contrasts made in the New Testament between death and life (*θάνατος* and *ζωή*) which are everywhere set one against the other. Death seems to depict the finality of the separation from God and holiness which is man's lot under the curse of God. It does not, however, mean loss of any human faculty. Rather it describes the moral alienation which exists between God and man. All the powers of personality remain alert and active (Romans 7:5-24) but oriented about a center other than God, its only proper center. Love, the most active faculty of the human personality, when centered in God, is termed in the New Testament, *ἀγάπη*, and is said to satisfy all the demands of the law of God and man (Matthew 22:37-40; Romans 13:10). But when that same faculty attempts to expend its energy upon itself, the very faculty itself loses its high quality and its expression is reduced to the category of the antithesis of love, namely, lust. Paralleling this observation, and related to it, is that regarding life and death. In the spiritual nexus there is spiritual life and derived holiness. Outside of that nexus is death or lack of holiness, which is depravity.

This new nature is 'the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;' and it is this new man which forms the spiritual nexus of the body of Christ. It is the channel way of blessing - the sole medium of the Spirit's indwelling presence.<sup>1</sup>

To this point of view, Wesley gives argument. In speaking of the death which sin occasioned he said,

He lost the life of God: he was separated from him, in union with whom his spiritual life consisted. The body

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<sup>1</sup>H. Orton Wiley, The Psychology of Holiness (An unpublished manuscript of lectures), Lecture V, p. 14.



dies when it is separated from the soul; the soul when it is separated from God. (Of this death), he gave immediate proof; presently showing by his behaviour, that the love of God was extinguished in his soul.<sup>1</sup>

Fletcher was unusually lucid at this point.

The word dead, etc., is frequently used in the Scriptures to denote a particular degree of helplessness and inactivity, very short of the total helplessness of a corpse. We read of the deadness of Sarah's womb, and of Abraham's body being dead; he must be a strong Calvinist, indeed, who, from such expressions, peremptorily asserts, that Sarah's dead womb was as unfit for conception, and Abraham's dead body for generation. as if they both had been 'dead corpses'.<sup>2</sup>

His discussion of the body of death in Romans 7, is equally pointed.

Dead as he (Paul) was, could he not complain like the dry bones, and ask, 'Who shall deliver me from this body of death?'<sup>3</sup>

A strong argument is that in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Standing in contrast to the three-sided personality of men as they are in proper relationship to Christ is the picture of men "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). The picture is not of death, as stulted senses or annihilation, but of very active faculties in varying relationships. The "Spirit of Christ" which is a test of men's relationship to Christ (Romans 8:9) is contrasted with the "spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience." The "mind of Christ" which the "spiritual" have, stands against the "desires of the flesh and mind." The "love of Christ" which "constrains" a Christian has become in fallen man "the lust of the flesh." Death, then, must be the separation of the race from the immediate presence and power of the Holy Spirit, with the

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<sup>1</sup>Welch, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

<sup>2</sup>Fletcher, op. cit., p. 158.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 159.



consequent loss of righteousness. The work of Christ in bringing life ( Sw ) in place of death, is in harmony with this concept. Spiritual death and life, are synonyms with sin and holiness, and are properly understood as basically in relationship to God. (The nature of this life is discussed in a subsequent chapter.)

Paul in Colossians gives us a useful passage in this respect (Col. 1:18-23). Alienation, moral disunion, enmity in the mind, all are ended in the body of Christ's flesh that we might be holy and unblameable in God's sight. Perhaps the classic discussion is in Ephesians 2:11-22. Christ is our peace, who abolished in his flesh the enmity, making in himself of two one new man, that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by His cross. II Cor. 5 graphically speaks of the ending of estrangement in reconciliation through Christ and the letter to the Hebrews often speaks of sin as estrangement which incurs guilt and which ends provisionally in Christ.

There are a number more word pictures in the New Testament regarding the nature of sin and the damage it occasioned but perhaps this established without serious question the heart of the matter. There are several pertinent observations to be made. The mind, or personality, as representing the intellectual, volitional, and affectional natures in man, is the seat of moral perversion. This three-fold mind, in relating itself to truth determines the moral quality of man. When this mind rejects truth willfully, perversion and corruption result. Knowledge, as an implicit intuition of things divine is lost by moral default. In no case in the Bible is the mind considered as merely a thinking machine, amorally compounding tower of pure reason. Its exercise is always enmeshed with moral matters. It is the whole man responding to the truth of God in fullest personal responsibility.

Fallen man, though possessed of normal human faculties, able to know and do the law, and responsible for his moral attitudes and acts is yet said to be dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1), and is a partaker of the curse of sin (Romans 5:12), which is death. Whatever death means, it is obvious that it is not a lessening of human responsibility in any measure, for moral capacity and moral responsibility stand or fall together and both are necessary to human existence and rationality. Whatever may lessen moral responsibility suggests a corresponding loss of capacity for moral existence and this in turn would rob mankind of the peculiar and distinctive dignity which makes him human. It is the opinion of the writer that three concepts are bound together into one inseparable whole, no one aspect of which can be touched without undermining the entire structure; man as created in the image of God, man as possessed of moral capacity, and man as morally responsible. All these are necessary to real intelligence. If this be true, the metaphysical image of God in man, of necessity, remains intact even in fallen man. It is this fact that gives moral seriousness to human sin.

Paul's solemn charge against both Jews and Gentiles as recorded in the first three chapters of Romans was on the basis of man's ability to understand and keep God's law. Even the heathen held truth, and the indictment was that they held it in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18). He specifically said that they knew God but that they refused to glorify Him as such (Romans 1:19-20). They also knew the ordinance of God and the punitive sanctions involved and deliberately repudiated that which they knew and delighted in their disobedience (Romans 1:32). No clearer statement can be made than the one in this passage, to the effect that God considered man a morally mature and emotionally responsible person,

intellectually qualified to discharge that responsibility solemnly.

If this were not true, God's wrath would be not only absurd but immoral.

Even the seventh chapter of Romans clearly reveals Paul's teaching concerning the capacity of natural fallen man. He has will (Romans 7:18) which is capable of moral choice, though it of itself is impotent to lift man out of sin into righteousness. But he may will the good. He may even "delight in the law of God after the inner man" (Romans 7:22) a possibility which adds terrible condemnation to those who use that faculty to delight in evil (Romans 1:32). His aspirations may be noble and good and right. Jesus recognized that ability, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts, etc. . ." (Luke 11:13). Natural man has not lost the faculty of aspiring to a proper pattern of life, even to a godly life.

Even to preserve a right condition of conscience is man's responsibility (I Timothy 4:2). The obligation to direct the love faculty properly is a personal moral choice (II Timothy 3:2). Evil men are not first deceived and then deceiving, but they deliberately deceive and then become deceived (II Timothy 3:13).

But is natural man responsible to the law of God? Apparently even here he is not so far gone from his original condition but that he is not. Both the rich, young ruler who could tell Jesus he had kept the law from his youth up and be "loved" by Him for it (Mark 10:21), and Paul who could testify, "I . . . as touching the righteousness which is in the law (was) found blameless" (Philippians 3:6), are examples of the power of human beings to sustain a proper relationship to impersonal law.

Man then, is intellectually responsible, volitionally responsible, emotionally responsible and morally responsible. He is responsible to law, to truth, and to all the revelation of God. God judges him and pours out His wrath upon disobedience. Every exhortation, and command in Holy Writ is made on the assumption that man can hear and understand and obey. There is not a law for the sinner, another for a Christian much less a third and intermediate system for unsanctified believers. There is one standard only with divine approval for those who keep it and divine condemnation for those who do not. The approval and condemnation, moreover, is personal, not merely the impersonal consequences of natural law. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Psalm 51:4). "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against thee" (Luke 15:18, 21).

G. Campbell Morgan saw in this fact of responsibility to God the dignity and worth of the image of God in man. By being put in a place of dominion he would be

reminded of his relation to God and called upon to respond thereto. . . This conception of the relation between man and God creates that consciousness of what sin is, which fills the soul with fear. The determined prostitution of powers which are akin to God, to purposes of evil, is terrible indeed.<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion seems warranted that all the properties of human personality which have in any way to do with him as a morally responsible agent, are preserved even in fallen man. He may know enough about God to recognize Him as Creator and Lord. He is responsible for any failure to possess this knowledge, as though that kind of ignorance may have

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<sup>1</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, Living Messages of the Books of the Bible (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912), I, pp. 21-22.

moral considerations. He has sufficient will to effect a change in life's direction and he comes under divine condemnation for directing his will against truth. He can desire right things and love God's law. In all the research of the author in this field not a single passage of Scripture was found which gave any hint that any man was absolved from responsibility for sin because of the loss of any facet of the image of God in him. There were no texts which provided the slightest excuse for sin even for a day. In fact, the force of Biblical condemnation for sin in the most depraved and alienated of men from God, becomes one of the most striking features of the Book. No message in all literature is so unequivocally against evil and demands such a high and noble response from man, and so robs him of comfort for his failure.

This analysis of sin is obviously unconventional, theologically speaking. It is not, however, a departure from conservative doctrine (it is believed). What we have tried to do is to express the formal statements of theology in a way that the practical human mind can grasp meaningfully.

We are impressed by two emphases. First, sin is always put into a moral context in the New Testament (and the Old Testament, too, for that matter). It is never confused with fallibility and imperfection nor is it ever condoned "in Christ" or out of Him. Always "sin" is the enemy of God wherever it is found. Never is sin said to inhere in a non-personal substance. It is moral, through and through.

Secondly, in spite of -- or because of -- what God has done for us in Christ, the attitude men are to take toward sin makes a passive

acceptance of it impossible in the Christian life. Never is ground given for the least measure of relaxation of conscience or insensitivity toward wrong. What Christ has done "for us" does not absolve us of responsibility for the utmost in moral experience in life. Rather than probation ending "in Christ", it takes on added meaning.

Following from the establishment of the moral atmosphere in which sin is defined three observations can be made. (1) Sin is basically estrangement from God which has consequences in all areas of natural life. (2) This estrangement is two-fold; God's withdrawal from us and our attitude of rebellion against Him. (3) The acts of moral beings committed in this atmosphere of rebellion are sinful and it is the moral atmosphere out of which they spring that makes them sinful regardless of how proper or noble they may appear on the surface.

