



A Publication of The Salvation Army

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The purpose of the journal is to encourage and disseminate the thinking of Salvationists and other Christian colleagues on matters broadly related to the theology and ministry of The Salvation Army. The journal provides a means to understand topics central to the mission of The Salvation Army, integrating the Army's theology and ministry in response to Christ's command to love God and our neighbor.

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Contributions related to the mission of the journal will be encouraged, and at times there will be a general call for papers related to specific subjects. The Salvation Army is not responsible for every view which may be expressed in this journal. Manuscripts should be approximately 12–15 pages, including endnotes. Please submit the following: 1) three hard copies of the manuscript with the author's name (with rank and appointment if an officer) on the cover page only. This ensures objectivity during the evaluation process. Only manuscripts without the author's name will be evaluated. The title of the article should appear at the top of the first page of the text, and the manuscript should utilize *Word & Deed* endnote guidelines. All Bible references should be from the New International Version. If another version is used throughout the article, indicate the version in the first textual reference only. If multiple versions are used, please indicate the version each time it changes; 2) a copy on a disk or CD, using Microsoft Word format; 3) a 100-word abstract of the article to be used at the discretion of the editor (e.g., on The Salvation Army's web page or in advertisements pertaining to the journal). Please note that neither the hard copies nor the disk will be returned to the author and that all manuscripts are subject to editorial review. Once articles have been selected for inclusion, the deadlines for submitting final material for the journal are March 1 and September 1. A style sheet is available upon request.

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Word & Deed

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Editorial: Our Contribution to the Life of the Church

Jonathan S. Raymond and Roger J. Green. 1

Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Why Not?

Glen O'Brien 5

Excelling in Love

Roger J. Green 25

Holiness and Wesley's Way of Salvation

R. David Rightmire. 39

Book Reviews 55

The Word of Life: A Theology of John's Gospel, by Craig R. Koester

Reviewed by Donald E. Burke

Sacred Waiting: Waiting on God in a World that Waits for Nothing,

by David Timms

Reviewed by Judith L. Brown

Book Notes

Roger J. Green 63

Our Contribution to the Life of the Church

In September of 2009 there were two important conferences in Sydney, Australia; and we live in hope that their work will bear fruit for the Army, and thereby for the Kingdom of God. The first conference was entitled Brengle Create. This was part of the heritage of the Brengle Institutes that are held around the world and focus on the biblical doctrine of holiness. The difference was that this conference was open to laypeople as well as officers, but that was not its chief distinguishing mark. This was a Brengle for creative people, and the intention of the conference was to stimulate new ways of thinking through the biblical doctrine of holiness and expressing that doctrine in ways other than the traditional writing of books or articles.

So the creative and imaginative skills were let loose during the conference, and all kinds of expressions of holiness were attempted—through song, dance, poetry, video, and other creative avenues. Especially important to fulfill the original vision of the conference was that young Salvationists would put holiness themes into songs for today's generation. The work continues through contributions on a web site set up to continue the conversation. The web site is www.salvos.org.au/create.

A second conference was a tri-territorial theological conference, commenced in recent years. This conference brought together delegates from

throughout Australia and New Zealand, and included the more formal presentation of papers that were then open for discussion among the delegates. Readers of this journal will know that occasionally we have published the annual Frederick Coutts Memorial Lecture. This year, the lecture became part of the wider tri-territorial conference.

And so we are pleased in this issue of *Word & Deed* to use two papers from that conference. The first paper entitled "Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Why Not?" was presented by someone new to the readers of this journal, but a close friend of the Army in Australia. As someone who was not reared in the Army the writer of this paper presents an objective appraisal of the teachings of two essential teachers of holiness in Salvation Army history, Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle and General Frederick Coutts. This is both a comprehensive and compelling look at both Brengle and Coutts approached through the disciplined writing and research of a scholar.

It is appropriate in this editorial, therefore, to introduce Dr. Glen O'Brien to our readers. He is an ordained minister in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, but also teaches for the Army at Booth College in Sydney, Australia where he is the Head of Humanities, and Lecturer in History and Theology in the School for Christian Studies. In addition he is a leader in the Australasian Center for Wesleyan Research, being the secretary of that organization. That Center "promotes and supports research on the life, work and times of John and Charles Wesley, their historical and theological antecedents, their successors in the Wesleyan tradition, and contemporary scholarship in the Wesleyan tradition. This includes areas such as theology, biblical studies, history, education, ethics, literature, mission, cultural studies, philosophy, pastoral studies, worship, preaching, practical theology, and social theology." We are pleased that both Booth College and The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory Training College are two of several Wesleyan theological institutions that form a working partnership with the Australasian Center for Wesleyan Research. For those interested in further information about this Center please see the web site at ACWR.edu.au.

The second article, "Excelling in Love" was the Frederick Coutts Memorial Lecture at that same conference. The article calls the readers' attention to the central command of our Lord to love God and love our

neighbor as ourselves. This is a commandment not only for the individual believer, but also for the community of believers. We confess that we have not shaped ourselves as an intentional community of believers in the way envisioned by our Methodist founders. They were reared in the Methodist class meeting where people met weekly to examine their lives against the demands of the gospel. Those class meetings proved to be the foundation of the Methodist movement. This paper is a challenge to rethink how essential those class meetings are as an integral part of our common life.

The third article was not given at the conference, but is a second in a series by our friend, David Rightmire, Professor of Religion at Asbury University. We remain in his debt for his past contributions to this journal, and he is one of many Salvationist witnesses to the renewal of Wesleyan scholarship so foundation to the doctrine of full salvation and the life of vital piety that we preach and proclaim. His article in this issue is entitled "Holiness and Wesley's Way of Salvation." Dr. Rightmire helps us to understand that we need not see holiness "in isolation from the overall redemptive purposes of God." Perhaps we too often view holiness as an addendum to the heart of theology, and this article reminds us that this is not so.

Our readers should not miss the importance of what is happening in the broader scholarly and pastoral world with the formation of the ACWR and the continuation of this journal, to name but two venues for the study of the Wesleyan/holiness tradition of which the Army is a part. Throughout the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth century Christian scholarship was dominated by our friends in the Reformed tradition, and their contribution to Christian thinking through books, articles, the formation of journals, and the founding of publishing companies has been both inestimable and invaluable in the advancement of the gospel. However, we in the Wesleyan tradition did not match that output, and as a result our ministry and our mission at times lacked the solid biblical, historical and theological support so necessary to the proclamation of the good news of Kingdom of God. We were not being faithful to our forbearers such as John and Charles Wesley and William and Catherine Booth and others whose productivity not only in preaching but also in writing was immense.

Yet, throughout the world we are witnessing a renewed interest in

Wesleyan theology and in the biblical roots that support such theology. As the editors of this journal we are delighted to be a small part of that renewal movement, and rejoice in the Army's partnership in Australia with the Australasian Center for Wesleyan Research. Other movements in which the Army participates also bear witness to this renewal, such as the formation of the Wesleyan Holiness Study Project, which is now known as the Wesleyan Holiness Consortium; and our continuing conversation with the Methodist World Council.

'This issue of *Word & Deed* is a reminder that a significant work of God's grace is being done in our midst, and we are a part of that work. But this is a work not unto ourselves, but for the greater glory of God and the life of the Church. In that we rejoice. RJG, JSR

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Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Why Not?

Glen O'Brien

*A paper given at the Salvation Army's Territorial Theological Forum
Stanmore, NSW, 26 September 2009*

Introduction

Sharing Catherine Booth's confidence in homeopathic and hydropathic remedies, Shepherd Drake Pennick, veteran sergeant at the Clapton Congress Hall and formerly a London police officer, served as duty officer at the local hydro facility. One day, around 1919, he ordered the young cadet Fred Coutts out of a scalding hot bath to stand against the wall and receive a prolonged hosing down with a strong jet of ice cold water. "In theory I was prepared for this," Coutts remembered, "but not for the accompanying theological parallel which the sergeant drew between this outward cleansing of the body and the inner sanctification of the spirit."¹ I trust that as I discuss today the doctrine of sanctification held by two much loved and revered Salvationists I will receive no hosing down, though it is possible that I may end up in some hot water.

Jonathan Raymond has said that modern-day Salvationists fall into three camps. "First – the Brengle camp of holiness as crisis and second work of grace; second – the Coutts camp of holiness as growth in grace; and third – the largest

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camp of apathy where holiness is not an issue at all.”² Alongside these twin themes of crisis and process, one must also set the twin themes of pneumatology and Christology, for in Brengle and Coutts and in the wider holiness movement, entire sanctification has been understood both as a “baptism of the Holy Spirit” and as “crucifixion with Christ,” as an enduement of power from on high and as a dying to sin and self with a subsequent rising to a Christlike life. In each case the result is understood to be the same, though the metaphor may differ – a heart purified from all sin and filled with love for God and neighbor. It would be a tragedy indeed if confusion over differences of emphasis should lead to a loss of any distinctive holiness message being proclaimed. This is, I fear, what we have come to, not only in The Salvation Army, but in other Wesleyan-Holiness churches such as the Church of the Nazarene, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

In this paper I would like to set the discussion of the different emphases of Brengle and Coutts against the backdrop of the much broader and long standing discussion of which it is a part. I would also like to set out a possible way forward so that these two important and influential holiness teachers might no longer be seen as at odds with one another but as offering complementary views that when taken together in a conjunctive fashion bring a balance to Wesleyan-Holiness teaching. It is well known that Wesleyan theology takes a conjunctive approach. It does not favour the polarity of Lutheran theology whereby opposites are allowed to stand over against each other in irreconcilable paradox. Rather it seeks to hold apparent opposites in creative and fruitful tension – faith alone *and* holy living, law *and* gospel, grace as favor *and* as empowerment, sovereign divine initiative *and* free human response, and (the conjunction most relevant to the focus of this paper), instantaneous *and* progressive sanctification.³ A focus on the instantaneous nature of both justifying and sanctifying grace stresses the divine initiative. For in each case God must break in and do what we cannot do in our weak and fallen condition. On the other hand, the progressive nature of the process leading toward and beyond justification, as well as the progress toward and beyond experiences of sanctifying grace, stress human co-operation. God respects human freedom and identity. He has chosen not to work with disregard for human choosing and willing. Free grace (the divine initiative) and co-operant grace (the human response) form a crucial part of the axial theme of Wesley’s

practical theology.⁴ A truly Wesleyan approach will therefore be conjunctive rather than polarized toward either one or other of these two emphases.

All theology is to some extent autobiographical as we first begin with the direct experience of God's grace and only then do we reflect on that experience and are enabled to undertake the task of dogmatic confession. I turn now, therefore, to a brief biographical sketch of these two important holiness teachers.

I. Samuel Logan Brengle (1860-1936): “[Inter]National Spiritual Special”

Samuel Logan Brengle was born in Fredericksburg, Indiana, in 1860. His father died fighting in the Union Army after having been wounded at the siege of Vicksburg. His mother remarried and he was raised in a church-going home. After his mother died he enrolled at the age of 17 at DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana where he excelled in his studies.⁵ After experiencing conversion he sensed a call to the Methodist ministry and studied at Boston University's Theological Seminary where he was tutored under Daniel Steele and became part of his Octagon Club of serious young seekers after holiness. It was during this season that he wrote his oft-quoted words of testimony.

I saw the humility of Jesus and my pride; the meekness of Jesus and my temper; the lowliness of Jesus and my ambition; the purity of Jesus and my unclean heart; the faithfulness of Jesus and the deceitfulness of my heart; the unselfishness of Jesus and my selfishness; the trust and faith of Jesus and my doubts and unbelief; the holiness of Jesus and my unholiness. I got my eyes off everybody but Jesus and myself, and I came to loathe myself.⁶

It was also in Boston that Brengle first heard William Booth speak and began to admire the Salvation Army, recognizing its holiness teaching as essentially the same as he was imbibing from Daniel Steele. Brengle recalled his experience of entire sanctification in a letter to his son George on 9 January 1923, “It was thirty-eight years ago this morning at about nine o'clock that God sanctified my soul [as] I was sitting at my study-table in Boston ... Out of that experience and from that moment has flowed my worldwide ministry, my teachings, testimonies, arti-

cles and books."⁷

Sam, as he was known by those closest to him, became an officer after turning down an opportunity to serve as the pastor of a prestigious Methodist congregation. After publishing *Helps to Holiness* (1895) and *The Soul Winners Secret* (1897) the first of what would become some fourteen best selling books on holiness, he was named in 1897 "National Spiritual Special" and given a special commission to conduct holiness meetings. Holiness teaching would remain the central activity of his life. The first American-born officer to obtain the rank of Commissioner, Brengle died in 1936, having attained an international standing as the Salvation Army's foremost teacher of holiness, a reputation he still holds to this day.

According to Brengle's biographer, David Rightmire, "The inter-penetration of transatlantic holiness theologies as mediated through the ministry and message of Samuel Logan Brengle helped center Salvation Army holiness theology in the tradition of Wesley, maintaining a balanced tension between active faith and patient waiting in the experience of entire sanctification."⁸

I find I can only go so far in subscribing to Rightmire's judgment on this point. It is true that Brengle helped steer the Army away from Phoebe Palmer's altar theology by insisting in a more Wesleyan fashion on the need for a direct witness of the Spirit to entire sanctification, an element missing from Mrs. Palmer's approach, as often noted by her principle Methodist detractors such as Nathan Bangs.⁹ This means that it is an error, as Rightmire makes clear, to place Brengle's work alongside of Phoebe Palmer's over against Wesley's, as if Brengle and Palmer represent the American holiness movement's view of unhindered free human agency, over against Wesley's more classical view of grace-enabled human freedom.

Yet there are also notable discontinuities between Wesley and Brengle. Rightmire himself identifies some of these, including the following.