Salvation has to do with this whole disrupted relationship. (1) Being a disruption in the moral realm, in the sight of God and in the hearts of men, the central concern is to correct that relationship. Nothing less can be dignified by the term salvation. (2) The alienation of God from men must be ended. Only God can do this. What He did and how it was done must forever escape our limited ability to understand. But this we know, in Christ the estrangement ended. Moral and cleansing fellowship with God is a possibility through Christ. (3) But being a moral matter, estrangement is two sided. Our rebellion must end. We must meet God with a single-hearted love. Any duplicity, or mixed motives, make cleansing fellowship impossible. Christ's sacrifice of Himself on the cross not only made God's approval of us possible but makes a pure heart also possible. These two possibilities constitute sanctification. (4) The door to all of this is forgiveness, or justification, which cares

for the acts of sin which we have committed. This lies at the foundation of all moral experience.

Notice how this systematization parallels I John 1:5-10. (vv. 5-6) The moral atmosphere, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." If we say we know God and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. (1. v.7) The goal is restored fellowship, a relationship built on truth. (2. v. 7) Our own clean heart is experienced as we maintain that fellowship on our part. It is in this mutual fellowship that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. (3. vv. 8-9) Forgiveness is the door to the possibility of mutual fellowship and an acknowledgement of our sin is an absolutely basic requirement for forgiveness. That this is not "perfectionism" in which sin is an impossibility, or a static, impersonal cleansing, is made clear by the promise of continued forgiveness of the repentant heart who may find himself again sinning.

There are two points of conclusion. (1) Sin as a moral defect is in this life possible of correction. Alienation is ended between God and man. Human rebellion against God can end. This is not humanly impossible. The antithesis or loving God is not a state (properly speaking) but an atmosphere daily, hourly, perhaps momentarily, maintained in the presence and by the power of the Holy Spirit. This calls for the deepest measure of moral participation of which the person is capable at any moment. But the participation is not a strained, unnatural, fear-inspired thing, but the whole man committed to God with the same abandon with which he committed himself before <sup>to sin</sup>. This does not put an impossible burden on the human psyche nor does it require any particular measure of maturity, ability, or knowledge. It asks for growth and maturation and a deepening spiritual



sensitivity that never ends perhaps. It does not insure against sinning but it makes it possible to love God enough to prevent acts of rebellion. And it cannot abide a careless conscience or moral relaxation or indifference.

The second conclusion has to do with the results in natural life of sin. These cannot be removed in this life. When it is claimed that all sin is destroyed, natural evil (which is not sin in the Biblical sense) must be excluded until the final day of redemption.

. . . the infirmities of flesh will be removed only in the resurrection and glorification of the body. Man in a general way has no difficulty in distinguishing between the soul and the body, but the fine line of demarcation, the exact arresting point between the spiritual and physical cannot be determined. Could we but know where this line of distinction lies, we could with ease distinguish between carnal manifestations which have their seat wholly in the soul, and physical infirmities which attach to his physical constitution still under the reign of sin . . . There is ever needful, a spirit of charity toward all men (H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology, II, p. 140).



## "Eradication"

Problem: Every system of thought or science develops a terminology peculiar to its own needs. Eventually certain words or phrases become "catch words" and these in turn come to stand for the whole discipline which developed them. Often, particularly in political and religious thinking, the words take on an emotional charge which tends to prejudice the mind before clarifying the issue. The word "eradication" is an example and the one in which we are interested. Few words in religious circles have the power to excite more lively reaction than this one.

Among thoughtful Wesleyans the problem arises as to whether the word "eradication" best expresses the spiritual truth which they seek to teach. The truth is essential to the "holiness" position and, it is felt, to a Biblical understanding of salvation. Is any of this truth gained or lost by the use or disuse of this particular term? The problem lies in the general response to it. Wesleyanism has no disposition to compromise its area of truth however much this truth may plunge it into disrepute. But it does ask whether the use of the word is wise or essential to the Biblical teaching on holiness and whether its use clarifies or prejudices the minds of those who hear it. Good Biblical preaching ought to raise real issues and remove false barriers to truth.

Sources of the Problem: There are a number of reasons for the widespread unfavorable reaction to this word among religious people. It is well to be familiar with them.

The first source of misunderstanding and one not often recognized is semantic in nature. It has to do with the problem of the relation of

words to meaning. Words are tools of thought. They are symbols of things and not the things themselves. Certain symbols are associated with concrete objects, e.g., "tree" stands for objects quite easily recognizable in nature by anyone at all familiar with the outdoor world. But less concrete realities are not so easily defined. For instance, it is not so certain that the word "love" is uniformly understood and we are very sure that among some heathen peoples such a word as love is totally meaningless apart from instruction and experience. The most difficult area of reality to be reduced to words is the spiritual. We have no spiritual vocabulary and hence when the spiritual real is referred to, it must be done by means of figures of speech. In other words the concrete experiences which we understand are made analogies of spiritual truths. Remarkably the sensitive human mind finds very little difficulty in making this transition. Jesus very deliberately spiritualized his message by means of parables. Both John and Paul's writings are rich in figures of speech. This is highly significant. To literalize these figures in the sense of limiting their meaning to the materialistic or corporeal experience out of which they were lifted is to distort the spiritual truth into a caricature. Spiritual interpretation of scripture does not mean unrealness or irresponsible imagination but is the most direct way into the most real area of human life. Paul for instance corrects any materialistic interpretation by the statement that the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. This whole matter of interpretation is discussed at length and adequately in his first letter to the Corinthians, the second chapter.

The orientation of the human and divine involved in the experience of sanctification is the most intently spiritual experience of which the

human person is capable. It will not be surprising then to find a most rich use of symbolic language in holiness theology and testimony. In the full glow of penetrating spiritual insight these figures of speech carry real meaning from one person to another. The terms are clothed with an aura of connotation which is dynamically meaningful. It is only when the spiritual reality fades that the figures of speech begin to stand out like skeletons. Such a fate befell the word "eradication". Instead of supporting rich meaning the term came to look gaunt and repulsive. Crass literalism destroyed the fundamental significance of the figure of speech.

Arising out of this sematic problem is another source of objection to the word "eradication" which proves to be theological in nature. Because the spiritual implications of the figure of speech are lost all the literalistic implications of the word cling to it grotesquely. "Eradication", it is said, must presuppose sin as a thing which is said to be removable as a diseased organ is removed by surgery. In answer it may be noted that in general those who object to the term "eradication" on this basis themselves presuppose sin to be a depravity so extensive and realistic that it cannot be separated from human nature in this life. Either the term "suppression" is substituted, meaning a subjugation and denial of the natural impulses, or a phrase such as this is used, "The structure of the sinful nature is gradually destroyed as the structure of the spiritual man is gradually built up." Wesleyans find these expressions suggesting a definition of sin quite unacceptable to them because of an implied materialism. It would seem to lack the full moral connotation which the Bible teaches about man and sin. "Eradication" to the Calvinist would not be out of keeping with possibility - for sin will be

"removed" in the next life-, but is antithetical to a theological position which makes such a deliverance in keeping with divine intention. The criticism is not of what is imagined to be a Wesleyan's view of sin but of his view of grace. The Wesleyan on the other hand rejects completely the idea of sin as inhering in any part of the man not involved in responsibility. It is not a thing but a relationship which must and can be corrected. Hence, the Calvinist criticism of the word "eradication" is unwarranted and would have theological point only in its own system of presuppositions.

To a Wesleyan sin does not reside in the natural impulses nor in a juridical imputation. It is not naturalistic as such nor is it a philosophical abstraction. Sin is always and everywhere a responsible man's rejection of the authority of God. Sin put in the context of a moral and responsible relationship to God makes such terms as "suppression" and "tearing down structures", meaningless. Moral responsibility knows no degrees of rebellion. It certainly knows about ascending levels of perspective and deepening levels of understanding and corresponding degrees of integration, but at any point the Christian can say, "I love God with all my heart". All the Wesleyan means by eradication is that he loves God with all his heart-that all the powers of his being at any stage in his way are centered in God not self.

Thirdly, because of the hidden presuppositions involved in the word "eradication", ambiguities exist in its usage. Unresolved ambiguities give rise to serious misunderstandings and these in turn to highly charged emotional responses. Emotional reactions to "catch words" throw up a block to "communication" which must be removed if the message of truth is to get through.

There is a Cross - a moral barrier - at the point in religious experience where the word "eradication" is appropriate. The minister of the gospel ought to be quite sure that it is the real cross which confronts his hearer and not a false barrier which obscures the central issue. Is it the truth or a misunderstood word which blocks the way to God we must ask constantly. This task must be kept paramount in any decision regarding the choice of non-Biblical terms.

The Meaning of Eradication: Some of the earliest histories of the "holiness" movement, its teachers and preachers have used the term "eradication" to describe its most characteristic tenet of thought. The distinctive features of holiness theology is its insistence upon a radical and incisive disposition of the sin problem. Sin is to end in the human heart. The Christian's life-long conflict is not to be with sin within. He is to be cleansed from all sin. He is to be free from sin. Those who have experienced that grace testify to that freedom. The annals of Christian history abound with reports of responsible persons who say, "I know cleanness for the first time in my life." No word could so adequately describe the thoroughness of that cleansing as "eradication".

It makes clear the distinction between an end of sin and a suppression of it as preached by some. Among responsible holiness teachers it never meant a removal of sin as a "thing". It always had to do with the moral renovation of the person which is necessarily decisive in nature. Moreover, this freedom must not be interpreted in a perfectionist sense but in the evangelical sense of moral integrity. It is a quality of relationship whose positive characteristic is love. It must be understood in the context of grace and in keeping with the fallibility and imperfection of human nature.

There is not only historical precedent for the use of the term eradication but there is some Biblical warrant for so doing. Though it is never used in scripture, it would be difficult to find stronger terms for what eradication stands for than "destruction of the body of sin" and "crucifixion with Christ" and "death to sin". Certainly nothing of the radical nature of moral cleansing is lost by the exclusive use of biblical terms, rather, the case is strengthened. But at least, one who elects to use the term "eradication" can claim good ground for it on the basis of biblical meaning. Semantically, the figure of speech which becomes the analogy for spiritual reality warrants the use of "eradication" on the same basis as "destruction". It is questionable however whether it is as justifiable to contend for the extra-Biblical term as for the scriptural expressions on the same ground.

Ought the term to be used? The answer to this question is not simple. There are several considerations to keep in mind in making an individual judgment in the matter.

In the first place, Wesleyanism is distinctive in its freedom from rigid bondage to human philosophy and creedal formulations. Its interpretation of Scripture is not bound by systematic consistency but rather its systematization always stands under the judgment and correction of the Word. Its emphasis on the ministry of the Spirit as a guide to the revealing of truth and dynamic insight into the Word preserves it from undue reliance on precise verbal formulations to preserve its life. There is a vitality about it which leaps over extra-biblical phrases into a kaleidoscope of figures of speech, each suited to some glowing facet of its truth. The loss of no word or phrase could compromise its truth. Tragedy can strike holiness circles only when words become more important than

life. When spiritual vitality sinks to the point where it can no longer burst the bonds of formalism in word or deed and break out in fresh expressions then the very excuse for the existence of "holiness" theology is gone. No, Wesleyanism does not need to spend precious time in defending the importance of the use of any non-biblical word provided the reason for its disuse is not a compromise with a distinctive truth behind it.