Brengle is silent...on the corporate nature of holiness, except as it is impinged upon by the holiness of its members. In this he is unlike John Wesley, who emphasized the social ramifications of the individual's experience, and he is unlike Booth, who emphasized the corporate character of the experience (i.e.,

that it properly fits the sanctified for service, which is an essential reason for their being saved at all). Brengle here reflects the Holiness Movement's characteristically individualistic understanding of the experience of entire sanctification.¹⁰

It is well known that Brengle gave special attention to the role of the Holy Spirit in the reception of sanctifying grace. It should not be thought, however, that because Brengle employed pneumatological language in his exposition of holiness he did not also understand the profoundly Christological features of the doctrine. For him, the Spirit's work was to bring about a vital union with Christ that would result in Christlike character and conduct.¹¹

God and man must work together, both to save and to sanctify...To get the priceless gift of the Holy Spirit - a clean heart, we must work together with God. On God's side, all things are ready, and so He waits and longs to give the blessing; but before He can do so, we must do our part, which is very simple, and easily within our power to do.¹²

It is hard not read this last quote as Pelagian or at least semi-Pelagian. It seems to bear the impress of Charles Finney's theology and it certainly stands in contrast to Wesley who in 1777 made the following important distinction.

To say every man can believe to justification or sanctification *when* he will is contrary to plain matter of fact. Everyone can confute it by his own experience. And yet, if you deny that anyone can believe *if* he will, you run into absolute decrees. How will you untie this knot? I apprehend very easily. That every man can believe *if* he will I earnestly maintain, and yet that he can believe *when* he will I totally deny. But there will always be something in the matter which we cannot well comprehend or explain.¹³

Here is another difference between the nineteenth century view of Brengle

and the eighteenth century view of Wesley. The former seems informed by a view of human agency as entirely free. One may simply exercise the power within oneself to accept God's gift of a clean heart. Nothing hinders appropriation but human unwillingness. Wesley, however, insists that the very ability to believe for entire sanctification (or indeed for justification) is a grace-empowered ability. Human agency is a subset of divine grace and not merely a natural ability completely at the control of the individual's will.

II. Frederick Coutts (1899-1986): "Highly Polite Suggestions?"

Frederick Coutts was born in Scotland to Salvation Army officer-parents. After serving as a flying officer in the Royal Air Force, he became a Salvation Army officer in 1920. In 1957 he became Territorial Commander of the Australian Eastern Territory until he was elected 8th General in 1963, serving in that role until 1969. He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the University of Aberdeen in 1981 and died in 1986 at 86 years of age. "A scholarly, self-effacing man, Coutts was the model of courtesy whose thoughtful arguments were often phrased as highly polite suggestions."¹⁴

In contrast to Brengle, who could precisely date both his conversion and entire sanctification, even, in the case of the latter, to the very time of day, Coutts does not bear witness to any instantaneous experience of either the new birth or entire sanctification. When remembering his commissioning as a probationary Lieutenant at Blackpool in 1920, he wrote, "No bright light ever shone on my Damascus road, but I was slowly unlearning the tawdry values acquired during the previous two years [in the Royal Air Force]. It might not be inaccurate to describe this slow turnaround as my 'conversion' – though 'not sudden in a minute' was all accomplished."¹⁵

Another difference between Brengle and Coutts was that where Brengle reflects the pre-critical view of the Bible, typical of the revivalism of the nineteenth century world, Coutts embraced a more modern approach. I hesitate to use the label "liberal-evangelical" in reference to Coutts (not least because the word "liberal" is so easily misunderstood in conservative circles as meaning "everything bad in theology"), but his approach to the Bible seems to have much in common with views shared by many liberal-evangelical Methodists in the early twentieth century who remained passionate about evangelism and held out the

old fashioned Gospel to sinners, while being little bothered by controversy over the higher criticism of the Bible.¹⁶ The young Coutts was eager to learn from any biblical scholar regardless of what label they were given. "I had heard some praised as fundamentalist and others damned as modernist. I did not wish to wear either of those question-begging labels. The only 'ist' by which I wanted to be known was Salvationist."¹⁷

Coutts is often viewed as having introduced a departure from the accepted holiness theology inherited from Brengle. Geoff Webb, for example, sees Coutts' influence as "symptomatic of the start of a departure from mainstream Wesleyan-holiness teaching."¹⁸ According to this view, Coutts sought a balance between crisis and process but those who followed stressed process almost exclusively so that a distinctive holiness message was all too often completely lost to the movement. Those who followed Coutts, such as Chick Yuill, developed what Webb calls a "neo-Couttsian" approach which essentially adopted a more Reformed view of holiness as almost entirely positional, an awkward and unworkable fit for a tradition birthed from Wesleyanism.¹⁹

In his own lifetime, Coutts' teaching was also sometimes misunderstood as a betrayal of Army principles and was the cause of some personal pain. With his work in the Literary Department at International Headquarters from 1935 came many opportunities to speak publicly and far a-field.

I ... purposed in my heart to speak of the experience of holiness as honestly and as intelligently as God should help me. As with most resolves of that sort, the results were mixed. In every company there are those who are at ease only with the familiar. To hear some well-remembered phrase is to be assured that the speaker is "sound." Old wine does not taste the same from a new bottle. The chalice could be poisoned.²⁰

Perhaps most notoriously, Coutts is credited with having introduced a change to the Army's official statement on sanctification. Coutts was critical of George Railton and William Garner who added the language of "roots of bitterness" to Article 10 on sanctification.²¹

We believe that after conversion there remain in the heart of a believer inclinations to evil or roots of bitterness, which, unless overpowered by divine grace, produce actual sin, but that these evil tendencies can be entirely taken away by the Spirit of God, and the whole heart thus cleansed from everything contrary to the will of God, or entirely sanctified, will then produce the fruits of the Spirit only. And we believe that persons thus sanctified may by the power of God be kept unblamable and unprovable before Him.²²

Ian Barr sees Railton and Garner's definition as a "statement of Salvation Army orthodoxy on the doctrine of sanctification for the first seventy years of its existence."²³ Coutts was undoubtedly correct in pointing out that the language was drawn from a context quite foreign to the purpose it served in Article 10. It is language drawn from Deut 29:14-18, where Moses is calling the people to be faithful to Yahweh. Any turning to other gods would be a root of bitterness springing up to destroy the covenantal unity of the people with their God. The writer to the Hebrews draws on the same language in addressing Christians in Hebrews 12:14-15. Yet Railton and Garner used it as a synonym for "inbred sin," or the "carnal nature" which was to be destroyed at entire sanctification, a meaning unintended in either of these passages.

It is perhaps understandable that Brengle and Coutts should come to be seen as representing opposite poles, since there are significant differences between the two writers. However it would be a mistake to think there was any animosity one toward the other. Dying in 1936, when Coutts was early in his career, Brengle of course had no "right of reply" to Coutts, but Coutts was profoundly moved by Brengle's teaching and writing and every reference to Brengle that I found in Coutts' autobiography *No Continuing City* is a positive and admiring one.

I now want to turn to the setting of this discussion in a broader context, making it clear that the differences between Brengle and Coutts are not confined to an in-house discussion peculiar to the Salvation Army but reflect a wider conversation across the Wesleyan-Holiness movement.²⁴

III. Setting Brengle and Coutts in the Context of a Broader Discussion

In the middle 1970s a discussion emerged in the Wesleyan Theological Society over the use of pneumatological and Pentecostal language in reference to entire sanctification. The "first shot was fired"²⁵ from Scotland when the Nazarene Herbert McGonigle pointed out that Wesley used the phrase "baptized with the Holy Spirit" in reference to justifying grace, rather than to entire sanctification.²⁶ With this, "the theology hit the fan" and after much going back and forth the debate came to a head in 1977 and 1978 before "subsiding without any clear resolution."²⁷ Even earlier than McGonigle's "first shot," George Allen Turner had stated, in 1965, that "John and Charles Wesley said or wrote little about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This emphasis is relatively recent. It is not easy to find Wesleyan writers devoting much space to it or associating it with entire sanctification and evangelical perfection."²⁸

Perhaps the most sustained defense of the inappropriateness of "baptism with the Spirit" language in reference to entire sanctification, from the standpoint of biblical studies, came from Asbury Theological Seminary professor Robert W. Lyon.²⁹ "From Pentecost on, all believers receive at conversion the Holy Spirit as promised - in His fullness. No biblical basis exists for a distinction between receiving the Spirit and being baptized in, or filled with, the Spirit."³⁰ Much of the argument revolved around Wesley's use of language since all recognised in the founder of Methodism the wellspring of their particular type of holiness teaching.

It has now become a common place observation that the thought of Wesley's contemporary, the sainted John Fletcher, shaped the American holiness movement in ways that at crucial points differed from Wesley's approach, most conspicuously his use of "Pentecost" language in reference to entire sanctification. Though Fletcher's terminology is significantly different from Wesley's at certain points, the teaching of the former clearly gained the explicit imprimatur of the latter.³¹ Wesley did in a few places equate entire sanctification with being "full of His Spirit."³² George Allen Turner concludes that a sharp disjoining of Wesley's and Fletcher's teaching as if they were at odds with each other would be a mistake.

Wesley did not object to linking the baptism with the Holy Spirit with entire sanctification and sometimes he made the link himself. He only objected, on scriptural grounds, to the statement that Christians do not receive the Holy Spirit

at conversion, and he heartily endorsed Fletcher's last "Check" in which the baptism of the Holy Spirit was seen as a "second work of grace."³³

Wesley, at least in his earlier writings, does seem to take a more Christological approach to the doctrine of entire sanctification than Fletcher. He stresses, for example, the "circumcision of the heart" defined as "the being endued with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus."³⁴ It is interesting to note that of the thirty texts identified as those most often quoted by Wesley in his treatment of entire sanctification, none of them has any direct reference to the Holy Spirit or to Pentecost.³⁵ When Wesley does use language drawn from the day of Pentecost, he seems to do so in reference to the new birth, rather than to a second work of grace.

Larry Wood's research into Wesley and Fletcher is an indication of the fact that the discussion over the agreement or otherwise between Wesley and Fletcher is far from over.³⁶ Wood documents "the extensive use of Pentecostal phrases as encoded nomenclature for Christian perfection which were universally used by the early Methodists, including Wesley, his leading preachers and assistants."³⁷ Wood cites Albert Outler's judgment that the latter years of Wesley's thought are those most neglected by Wesleyan scholarship. It was this Wesley, whom Wood calls "the Pentecostal Wesley" who was understood by the early Methodists right through to the end of the nineteenth century. One must not simply rely on the *Standard Sermons* for a full understanding of Wesley's theology of holiness but also survey the later sermons, *The Arminian Magazine* which did not begin publication until 1778, and the writings of John Fletcher which were published in 1771.

The close personal partnership between Wesley and Fletcher in forming the ideas of their preachers as they travelled and preached together at Methodist preaching houses and in the annual conferences, and the preaching and writings of his key preachers and assistants must all be brought together into a single puzzle if a true picture of Methodism is to be seen.³⁸ Indeed, Wood goes so far as to elevate Fletcher's writings to a kind of theological standard with his proposal of a threefold canon consisting of "John Wesley's sermons, Charles Wesley's hymns, and John Fletcher's theology" as having shaped "the matrix of early Methodism."³⁹

I remain somewhat unconvinced by Fletcher's argument. Wesley wrote to

Fletcher's close associate, Joseph Benson in the midst of a controversy at the Countess of Huntingdon's Trevecca College, taking exception to their use of the term "receiving the Spirit." He maintained that the Methodists "can sufficiently prove our whole Doctrine, without laying stress on those metaphorical Expressions" such as "the baptism with the Holy Ghost" referring to this "sentiment" as being "utterly new."⁴⁰ He wrote to Benson on March 9th, 1771 that he is to reread the *Minutes* of the Conference "and see whether you can conform thereto...Mr. Fletcher's late discovery...[a view which] would [only] create huge debate and confusion" among the Methodists.⁴¹ It is in Wesley's genuine love for Fletcher, his view of him as the saintliest of Methodists, and his desire that he succeed him as leader of the Methodists, that we find the true reasons for Wesley's reticence to take too strong a line against Fletcher's approach.⁴² As late as 1775, Wesley wrote to Fletcher, stating that their respective views on "receiving the Spirit" differed somewhat.

It seems our views of Christian perfection are a little different, though not opposite. It is certain every babe in Christ has received the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God. But he has not obtained Christian perfection. Perhaps you have not considered St. John's three-fold distinction of Christian believers: little children, young men, and fathers. All of these had received the Holy Ghost, but only the fathers were perfected in love.⁴³

1 In a much discussed correspondence with Joseph Benson in 1770, John Wesley relegates the phrase "receiving the Holy Ghost" in reference to entire sanctification to the status of *adiaphora* - a thing indifferent.

You allow the whole thing that I contend for; an entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul and strength. And you believe God is able to give you this; yea, to give it to you in an instant . . . If they like to call this "receiving the Holy

Ghost" they may: Only the phrase, in that sense, is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all "received the Holy Ghost" when they were justified.⁴⁴

The special role given to the Holy Spirit in Samuel Logan Brengle's doctrine of entire sanctification does seem to owe more to Fletcher than to Wesley. This is not say, of course, that Brengle's theology is not Wesleyan at all. But it demonstrates that the different emphases in Brengle and Coutts regarding the role of the Spirit in sanctification (as well as the related question of whether sanctification should be seen as instantaneous or gradual) have a much longer history than their own lifetimes. They are among a number of related themes that have remained part of Wesleyan discourse since the eighteenth century.

The historian Paul Merritt Bassett maintains that two systematic theologies have shaped the theology of the holiness movement in the twentieth century, at least as reflected in the formal statements of holiness movement denominations. In spite of their general agreement on the doctrine of Christian perfection these are "essentially different in methodology and in certain ranges of presuppositions."⁴⁵ The first of these is derived from A.M. Hills' "New School Congregationalism," which placed human free agency at its center, with holiness ancillary to it. Hills' doctrine of holiness leaves the Spirit as acting almost unilaterally, divorced from solid Trinitarian moorings. According to Bassett, "For Hills, the Holy Spirit is the agent and animator of the life of holiness . . . no care at all is taken . . . to anchor the Christian life in the continuing presence of Jesus Christ, with the Spirit serving as Christ's Spirit. The Spirit is seen as an independent being with an independent work."⁴⁶ It is easy to see how the holiness movement - and later Pentecostal - idea of the Holy Spirit as a gift given, not with the new birth, but at some later time, might grow from this sort of thinking, and the influence of this way of thinking is certainly found in Brengle.

The Nazarene theologian H. Orton Wiley, representing the second of the two systematic theologies that Bassett sees as having shaped the holiness movement in the twentieth century, exhibits a more Christocentric approach, insisting that "[T]he Holy Spirit supernaturally extends to men, the redemptive work of Christ. [It is] Christ [who] communicates to the membership of [his] body, the quickening and sanctifying offices of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁷

On its Methodist side, then, the holiness movement has developed a deeply christocentric ethic which is utterly dependent upon Christ's historic and continuing presence and upon his example. But side by side with this ethic is a pneumatological one in which Christ's role is unclear. Rather, the emphasis is upon some sort of spiritual power.⁴⁸

Donald Dayton seems to agree with those who identify two converging (or competing?) visions within the holiness movement.

We are a movement with two generating movements . . . one in the Wesleyanism of the eighteenth century and one in the holiness movement of the nineteenth century. These are not entirely congruent, and our struggle with these differences may help free us to face the challenges of articulating the Wesleyan message into the twentieth and twenty first centuries. We cannot meet these challenges by repeating the clichés of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.⁴⁹

T. Crichton Mitchell expressed something of the weariness felt by some over this debate when he declared in 1981 that the question of John Wesley's relating (or otherwise) of Pentecost with entire sanctification seemed to him to be "merely academic, of small profit, and rather boring."⁵⁰ Yet, if the tradition is to move forward it cannot do so by sidestepping this important discussion. If it turns out to be the case that Pentecostal language in reference to entire sanctification is demonstrated to be inadequate, one has to ask, as Melvin Dieter does, "what other terminology can express equally well the fullness of life in the Spirit as the Pentecost motif? What motif can better represent the dynamic for genuine holy living which is at the heart of the Wesleyan tradition?"⁵¹ I am convinced that the answer to that question lies in the articulation of a thoroughly *Trinitarian* theology of Christian perfection.⁵² If we continue to polarize toward either a Christological or a pneumatological pole, we will only perpetuate an imbalance that is part of our historic legacy, and which needs addressing and rectifying. This was in fact part of Coutts' concern over Brengle's more pneumatological approach. "To invoke the Holy Spirit, supposing that He can do more for us than

the other two Persons in the Godhead is bad theology. We know but one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who share every act of thought, will and feeling."⁵³ To explore this Trinitarian project more fully lies beyond the scope of this address, but if the Salvation Army is to play its part in contributing to that conversation it will need to find a way to overcome the polarization of the Brengle and Coutts traditions, integrating both into a more fully conjunctive approach.

Some Concluding Thoughts

Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Indeed, why not both? Firstly, why Brengle? There is some loss suffered when stressing the progressive role of sanctification to the exclusion of its accompanying theme of instantaneousness. It is characteristic of both Reformed and Lutheran theology to stress the objective, positional nature of sanctification, such that no place is found for any defining experience(s) of God beyond justification. The Reformed tradition, especially in the piety of the Puritans, stresses holiness as growth in grace but has a tendency to minimize or even at times deny the possibility of the powers of heaven breaking in upon a person's life in any defining way that marks milestones on life's journey toward final perfection.⁵⁴ One reason for the phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism is that movement's belief in a God who is powerfully present in the believer's life and in its understanding of Christian experience as radically supernaturalized. The Holy Spirit is seen as the active agent of the empowering grace that flows from the Father made available through the Son's atoning work. This is not an exclusively Pentecostal specialty, but the dynamic emphasis of the Wesleyan-holiness tradition. It is something that Samuel Logan Brengle expounded well, even if we would not agree with every single one of his expressions or findings. It would be a tragedy to lose this emphasis from our tradition.

Why Coutts? Because one danger in an exclusive stress on the instantaneous aspect of entire sanctification is that it throws into shadow the progressive work leading up to and following on from it. I recently heard a preacher declare that "entire sanctification is not the end of a process; it is just the start of progressive sanctification." He quickly realised his error and corrected himself mid-sentence; but this is an example of how we can trip ourselves up if we focus exclusively on instantaneousness. We must never forget that holiness does not begin with any experience(s) subsequent to the new birth, though it may be deepened by such. There is a very real victory over sin from the moment we are born again. When

Charles Wesley wrote, "He breaks the power of cancelled sin; he sets the prisoner free," he was speaking not of entire sanctification but of the new birth. Let us not minimise the very real nature of initial and progressive sanctification in our teaching of a second work of grace. If entire sanctification is not a beginning point, neither is it an end point. For Christian perfection is not a static absolute-ness but a perfection which is always being perfected, a dynamic movement toward the full *telos* of our being in God.

Nor need the dispute over terminology paralyse us into saying precisely nothing about holiness. Some Salvationists are not comfortable with the language of "baptism of the Holy Spirit." Others feel that terms such as "entire sanctification" and "Christian perfection" are so misleading that they need to be superannuated. Let them use other terms if they like, but let them not be silent. (Our own church has initiated a national campaign to renew holiness teaching in contemporary language under the banner "An Undivided Heart.") What Salvationist (or any other kind of Wesleyan) could balk at calling upon believers to love God with the whole heart, soul, mind, and strength? What preacher would dare draw a line in the sand and say, "But you can only love God this much and no further?" Wesleyans have never majored on telling Christians what God's grace does *not* make possible. Let us not change our tune now at a time when our emphasis is perhaps most especially needed. It is true that our theology involves a pessimism regarding human nature. (We are not Pelagians or semi-Pelagians, though we may sometimes talk as if we are). But that pessimism of nature is offset by an optimism of grace. It is the true genius of Wesleyan thought to refuse to place limits on the degree to which God's love may be made perfect in the human heart in this life.

In a recent theological conference at Booth College (Australia), Tom Noble reminded delegates that entire sanctification is not something to be sought for its own sake, not an end in itself but the means to the end of perfect love. Wesley's focus was on the result rather than the means, whereas the nineteenth-century holiness movement tended to focus on the means (the "moment" or "instant" of entire sanctification). Wesley never used the word "crisis" in reference to entire sanctification (that is a nineteenth-century term), though he did speak of the "instantaneousness" of the gift. Nor did he ever use "experience" as a noun, that is, he never spoke of "getting the experience" of entire sanctification. Instead he

spoke of loving God more and more until God was loved perfectly.⁵⁵

There is a key here to our contemporary discourse about holiness. Disputes among theologians on the nature of entire sanctification can lead to stagnation so that our holiness message dies the death of a thousand qualifications and preachers are at a loss as to what to say. Yet Christian proclamation is a type of discourse where *something definite must be said*. Here are some definite things which in my view must be said from our pulpits if we are to reverse the downward trend in holiness preaching and teaching:

1. God has made you holy when he forgave your sins, by giving you a new nature in Christ.
2. God calls and enables you to grow in the holiness he has implanted in you until you reach the fullness of Christlike character.
3. The nature of holiness is love. We need to love God and our neighbor with a pure heart; then we will live lives free of love's opposite – sin.
4. Everything we receive from God we receive in response to faith-filled, heartfelt prayer. Ask God daily to empower you to love Father, Son and Holy Spirit with an undivided heart and to love your neighbor as yourself.
5. Believe that what you ask from God will be given in God's own time and way, and never stop asking for more and more of the love of God until it is made perfect in you.

Who knows what God would do if such prayer were our daily pursuit?

John Wesley often concluded his sermons with a direct exhortation to the reader, concerned lest people read his thoughts out of mere intellectual curiosity. Let me conclude with such an exhortation from one of his lesser known sermons, "On Patience."

[I]n what manner does God work this entire, this universal change in the soul of the believer? This strange work, which so many will not believe, though we declare it unto them? Does he work it gradually, by slow degrees? Or instantaneously, in

a moment? . . . The Scriptures are silent upon the subject, because the point is not determined, at least in expressed terms, in any part of the oracles of God: Every man may therefore abound in his own sense, provided he will allow the same liberty to his neighbor . . . Permit me . . . to add one thing more, see that you never rest till it is wrought in your soul . . .⁵⁶

Notes

¹ Frederick Coutts, *No Continuing City* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1978), 26.

² Jonathan Raymond, cited in Geoff Webb with Kalie Webb, *Authentic Fair Dinkum Holiness for Ordinary Christians* (Melbourne: Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory, 2007), 205.

³ Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007), 3-16.

⁴ Collins, 6.

⁵ Formerly "Indiana Asbury University," it changed its name in 1882.

⁶ "Samuel Logan Brengle: Soldier and Servant," excerpt from E. F. and L. Harvey and E. Hay, *They Knew Their God*, vol. 1 <http://www.kingsleypress.com/samuel-logan-bren-gle.html> accessed 2 September 2009. The best biography of Brengle is probably R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle* (Alexandria, Va.: Crest Books, Salvation Army Publications, 2003).

⁷ Letter from Champaign, IL, 9 January 1923, in William Clark, ed. *Dearest Lily: A Selection of the Brengle Correspondence* (London: The Salvation Army, 1985), 142-43.

⁸ R. David Rightmire, "Samuel Brengle and the Development of the Pneumatology of the Salvation Army," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 27:1 (1992), 121-22.

⁹ Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), 127. See also Charles Edward White, "Phoebe Palmer and the Development of Pentecostal Pneumatology," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 23: 1 and 2 (Spring-Fall 1988), 198-212, for the subsequent influence of Palmer's ideas on Pentecostalism.

¹⁰ Rightmire, "Samuel Brengle and the Development of the Pneumatology of the Salvation Army," 117.

¹¹ Rightmire, "Samuel Brengle and the Development of the Pneumatology of the

Salvation Army," 116-18.

¹² Samuël Logan Brengle, *The Way of Holiness* (New York: Salvation Army Printing and Publishing House, 1902), 18-19.

¹³ John Telford, ed., *The Letters of the Rev John Wesley, A.M. Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford* (London: The Epworth Press, 1960), 6: 287.

¹⁴ http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/SALV/STANDARD/PC_60862.html accessed 2 September 2009.

¹⁵ Coutts, *No Continuing City*, 28-29.

¹⁶ For a study of one example of this approach see Glen O'Brien, "Reading Wesley's Sermons in Edwardian Melbourne," ch. 9 in Renate Howe, ed. *The Master: The Life and Work of Edward H. Sugden* (Melbourne: Uniting Academic Press, 2009), 109-124.

¹⁷ Coutts, *No Continuing City*, 50.

¹⁸ Webb, 209.

¹⁹ Webb, 212.

²⁰ Coutts, *No Continuing City*, 60.

²¹ Coutts, *No Continuing City*, 58.

²² Cited in *No Continuing City*, 57-58. The statement has an interesting and varied history. From 1881 to 1922 it was part of the text of the Army's official doctrinal statement. In 1922 it was placed in small print and then in 1935 hidden away in a footnote in the *Handbook of Doctrine*. Finally it was omitted altogether under Coutts' influence after a sitting of the Doctrine Council in 1969 (*No Continuing City* has 1949 but it should be 1969).

²³ Ian Barr, "Is the Salvation Army Still a Holiness Movement?" Published as a Supper Club address on *The Rubicon* 27 April 2007 http://therubicon.org/wp-content/full_text/supperclub3_barr.pdf accessed 3 September 2009.

²⁴ It should be noted that the following discussion is by no means an attempt to deal with biblical exegesis. It is rather an historical discussion from which are derived some theological conclusions. I am convinced that the Wesleyan doctrine of holiness must have a sound basis in exegesis (and that it has often lacked that basis) but am not attempting that task here.

²⁵ Donald W. Dayton, "Wesleyan Theological Society: The Second Decade," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* [WTJ] 30:1 (Spring 1995), 224.

²⁶ Herbert McGonigle, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," *WTJ* 8 (Spring 1973), 62.

²⁷ Dayton, *WTJ* 30:1, 224. The issue reappeared again in the devotion of an entire issue of the *Asbury Theological Journal* to previously unpublished writings of John Fletcher, and further published research on John Fletcher by Lawrence Wood.

²⁸ George Allen Turner, *The Vision Which Transforms* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1965), 149.

²⁹ Robert W. Lyon, "Baptism and Spirit Baptism in the New Testament," *WTJ* 14:1 (Spring, 1979).

³⁰ Lyon is not arguing *against* entire sanctification, only against it being seen as a "baptism of the Holy Spirit." "Were someone to ask me," he writes, "where we begin in establishing the biblical roots of Wesley's doctrine of perfection in love, one of the powerful warrants I would offer would be [the] biblical account of conversion. The dynamic of conversion to Jesus Christ is such that perfection in love is the mandatory follow-up."

³¹ Cp. McGonigle, *WTJ* 8 (1973), 68.

³² John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (London: Epworth, 1952), 55, 61, 78-9; John Telford, ed. *The Letters of John Wesley* (London: Epworth, 1921), 5:229. See also Lawrence Wood, "Exegetical Reflections on the Baptism with the Holy Spirit," in *WTJ* 14:1 (Spring, 1979).