This leads to a second criterion. Wesleyanism attempts to be Biblical to the core. This does not mean that it holds the words of Scripture in superstitious reverence. Rather, the reverse is true. It seeks to determine the meaning and spirit of Scripture and then to apply that meaning resolutely to concrete experience. Wesleyanism prefers scriptural terms to any other. It speaks of the "carnal mind" rather than "Original sin". It defines God and sin and grace and sanctification exegetically rather than philosophically. It, therefore, will defend Biblical terms and meanings in preference to any other terms. So long as extra-biblical terms carry Biblical connotations they are useful but when they fail to illuminate they may be dropped without regret.

A third test by which to judge a "holiness" vocabulary is the test of understanding. "Holiness" preaching defeats its purpose when it barricades itself behind academic language. "Holiness" is peculiarly experiential and must be expressed in the language of experience. This results in great flexibility of idiom. But always the ivory tower formulation must bow to the vivid, changing, vital, exuberant medium of deepest communication. "Holiness" language is the language of experience and if the proclamation of its theology is not clear to the common man it has not tasted deeply enough of the idiom of life. Wesleyanism thinks that since Scripture was not produced in a vacuum but in the give and take



of life, so its theology must find expression in the living language of experience.

Conclusion: There is no categorical answer to the question, "Ought we to use the word 'eradication'?" It is a word rich in meaning having been hallowed and sanctioned by many years of usage by our spiritual fathers and mothers. But lying beneath our personal decision ought to be an understanding of the task of the holiness preacher. His most difficult and challenging assignment is to keep the truths of grace, freshly and attractively and adequately expressed in the language of his generation. He must, by the help of the Holy Spirit, confront men by God's claims on them, "in their own language". He must himself so experience God's grace in his own life that he is never at a loss to know how to translate his preached message of grace into the common language of "folks". If the formal language of theology fails to make contact he has at his command the simple, direct, homey, reply of the man born blind who said to those who were trying to confuse him on the basis of theory and tradition, "This much I know that whereas once I was blind, now I see".

"Eradication" is a proper word, historically, theologically, experientially. It may even be a proper word Biblically though it is not a Biblical word. It has been used with great effectiveness in the past and will be useful in some situations today. It must ever be remembered, however, that all words, Biblical and otherwise, must be made fully meaningful to every new generation. A continuing task of theology is to make its truths relevant. And there is no more difficult and challenging task than this.



## PSYCHOLOGY OF HOLINESS

In the foregoing discussions it is hoped that the central moral issue relative to holiness has been distinguished from the other problems in it so that the real point of holiness has been made clear. Since holiness is primarily a moral matter it has a relevance to human life. It is this relevance that raises the psychological problems with which this study opened and which must now be answered.

When the moral problems have been distinguished from the psychological problems so that the two are no longer confused it is time to relate them again and show how the moral and psychological interact in actual human situations. There was a sort of sad humor in the kind of questions asked about holiness. The questions however are not really funny. They are not to be disregarded. They are desperately serious and deserve serious answers.

The psychology of holiness simply means that there is a relationship of holiness to human experience which fits people as they are. In this discussion of it we will have to say some things about the constitution of human nature and personality and show how sanctification acts in living situations. Theology looks different in work clothes than it does in a book.

The greatest problems are those stemming from the "Second Crisis" theology. It is not the moral issues which raise the problems relative to the "Second Crisis" but the psychological or experiential aspects. Perhaps it would be helpful to sharpen the issue by means of the questions.

Wesleyans speak of a second work of grace or a second crisis or "blessing" in the Christian life. What is the significance of two special

moments among the many in life? Why two, not one or three or one hundred? How is one recognized from the other or how does one distinguish the first from the second? Could they be reversed and make any difference? How are those two distinguished from the other crucial moments in one's spiritual life. If a Christian loses one "blessing" which one is lost and what happens to the other and how would one know when he had recovered what was lost? Does God withhold some measure of grace from the first experience that is later given in the second? Or does he solve only part of the sin problem in each "work of grace"? Are there levels of religious living, proper for sinners, for believers and for sanctified persons? May one determine the amount of sin or the degree of victory over sin, or the kinds of sin characteristic of each state of grace? May one choose his state of grace and adjust himself to it satisfactorily? Is one fully saved when he is saved or only partially saved? If God doesn't save completely couldn't he if he would and if he could why wouldn't he in the new birth? If one is wholly saved in the new birth why must he have another special experience to prepare him for heaven? And, back of all these questions, why a crisis experience?

These are not fictitious questions but serious ones. They are asked not only by those who have not been trained in this tradition but by those who have known no other way. It shall be our concern to examine the meanings of the questions and propose answers which it is hoped will qualify as Biblical.

In analyzing these questions several areas of problem are noted: (1) An understanding of grace; (2) and personality; (3) how grace relates to personality; (4) and the problems involved in the numerical value of crisis experiences. In this last section we will develop a philosophy of second crisis.

## "States" of Grace

It will be noted that one major difficulty lies at the base of all the questions and is expressed in such phrases as "work of grace" and "state of grace" and in the term "blessing". This difficulty arises from a failure to understand the nature of grace. The dual aspect of the religious life is said to be structured by "states of grace", and that "works of grace" transfer one from state to state. If this pattern can be defended Biblically, the answering of the specific questions about these states ought not to be too difficult. If not, the Biblical teaching will have to be ascertained and distinguished from the deductions of theology and the application of the Biblical teaching related to experience.

A brief survey of the uses of the word "grace" quickly establishes the fact that neither "state" or "works" of grace is a Biblical phrase. "Blessing" when used to refer to them is extra-Biblical. It is observed, also, that neither "first" or "second" can be defended directly by New Testament exegesis as adjectives defining the stages of grace on the way. Of course, the Wesleyan knows this and he defends his usage on other grounds believing that the experience of New Testament grace gives evidence of this dual aspect. However, in the attempt to remain strictly within the limitation of Biblical exegesis, one can be embarrassed by these terms if they are insisted upon too dogmatically as an evidence of orthodoxy.

What is grace? Is it possible that grace could refer to a state or position? All that men receive from God is "by grace," from creation to final redemption. A careful study of the term reveals at least one clear fact, grace is never impersonal or something apart from God himself. It is, rather, precisely as a personal expression of God's nature and as

such spiritual and moral that it has meaning. It is mercy and love and patience and longsuffering, never deserved by men, never compelled by any sort of divine necessity, but always freely given and always conditioned by moral considerations so far as its reception by men is concerned.

If it were possible to conceive of a "state of love" or a "state of mercy" (terms that are synonyms for grace), the validity of a "state of grace" could be defended. But these matters do not describe impersonal or static positions but relationships which are personal in the highest sense of that term. Wesleyanism, in its most alert moments has always seen this. It has maintained that no man is to trust in any moment of experience, or in any psychological experience itself or in any "state of grace" or in the results of any of these. He is to trust in Christ alone, not as an idea or a group of words - even Biblical words - but in Christ Himself as a Person. This puts the whole of redemption on the highest possible plane and prevents the development of antinomian tendencies which are inherent in any system which fails to grasp this personal aspect of God's dealing with men. Wesley answered the question, "Does not talking of a justified or sanctified state tend to mislead men? almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done at one moment?" by saying "Whereas we are every hour and every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, according to our works: according to the whole of our inward tempers and our outward behavior."<sup>1</sup> Hannah Whitehall Smith has been quoted, also, to this effect (see p.     ).

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Fletcher in his, Works, Preface, "Extracts from the Minutes of some late conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others at a public conference held in London, Aug., 1770." Vol. I, p. 9.

It may be fairly stated that the most fundamental distinction between Augustinian theologies and the spirit of Wesleyanism lies in this difference in their respective conceptions of grace. Augustinians think of grace as causal, or a power working upon man's will, hence essentially mechanical. Calvinism, generally, regards grace as a legal standing or a decree of God. To the Wesleyan grace is not properly called a state and is never impersonal, but is consistently conceived of as God with men, loving them, but never acting on them apart from their wills. Grace is never power, or coercion. It is thought of in the most personal terms. This conviction lies back of its view of the Imago Dei and of primitive holiness and consequently of the holiness which is said to be possible in this life. As is noted the Biblical defense for this conviction is both negative and positive. Negatively, grace, as well as the other attitudes of God, is never impersonally spoken of. Positively, an ethical connotation everywhere characterizes God's dealing with man and man's response to God. This means that all the commands of God in relation to man are consistent with God's moral order. God does not play with men, teasing them by impossible requirements. The Bible is a serious book trustworthy in all its moral teachings. No more is required of men than they are able to perform. The requirements are related primarily to inner attitudes not to achievements of prowess or perfections of which men are incapable, physically, mentally or morally. But the demand is for all that man can do and he is pressed to his utmost capacity as is consistent with personality growth. God's grace stimulates moral experience, never substitutes for it.

The one important point in all this discussion is this, that God acts toward men in personal relationship. This means that He acts as

a Whole Person to whole persons. The tendency to speak of God as giving a part of Himself to a part of man, or, God acting in mercy, or justice or grace or wrath, each attribute apart from the others, in relation to one aspect of man such as his status only, or in respect of his rational mind apart from his moral nature, or his will and not his emotions, arises from the failure to see the Person-to-person aspect of divine action. Grace represents the whole of God acting in respect of the whole man. When by grace we are saved, salvation is potentially complete. Grace cannot be divided off into layers because God is a Person - not layers of anything. We cannot divide the Holy Spirit up so that we receive a part of Him at one time and more of Him another time. The Holy Spirit is a Person and comes as a Person and He relates Himself to persons. When one is saved the Holy Spirit comes to him. This is a personal relationship, not a mathematical addition which can be divided by fractions.

But it is precisely at the point of the personal nature that this whole matter of "religious mathematics" lies, and how grace relates to it. But before the question of "first and second blessings" can be discussed something must be said about human nature.

#### Human Personality

If the experience of sanctification is a matter of spiritual and moral adjustment worked out at the juncture of human nature and God's grace something needs to be known about human nature in order to be intelligent about the whole process. Contemporary theories of personality offer interesting suggestions with ever increasing approximations to what one can believe about himself. But the picture is far from clear and theology cannot wait for a final answer from psychology. Two

convictions about the human psyche lie at the heart of Christian faith. These two convictions answer to what we feel is true to Biblical psychology and what we experience about ourselves. Biblical psychology is always contemporary and the theologian is never embarrassed by it.