³³ George Allan Turner, "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Wesleyan Tradition," in *WTJ* 14:1 (Spring 1979), 68.

³⁴ Sugden, ed. *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, I:176.

³⁵ See "The Thirty Texts of Wesley" in *The Wesley Study Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990). William Sangster deals with the textual basis of Wesley's doctrine in *The Path to Perfection* (London: Epworth, 1947), 37-52.

³⁶ Laurence W. Wood, *The Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism: Rediscovering John Fletcher as John Wesley's Vindicator and Designated Successor* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 2002). See also, "John Fletcher and the Rediscovery of Pentecost in Methodism," and a collection of previously unpublished essays by John Fletcher, in *The Asbury Theological Journal*, 53:1 Spring 1988; also "Purity and Power: The Pentecostal Experience According to John Wesley and Joseph Fletcher," paper presented at the 27th Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, in special session with the Wesleyan Theological Society, March 12-14, 1988. Church of God Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee.

³⁷ Wood, "Purity and Power: The Pentecostal Experience According to John Wesley and Joseph Fletcher," 20.

³⁸ Wood, 25.

³⁹ Wood, 25.

⁴⁰ Wood, 6.

⁴¹ Wood, 9.

⁴² Wesley's idea that Fletcher would succeed him as leader of the Methodists must surely rank as one of the most ill-advised ideas he ever had, given Fletcher's retiring personality unfit as it was for the kind of autocratic leadership in place in the Methodism of that time.

⁴³ Wesley, Letter to John Fletcher, 22 March, 1775, *Letters* 6:146. Cited in Paul M. Bassett and William M. Greathouse, *Exploring Christian Holiness. Vol. 2. The Historical Development* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1985), 246.

⁴⁴ John Wesley, "Letter to Joseph Benson," December 28, 1770, in *Works* XII: 416.

⁴⁵ Paul Merrit Bassett, "The Interplay of Christology and Ecclesiology in the Theology of the Holiness Movement," in *WTJ* 16:2 (Fall, 1981), 80.

⁴⁶ Bassett, *WTJ* 16:2, 87.

⁴⁷ H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1940), 3:103.

⁴⁸ Bassett, *WTJ* 16:2, 88-9.

⁵⁰ T. Crichton Mitchell, "Response to Dr. Timothy Smith on the Wesley's Hymns," in *WTJ* 16:2 (Fall, 1981), 49.

⁵¹ Melvin E. Dieter, "Presidential Address: Musings," in *WTJ* 14:1 (Spring, 1979), 10.

⁵² Glen O'Brien, "A Trinitarian Revisioning of the Wesleyan Doctrine of Christian Perfection," unpublished MA thesis, Asbury Theological Seminary, 1998, a summary of which is found in *Aldersgate Papers* 2 (September 2001), 17-68.

⁵³ Frederick L. Coutts, *The Call to Holiness* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, n.d.), 15.

⁵⁴ This is not say that such experiences are absent from Puritan piety, only that they are not prominent and are perhaps little known. For an insightful investigation of this strand in Puritanism see D. Martyn Lloyd Jones, *Joy Unspeakable: Power and Renewal in the Holy Spirit* (London: Kingsway Books, 2008).

⁵⁵ This is a summary of one part of Dr. Noble's lecture series given at Booth College 23-24 July 2009, drawn from <http://glenobrien.blogspot.com/2009/07/booth-seminar-with-tom-noble.html> accessed 21 September 2009.

⁵⁶ John Wesley, Sermon 83, "On Patience," *BE* 3:176f.

Excelling in Love

Roger J. Green

Frederick Coutts Memorial Lecture
September 26, 2009

There are 613 commandments in the Torah, some of them positive and some of them negative. But, as *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk* reminds us, "In early Judaism the Rabbis taught that . . . other teachers had found ways to summarize the essence of these commandments: David reduced them to eleven in Psalm 15; Isaiah to six (Isaiah 33:15-16); Micah to three (Micah 6:8); Isaiah again to two (Isaiah 56:11); then Amos and Habakkuk reduced them to one ("seek me and live" in Amos 5:4, and "the just shall live by faith" in Habakkuk 2:4)" (p. 11). And even in the Judaism of Jesus' day the question of summarizing the law was raised. The Talmud records that a Gentile asked the great Hillel if he could summarize the essence of the law while standing on one foot. His response was, "What is hateful to yourself do not do to your fellow man. That is the whole Torah. All the rest is commentary. Now go and study."

So in Jesus' Jewish context it was not unusual that a Pharisee came to

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Jesus and essentially asked the same question: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" (what in your opinion is the essence of the law). And Jesus responded, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:34-40). Jesus reduced the commandments to two essential commandments, of course not relying on his own human wisdom for the task, but quoting directly from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. Love God and love your neighbor. And the parallel passages in Mark 12:28-34 and Luke 10:25-28 read much the same. When we speak of excelling in love this is the first passage that should come to mind.

And these are, after all, commandments from our Lord. Therefore we acknowledge that excelling in love is impossible without first excelling in obedience, not a legal obedience out of fear, but an evangelical obedience done because of the covenant relationship that the believer has with the Christ who gave these commandments in the first place. However, what I would like to do this evening is to speak of these two commandments of our Lord in reverse order, because often the last part of the second commandment is forgotten—love your neighbor *as yourself*.

Therefore, I begin this evening with an attempt to address what it means to love ourselves, not as individuals, but as part of the Body of Christ, as the People of God, called, I believe with perfect faith, to a particular mission at a particular time. I will dwell more on this phrase than on the others, but can only hope that my reason for doing so will become evident.

I am more convinced now than ever that the challenge of excelling in love for The Salvation Army is to be absolutely and courageously focused on creating an intentional community (if I may borrow a phrase from the Anabaptist tradition), so deeply rooted in our own history and theology that our intentional actions will follow. However, giving due diligence to the intentional community comes first; and the time for doing so is pressing upon us. As ravaged as Afghanistan has been throughout the twentieth century and now into this century, the sign outside of the Kabul, Afghanistan museum reads, "A Nation Can Stay Alive When Its Culture and History Stay

Alive." And the same may be said of any organization, sectarian movement, church denomination, intentional community. I can easily apply that saying to The Salvation Army, but of course to culture and history I would add theology. The Army can stay alive when its culture and history and theology stay alive. If the heart of theology for Jesus was summarized in two commandments, surely we can say that the heart of our theology is also there, in the phrase that was chosen for this evening—excelling in love.

I will argue that the most loving thing we can do for our neighbor and therefore the most loving expression we can give to God is to shape ourselves as an intentional community prepared, at all costs, to follow the commandments of our Lord.

May I use two illustrations of why I believe an intentional community is so vital to the Church and therefore to the world. When Dietrich Bonhoeffer became the leader of the Confessing Church seminary first at Zingst and then at Finkenwalde, seminaries founded by the German underground church to train pastors in the face of the Nazification of the Lutheran Church, he knew that while action would be required some day, it was the first task of the seminary to establish an intentional community of like-minded believers. The shape of that community can be seen in Bonhoeffer's popular work entitled *Life Together*. There would be a time for love of neighbor, especially the most marginalized and oppressed neighbor in Germany—the Jews—but first the community must be absolutely certain of its own existence—historically, culturally and theologically.

Little wonder, then, that the Confessing Church could exist through years of oppression, imprisonment of hundreds of its pastors, and martyrdom, because first those Lutherans had learned what it meant to be an intentional community. Their life after seminary was a natural expression of community loyalties based on the Bible, the Lutheran tradition, and the *Barmen Declaration*, the theological expression of the Confessing Church written in 1934 primarily by Karl Barth. The members of the Confessing Church made no attempt to be relevant to the broader culture, but instead chose faithfulness to the truth as they understood it, and shaped an intentional community that was not relevant to the culture, but essentially counter-cultural.

My second illustration is from the Amish Community, an intentional

community that I have always admired for their principled way of life, however misunderstood, mocked and ridiculed by the broader culture. But the community exists because its first commitment is to its own understanding of what it means to live by the Sermon on the Mount, and not because it is driven to be relevant to some broader culture which changes with the wind. Indeed the lesson that the Amish community taught to the broader, skeptical culture in October 2006 could have been neither taught nor accepted were it not for the fact that here is an intentional community that knows what it is all about, that is loyal to its first principles, and that is embedded in a culture that the Amish believe is biblical.

On the morning of October 2, 2006 Charles Carl Roberts IV, not a member of the Amish community, calmly walked into the West Nickel Mines School, an Old Order Amish one-room schoolhouse in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, ordered many of the students out of the schoolhouse, and then bound the girls who remained in tape and wire, and executed five of the girls aged six to thirteen before killing himself. The international media almost immediately descended on that community, and hardened reporters were brought to tears, not only because of the tragedy of the event, but also because of its aftermath. That Amish community immediately allowed who they were as a community of believers to inform their common life, including their way of facing tragedy, and their response of forgiveness and reconciliation shook a world that had never before really understood the Sermon on the Mount.

The Amish reached out in love to Roberts' widow, Marie, and to his parents and his parents-in-law. I will never forget the sight of the funeral procession a couple of days later on a bright October morning when as far as one could see came the silent procession of hundreds of the simple one-horse black carriages and the thousands of Amish in their traditional dress. The procession drove past the Roberts' home so that the leaders could console Marie Roberts and the other members of the Roberts' family. Following the funeral, Marie Roberts wrote this open letter to the Amish community: "Your love for our family has helped to provide the healing we so desperately need. Gifts you've given have touched our hearts in a way no words can describe. Your compassion has reached beyond our family, beyond our com-

munity, and is changing our world, and for this we sincerely thank you."

So, what is the point? Well, the point is this: that both the Confessing Church and the Amish community had such a deeply rooted, such a clearly defined understanding of the Scriptures that they were able to live out the gospel in the most tragic of circumstances. In the case of the Confessing Church, many members of the Church suffered imprisonment and death for the sake of the truth of the gospel so clearly defined in their *Barmen Declaration*. Let the Nazis unleash the dogs of war and slaughter innocent people by the millions. The Confessing Church will stand in the face of such evil and proclaim allegiance only to Christ.

In the case of the Amish, their theology informed their community life, and the vilest, most hateful, most demonic violation of the youngest, most innocent, and most vulnerable of their community could not shake their theology, but could only show it for what it was to the world, who beheld it in utter disbelief, but utter wonderment.

Loving ourselves means being an intentional community in every way possible, in history, in culture, in theology so that our actions immediately speak of the deepest values of our community. We love our neighbor and indeed love God as an intentional community simply because as a community we have taken the time and the energy needed to shape our common life together. If, as a community, we lose here, we lose everything. The external organization may continue because it is the very nature of bureaucracies to try to keep breathing even when they are on life support.

How, then, may we shape our life together in a way that is pleasing to God, a joy to ourselves, and always a means of loving our neighbors even in the darkest hour, and perhaps we could say—especially in the darkness? I offer here only one suggestion, and a quote from William Booth comes to mind. He said, "We must follow Wesley in this or we are a rope of sand." He was referring to the Wesleyan class meetings, those gatherings of about twelve people with a leader who met week after week to learn from the Scriptures and learn how to apply the Scriptural message to their own personal lives. The class meetings provided also a time of confession to one another, a time of reflection, and a time of prayer. The class meeting, Wesley himself knew, was the primary reason for the success of the Wesleyan revival.

As great as was the preaching, as wonderful as were the 6,000 hymns of Charles Wesley, the abiding legacy to Methodist survival—to the formation of an intentional community—was the class meetings.

Needless to say, Booth and his followers were not faithful in engendering the class meeting as part of Army life. My own suspicion is that we were so caught up with the grand revivals of the Army and the tremendous growth of the Army (that is why as early as 1882 the Anglican Church wanted to take us over—my present research interest), that we failed to give proper attention to the nurturing of our converts, and eventually that failure has taken its toll, most evidently in the West.

Please allow me to develop here an analogy that I began to think about in a paper entitled “The Intellectual Appeal of The Salvation Army” at the International Literary Conference in April of 2005. Please think with me of the best Salvation Army band that you know. Please imagine that band in your head. Now please think with me of what it took to develop that band. Think of the money invested in purchasing the instruments, writing the music, producing the music, training the musicians. Think of the absolute dedication of each bandsman and bandswoman to attend rehearsals, never thinking of missing a rehearsal throughout perhaps many years, and faithfully being on duty at Sunday meetings, open airs, and special events. Think of the money involved, the time involved, the dedication involved, the energy involved. And now think with me of what that has produced. Around the Army world in the area of brass banding there are musicians who have reached the top of their fields, there are composers and conductors who are world-known. Our dedication to Salvation Army banding has, in a sense, “paid off” not only in the Army, but outside of the Army as well.

Now, one caveat before I make the analogy. I was reared in Army banding, and I here and now confess that some of my proudest moments in the Army have been when marching with the Army band to the open air. Or marching during international congresses with six or eight thousand other Salvationists down the Mall in London! In fact, this being the Frederick Coutts Memorial Lecture, I should mention a particularly joyful experience after the 1965 International Congress in London when our band did a weekend of meetings with General Coutts, and as part of that weekend the band

marched with the Coventry City Band and Salvationists carrying flags from each country where the Army was working, led by General Coutts from the Coventry Corps to the old Coventry Cathedral, bombed during the Second World War, through the old Cathedral and down the central aisle of the new cathedral. There we provided the music for the service and General Coutts preached, his opening line being "By what right are we assembled here today. By no right, but by the grace of God." So I have a great appreciation for Army banding. Being a bandsman was part of my own nurturing in the Army and provided wonderful fellowship.

But now back to my point—Just suppose that we had been as faithful in our history in creating class meetings in our corps with the same degree of financial support, and the same due diligence of our people committed to those groups week after week, year after year, like the committed bandman or bandswoman, never even thinking of missing a rehearsal or a band engagement. Think of how the investment of money in training these class leaders in Scripture and in lay leadership would have paid off in spiritually mature, personally disciplined, biblically literate, theologically sound lay people. And think, as with the music and the musicians that the Army has given to the world, what the class meetings would have produced in like manner—theologians, preachers, writers—the contribution to the Army and the broader Church could have been staggering.

And yet back to reality—we confess to our shame that we have not given our financial resources, our time and our talent to this commitment. And the statement of St. Jerome that I mentioned in a previous conference here in this territory haunts us still—"Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." Many of our Salvationists, while claiming commitment to Christ and love of Christ and a desire to follow Christ, actually know nothing of Him because they are so woefully ignorant of the Scriptures. And ignorance of Christ logically means an ignorance of our own spiritual life because that life is rooted in Christ or it is not rooted at all.

I once asked a pastor of a large and active church if he had any secrets about his ministry that he would like to share. He said he attributed the "success" of the church to two things—first the seriousness of the worship experience on Sunday mornings. A half hour before the Sunday service the con-

gregation meets to rehearse the songs and hymns that will be sung during the worship service. People learn the tunes and become familiar with the words so that when it is time to sing the whole congregation can participate wholeheartedly in that great worship experience.

The second was a form of the class meeting. Every Sunday after the morning worship service the congregation has a common meal together, and following the meal they break up into small groups for about an hour to discuss the sermon and to discuss explicitly how they will apply the teachings of the Scriptures to their personal lives, their home lives and their work lives in the week that follows. Little wonder that that church is so alive!

I will take only a moment of privilege here to say that my wife, Karen, and I are grateful to belong to a small group of about twenty believers from various denominational backgrounds that meets together for Bible study, discussion, and prayer every other Friday evening. The group was formed in 1964, originally composed of those who taught biblical and theological studies and their spouses. The group has since expanded to include others. I joined this Bible study in 1970, and except for the three years that I was away from the Boston area teaching at Asbury College, Karen and I have rejoiced in meeting with these fellow believers for mutual growth and encouragement in the Lord, praying constantly for each other in good times and in difficult times, supporting each other in every way possible, and mourning the loss of one of our own when he or she goes to be with the Lord. This intentional community has been invaluable to us now for nearly forty years.

My contention is that if we give time, energy and dedication to shaping ourselves as an intentional community historically, culturally and theologically, and we are rooted in our holiness theology which is a natural expression of God's holy love and the shape of grace (the subtitled of Ken Collins' recent biography of *The Theology of John Wesley*), then love of neighbor will not only flow naturally (because holiness means among other things the love of neighbor), but the expressions of that love will be made known to us corporately. That was true of the Confessing Church under Hitler—the members of that church loved their Jewish neighbors because such love was so embedded in their theology. That was true of the Amish community—the love of the neighbor came naturally to them because of the embedded the-

ology and life of that particular community, and the expression of that love came naturally even in the most trying of circumstances.

There is no doubt that the love of neighbor has been a strength of the Army, beginning institutionally in 1883. There is no doubt also that institutionally we have supported the love for the neighbor enormously in terms of money, personnel, talent, and energy. But ultimately the love of neighbor will not fulfill its desired purpose of helping people to love God if an intentional community is not firmly established that knows its history, supports its culture, and is rooted in biblical theology.

And so I contend that this is the time to love our neighbor, but to do so as the community that God intends. We love ourselves most when we take time to shape the community carefully and constructively so that love of neighbor will be all that it is intended to be. We do absolutely no service to our neighbor physically if we do not help them to understand the love of God in their lives. By helping them only physically we forfeit what we so commonly call a holistic ministry. Ministering to the whole person means leading our neighbor to a loving God. Every social expression of our faith has that mandate because the command of Jesus was to love our neighbor only in the context of loving God.

And we are not fools. We know that the first command of our Lord is to love God. And as our Lord himself said, we are to do this with all of our heart, and our soul and our mind. And of course the inconvenient truth of the very commandment of our Lord is that the word for mind that is used here is *dianoia*, which means both the ability to think, as well as the disposition of the will. How do we cultivate both correct thinking and spiritual disposition toward our neighbor? This can be done only as we are an intentional community training our people in the habits of the mind and of the heart through preaching, teaching and the class meetings.

But we are to do this as a community. I am forever telling my students that Christianity is an intensely personal religion, but it is never a private religion. We always live out our love for God within the community of believers. Hundreds of years after Cyprian we still need to remind ourselves of his famous dictum that "You cannot have God as your Father if you do not have the Church as your mother."

You will know that the frustration of being a Salvationist in the United States is that we are known for our charity, but people are surprised that we are a church. The frustration is more dearly felt when even our brothers and sisters in Christ do not realize that we are part of the Body of Christ. Ironically the confusion that they have with The Salvation Army does not carry over to the Roman Catholic Church. No one doubts that the Roman Catholic Church is a church, and that there is a charitable expression of that church in the organization known as Catholic Charities. Now the question is why? I believe that the answer is that the Roman Catholic Church is deeply rooted in its own tradition, culture and theology. It is not engaged in attempting to be more relevant to the changing culture, but maintains what it believes to be the essence of what the Church was called to be by God Himself, including ways that we Protestants might find difficult such as the existence of the papacy or the exaltation of Mary and the saints, or the existence of purgatory, or, for still some Catholics, a justification by works.

But it is a firmly entrenched intentional community, and another inconvenient truth is that in the West many Protestant evangelicals are finding their home in Roman Catholicism or in Eastern Orthodoxy, and part of the reason for this is because those evangelicals find the contemporary expression of evangelicalism too elusive, too orientated to the contemporary world, too culturally bound and not connected to the great teachings and traditions of the Church that now reaches over two millennia. The flight to Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy is not a flight to relevance, but to truthfulness. Mark Noll has raised the question in one of his latest books entitled *Is The Reformation Over? An Evangelical Assessment of Contemporary Roman Catholicism*. And the evangelical world was a bit shaken when the president of the Evangelical Theological Society (a bastion of evangelical thinking) made his obedience to Rome in the midst of his tenure as the president of that society. He has now written a book about his pilgrimage into Roman Catholicism entitled *Return to Rome: Confessions of an Evangelical Catholic*.

Nevertheless the commitment of the Roman Catholic Church to social justice is a natural expression of what that intentional community believes is part of its doctrinal life, developed both from the tradition of allegiance to

the Scriptures and to a carefully crafted natural theology. And the Roman Catholic Church is clear about both the demands and the outcomes of shaping an intentional community, and still works hard in shaping that community.

But back to our own intentional community. I would like to conclude by suggesting three aspects of that community that I believe are indispensable. The first is that any intentional community must have a central controlling metaphor by which it lives, and, if need be, by which it suffers. And I believe that is given to us in Christ when he announced that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Christ established his Kingdom here on earth and while that Kingdom is a present reality it is also a future hope. As members of an Army of God we can relate to Kingdom language and Kingdom practice, and as a Kingdom community we follow Jesus in his preaching, his teaching, and his ministry of caring for the neighbor.

Second, we need to embrace more surely the eschatological aspect of our community life. We are people of the Kingdom already established, already inaugurated, but we live in hope of the Kingdom fully known. We do not build the Kingdom, but we accept the Kingdom that is already fully established in Christ. My mother was promoted to glory at the young age of 68, and toward the end of her life she lost much of her eyesight and so had to sing the songs in the meetings from memory. I remember standing by her in a Congress meeting, and we were all singing—she from memory—a song that she knew so well because she had sung it so many times in the open air meetings:

We're bound for the land of the pure and the holy,
The home of the happy, the Kingdom of love;
Ye wanderers from God in the broad road of folly,
O say, will you go to the Eden above?

Now my mother could not have had a conversation with me about the eschatological dimensions of our community. But she and others of that time and training knew intuitively that there was an eschatological dimension to their message, and that their Kingdom language had to include something about the as-yet-unfulfilled vision of the Eden above. We are by nature

an eschatological community, but embracing that reality identifies what it means to be an intentional community.

Finally, an intentional community challenges all calls to be relevant. Now I want to make this as perfectly clear as I possibly can. I have the deepest admiration for my friends in the Army and outside of the Army who are speaking much about the issue of relevance, and who want the Army to be more in tune with this generation, especially in the forms in which we present the gospel. But perhaps at times I disagree in love, and my problem with relevance is threefold. First, I do not see Jesus as being concerned with relevance, but with truth. Perhaps that is why John 6:66 is such a tragic verse: "After this many of his disciples left him and followed him no more." We could give countless references from the life and ministry of our Lord, including his death on a twisted cross, where no one could ever accuse him of being relevant. Second, our own movement was for the most part a counter-cultural movement. We were distinct from the broader culture in both form and essence, calling our people to an extremely disciplined personal life and preaching a radical gospel of holiness—preaching and singing about things like the purity of the heart and the perfection of the whole person, and the sinlessness of the believer!

Third, the call to relevance, in my estimation, does not take into account the radical rebellion of the culture in which we live against God, against the Church, against any moral or ethical authority of the Scriptures. Perhaps we need to give more attention to the judgment of God under which the culture stands than to trying to be relevant to that culture. David Wells in his book entitled *No Place for Truth; or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology* speaks about the ease with which the contemporary church finds itself with the world, and, as an evangelical theologian, he challenges his fellow evangelicals. In one passage he writes, "Evangelicals now stand among those who are on easiest terms with the modern world, for they have lost their capacity for dissent. The recovery of dissent is what is most needed, and the path to its recovery is the reformation of the Church. The requisite dissent arises out of a vision of God in his otherness; and this vision has now largely faded, a fact most obviously evidenced by the disappearance of theology in the evangelical Church" (p. 288). There is no doubt in my mind that

an informed conversation about the issue of relevance needs to take place in our intentional community before we move so stridently into trying to be relevant to the contemporary culture, always a moving target, and just when you think that you are really relevant you find that the culture has moved to a new place!

In conclusion, I want nothing more than for us as an intentional community of believers to excel in love. We do so by being obedient to the command of our Lord, and we want, above all, to love God and love our neighbors. But perhaps excelling in love includes what it means to love ourselves. And whatever that means, by all means let that conversation continue. And with Paul we speak this truth—"thanks be to God who in Christ always leads us in triumph" (2 Corinthians 2:14).

Holiness and Wesley's "Way of Salvation"

R. David Rightmire

A Wesleyan understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in the divine work of redemption is fundamental to the Army's doctrine and experience of holiness. In order to avoid the pitfalls of viewing holiness in isolation from the overall redemptive purposes of God, a more holistic approach to sanctification is necessary. Having addressed this broader concern in a previous article,¹ the intent of what follows is a further exploration of the dynamic nature of Wesleyan soteriology. As a result, the doctrine of entire sanctification will be shown to have a vital place in the "way of salvation."²

Throughout Christian history, a number of attempts have been made to describe the process of salvation in some organized way, often referred to as comprising an "order of salvation" (*ordo salutis*). Various stages of grace have been differentiated by the church, depicting salvation as a standard progressive sequence of God's work in the soul.³ John Wesley's order of salvation is a helpful model by which to understand the life of grace. It includes the following dimensions: awakening, repentance, justification by faith, regeneration, the witness of the Spirit, entire sanctification, and glorification.⁴ Several scholars have argued that the term, "way of salvation" (*via salutis*) is more appropriate when

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dealing with Wesley, in that the word "way" better conveys the gradual dynamics of Wesleyan soteriology. Thus, in contrast to *ordo salutis* which characterizes the Christian life as a standard set of abrupt transitions in status, *via salutis* characterizes it as a developing responsive relationship with God.⁵ What follows is thus an examination of Wesley's "way of salvation," with particular emphasis on the critical role of sanctification in the process of divine redemption.

1) Awakening

Since salvation is co-operant, if we are even to begin the journey of renewal that God intends for us, we must first become aware of our need for it. Wesley was convinced that most people are not sufficiently conscious of this need. They have repressed the initial overtures of prevenient grace to the point that their spiritual senses are asleep. What is needed in such cases is an awakening by the Holy Spirit through preaching, witnessing, or tragedies.

Thus, the first step toward salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit bringing an awareness of lostness and sin. In New Testament teaching, the Law has this function of awakening a person to their need of grace. But even apart from the Law, humankind has enough light by way of conscience to recognize the need for divine assistance. Wesley maintained that the awakening work of the Holy Spirit occurs at the most universal level in terms of human conscience (as a form of general revelation). Thus, prevenient grace is at work in the conscience, revealing moral truth and freeing the will to respond to grace. Beyond this preliminary work, there is another level of awakening that is directly connected to the operation of the Holy Spirit. Through preaching and witnessing, the Spirit convinces the unbeliever of the need for salvation (Jn 16:8-11).

2) Repentance

In the broadest sense, therefore, salvation can be said to begin with the awakening work of the Spirit in prevenient grace. Closely associated with this preparatory work is the concept of repentance. In the process of salvation, this is the operation of "convincing grace," resulting in a "first repentance," that is, repentance *before* justification. It involves the conviction of sin and produces what Wesley calls "real desires and sincere resolutions of amendment."⁶ It is not merely regret or remorse for sin, but involves a change in direction. The word in

the New Testament for "repentance" (*metanoia*) implies a reorientation of one's whole life and personality, with a desire to forsake sin and live in obedience to God.

Wesley distinguishes between two types of repentance: that which precedes justifying faith, and that which occurs within the Christian life. Repentance involves both "a thorough conviction of sin," and "an entire change of heart and life."⁷ Wesley understood the first part, conviction of sin, to be a recognition of our sinfulness and helplessness. Such conviction is a *gift* of God, occurring *prior* to faith in Christ. In this way he hoped to make clear that repentance prior to justification was not a human initiative but a response to God's awakening (prevenient) grace. The second aspect of repentance, change of heart and life, he viewed as equivalent to the progressive transformation of the life through the Christian journey. In other words, there is a continuing need for repentance *within* the Christian life.