1. The person is essentially a unity. A normal man is not odds with himself though he may be contending with his best judgment over some matter. When he acts, he acts as a unit. The whole man acts whenever he acts at all. Neither the Old or the New Testament knew anything about a man whose spirit is good and whose flesh is evil. One's spirit, or body for that matter, never acts without the real consent of the entire personality. Responsible action, in fact, must engage the whole man. The Bible speaks of numbers of parts of the body as being the seat of responsible action; heart, bowels, eyes, ears, mouth, feet, mind, spirit, flesh and many other organs, internal and external. But never does the heart and the feet, for example, act out of harmony with each other in the same man, at the same time. When the feet are "swift to shed blood", the heart is involved and to blame. When the feet are "beautiful" because they carry the message of grace, the spirit and flesh are included. Each designation is a figure of speech characterizing the action and attitudes of the whole man. It refers to a quality of character taking its cue from the sort of symbol of action which the organ suggests. The trichotomous view of man as body, soul and spirit is not a Biblical teaching. Some classical errors in Christology stem from this Hellenistic idea and some contemporary perfectionism is only made possible by this concept of personality. But the Christian view is that the clean heart is an undivided heart.



We have said that one of the aspects of personality is its essential unity. It is important to keep this in mind as we think about justification and regeneration. To catch the import of this the alternative view will be analyzed - namely, that grace and human nature are antithetical.

The only alternative to the "whole man" view which relates grace to man existentially is a dual view which sets one part of the human psyche against another. In this view a "carnal" life grows together with a "spiritual" life and these are always antagonistic, always contesting each other. Never is a union achieved the reason being that the spirit and the flesh are conceived as a struggle between God's Spirit and the human person. The result is an inner conflict, greater as the spiritual grows stronger. The carnal, being an integral part of the psyche can never be conquered or eliminated. Death only releases the person from this dilemma.

There are two serious problems in this view. Either

(1.) The spiritual in men is God's Holy Spirit in him but operating apart from his will or ability. This leaves the ego passive, inert, evil. If a man does right it is against his will or ability and indicates only that the Holy Spirit has moved him. There is no moral union or communion. There is no real righteousness in men.

or, (2.) The spiritual in man operates independently of the rest of personality. This means that after one becomes a Christian, the spirit is saved and does not - perhaps cannot - sin, while the body cannot be saved and must sin. This indicates that the spirit is savable and the body is not, that the total man is not carnal only the flesh is carnal. The spirit is essentially good and is simply bound helplessly, in sinners



by an evil body. The Holy Spirit liberates the human spirit from this bondage and so a man can be both good and evil, at the same time. Part of the personality is saved, part unsaved. God can save the spirit but He cannot save the body. The Christian, in this view, is in the unhappy position of being doomed to a personality conflict that must endure for life.

Any dual view of personality makes the Christian life a source of conflict not of peace. It makes salvation destructive of wholeness and integrity. It impugns the grace of God. A disturbed personality becomes the badge of Christianity and death a saviour.

The view to which this is the alternative, insists that justification and the new birth integrates the whole personality. It is life -- life which draws all elements into a dynamic whole. Life is unity. Death is disintegration, the falling apart of constituent elements. Salvation is the spirit of life in Christ Jesus that makes us free from the law of sin and death. The new birth means the beginning of growth of a whole person. It looks forward to maturity and service. It is a partaking of the divine nature. It means one is wholly saved, wholly revitalized, remotivated, by the Holy Spirit. It means that by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the person has made Christ, Lord.

2. Personality is dynamic, not static. It is spiritual not material. It is not a substance upon which from the outside may be imposed permanent "marks" as Catholic grace is said to do. It is moral, not metaphysical. There is a continuum of identity and self-consciousness, but in this there is a flux and adjustment and enlargement and altered perspectives and relegation and movement that everlastingly constitutes the "person" a vital entity. It learns by responding. It's

development is by intelligent response to challenge, not by mechanical response to stimuli. Its character is known by its personal response. Jesus' analysis is pertinent - not what goes into a man makes him, he said, but what proceeds from him. When the person is operating as a responsible creature he distinguishes between stimuli and purpose and responds intelligently. This does not posit absolute freedom, but does assume real freedom. A person, so long as he is a person, is in movement, outgoing, expanding, reaching for completion, restless, seeking, driving. Spiritual "death" in a living person is not the death of immobility or quiescence but the direction of activity toward disintegration. It is moral. Grace does not revitalize the psyche - but has something to do with the direction and goal with which the person is concerned. It is not metaphysical but moral. Whatever part of the person it is that may partake of substance certainly nothing of that constitutes what we mean by the spiritual man. It is precisely that which is not in causal connection with which grace has to do. Moral freedom is the atmosphere of persons. Human personality. it must follow, is finite and fallible and responsible. Nothing that happens to it can impose moral security on it except a life-time of inner choices. No "state of grace" can assure final salvation. All that which probation means, by way of moral choice, growth, discipline and spiritual deepening apply to it.

Personality is dynamic as well as a unity. This means that men step into a life of the fullest responsibility to God at conversion. The personality is not passive, inert, but constantly meeting moments of decision which must be made in the spirit of the new life. The guarantee of grace is not that God will make these decisions for us but

that we will be enabled by the Spirit to make them to please God. Moral life is either progress or regression in a zigzag line, not by straight lines. New situations constantly confront us. new choices must be made. At every point a council meeting is held in which the prevailing attitude is determined by the whole man. He is now a Christian but that does not make the right choices automatic or inevitable. The responsibility for right choices is not relegated but heightened in the Christian life. The essence of personality is moral freedom, and in the Christian life personality is ever more deeply spiritualized never depersonalized. Everything involved in sanctification, then, applies precisely here. Sanctification is the bringing into total integration about the will of God, every element of the personality. Sanctification is the "growing edge" of justification. What one contracts to do when he becomes a Christian, he must in living situations, do. The new life needs sanctification.

#### Grace and Human Freedom

To be a self means moral freedom. God acts in relation to man in harmony with his moral nature and psychological makeup. No one in religious circles seriously questions man's moral responsibility. Even the most extreme "predestinationist" contrives to find a way to preserve the moral element in men. Wesleyans simply take this truth for granted consciously, as others do with more or less awareness of what they have done. Freedom may not be great but in order to maintain personal and moral integrity it must be real not fictional. Persons cannot be real persons -- spiritual entities -- apart from this measure of self-transcendence and self-determination. Biblically, the whole appeal of

the Gospel is to the power of men to decide and initiate one course of action rather than another. Men are not free to choose the consequences of an act but they are free to decide in which consequences they prefer to become enmeshed so far as a relationship to God is concerned.

But inevitably involved in personal freedom is personal responsibility. Freedom lies in a matrix of responsibility. To be free is to be responsible. Freedom is not a-moral, with the matters of choice centered solely around the whims and interests of the individual. It is intensely and terribly moral. In other words, we do not begin and end our life of freedom as unattached individuals but only and always as a self-conscious entity standing in relation to God and to others. The self is a self only when it so stands. Self-consciousness is but another way of saying Other-consciousness (namely, God-consciousness) and other-consciousness (namely, men). In other words moral freedom is the self sustaining a responsible relation to other selves. Freedom has no other meaning.

The Bible has much to say of this interrelatedness. The triune God is a community of Selves in love and communication. Men find their spiritual awareness only when they have been drawn into that divine life by mutual fellowship and the resulting life is a community fellowship with other Christians. Somewhat parenthetically, but significant to this discussion is a reference to the observation made earlier in the study, that the Holy Spirit is said to have fallen on, or filled, groups only, never individuals, though the individual's body is the temple of the Spirit, and such men as Stephen in the pursuance of their witnessing were characterized by this divine habitation. The body ("a living sacrifice") is related, by the Spirit, to all other persons in that

fellowship. This interdependent life is absolutely crucial. Jesus' prayer in Jn. 17 will not permit us to dismiss the obligation of the full implications of fellowship to salvation. The relationship we sustain to the Holy Spirit, of deepest necessity, makes us a part of a fellowship. Apart from that fellowship is spiritual death.

This leads us to observe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit under the terms of grace has a two-fold thrust. He compells persons to become sharply aware of themselves as responsible individuals and the decisions to which they are driven are fully responsible decision. Men are "cut out of the herd" and forced to act as persons. But the Holy Spirit also demands that such persons begin to sustain responsible relationships. This is highly significant. The Spirit assumes and respects our self-interest and other-interest and deals with us through this avenue of personality.

These two moments of the self, a self interest and another interest are both absolutely essential to mental health. The "fulfilling of the whole law" or mental and spiritual health expressed in a religious way (the only adequate way) is to love God wholly and others as the self. Salvation must include both aspects or fail to do justice to the whole scope of Biblical teaching. Self consciousness is logically prior to the social dimension of the personality. One who has not become a true self will never be able to take his place in a society of selves. Self love is not sinful in itself but only when it crowds out the ultimate object of existence, loving God and others.

When theology speaks of denying self it ought never to mean that the self is to be disparaged or destroyed. Paul drives for a proper self estimate in all his letters. His clear self-affirmation, in Gal. 2:20,

is one of the most wholesome expressions of Christian psychology to be found anywhere. The powerful integration of the self which the passage displays is achieved and maintained by the proper relationship of the self to itself and it in turn to Christ.

His strong Christ-consciousness rested in a strong self-consciousness -- a respect for the proper self. In this short passage Paul refers to himself no less than seven times, and yet in such a way as to make Christ (three times mentioned) the absolutely central figure.

In Paul's mysticism there is no hint of a merging of the identity of Christ and himself. There is no metaphysical union, no violation of the integrity of Paul's personality. Rather it is precisely the sharpest deliniation of it. Paul is still Paul and his capacity to fellowship Christ is the greater for his being Paul.

To Paul, the Christ-life is spiritual through and through. maintained at the highest level of personality. Nothing of the rational or conscious is surrendered. There is no "ouiji-board" by-passing of Paul's consciousness but the most full utilization of his dynamic personality.

No Christian "surrender" weakens the uniqueness and vitality of self-interest and personality. It is only the strong self that can give itself to Christ at all. The basis of spiritual living is the whole self in wholesome integration with all the uniqueness of personality intact, positive strong, but under the domination of an all-controlling love for Christ - a cleansed self.

Too many people have never allowed the Holy Spirit to bring them face to face with their real selves -- they never come to clear personal identification. They try to be someone else, follow some external code, mouth someone else's words, retreat behind the comfortable cover of

convention. They give a fuzzy self to God, have a fuzzy testimony and do a fuzzy service for God, dull, monotonous, uninspired, intolerant because of the fear resident in their uncertainty, unattractive, a non-entity. This is not Christian, and not in keeping with holiness theology. God cannot use a defective personality, psychologically speaking. Holiness is wholeness and health, and everything God requires of the person from the first stirrings of conviction to the last act of life is in the interest of that wholeness.

When one becomes a Christian, or is born again, the ultimate in self awareness and self-consciousness and personal identity is reached. God forgives the sin that has robbed the self of respect and security. The fear of God has changed to a sense of mutual love. In this experience every debilitating drag to self identity is removed. But the moment of release is an infinitely pleasant moment. We would like to preserve it, glory in it, live in it, retreat to it. But this is not spiritual health any more than arrested development is mental health. Personality is not static but dynamic. It cannot thrive in perpetual babyhood. It must commit itself.

The new born person finds himself in a world of deepest responsibility. The inward look is no longer adequate. There must be the usually painful wrenching of self-interest from the self center to the two foci perspective of love to God and others, also. Under the dominion of sin, the self lacks that element of true dignity which the child of God now enjoys. For the first time the person emerges as a true person and begins to function as a person. Self interest which is not of itself sin but which has functioned out of perspective and, because it has shut God out has been sinful, must now of its own free choice transfer



its authority to God and the object of its interest to others. Without relinquishing self-identity it must identify itself with God and begin to live responsibly with others.

There is a tendency in all theological traditions to isolate the first step from the second and to think only in terms of being right with God - or self interest. In the interest of counteracting the Catholic abuse of theology of works, the other extreme to which Reformation theology went emphasizes grace in such a way as to exclude all personal responsibility. The result of this philosophy is revealed in an undue individualism, a failure to take moral and social obligations seriously, a carelessness in all social contacts. Perhaps Paul was speaking of this when writing to the Corinthians who he reproved for being "babes in Christ" when maturity was demanded. A characteristic of babyhood is an exaggerated interest in the self and the desires and outlook of the self. To end Christian experience in self-interest is to fail to complete normal moral experience. Paul said that when he became a man he put away childish things and he said this in the context of a discussion about love, the most spiritually maturing engagement possible to rational beings and the cure for the Corinthian problem.

In Wesleyanism this same tendency to self interest in salvation often robs those who professedly "go on to perfection" of the strength of the Spirit filled life because the true nature of love has been missed. There remains a controlling interest in the self that can never permit soul health and Christian victory. There is an exaggerated engagement in introspection, a "feeling of the pulse", a "sore conscience" rather than a tender one, an over stress on emotional states and being "blessed". The self has never emerged out of its infantile state into



wholesome maturity and moral strength and responsibility. There is no fear in love.

When we say that the so-called works of grace represent, not God's arbitrary limitation of what He is willing to do at any time, but man's psychological ability to appropriate the riches of God's grace, it is this two fold aspect of personality that we have in mind. Men receive grace from God but because men are persons, spiritual beings, they instantly step into a new world of responsibility in relation to God. The self begins to function in a new environment and as a self it must behave in keeping with its own nature as a responsible person or forfeit its spiritual existence.

These two things, freedom and responsibility, are in some ways separate things but in a very true sense, two sides to the same thing. When a person is "saved" he is wholly saved. God, by his grace (not "by grace" apart from the person of God), saves the whole man from all sin. As a personal act and as a Person acting and as a person reacting to God's personal action, salvation is complete and extends to the whole of the person's being. But a saved person is a responsible person and the new birth instantly involves him in a concomitant life of responsibility commensurate with his spiritual life and liberty. Now, psychologically, there are two kinds of human response in this single unit of experience in which God saves a person. There is the coming into fellowship. There is a whole hearted yielding and declaration of trust and love and there is the whole lifetime of moral decisions regarding that new life. It is a commitment that is more than a formal signed contract. It is rather a "reserve" status which takes priority over every personal wish. One is always "on duty".

It is our thought that this life of responsibility involving a living obedience in specific instances of choice is an explanation of what the Wesleyan means by a second crisis. In no sense is one "work of grace" limited for the purpose of reserving a place for another "work of grace". God does not partially save and then fully save. Men do not respond with part of the personality and then later with the rest of it. Sin is not partially destroyed at one time and fully destroyed at another nor is a second work of grace for the purpose of correcting the defects of the first. At least there is no Biblical warrent for this kind of explanation. The "second crisis" is different in kind - not different in degree from the first. The two represents two essential movements of the person as a person. They have respect for the double psychological aspect of selfhood in its freedom and responsibility.

Three strands of the analyzed elements of the subject under discussion come together at this point, and answer the question as to the relation of sanctification to human nature, life as dynamic, justification as the beginning of new spiritual life and sanctification as the ordering of life about a proper center. But what specifically, is the process of sanctification within the personality?

Justification (and the new birth) is a "loaded" gift. Life is a loaded gift. In the spiritual realm as in the physical, the gift must be unpacked and put to use. In both cases immaturity must give way to maturity, scattered interests to one controlling Passion, petulance to Purpose. Discipline is needed to help a child brimming with life, pulling apart at the seams, to direct himself into a proper channel. A child must be under "tutors" and the learning comes hard. Maturity, man-

hood is reached, in a real measure, the day that the child, of himself, deep within his own being, uncoerced, commits himself to a worthy goal and realizes something of the cost of that dedication. The commitment is personal, voluntary. No one may share in it. Most legitimate desires must be forfeited in order to gain the cherished goal. In this formative decision the child becomes a man, the "servant" becomes the son. The analogy carries into the religious life almost unchanged.

It is hardly necessary, now, to add much more to the meaning of entire in relation to sanctification. "Entire" refers to the total moral integration of personality. It refers to the aspect, also, of total commitment to Christ. It must say something important about the mature, deliberate, personal decision of a thoughtful deeply challenged person. Entire does not mean that all the process of character building and spiritual stabilizing is completed. The definition of personality as dynamic precludes that. It does mean that the whole man has united about Christ. It refers to a crisis moment when this full measure of commitment is realized. It refers to a life of continued commitment. "Entire" is the whole man in spiritual decision.

Entire Sanctification draws together the two major cords into one strong twist of rope.

(1) God requires men to love Him wholly. Sanctification is the moral atmosphere of that love. It has two movements, a total renunciation of the self-centered life and a total commitment to God. Everything sanctification requires is in keeping with wholesome personality. (2) God accepts this living sacrifice and fills the "heart" with the Holy Spirit. As religion this is "loving God with the whole heart, soul, mind and strength: in psychology it is an integrated personality, in theology, it is cleansing.

Both crisis and process are recognized - crisis at crucial moments, process as a continuing life both before and after the more formative moments of decision.

## Why "Second"?

Every line of investigation has lead to the point now under consideration. Holiness theology in distinction from other Christian approaches to Biblical teaching asserts, (1) that sanctification is to be experienced in this life, and (2) that it is an experience distinct from and logically subsequent to regeneration, and (3) that it is instantaneously come into, and (4) it is properly called "second". How are these assertions explained?

The analysis of the word moral, a word which structures holiness, shows that (1) it relates to this life and must do so, that (2) moral life proceeds on the basis of crisis/decision points, that (3) moral experience is not static but is as vital and dynamic as life itself and that (4) moral responsibility is respected and assumed by all steps in redemption.

The Holy Spirit's ministry is made possible by and works in the interest of moral integrity with all that is implied by the moral awareness of persons. Faith is a moral experience and relates grace to life. Biblical truth is couched in the language of moral experience and its appeal is to the conscience in terms of moral responsibility. Cleansing is basically moral integrity with God as the true and integrating center of personality. It is a single-hearted, unalloyed love for God. Sin is the absence of this integrity because of a morally destructive center of attempted integration. It is antagonism toward God and love of self. Perfection is akin to cleansing except that it emphasizes the development of potential consistent with human responsibility. It is not static but growth to and in maturity. Sanctification is the whole complex of redemption procedure structured by decisive steps.

Human personality as understood in Biblical psychology and verified by personal experience, is moral to the core, It is a unit, not an unresolved dualism of flesh and spirit and acts as a single unit. Grace does not destroy that unity but strengthens it, not as a self-sufficient entity but as a true moral integration which includes God primarily and other persons necessarily. But personality grows, relegates, comes into new perspectives, expands, matures, discards and deepens. In all of this grace is accommodated. Life needs discipline, immaturity needs to come into adulthood, childishness must change to responsibility, ignorance must be corrected and smallness stretched into a great heart, narrowness cannot remain that way but must give place to vision without compromise. Spiritual and cultural provincialism needs the enlarging and molding effect of a great love and self interest must expand into a concern for others without losing its own integrity.

Biblical exegesis emphasizes the moral demands of God on man. The sinner is to repent and believe and the believer is to obey, and cleanse himself and take up his cross, and walk in the spirit, and put off the old man and put on the new man, increase in love and perfect holiness and present himself to God a living sacrifice and not to think more highly of himself than he ought and pray without ceasing and be transformed by the mind's renewing and be renewed in the spirit of his mind and quit lying and a host of other things too numerous to complete here.

Christian experience gives ample evidence of an experience after conversion that, by whatever name it is called - or by no name, has opened the door to a new realm of spiritual vitality. Inadequacy occasioned by a morbid self interest and "proneness to wander" has given way to a fresh and vital life because of the conscious presence of the Holy Spirit.

Waning spiritual tone has recovered and become a vibrant, undying and passionate zeal. Duty has turned to the dynamic of love, moral inability to a victory for which no personal will-power could account, and vacillation to holy steadfastness. Dragging feet acquire winged heels and lack-luster eyes shine. No theological tradition is lacking in these testimonies. It is a universally recognized phenomenon. Rather than increasing spiritual pride it is its antithesis and a Christ-like spirit and tenderness and strength prevail. Drab ministries begin to sparkle and an awakening of spiritual interests often result.

When asked to account for the change the person will almost invariably recall a period of mounting spiritual tension because of failure in the things in life that matter most and often in relation to ones Christian service. He remembers a consciousness of an inner resistance to the will of God and a moment of deepest personal obedience involving a painful blow to pride and independence and a new and inexhaustably deep abandonment to God. Sometimes it is a call to the ministry, sometimes a clarification of the responsibilities of life which are seen to be a ministry, sometimes it is a deliberate choice of the less spectacular of two alternative ways of life. Always it strengthens and confirms faith in God by a practical demonstration. Ideals are translated into action of a specific sort under the impulse and compelling inexistence of the Holy Spirit.

The result is not always great success, but is usually an end of inner conflict resulting in the strength of a unified purpose. It is a "clean heart" without the contrary drives that spoil service. It is the beginning of an unspeakable love for God and people that lifts life to a new level. It brings stability, vision, purpose, drive, humility,

and a devotion to Christ never before known.