3) Justification by Faith

Faith, theologically understood, is a personal response to a personal God, who comes to meet humanity in Jesus Christ. If there is no personal response of loving trust and obedience toward the God who is believed in, there is no saving faith (James 2:19). However, is such faith solely a human act? As a response to the saving work of God in Christ, faith does not operate apart from the divine initiative.⁸ The action God takes toward those who unite themselves with Christ through trustful, obedient faith is described in evangelical theology as *justification*. "To justify" means "to acquit" or "to bring in a verdict of not guilt." Thus, justification is forgiveness, and acceptance with God. In response to a religion of law, as expressed through rabbinical Judaism, Christianity used legal concepts to express human relationship to God. The fundamental doctrine of grace was rendered into the language of the law court by St. Paul. In contrast to Judaism's stress on the keeping of the law as the basis of justification, Paul emphasized justification by grace through faith alone.⁹ Thus, right standing before God is based on faith in Jesus Christ and his righteousness, and not on works righteousness (keeping the law – Gal 2: 6). What, then, is the relation between justification and works? Righteous living is the *result*, not the precondition of justification. Thus, while we are saved by grace through faith alone, such faith is never alone, but

always manifests itself in good works as the fruit of faith ("faith righteousness").

Justification, according to Wesley, is not the "being made actually just and righteous."¹⁰ Such cleansing and renewal is more aptly termed sanctification which, though it initially occurs (in regeneration) simultaneously with justification, must be theologically distinguished from it. Wesley states that "the one implies what God does *for* us through his Son; the other what he *works in us* by his Spirit."¹¹ Simply put, justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins; sanctification, on the other hand, involves the actual impartation of righteousness, what Wesley calls "holiness." What then is the role of the Holy Spirit in justification? Wesley maintains that "pardon is applied to the soul by a divine faith, wrought by the Holy Ghost ..." ¹²

That is, the sinner is convinced by the Spirit that "Christ loved me, and gave himself for me,"¹³ thereby making the death of Christ a present benefit. And it is this faith "by which he is justified, or pardoned, the moment he receives it."¹⁴ Wesley understood that the Spirit does not work in the same manner with everyone, and therefore he did not maintain one set form of the experience of justification. What was important for Wesley was not so much the manner of this experience, but the *fact* of it, the realization of "the love of a pardoning God ... shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."¹⁵

4) Regeneration

In Wesley's *via salutis*, regeneration is an alternative word for the initial step in the life of saving faith in Christ. The legal term "justification" has in mind this step chiefly from the standpoint of man's standing before God, and of acceptance with him (new standing). The broader term "regeneration" or "the new birth," has the same initial step in mind, but is considered chiefly as the beginning of a new course of morally changed life (new life). Those who in Christ are accepted by God as his reconciled children are indwelt by the personal presence of the Spirit of Christ, and enabled by his power, so that they are changed in heart, mind, will, and action, and enjoy a power not their own which enables them to live a life pleasing to God. Thus they are regenerate, or born again by the Spirit.

Although not making a temporal distinction between these two doctrines,

Wesley does make a logical one: "God in justifying us does something *for* us; in begetting us again he does the work *in* us."¹⁶ Put another way, justification changes the outward relation to God so that sinners are now restored to divine favor; they are freed from the power of guilt: Regeneration, on the other hand, changes the inward nature of people so that they are initially made holy; they are freed from the power of sin. If repentance is acknowledgment of our profound spiritual need, justification is one facet of God's gracious provision for that need. Wesley defined justification in one word: forgiveness. He understood divine grace to convey both pardon (imputed righteousness) and power (imparted righteousness). Justification cannot be separated from regeneration, in that believers are not only forgiven of their sins, but also are made partakers of the divine nature. In fact, Wesley refers to regeneration as "initial sanctification," or the "gate" to the whole process of the development of the life of God in the soul.

The genius of Wesley's theology consists in his attentiveness not only to the issues of justification and forgiveness, but also to new birth and holiness. For him, these doctrines are dependent on faith, in that, forgiveness of sins is received and the life of God is established in the soul only by faith. Thus, faith's twofold function is necessary for the Christian life: "We esteem no faith but that 'which worketh by love'; and that we are not 'saved by faith' unless so far as we are delivered from the *power* as well as the *guilt* of sin."¹⁷

In distinguishing justification from sanctification, Wesley viewed the former as a "*relative* change" in which God declares us forgiven by virtue of Christ; and the latter as a "*real* change" in which the Spirit renews our fallen nature.¹⁸ His point in such a distinction was to insist that Christian salvation involves more than simply imputed righteousness, God's deepest desire is our actual moral renovation (imparted righteousness). The following chart illustrates the distinction between justification and regeneration ("initial sanctification"):

Justification

- that which God does *for* us
- relative change (external relation to God)
- imputed righteousness (righteous status)

– freedom from the *guilt* of sin

Regeneration

- that which God does *in* us (new life)
- real change (internal transformation)
- imparted righteousness (righteous nature)
- freedom from the *power* of sin

Wesley did not allow justification to dominate his understanding of salvation to the degree that is common among many Protestants. For him, the greatest value of justification was its contribution to the higher goal of sanctification – the recovery of the likeness of God. At the same time, Wesley was careful not to allow his emphasis on sanctification to diminish the importance of justification; no degree of spiritual transformation negates the need for God's gracious pardon. Wesley's understanding of the relation of justification and sanctification thus reflects his conviction about the inherent relation between *grace* and *responsibility*: our very capacity for responsive growth in Christ-likeness (sanctification) is contingent upon God's gracious pardoning (justification). Justification is not a stage that is left behind after new birth, it is a facet of God's saving grace permeating the entire *via salutis*.

Wesley describes the work of sanctification as something which God does *in us* so that "our inmost souls are changed."¹⁹ To be born of God, therefore, to be renewed in heart and life, is not "barely being baptized, or any outward change whatever; but a vast inward change; a change wrought in the soul by the operation of the Holy Ghost."²⁰ Likewise, in his sermon "The New Birth" (1760), Wesley not only continues this theme but indicates that the new birth is absolutely necessary in order to be holy. The Spirit's activity in the new birth (initial sanctification) entails a true transformation, a vital cleansing of the heart, so that believers are not just positionally holy (relative change), but actually are holy (real change). In other words, the life of God, the mind of Christ with all its affections and tempers, has been implanted in the soul in some measure by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

However, this cleansing and purifying ministry of the Holy Spirit is only one aspect of his work; liberation and empowerment are graces conferred as

well. Accordingly, those who have experienced regenerating grace are truly liberated: free from "both the guilt and power of sin."²¹ Moreover, Wesley maintained that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,"²² not from the law of God or from holiness, of course, which would reflect an antinomian understanding, but from "guilt, fear ... and sin."²³

Regeneration is also directly related to the concept of "sonship" (becoming a child of God). Those who are born of the Spirit are sons and daughters of God by adoption. "Adoption" is a legal term borrowed by Paul from Roman law – the act of taking into one's family children not one's own, and conferring upon them the status of son or daughter. Pauline usage of this metaphor is to describe the social aspect of conversion (Gal 4:4-7 — "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God"). Those who are united to Christ by faith are taken into the spiritual family of God, so as to share in Christ's filial privilege of confident access to the Father. Thus the word refers to the believer's sense, in Christ, of a confident standing before God (see also Rom 8:15; cf. Jn 1:12).

5) Witness of the Spirit

The mature²⁴ Wesley came to understand faith as involving both objective and subjective dimensions. Faith is more than the "subjective" assent to spiritual truths or trust in God's love. It also involves "objective" evidence of God's pardoning love – i.e., the Spirit's witness to our justification and adoption. It is this witness that evokes within us a response of personal trust and confidence in God's forgiveness and acceptance. In the order of salvation, the witness of the Spirit speaks to the issue of whether, and in what way, the believer may be "sure" of salvation (doctrine of *assurance*). Wesley believed that it is possible for the believer to enjoy full assurance of salvation, but such assurance is *conditional*. He stressed that the witness of the Spirit is a privilege, not to be presumed upon, and definitely not to be equated with a guarantee of salvation. The believer may fall from grace and lose both their

assurance and salvation (Rm 8:16-17 – “The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ – if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him”). Thus, the believer can know full assurance of *present* salvation, but assurance of future salvation is conditioned upon continued faith and obedience.

From Romans 8:16 Wesley developed a doctrine of “Two Witnesses,” that of our own spirit and of the Holy Spirit. The first testimony is indirect and proceeds largely by reason: that is the proper estimation of one’s spiritual condition is reached in light of the appropriate evidences of the fruit of the Spirit, the marks of the children of God (faith, hope, and love), keeping the commandments of God, and conscience.²⁵ The *direct* witness of the Holy Spirit, however, is needed over and above this *indirect* witness of our own spirit, in order to convey the assurance of our being forgiven and adopted by God. Wesley sees these two witnesses as acting in harmony only with each other. On the one hand, the direct witness is the cause of the fruit of the Spirit, the indirect witness. On the other hand, the witness of the Spirit itself cannot remain where fruit are not produced.²⁶ The relation is dialectical, *both* witnesses are necessary parts of Wesley’s doctrine of assurance.

6) Entire Sanctification

Entire sanctification must be understood in the light of the more general doctrine of sanctification. Wesley understood sanctification as the Christian experience of growth in grace which starts at regeneration (initial sanctification) and continues progressively all the days of the believer’s life (Rom 5:3-5; 6:13-14; 1 Cor 6:9-20; 9:24-27; Eph 4:20-32; Col 3:1-17; 1 Thess 4:3). Thus, sanctification is the process in which new life is imparted to the believer by the Spirit, bringing freedom from the power of sin and enabling the love of God and neighbor. A fundamental point is that this continuing spiritual and moral improvement of inward character and outward conduct is not a self-improvement imposed by discipline. It is the fruit of the effectual operation of the indwelling Spirit of grace (Rom 8:1-13; Gal 5:22-26). Every stage of the Christian life is dependent upon God’s saving grace; sanctification is by grace through faith. However, not only did Wesley emphasize a strong evangelical doctrine of grace, he also was opti-

miistic about the transformative possibilities of grace in this life.

The theological foundation for Wesley's understanding of sanctification is found in the doctrine of imparted righteousness. Whereas Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer in justification (resulting in a relative change of relationship), it is imparted to the believer in sanctification (resulting in real change, understood as Christlikeness). Wesley came to regard sanctification as the therapeutic transformation of our lives following the new birth, leading him to add qualifiers like "entire" when referring specifically to his conception of the ideal expression of sanctification in this life. He understood sanctification to begin at regeneration (new birth), and viewed such "initial sanctification" to involve the beginning of a gracious restoration of an ability to live holy lives. For Wesley, the "baptism" of the Holy Spirit occurs at regeneration,²⁷ and provides the empowerment necessary for our growth in holiness all along the *via salutis*, including the attainment of Christian perfection.²⁸ Gradual spiritual recovery of the likeness of God following the new birth is understood as a process of growth in grace, or a "going on from grace to grace."

With Wesley's therapeutic focus it is natural to ask how much deliverance from the plague of sin did he believe was possible in this life? His distinctive answer was that there is a possibility of *entire* sanctification, or "Christian perfection," in this life. Indeed, Wesley claimed near the end of his life that propagation of this very teaching was the chief reason for which God had raised up the Methodists. His commitment to the doctrine of holiness understood as being made "perfect in love," was grounded in the belief that not only did scripture teach it (Mt 5:48; 1 Pet 1:16; Heb 12:14), but that what God requires, he also graciously provides.

In his sermon "On Christian Perfection" (1741), Wesley offered a qualified understanding of "perfection," by distinguishing ways in which Christians can and cannot be perfect in this life. On the negative side, he stipulated that Christians, however mature they might become in this life, cannot experience absolute perfection until glorification. Those who are made perfect in love (relative perfection) are not delivered from ignorance, mistakes, infirmities, or temptation. In addition, he argued that Christian perfection was open to continual increase, specifically rejecting any notion of a static perfection in holiness. On the positive side, Wesley maintained that although new birth brings freedom

from the *necessity* of outward sin, Christian perfection provides the further deliverance from all inward sin (i.e., sinful "tempers" – inclinations or desires in 18th century parlance).

Although sanctification is progressive, such progress is not realized apart from the critical work of the Holy Spirit. According to Wesley, the experience of entire sanctification involves the divine gift of "perfect love," given in a moment of time (instantaneously), subsequent to salvation.²⁹

Thus it has been called the "second work of grace," or the "second blessing." As we have seen, Wesley's understanding of Christian perfection, holiness; or "entire sanctification" does not involve a "sinless perfection." Those who are "made perfect in love," however, *do not intentionally sin*. Is it possible to sin when entirely sanctified? Yes, but there is also the possibility not to commit willful / intentional sin: "Entire" victory is possible over all known and willful sin.³⁰

Wesley integrated his emphasis on the possibility of present attainment of Christian perfection into his stress on the responsibility of gradual growth in sanctification. This balance is reflected in his sermon "The Scripture Way of Salvation" (1765), in which he continues to insist on the one hand, that Christian perfection is a present possibility because it is God's gift, not our accomplishment. Yet, on the other hand, the way to "wait" for this gift is by repentance and growth through the means of grace. Wesley, although urging his followers to believe in, pray for, preach, and expect the divine gift of perfect love, never encouraged them to claim the attainment of this experience. Rather, his emphasis was on waiting for and receiving the gift.³¹ How does one know that the gift has been received? Wesley maintained that the Spirit provides assurance that the work of entire sanctification has been accomplished. He wrote:

None therefore ought to believe that the work is done till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification, as clearly as his justification. But how do you know that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption? I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. Hereby know we that we are of God, in either sense, by the Spirit that he hath given us.³²

Wesley was far from unique in his emphasis on the possibilities of grace in Christian life. What was controversial about his doctrine of Christian perfection, however, was his claim that the specific transition to this level of Christian living is an instantaneous one, however much gradual growth may precede or follow it. Why did Wesley insist on this point? Although conceding that Scripture did not explicitly affirm the instantaneity of this experience, neither did it deny it. In line with his methodological assumption that when scripture is not explicit on a matter, *experience* plays an important role in deciding the issue, he defended his position by appealing to examples among his Methodist people. Wesley apparently assumed that an instantaneous transition was a logical implication of Christian perfection's status as effected by divine grace, not simply a human achievement. Such an experience of entire sanctification, he believed, is confirmed by a distinct witness of the Spirit.