All of these lines converge on one point and present a problem. How can all of this be rationalized without distorting the vitality of it into a rigid formalism or without losing it by an inadequate guarding of its basic truths. Four elements at least must be preserved. (1) The moral relationship, (2) the crisis which is implicit in moral, (3) the distinction between the pre and post kinds of spiritual experience which is the content of testimony and (4) the infinite capacity for change in the human psyche -- its fallibility, imperfection and weakness which must always remain less than philosophical perfection.

Protestantism has offered two major solutions, extremes and antithetical. One has neglected the moral foundation of redemption and has tended to legalize grace. All improvement possible in the moral aspect of the "human predicament" is a gradual displacing of latent evil by good. One grows into sanctification and Protestantism is embarrassed by the logical problem of when sanctification can be complete since death ends all change. The other extreme emphasizes the crisis element of the moral life almost to the exclusion of the fallibility of the human psyche. Both of these are types of perfectionism. The first makes God's grace unconditionally effective in procuring salvation. The other puts perfection in the human person, in that capacity for sin is ended or at least nearly so. Neither one is wholly realistic but tend to over simplify a most complex and deep seated problem and solution.

The holiness groups attempt a compromise between an over emphasis on either crisis or process without losing the truth in either. In this mediating position the terms, "2nd<sup>and</sup> crisis," have not always been satisfactorily explained and related to the process element. Such an explanation will now be attempted.



In the writer's opinion the major cause for problem in this area is that the moral and psychological aspects of holiness have not been distinguished and consequently families of terms appropriate only to one or the other have been used uncritically and confusedly.

The fundamental distinction between moral and all other elements must be made. Moral is not a time-space concept. Terms suitable for use in time-space measurement are inadequate for moral truth. Moral is not a linear dimension nor does it have the sort of character that can be described by any rule of measure. There is no past or future in "moral" or mathematical sequence or series so far as its essence is concerned. It transcends space and time just as "person" transcends them. It is quality and not quantity. If persons were bound absolutely to the time-space matrix they could not even speak of moral, let alone understand it. It is a dimension which some have called "depth" for want of a better term.

Now, this does not mean that moral has no relation to the time-space continuum or that its nature cannot be known by persons who are conscious of time and think rationally in seriatum patterns. The relevancy of moral consists precisely in its affinity for persons and all the relationships of persons. It gives meaning to life through persons. It does mean, however, that measurements apropo "things", are not adequate to measure moral values. Holiness cannot be weighed or counted. In this sense the mathematics of the doctrine of holiness, namely, first and second, causes confusion when not guarded in meaning. Since we think (more or less) logically it is necessary to structure events by before, now and then. We enter into moral experience "now". There was a "before" in regard to it and a future ahead of it. But the counting

is in relation to us. It does not describe the content of the moral truth.

Obedience to law, as such, is linear or temporal, seriatum, mathematical. "I have done that, and that. Now I am doing this and will do the other when the time comes." The rich, young ruler said as much, "All these [decatalogue] I have observed from my youth up. What lack I yet?" Religious life was for him still in the realm where time-space measurement could account it. It had never entered the moral dimension where quality transformed quantity into spiritual values. The basic questions raised by the holiness affirmation of first and second lie in a false understanding of the use of these terms. If second stands only in temporal relation to first and the seriatum relationship unduly emphasized the moral truth is lost.

Moral truth is always relevant. No moral truth is to be accepted now and discarded or replaced by a higher truth later so that one steps from less permanent to more permanent elements and hence into ultimate perfection after a while. This has deep kinship with the early Gnostic stratification of believers into somatic, soulish and spiritual levels. A spiritual aristocracy very easily develops in this view and can issue in a gradual independence of the means of grace and even of Scripture in the life of the Christian. Some look for so-called "higher truths" beyond the Bible and find emancipation from the common herd in emotional states - mysticism, or beyond all the confines of the physical - pseudo mental sciences masquerading as religion.

All the demands of moral life are always true everywhere. Even the first feeble steps in the moral realm are permanent matters and must be well taken because they must bear all the weight of whatever else is

added. No past moments can be discarded for subsequent ones. No first steps are ever outdated. This means that all the Bible is always relevant to all people. We do not live through one element and peel it off as finally having no more application for us in favor of another and higher (or deeper) truth.

Significantly, the Bible never mechanizes truth. We are not able to stratify religious experience by mathematical designations from the text. No first work of grace is retired in favor of a second. Neither first nor second is ever mentioned. This does not mean that the appropriation of the benefits of atonement has no psychological structuring but it does prevent us from missing the central moral issue which could be lost in an undue emphasis on form. This is precisely the difference between letter and spirit a distinction which does not discard the first from the second but puts them in moral relation.

In other words, Romans 7 is not superceded by Romans 8, nor does sanctification supercede justification, or is repentance relegated by faith or faith outdated by the witness of the Spirit. John 3:16 is not exclusively for sinners and a primary department picture book to be discarded by the mature sanctified Christian. The structure of the moral life requires Heb. 2:3, "How shall we escape . . .?" and Gal. 6:7-8, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked . . ." as well as, Rom. 12:1, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice . . ." and Rom. 12:17, "Recompense to no man evil for evil."

This does not mean that the "concurrent theory" of Romans 7 and 8 as interpreted by some is true. It is a theory that supposes that the conflict in 7 and the peace in 8 is always true to all Christians at the same time and in the same way, that the warfare between human flesh

and God's spirit is normal for Christians. Sin, according to this view is substance and therefore must always offer a protest to the ministry of the Spirit and the fact of conflict is a sign of Christian status. But what does seem to be true is that self-righteousness is always condemnable wherever it is found, no matter how many "experiences" one may have gone through, and that righteousness is always by a vital faith in Christ and walking in the Spirit.

The static and passive and complacent attitude does not seem to square with Biblical teaching. One does not come up out of Romans 7 and <sup>17/6</sup> 8 so that the door can be closed and the matter forgotten except as one continues to walk in the Spirit in the newness of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The truth of Romans 7 reaches into Romans 8 and serves to warn against lethargy and carelessness and in this warning structures negatively moral experience. Sanctified people have not outgrown the need for the penetrating spiritual truth of Romans 7.

What does all this have to do with holiness theology and its two works of grace? Basically, it means that true moral experience is not exhausted by or completed by the requirements of the grace of justification. It is not simply a mathematical addition that is needed but the rounding out of what constitutes moral life. Repentance is to be a settled life attitude toward sin, not a momentary emotional upheaval. In repentance we take God's point of view on sin -- our sin. This isn't just past sin, but sin always, everywhere. Hatred of sin is a permanent element of our lives. We do not graduate from this. The whole weight of moral life rests on this. When and if this relaxes the whole personal moral structure collapses from within. No work of grace subsequent in time can have meaning apart from the integrity of repentance.

Faith is also a permanent life attitude. Repentance is negative, faith is positive. Faith is a new direction of love and is as stable as the repentance that guards against a wrong center of affection. These two elements of moral life are not simply the first steps in a series. They are foundation stones which support everything one builds into life. In fact this repentance-faith complex is the atmosphere in which all other elements of grace are unfolded. These are the elements essential to moral integrity, always, everywhere in time and possibly in eternity. To call their inception a first work of grace is a concession to logic and must not be pressed beyond the immediate semantic need.

But repentance and faith is not all there is to moral experience. There is immediately involved responsibility as persons. The New Testament never permits a time lapse between believing and obedience. This does not mean that in the absence of a recognition of this temporal sequence that the two movements of moral experience are confused or thought to be automatically included one in the other. It is precisely this that is not the case. Justification involves the individual in responsibility. Faith is not quite faith until it is also obedience. The forensic has an existential dimension which is the personalizing of any abstract element in redemption. Sanctification is this personal dimension and it, of necessity begins in justification. In it is the moral power which is implicit in justification. Jesus did not die to justify us and then to sanctify us. When he came to "save us from our sins" and "to sanctify the people" these are not different things but two aspects of the same thing. Justification opened the door to the moral rectitude which sanctification means. Forgiveness is actually incidental to the real purpose of redemption - "sanctification of the church."

Sanctification then is begun in repentance and believing but is given moral meaning and is brought into moral experience by the moral commitment of the justified person. All the potential of sanctification lies in justification.

Now, the term Entire Sanctification can have proper moral meaning in this context provided it is understood. The question "what is it that is entire?" must be carefully answered. It is not Sanctification that is entire if by that is meant that sanctification is fully realized and completed. To speak in this manner is to miss the point of what sanctification is. If sanctification is basically purity of heart and purity of heart is single-hearted love for God or an undivided heart we speak of a dynamic relationship not a static, impersonal state. The substance of the soul is neither capable of holiness or unholiness, but the person is holy or otherwise in respect of his moral relationship to God. If he loves God with his whole being he is holy, if he does not he is unholy. This love with the whole heart is not quantity or perfect expression, but quality or wholeness.

Entire when related to sanctification is only once mentioned in the Bible (I Thess. 5:23). This passage does not suggest a termination of the potential in sanctification but does say that the entire person needs to be drawn into the orbit of this kind of moral response to God. Paul clearly says in I Thess. 5, that no physical uncleanness is consistent with holiness, that one cannot be holy, or devoted to God in single-hearted love so long as he has failed to bring his whole person into the holy moral union of himself and God. This is just another way of saying that holiness is for this life with all of its relationships and that he who refuses to bring himself wholly into the orb of grace

despises and rejects the Holy Spirit who cannot tolerate duplicity.

In a very real sense this marshalling of the whole man into the realm of grace is a thoroughly moral act. It is deliberate, voluntary, decisive, often difficult. No responsible Christian is satisfied until it is done. He may need guidance as to how to do it. It cannot be truly said to be a higher truth than the conversion experience simply a more inclusive one -- a wholly inclusive one.

In relation to the designations first and second, the truth seems to be that the significance of two experiences is not (1) a quantitative value or additon. It is not (2) a higher level which gives the lower level an inferior status. Nor is it (3) primarily a psychological measurement. The second is not a correction of the first nor a completion of a partially realized work of grace. It is most certainly not a stratification of the spiritually elite from the common crowd - a sort of "heavenly 400". It cannot be simply an emotional or psychological state which is passed through. The question, "how do you know which of the many religious experiences is 2nd?" is not idle or fe<sup>l</sup>itious. It is a morally relevant question. It requires a norm of judgment which is rational and testable. It is properly critic<sup>al</sup>. One-two are parallel and interpenetrating moral experiences in relation to a human response to God. They are not necessarily separated in time. They usually are. But they are two halves of a sphere or two elements in a substance (such as H<sub>2</sub>O). Together they constitute true moral experience which is impossible without both. Second is implicit in first and completed by it. The Bible does not know anything about a place between first and second which can be described and lived in. It only knows about the danger to the person of failing to put into life the commitments which faith made



to grace. Privilege and responsibility are two sides of the same coin. Justification and sanctification are parallel truths - one formal, the other personal.

That there is a time lapse between the two elements simply testifies to the moral weakness of mankind. That moral experience is a this-world possibility is everywhere assumed in Scripture. It may be and must be integrated in this life. It is this moral integration that is holiness or perfection in love. It is quality not quantity and the whole of life's unfolding must be prayerfully and patiently and painfully and humbly and deliberately worked out in this moral atmosphere.

It must be recalled that moral integrity is not self-realization but the self integrated with God. This is a restoration of the sanctifying fellowship of the Holy Spirit. No one sanctifies himself but is sanctified by the Holy Spirit who in this moral atmosphere is enabled to lead men into the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God which growth in grace implies.

The emphasis on the second crisis experience, then, is not on the temporal succession implied by one and two. It is not on the limitation of life's religious experiences to two. It is not on crisis as a terminal point. It is not on experience as an emotional or psychological state. It does not leave the answer to the question as to whether one has had one or two crises experiences to irrational or non-moral tests. There must always be an objective and practical test of the validity of experience. This test is inherent in moral experience itself.

What is crisis? It is the turning point, or beginning. It does not have content, but only moral quality. Moral life proceeds on the basis of crisis-decision points.



What is "entire"? It is the entire man in moral decision. Sanctification is not subject to the descriptive term, entire, but the man must enter entirely into sanctification.

What is the "second experience"? It is the completion of moral experience - privilege met by responsible commitment to Christ. It is not something that terminates anything but makes continuing possible. It is not the goal, the ceiling. but the beginning of life. The emphasis on "second" is not on an arbitrary number, but means that nothing less than what it prepresents is acceptable in a moral context.

What is freedom from sin? It is moral union with God. It is the fellowship which cancels out the essence of sin which is alienation from God. It is not "something" but a moment-by-moment trusting in the merits of Christ met by a walk of faith.

What is perfection? It is loving God with the whole heart regardless of the relative ability or capacity of the person at any one time. Perfection has a dynamic element when related thus to love. It must continue and grow or it is lost. Its very nature is growth.

Is Christian perfection a state? Not in any Calvinistic sense. It is a personal relationship which must be nourished and deepened. This leads into the final question.

What is process? It is a life of love to God. It must presuppose all that has been said to this point. Sanctification is the life of holiness beginning in the new birth and never ending. Within it are the crucial crisis moments which moral experience demands. Holiness is not static. It is not a goal but a highway. It is not the end of problems but the beginning of them. It is not the termination of probation but the atmosphere in which probation has meaning.

Dr. Ralph Earle, in a guest editorial in the Aug. 6, 1958

Herald of Holiness says,

Too many who have "crossed over Jordan" and enjoyed a rapid conquest of Jericho - their previous "besetting sin" - have failed to follow through in the occupation of Canaan. The first flush of victory has given way to defeat.

The fault lies partly in the way holiness is too often presented. The impression is given that if one consecrates himself completely to Christ all his problems are settled forever. People are prone to treat entire sanctification as a goal, rather than as a very significant milestone on one's way to heaven (*italics mine*).

.....

The truth is that holiness must be a life-long quest as well as a present possession . . . If we would pursue holiness of heart and life as persistently and perseveringly as a hound dog pursues a fox, we would never lose out [referring to Heb. 12:14] . . . The use of the present tense in Heb. 6:1 suggests that there is to be a constant and increasing sanctifying of our lives which should go on until death.

This process of sanctification was taught by Wesley.

Our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but . . . like that of a branch which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but severed from it, is dried up and withered (Wesley, Works, Vol. XI, p. 380).

Wesley said again that it is only by the power of Christ resting every moment upon us that "we are enabled to continue in Spiritual life, and without which, notwithstanding all our present holiness, we should be devils the next moment" (Wesley's Standard Sermons, edited by Sugden, Vol. II, p. 393).

To Mrs. Pawson, Wesley wrote from London, Nov. 16, 1789 regarding Christian perfection:

You do well strongly to insist that those who do already enjoy it cannot possibly stand still. Unless they continue to watch and pray and aspire after higher degrees

of holiness [*italics mine*]. I cannot conceive not only how they can go forward but how they can keep what they have already received (Letters, VIII, p. 184).

We have already quoted Thomas Cook to this effect. We do not teach a state of purity, he said, but a maintained condition of purity - a moment-by-moment salvation. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, all the time by cleansing us every Now."

If holiness is whole-hearted love to God, it must be morally structured and as dynamic as life and as relevant to our changing personalities as the constantly renewed blood in our physical blood stream. Holiness is wholesome life in God.

## THE PREACHING OF HOLINESS

How often ought one to "preach holiness"? is a frequent question among ministers. There are two sorts of extreme responses, both of which arise out of a misunderstanding of what holiness preaching is. One says, "Don't over do it. Preach it once a month, or once a quarter or once a year." The other says, "Preach it everytime you go into the pulpit." And those who listen to him are apt to say, "We are tired of holiness. We wish our preacher would give us some food. We are 'emotionalized' into immobility."

In both cases the problem lies in the fact that holiness is interpreted too narrowly. It may mean a dry doctrinal sermon in which the bare theological bones are counted and properly located. Or it may mean a constant exhortation to a certain "experience" with no future beyond it. But mainly the difficulty is a limitation of the meaning of holiness to a second experience.

It is the conclusion of this study drawn from every specific element in it that there is a danger of stressing methodology until the moral and personal and life relevance is almost totally obscured. Considered Biblically, when this is the case the preaching, however correct it may be in stressing the crisis points, is no longer holiness preaching. Every Biblical exhortation was to a specific moral decision reaching into the farthest areas of life.

We may conclude, then, that Biblical preaching, will major on the content of the word holiness, pressing its demands upon the heart and life. It is basically Christ-centered. Every facet of the use of the word is bound up inextricably with Christ and His demands on us. And this is in total keeping with the Biblical idea of holiness as centered in God.

To major in preaching on any other emphasis or to overstress any one element over another within the total Gospel approach is to run the risk of "running out of sky." Only this spiritual, dynamic approach is capable of extended life and infinite increase. Only the moral demands of the gospel, as given us in the New Testament, can provide an adequate preaching substance which never grows old. Under it people come into salvation and mature in it and retain a perennial interest that does not die with human old age. Any other approach to holiness ends in a "dead-end street". The possibilities are soon exhausted and formalism is the inevitable consequence for lack of relevance.

Moralism has been tried and found wanting. Hebrew moralism is the classic example. It is easier to "keep law" than to be right but keeping the law without being right ends in the self-righteousness which is both repulsive to the on-looker and spiritually disappointing to the law-keeper. When the dynamic of holiness theology wanes its ideals tend to be translated into a moralism which isolates people from the life in which they need most to be immersed. Moralism ends in spiritual bankruptcy.

Intellectualism or rationalism has "too low a ceiling". Greek philosophy is the classic example. Its passion is to capture and preserve in logical formularies and precise expressions every detail of the Christian faith. The genius of Greek thinking gave the Christian church its ecumenical Christological creeds. But when it failed to keep practical concerns in its scope of thinking it ran into the dead-end of fruitless controversy in which the Eastern Church became entombed. It is possible to talk holiness theology into a grave. To know its content requires a corresponding obligation to do its truth. When this fails the doctrine becomes a head-stone to the grave of those who have betrayed it.

"Works" is a dead-end street. Catholicism is its classic example. Perfection that is earned by self-denial and acts of penance and good deeds is not Christian perfection. It is superficial and spiritually barren. The whole thing ends in a legalistic system of meritorious ritual that can and has issued in moral bankruptcy. The spiritual ceiling is too low.

Psychological patterning also has a low ceiling. "Experience", if it be not guarded becomes either a dismal source of truth = liberalism, or an irrational test of truth = emotionalism. Experience, or the life relevance of salvation truth, divorced from objective norms of truth, ends in a dangerous confusion about emotional states. Any preoccupation with psychological states must end in false tests of the true and a virtual denial of moral life. In the interest of a wholesome presentation of the message of holiness it must be said that there is a danger of so emphasizing the psychological aspect of experience that the moral relevance is almost obscured.

None of these approaches can maintain the spiritual dynamic of the New Testament gospel message. All of them begin in a truth but reach the climax of their truth and must be maintained in some unspiritual way to survive. The ceiling is too low. There is no "future". They run out of sky. Only the spiritual and moral approach characteristic of the New Testament message continues to throb with life century after century and - more miraculously - throughout the expanding life of a person. The true holiness message does not exhaust itself in issues which are discarded by a growing psyche. Maturity cannot outdate it. Properly preached, "holiness" has no ceiling. It is as big as the future and more challenging than the deepest capacity of any human person can possibly fully explore.

Holiness preaching grapples with moral issues and includes the secondary matters, such as methodology, only insofar as these help to relate the moral imperative to human experience. But even here, great care needs to be exercised. It is not the task of a preacher to convict another for sin, particularly the ultimate sin which lies as deep in the human heart as that which only the Holy Spirit can uncover. Wesley had a good word for us here. To the question, "In what manner should we preach sanctification?" he answered (in Plain Account),



Scarse at all to those who are not pressing forward;  
and to those who are, always by way of promise; always  
drawing rather than driving (*italics mine*).

It is not the task of the preacher, moreover, to tell anyone where and when this inner cleansing is to take place. In the zeal for "results", there has grown up a patterned methodology which is pressed with so much urgency as to dangerously threaten the real issues, namely, "If you come to the altar, today, you will go home 'sanctified'." A spirit of haste dissapates the spirit of depth. The Preacher's Magazine carried an article in the June 1958 issue in which Dwayne Hildie spoke to this important point.

This invitation was further implemented by an enthusiastic corps of altar workers who followed pretty much a set pattern which would include proper instruction, encouragement, singing -- nearly always ending in an exhortation to 'take it by faith.' But if we project human methods on the seeker to the extent that he really does not pray through, we send him home with an empty heart and with no real work done. We can only estimate his reaction and disappointment when, within fourty-eight hours probably, he can discern not one bit of difference in his life (p. 14).

The moral commitment is so deep and so personal and so intimate that no human being can accompany another into the depth of that act. No humanly structured hurry can do more than hinder the solid, painstaking way of the Holy Spirit with a human heart. It takes time for the "I" to divest itself of its self-righteous garments or, to change the figure, to push past the impersonal things with which it identifies itself into a naked self-awareness capable of the kind of commitment to Christ that will change the whole atmosphere of the self.