While the affirmation of the possibility of entire sanctification is distinctive of Wesley, the conception of sanctification as a progressive journey in responsive cooperation with God's empowering grace characterizes his understanding of the *via salutis*. While he emphasized the possibilities of grace that could be experienced in entire sanctification, his qualified understanding of "perfection" always allowed for more to be appropriated. Wesley was concerned to preserve a dynamic tension that could celebrate whatever God's grace has already made possible in our lives, without relinquishing our responsibility to put that grace to work in the new areas that God continually brings to our attention.³³ Some have viewed sanctification in Wesley as restricted to the notion of entire sanctification, limiting it to the instantaneous experience of "the second blessing," and neglecting his emphasis on the progressive nature of sanctification. The widest and most proper sense of Wesley's understanding of sanctification, however, comprises the whole process of transformation, the object of which is the restoration of humanity in the image of God.

7) Glorification

Our deliverance from the very *presence* of sin is the final step in the *via salutis*. Glorification finds its fullest expression in the eschatological restoration of all things. Wesley believed that gradual progression in sanctification extends beyond the boundaries of life on earth, involving a development towards ever

greater perfection even after death.³⁴ Wesley, along with most of Christian tradition, believed in a conscious intermediate state ("paradise"). Consistent with his therapeutic emphasis, he stressed the need for Christians to recover the holiness of heart of life which God intends for us before we enter the ultimate state of freedom from the very presence of sin. He was convinced that God would ensure that all who are sincerely growing in grace would somehow attain Christian perfection prior to the eschaton. Wesley's most common suggestion was that it would be bestowed at the moment of death on those who had not attained it before. He even speculated that those who needed to would continue to "ripen" in paradise while they awaited the final eschaton.³⁵ This latter suggestion brings the gradual dynamic so characteristic of Wesley into the third (future) dimension of salvation. While most western Christian traditions see paradise as a place of blessed rest where we simply wait for the ultimate state of the new heavens and the new earth, Wesley hints that it will be a place for growth in grace. In fact, he once even suggested that the perfect would grow in grace for all eternity (i.e., beyond paradise)!³⁶

Conclusion

Thus, a Wesleyan understanding of the "way of salvation" involves the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit from awakening through glorification, with important instantaneous works of grace in the justification / regeneration complex and the experience of entire sanctification. Progressive growth in grace marks the process leading up to, and following, both justification and entire sanctification, with the goal of transformation and renewal in the image of Christ by the power of the Spirit, enabling perfect love of God and neighbor.

Notes

1. R. David Rightmire, "Holiness in Relation to Salvation: Pneumatological Dimensions of Wesleyan Soteriology," *Word and Deed* 11:2 (May 2009): 19-32.
2. For viewing Wesleyan soteriology in this light, see: "The Way of Salvation," chapter 7 in Randy Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994).
3. E.g., Thomas Aquinas' *ordo salutis* included the following stages of grace: a)

Prevening — works preliminarily to remove barriers to faith; b) *Convicting* — disposes the will to the need for justification; c) *Justifying* — conveys the effects of Christ's sacrifice by faith; d) *Cooperating* — elicits a faith that is active in love; e) *Persevering* — strengthens & confirms faith and life of holiness. *Summa Theologica*, 1-2, Q 111, 1.

4. A detailed account of Wesley's order of salvation is found in the sermon called "The Scripture Way of Salvation" (1765). In this sermon, which deals chiefly with justification and sanctification, the following stages predominate: 1) operation of prevenient grace; 2) repentance previous to justification; 3) justification or forgiveness; 4) new birth; 5) repentance after justification and the gradual process of sanctification; 6) entire sanctification.

5. See: H. Ray Dunning, *Grace, Faith and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 1988), 431 ff.; cf. Maddox, *Responsible Grace* for his emphasis on Wesley's *Via Salutis*.

6. "A Farther Appeal" (1745), in Albert Outler (ed.), *The Works of John Wesley* [Bicentennial Edition — henceforth Outler, *Works*] (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984-87 ff.), 8: 47.

7. "The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained," in Thomas Jackson (ed.), *The Works of the Reverend John Wesley* [henceforth, *Works* (Jackson)], 14 volumes (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958), 8: 429, 467.

8. There is theological debate, however, concerning whether faith precedes or follows repentance. John Calvin, in seeking to maintain divine sovereignty, held that faith (as a gift of God) leads to repentance; whereas Wesley believed that repentance (as an act of the will, made possible by prevenient grace) leads to saving grace through faith. Note that divine initiative is maintained in both positions, but the nature of this initiative in the process of salvation is understood differently.

9. Martin Luther discovered in Rm 1:17 that the "righteousness of God" is not only the righteousness that *belongs to* God by which he condemns us, but the righteousness which *comes from* God through faith in Christ. Thus, righteousness is a gift since God himself meets the precondition of justification; the Judge had become the Justifier.

10. Sermon, "Justification by Faith," Outler, *Works*, 1:187.

11. Ibid.

12. John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1987), 371.

13. *Works* (Jackson), 8:276.

14. Ibid.
15. Sermon, "Family Religion," Outler, *Works*, 3:336.
16. Sermon, "The Great Privilege of Those That Are Born of God," Outler, *Works*, 1:431-32.
17. Sermon, "Sermon on the Mount," Outler, *Works* 1:559-60.
18. Sermon, "The Great Privilege of Those That Are Born of God," Outler, *Works*, 1:431-32.
19. Ibid., 432.
20. Ibid.
21. Sermon, "The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption," Outler, *Works*, 1:261.
22. Ibid, 262.
23. Ibid
24. Wesley's doctrine of assurance has often been misunderstood simply because many interpreters fail to take into account the fact that his views in this area underwent significant development and change as he backed away from some of the erroneous notions mediated to him by the Moravians.
25. Sermon, "The Witness of the Spirit, 1," Outler, *Works*, 1:270-74.
26. Sermon, "The Witness of the Spirit, 2," Outler, *Works*, 1 285.
27. *Excursus* on Pentecostal Terminology — On occasion, Wesley employed three 'Pentecostal' phrases with reference to the work of the Spirit in the life of the believer: "receiving the Holy Ghost," "filled with the Holy Ghost," and "baptized with the Holy Ghost." It is interesting to note that he used all three phrases to describe the *new birth or initial sanctification*, maintaining that all true believers receive the Holy Spirit at their justification / regeneration. Thus, although his followers used Pentecostal terminology to describe the Spirit's role in entire sanctification, Wesley did not. Wesley understood the danger in using such language to describe the second work of grace, in that it tends to diminish the value of regeneration, and to depreciate the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer prior to entire sanctification.
28. In other words, he rejected the identification of entire sanctification with Holy Spirit baptism.
29. Sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Outler, *Works*, 2:169.
30. Does this imply the removal of the sin nature? No, but it does imply the immobilization of the sin nature by the righteousness of Christ active in the believer when responded to by faith. By comparison, note the 19th century holiness movement's emphasis on

the eradication of the sin nature.

31. During the 19th century holiness movement, however, the role of volition (in line with Finneyan 'new measure' theology) began to modify the doctrine to include the claiming of the gift by faith as a means of appropriation (e.g., Phoebe Palmer's "altar theology" and "shorter way to holiness").

32. "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," *Works* (Jackson), 11:402.

33. Perhaps it was this very concern that kept Wesley from ever claiming to have "attained" Christian perfection himself. See Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 190, fn. 218.

34. "Farther Thoughts Upon Christian Perfection," Q. 29, *Works* (Jackson), 11:426.

35. Sermon, "On Faith," Outler, *Works*, 4:190-91.

36. "Farther Thoughts," *Works* (Jackson), 11:426.

Book Reviews

Craig R. Koester. *The Word of Life: A Theology of John's Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

Reviewed by Donald E. Burke, Booth University College, Winnipeg, Canada

The Gospel of John has been a favorite of the Church through the centuries. Its narrative simplicity hides the profundity of its understanding about Jesus. The fourth evangelist, more than the other gospel writers, addresses the question of Jesus' identity as the Son of God explicitly and forcefully. He also wrote a gospel in which one is able to peel back layers of meaning. These layers of meaning make John both simple to read and difficult to understand.

There are, of course, many introductions to John's gospel. This writer's long-standing favorite guide to John has been Robert Kysar's *John, the Maverick Gospel* (3rd edition; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007). However, alongside Kysar's book this writer would now have to place Craig Koester's *The Word of Life: A Theology of John's Gospel*.

Koester's book is not a substitute for reading the Gospel of John itself. In fact, I think that having a basic familiarity with John is essential to deriving the most benefit from reading *The Word of Life*. For this reason I would recommend that readers take the time to read the gospel in its entirety once or twice before opening Koester's book. But having turned to *The Word of Life* one finds an excep-

tionally well-written and lucid presentation of the John's theology.

In the introduction, Koester sets the agenda for the book. This is not a commentary on John; it is an exposition of John's theology. While fully aware of the history of Johannine studies in the past half century and its focus on sources and the reconstructed history of the Johannine community, Koester reads the Gospel as a coherent whole in order to articulate the theology of John. Thus, the book does not explore the relationship between John and the so-called historical Jesus; Koester does not read John as a biography of Jesus. Rather, according to Koester, the fourth evangelist is much more concerned to bring readers to faith by providing a true testimony to Jesus' significance. This stance frees Koester in the rest of the book to explore several key themes in the theology of John.

After the introduction, the author moves through seven additional chapters that address significant themes: God; The World and Its People; Jesus; Crucifixion and Resurrection; The Spirit; Faith, Present and Future; and Discipleship in Community and the World. Each chapter is based on Koester's own exegetical work on specific passages in John. As we read successive chapters we find that many passages are discussed on several occasions in order to draw out their implications for the theme under consideration. I would recommend that readers have their Bible handy in order to assess Koester's interpretation of these passages.

There are three major theological themes that emerge in the book. First, God created and loves the world. God has given the world life and desires to give eternal life to the world. In order to accomplish this, God has sent his Son—the Word—to convey God's love and to draw the world back to God. The love of God for the world is seen most clearly in the death of the only Son. Through His obedience unto death, Jesus communicates the profound love of God.

Second, the world, while created by God, is alienated from God. Because of this alienation, the world is in darkness, under the influence of evil and incapable of overcoming this alienation. It is for this reason that God sent his Son into the world; that is, to reconcile the world to God and to bring life to the world.

Third, the example of Jesus' self-giving love, exemplified in his washing of the feet of his disciples and in his laying down of his life in the crucifixion, provides a model for those who have received life from God. The Christian community, called together by the love of God for the world, is to live out this love

in its relationships with others.

Koester's writing is always clear. His chapters, sub-sections and paragraphs are structured well. The result is that one can always understand the contribution that each section makes to his overall argument.

This book also explicates well the Johannine propensity for double meanings. Koester shows that while the words of Jesus often are taken by characters in the narrative to have an earthly meaning, Jesus most often uses this language to expose a second and deeper meaning.

There is considerable repetition in Koester's book. The same themes and passages frequently are explored from a somewhat different angle in several places. However, in this reviewer's opinion, this repetition is used well to convey the complexity of John's theology. Just when you think that you have understood a passage or a theme, another layer of meaning is uncovered.

The ultimate test of an introductory book such as this is whether a reader would have gained an overview of the subject being discussed. In the case of Koester's *The Word of Life*, this reviewer is able to affirm that any reader would come away with a deepened appreciation for, and understanding of, John's Gospel. I also think that a reader's appetite would be whetted for more. That is precisely what an introductory study should do.

David Timms. *Sacred Waiting: Waiting on God in a World that Waits for Nothing*. Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2009.

Reviewed by Judith L. Brown, The Salvation Army, NHQ Publications Staff

"Wait. Wait. Wait. We don't have time to waste. Life feels too short, the opportunities (and needs) too many. Besides, he who hesitates is lost. But time and again, God calls us to wait . . . And in the process we learn deep, transforming truths." (16)

Sacred Waiting: Waiting on God in a World that Waits for Nothing, by David Timms, embodies the essence of these life-changing truths in compelling portraits of Jesus of Nazareth and four patriarchs from the Old Testament. The book deftly weaves together scripture, literature, stories, history, and other world-

views, giving the reader wisdom and insight into the spiritual discipline of sacred waiting. At the end of each chapter the author poses some thoughtful reflection questions that are certain to fuel a lively small-group discussion.

Timms differentiates between waiting *on* God rather than *for* God with the simple metaphor of a restaurant waiter, who must routinely pay attention to (1) *presence*—greeting customers, conversing with them and putting them at ease; and (2) *service*—taking special requests and serving the food. The author shows how these benchmarks of discipleship evoked a close and obedient divine-human relationship, enabling Noah, Moses, Abraham, David and finally, Jesus of Nazareth, to wait on God. Additionally, he outlines the role of sacred waiting in the four major liturgical seasons of the Church—Advent, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost—as well as the Christian tension of living in an in-between time when the Kingdom is “already but not yet.”