Preaching holiness is preaching Christ and preaching Christ is pressing upon the heart that kind of truth which Jesus pressed. If there is one word to describe it, it would be the challenge to straight thinking. It has been argued that it was the manner of Jesus' preaching that gave offence. He claimed to be the authority and that was not palatable to the ecclesiastical mind. But, as John Baker said in The Expository Times (March 1956), it was rather

His deliberate policy of driving men back to the point of self-examination, beyond their conventional attitudes, beyond their prejudices and their proneness to deceive themselves and to make excuses for their behaviour (p. 179).

Baker makes a strong and acceptable point of this matter. Christ was constantly doing and saying things that would force a reappraisal of personal motivation. "On each point Christ puts the emphasis where it was rarely put - upon the inner thought and motive preceding the action." He broke good rules (washing before eating) to attack the loose thinking of His age. He called no one to follow Him under false pretences. "He gave them no theories to swallow whole - He lived with them so they could thoroughly examine His claims."

But Christ's most telling exposures had to do with the more subtle forms of self-deceit - those which covered unholy motives with worthy ideals. Jews desired and prayed for the kingdom but Jesus showed them in parable and preaching that a pious desire apart from a clean heart and an accompanying personal commitment was hypocrisy. Christ wanted to save men and women but He could not do that until they became honest with themselves and stopped making excuses and gave up their pretences. "That was why he put such emphasis on straight thinking" (p. 181).

Preaching Christ is, also, preaching the deepest continuing moral responsibility for a life of Christian expression - not only in words - how formal they may become! but in action. Love is the atmosphere of holiness and love is the expenditure of the self. In the best sense of the word, holiness cannot happen in a moment. It begins, but as love cannot mature without expression so holiness, which is love, cannot exist apart from the life expression of it.

### The Crisis Points

There is a Biblical emphasis on decisive, crises points.

The Biblical approach to that crisis which is called in holiness theology, "the 2nd work of grace," constitutes the heart of the gospel message. No psychological methodology or theological terminology or mathematical designation obscures the stark moral meaning of crucifixion with Christ.

The passages demanding a "putting off" of sin and a "putting on" of the new man, or requiring obedience from the heart, or a presenting of the self as a living sacrifice, are not mildly advisory admonitions but the very essence of the gospel message. Forgiveness is never considered the summum bonum of the Christian life. The New Testament is largely and principally written to Christian believers and it is not comfortable reading. Biblical reading gives us the impression that great danger exists that the grace of God may be received in vain, that the Spirit may be grieved, that the sin of our first parents may be repeated in us. The urgent calls to self-purging, pursuing sanctification, perfecting holiness, yielding to God, bringing thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ and many others are not to be lightly regarded. They all carry serious consequences if not heeded.

All of these urgent exhortations drive one to the place of total moral commitment. The dangers relative to probation are great enough without the added hazard of an uncommitted heart which is itself impurity and which is always the source of enmity against God. Probation does not end with the new birth. But to maintain a committed heart is the responsibility of these under probation.

The commitment which completes moral experience and which brings moral integration is in preparation for the temptations of the enemy which can precipitate spiritual breakdown. We are told that very few German Christians maintained their integrity under the torture of the Russian prison life. However, that may be, none of us know how we may react to the sudden shock or prolonged testing which in some form awaits us in life. It is not the strong will that prevails but the heart that has met the full force of Christ's demands so that no untested moral depth remains.

The relatively low level on which many Christians meet their "Waterloo" testifies to the shallow commitment they have made. When money, or sex or love or ease or popularity or desire for power allures a Christian leader from his Christ-centered purpose and clean integrity, the depths of the heart's purpose had never been permitted to come under the scrutiny of Christ's light.

The crisis we speak of is that moment to which the Holy Spirit drives us in his relentless searching of our motives, when we meet a deeper test of fidelity to Christ than any we will meet in life. No self induced emotion on the matter will do. Only the Spirit can show us the true motivation of our hearts. Only He can prompt a right response from our chastened hearts. In this hour we are able to see the depth of ugliness in self-love and a more frightening sight we will never see. In this illumination, one is made more, not less, dependent upon the continuing mercy of God. A care and sensitivity never before known replaces any measure of self-assurance that the freedom of the Christian life may have produced.

The continuing cost of that freedom is an ever deepening commitment commensurate with the ever new expansion of personality and its capacities. When Wesley talked about a "moment by moment cleansing", he meant that this deep alignment with God's will had to be maintained, preserved intact, guarded carefully and not left to disintegrate by default.

We have an example of this testing in our Lord himself. The temptation experience was a part of the learned obedience. He met everything in that wilderness experience that he would meet in the course of his ministry. The "guy lines" were drawn tight. If there were flaws in them, they would show up. When we notice the thrust of each approach of Satan and locate it in his later ministry we can see the areas of stress and know much about the key spots in the redemptive purpose. No Christian can expect to enter the full responsibility of service who has not himself been "lead of the Spirit into the wilderness," there to be tested to the limit.

It is no wonder then that the preacher's message as he preaches Christ is more than simply the privileges of the gospel but also its deepest responsibility.



## Conclusions

### What is Basic to the Biblical Preaching of Holiness?

1. Present Christ. Press the claims of Christ, His love and sacrifice for sin, His absolute Lordship which must be made a living reality in the practical life. Press this, with all it means on everyone, sinner and saint alike. It is Christ who saves and who calls and who condemns sin and who calls to discipleship and Christian service. No Biblical preaching can by-pass Christ. It is Christ who validates and gives perspective to and sets the bounds around holiness preaching.

2. Press for a personal moral encounter with God. There is a place, out alone with God where each person must face for himself the issues of the moral and the spiritual life. In that place we cannot order the procedure or determine the rules. The final obedience is to God not to men, and all the conflicting clamor of human advice and human norms of approval must be stilled in the presence of Him with whom we have to do. Moral life must begin here and cannot begin until a high price has been set on spiritual integrity. This means that we dare not barge into that intimate encounter which we are arranging for others with our interpretation of God's requirements. We have done what is demanded of us when we have patiently cleared the way and lead the feet of needy men into the presence of God. "Judge for yourselves whether we should obey God or men."

3. Hold up the Cross. There must come a real death to self. But we must be careful that it is the right cross at the heart of our preaching and not one of our own making. There is a cross for the preacher for he must have a clean heart in order to preach a clean, selfless, winsome message. His cross will keep him criticized and tender. It is a two-edged sword cutting both ways. It is not true that holiness makes Christianity too hard but it is often true that the uncriticized holiness preacher makes it hard in the wrong places and in the wrong ways. There is a cross for the hearer but it must be the cross that Jesus presents. Let the human barriers to God be torn down in order that the sin barriers may be disclosed. It is Jesus who says, "Follow me." Let his voice be heard.

4. Press for Decision, clear, clean and sharp. The very structure of moral life demands decisiveness. It is not always easy to explain which of the many crisis decisions in life is "second", but when under the guiding and prodding of the Holy Spirit the deepest self is brought face to face with God and the responsible decision of the self is a "yes" to God and His will, not simply as a sentiment but as a life motivation and the Holy Spirit "takes over" with our deepest consent, "second" seems strangely appropriate. It is a different kind of response than the first. Each represents phases of the moral life. One is an acceptance of the responsibility of being in Christ and in grace.

5. Press for a continuing commitment. The need for decision in ever increasing and significant moral crises never ends. As personality enlarges, comes into new perspectives as character develops, as temptation strikes with subtle force, as the expanding self creates new situations demanding moral responsibility, as the whole of life is seen to need spiritualization, new tensions are created which must be met with the same watch-care with which the first was met. Spiritual and moral deterioration sets in at the first careless moment. Cleansing is maintained in the presence of the Holy Spirit only. Holiness is not something "possessed", but a relationship to be maintained by a life of love to God and man. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death," said Paul. Death in the moral realm as in the natural world is held back by that strange integrating power called life. But when life ceases disintegration begins, in the natural world and in the moral world as well. We must "walk in the Spirit" or forfeit life.

6. Exhort to Growth in Love because that is necessary to the maintainance of holiness. The dimension of love, which is the practical dimension of holiness cannot be neglected. Love is enlarged by use. That takes time and practice. It changes the whole perspective of the values of life. It mellows, beautifies, enriches the personality. Where love is lost, holiness is lost. Love is the adhesive power in human relations. It must increase or be forfeited. The test of holiness is love. It is a very practical and objective test and the test which must often be applied to holiness profession. The deepening of love is an effective check on one's own testimony. It reveals progress in holiness - or signs of its absence.

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It will be seen that nothing is lost by a Biblical presentation of holiness. The questions relating to the "second crisis" tend to dissolve in the dynamic of the moral appeal but nothing of the decisiveness and victory of "second" is lost. The questions relative to perfection fall away when the moral nature of God's continuing demands of the expanding and maturing personality is understood. When "cleansing from all sin" is seen in its relation to a total commitment to God and the abiding of the Holy Spirit, the crude, materialistic or arrogant, humanist features become less a barrier to its meaning. When love is seen to be the necessary atmosphere of a holy heart and actually its description, the harsh, legalistic, self-righteous pretensions are rejected and holiness becomes the desirable and desired will of God.

### My Controversy with Christ

The "last word" is an intensely personal word. It has actually been said in this book time and again, in many ways. But the author needs to point it up sharply again.

I have a deep rebellion - a "beef" - against the critics of the Christian religion. It is said that to be a Christian requires an

inhibition of life and vitality and creativeness. But Christian faith is not a negation of life. Rather, everything we find in the Bible suggests that God is trying to liberate us from sin and failure and false ideals and low ceilings and smallness and individualism. God wants us, in this life, to live fully, creatively. Being good is not simply not doing things, but living out the dynamic of God's purpose for men.

That is why a pure heart is so essential. Without it, Christian life is a smothering of life's impulses, and grace would be an enemy of normal personality. There is a basic urge to self-expression without which wholesome personality is impossible. An impure urge is death. God does not suppress the urge but cleanses the heart of double motives.

There is a cross in the Christian life but the cross is not an end of the self but an end of the sin that shackles the self and blocks the way to goodness. The cross is always at the beginning of life. The whole of real life lies beyond it.

Rather than Christ curbing our personal development, He requires that we put our whole personality to work. This puts a new light on our Christian faith. It is not a retreat but a moral obligation to advance.

I have a controversy with Christ. He will not let me rest. In His presence I cannot relax and rest on my "faith" in Him which dulls moral sensitivity. He will not let me settle for less than my best - not yesterday's best, but today's best. When I have done a job He confronts me with a bigger task - one too big for me. When I am selfish, He rebukes me until it smarts. When I am insensitive He has a way of prodding my conscience into activity. When I cry and pray for a little heaven in which to go to heaven in, He shows me the hell in which other people live. It isn't time for heaven, yet.

Purity is not an end in itself. Purity permits the personality to live in full expression of love to God and man. It is the power of a single-hearted devotion and must be kept intact by a daily fellowship with God.