Sacred Waiting reminds us that a lifelong journey of presence and service can involve fulfilling requests from God that require sizeable commitments of time. God’s promises may seem open-ended and His extended silence can seem hard to bear. Along the way we will encounter trials and disruptions but “we will only wait on Him with joy if we have deep confidence in His love for us.” (21) Like a myriad of other intentional disciplines, sacred waiting helps make way for the grace of God, which then gradually renews us from the inside out until we begin to reflect the image of Christ in what we think, say, and do.

Noah learned patient endurance from his willingness to build an ark that was about half the size of the Titanic. He had no doubt that God wanted him to complete this awesome project because he had walked with God for almost five centuries. Building the ark probably took 120 years “of hard labor, of ridicule from friends, family and neighbors, of blisters, calluses, splinters and injuries,” says Timms (27-28). Yet Noah didn’t take any shortcuts in building the ark, even though “he couldn’t just run down to the local lumber yard and order the timber he needed.” (26) Although God specified the use of an obscure gopher wood—which has never been heard of since—he didn’t try to substitute cedar or oak. For Noah, sacred waiting meant building intimacy with God, obeying God, and trusting in God’s timing.

Sacred waiting also prevented Noah from growing obsessed with building the ark, which easily could have occurred since it consumed so much of his time and

energy. "But the ark project never became Noah's," notes Timms. "It always remained God's. Indeed, decades later, Noah seemed to walk as closely with the Lord as ever." (31)

"The ark was no cruise liner," the author continues, "and this voyage did not return cheery vacationers to their cozy homes." (33) According to the lengthy narrative in Genesis, Noah and his family arrived at an unfamiliar place, where they had to live on the ark for more than a year until the floodwaters finally receded. The horror they must have faced as the sole survivors of a decimated civilization is impossible to fully comprehend.

Noah's perseverance grew out of a walk with God that was rooted in sacred waiting—presence followed by service—which gave him the ability to endure an almost unbearable situation. Then God honored his faithful service with a blessing to future generations—a promise that He would never again flood the earth.

The saga of Abraham reveals sacred waiting as a willingness to hold earthly things lightly and with open hands. Like most of us, Abraham and Sarah had "no crystal balls. No special visions. No advance glimpses" (38). Yet they left a safe haven in cosmopolitan Haran for a strange new land, risking their personal safety and enduring great distress along the way. During an 11-year period God spoke to Abraham at least three times about his future as the patriarch of a large family. But after Abraham and Sarah grew tired of waiting for an heir, Abraham set aside God's plan and fathered Ishmael with their servant, Hagar. Then 13 years of silence ensued. "No word. No clarification. No affirmation. No promise. No prophecy. And for Sarah, apparently no hope [of having a child]." (39) Twenty-five years after God's initial promise, when Abraham was 99 years old, God told him he would be the father of many nations.

After Isaac was finally born, Abraham's strong attachment to him began to eclipse his relationship with God. "Something happens to us sometimes when God tarries to answer a prayer or fulfill a promise," writes Timms. "Subtly, imperceptibly, we fall deeper in love with the promise than with the One who makes the promise. We fantasize about the gift rather than the Giver. We spend so much time imagining what life will be like that we fail to live life as it is. Our future vision blinds us to our present blessings." (40). In the case of Abraham, the fingers in his hand "*began to curl and his grip strengthened. And the Lord decided to pry those fingers back open.*" (46) Then Abraham was asked to do the

inconceivable—to sacrifice his greatest treasure, his only son and the child of the promise.

The very next day Abraham took an unsuspecting Isaac on a challenging climb to the top of Mount Moriah. Those three arduous days were probably spent praying and waiting on God to change his mind and rescue his son. "Waiting on [God], as Abraham shows us, means attentiveness, service, and trust—the kind of trust that releases what we love most in order to accomplish what He desires"(49). As Abraham's experience teaches us, "we cannot wait on God effectively or successfully when our posture is protective. If we want Him to genuinely speak, we must genuinely be willing to release whatever he requests—even our own Isaacs. (46) The process of learning to wait on the Father (drawing closer to Him and serving Him) requires that we also lay our best and our all on the altar before him." (48)

Sacred waiting enabled Moses to overcome his boldness, personal ambition, and the impulsivity that drove him to murder an Egyptian slave driver. He had to forfeit a royal life in Egypt to work as a simple shepherd in the land of Midian. For 40 years, as a fugitive in the desert with his wife and son, he learned to wait humbly and patiently on the Lord. By practicing the disciplines of silence and solitude, Moses went "from 40-year old arrogance to 80-year-old anxiety, just what the Lord wanted," says Timms. (56) He became poorer, weaker, and less self-confident than he had been as a valued member of Pharaoh's powerful dynasty. As a result of his austere life in the desert, "faith in himself had turned to faith in the Lord." (57-58) Moses' life epitomized what Timms defines as "radical Christianity . . . the complete and utter surrender of our own will to the will of God" (54).

Deep in his heart Moses began to perceive sacred waiting as a privilege rather than a way to achieve glory or fame. His life makes clear that "sacred waiting calls us to look for the burning bush, however long it takes, and not create a burning bush of our own, even if no burning bush appears. It thrusts us into tasks of service that the Lord designs, not a ministry of our own making." (59) Sacred waiting amounts to much more than killing time, because it teaches us about our relationship with God, helps us grow spiritually, and assures us that God is always with us.

David learned to wait on the Lord while he took care of Jesse's sheep in the

wilderness near Bethlehem. He waited with hope, which evoked stronger faith in God and a life of authentic worship full of patience and courage. At least 10 years elapsed between the time David was appointed to replace Saul and his coronation as king of Israel. During that period he killed Goliath, comforted Saul with his harp and served as one of the king's armor-bearers. Twice he spared Saul's life when he had the chance to seize the throne. After he became king he spent two years fighting Saul's loyalists and mobilizing his base of power. "Servants may have attended his every demand, but he quickly learned that God was not one of his servants." (69) For David, earthly glory did not mean that he could transcend God's law. His psalms, studied through the lens of presence and service, help us approach "poverty and prosperity, suffering and success, anxiety and comfort, pain and pleasure, fear and faith from a different, more life giving vantage point: the high ground of worship." (67)

From Jesus of Nazareth, our greatest teacher, we learn what it means to wait on God during times of suffering, loss and death. Jesus learned obedience in a new way by experiencing the "savage" aspect of grace through sacred waiting amid pain and suffering. "... It's this path of pain that potentially saves us from the shortsighted and self-centered existence for which we might otherwise settle (87) . . . And the path leads into the tasteless darkness where we might become salt and light." (88) As servants of God we are called to enter fully into the world's pain and suffering, which, paradoxically, gives meaning and purpose to our lives. *"Our deepest spiritual formation occurs not as we flee our distress, but as we face God and wait on Him."* (92)

Meanwhile, the liturgical seasons of the church calendar not only set rhythms for our spirituality but also enrich our understanding of what it means to wait on God. Advent calls us to admit our sinful nature and to appeal to God for forgiveness and deliverance. Luke's account of Jesus' birth presents four people who waited on the Lord: an infertile wife, a teenage girl, a man whose death was imminent, and an aging widow. All of them loved the Lord and waited on Him with presence and service. One of the salient gospel messages found in Advent is that *"we don't lose life when we wait on God, we find it."* (103) Just as the wise men came to worship Jesus humbly and joyfully, we need to reaffirm our coming to Him in the same way. Through the grace that flows from sacred waiting, it becomes possible for selfishness, egotism, and pride to be destroyed in the fur-

nance of transformation.

During Lent we are reminded of how solitude and sacred waiting can help lead us into ministry and service. As we fast to remember the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness, we confront our own personal demons. "In reality, the struggle to give up something significant for Lent is the struggle to die to our false self" (116). Sacred waiting requires that we empty ourselves in order to focus more on God and become more faithful servants in His kingdom. Lent says no to our cultural demand for instant gratification, challenging us to fill our hearts and minds with the things that are above. Lastly, it unites Christians as a community of faith to honor God's work in the world.

The reshaping of our kingdom expectations, according to Timms, is a major part of sacred waiting during the Easter season. In the midst of our trials and tribulations, we need to have faith that God will deliver us in His own way and time. Easter dares us to look death in the eye with the hope of resurrection, to pray and serve with honesty and humility, to reject the everyday violence of our world and to embrace pain as an avenue for God's grace. Pentecost teaches that God is in charge of directing His kingdom and that we must wait for the Spirit to lead us. Our spiritual gifts can work through us to help others know the reality of God's presence and power.

The final chapter of *Sacred Waiting* issues a caveat against giving way to the "Moses Syndrome" (Numbers 20:7-12), which Timms defines as our human tendency to try to control the shape and timing of the Kingdom. Like Moses, who struck the rock to draw water in the wilderness, we tend to forge blindly ahead with our own agenda instead of waiting on God to show us His way. As disciples of Jesus we must spend a lifetime learning when to proceed and when to abide obediently, just as the disciples waited in Jerusalem for the Spirit's direction immediately after Jesus' death.

The grace that emanates from sacred waiting can open the door to a more intimate and empowering relationship with God, a life of joy and peace overflowing with the fruits of the spirit. In this abundant life, which "takes no time but occupies all of our time," as Thomas Kelly writes, we can be freely and gradually transformed into the human beings God created us to be. Then the Spirit will empower us to work alongside Christ to help build the kingdom on earth through acts of loving and obedient service.

Book Notes

by Roger J. Green

Before I begin the Book Notes for this issue of the journal I need to correct an error in one of the Book Notes from the last issue (May 2009). There I reviewed an excellent new book on Salvation Army history entitled *Hadleigh Salvation Army Farm: A Vision Reborn*. To my amazement the final sentence of that review ended by stating that the Farm "continues to minister to people in the name of Christ from the sixteen century to today." The original text read correctly, "as it continues to minister to people in the name of Christ." The remainder of the sentence, "from the sixteenth century to today" crept mysteriously into the text from a previous Book Note that I wrote on the Reformation. So, apologies to our readers, but the Army has not been ministering in Hadleigh since the sixteenth century! Now on to other matters.

John G. Mettrick, ed., *Historical Dictionary of The Salvation Army*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2006.

Here is a fine source for readers interested in Salvation Army history. Scarecrow Press has an excellent reputation and has produced many dictionaries that are invaluable for writing and research. The articles are listed in alphabetical order and thus, easily accessible. This dictionary, edited by John G. Mettrick, a retired Salvation Army officer, and with various contributors, contains useful information about The Salvation Army. The first entry is Abstinence, Total, and

the last entry is Zimbabwe Territory, with a total of 670 pages. Other useful features include appendices for generals of The Salvation Army and recipients of the Order of the Founder. Likewise, the bibliographical essay and the bibliography at the end of the book offer useful resources for those wishing to do further research on the topics at hand. This resource would be a welcome addition to any library, including local corps and schools for officer training libraries.

R. G. Moyles, *Exploring Salvation Army History: Essays of Discovery*. Edmonton, AB, Canada: AGM Publications, 2009.

The author of this book has many qualifications to recommend him to our readers, but the two primary ones are that he is a Salvationist and a professionally trained academician. Dr. Moyles is Professor Emeritus at the University of Alberta and has written several books on The Salvation Army. Two of them have been especially helpful to me, *The Salvation Army and the Public* (published in 2000), and *I Knew William Booth: An Album of Remembrances* (published in 2007 by Crest Books at The Salvation Army National Headquarters in the United States, which also publishes this journal).

The eleven chapters in this book present some interesting moments in our history through the eyes of a trained historical researcher who is also committed to a careful reconstruction of the history of the Army. As he mentions in his essays, Moyles not only looks at the facts of history (and some of the fiction that arises as well) but also seeks to interpret those facts by asking the right questions. This is no easy task, and the honest historian will occasionally have to challenge the accuracy of some of our history that has been told repeatedly, but without factual foundation. This text is not just a rehearsal of eleven Salvation Army stories, but a refreshing look at those stories examined in light of a broader social, political, cultural and religious context. Throughout the text some basic methods of historical research are applied, which provide useful examples for anyone interested in such research.

Our People: The Remarkable Story of William and Catherine Booth and The Salvation Army. A Radiant Films Production in association with Carpenter Media, Written by P  ter Farthing and Produced by Corey Baudinette and Peter



Farthing, The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory, 2009.

Although this section of the journal is usually reserved for books, I recognize that in our world there are several other resources that can be used for writing, research, preaching and teaching. *Our People*, a 72-minute documentary on The Salvation Army, was shown at a conference entitled Brengle Create (see this issue's editorial), and received a Gold Crown award at the International

Christian Visual Media Conference held in St. Louis, Missouri. Five years in the making, it was researched, written and co-produced by Major Peter Farthing, who serves in the Australia Eastern Territory in Sydney.

The documentary clearly and compellingly shows the lives of William and Catherine Booth and the beginnings of The Christian Mission and The Salvation Army. It premiered at a theater in the East End of London not far from the Blind Beggar, the pub where William Booth held one of his first open air meetings. Several teachers, historians and scholars were interviewed for this video, chiefly in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. Here is an excellent resource for soldiers' classes, advisory board meetings, and churches interested in the history of The Salvation Army. It also makes a wonderful gift for officers, soldiers, advisory board members, friends of the Army and local libraries.

Amazing Grace. Bristol Bay Productions, written by Steven Knight and produced by Edward R. Pressman, Terrence Malick, Patricia Heaton, David Hunt, and Ken Wales, Twentieth Century Fox, 2007.

While I am reviewing DVDs, allow me to mention a second one. *Amazing Grace* is a must-see DVD for anyone interested in the history of Christianity, especially its impact on the final abolition of the British slave trade in 1807. It is the remarkable story of William Wilberforce, a bold social reformer who was determined against all odds to bring an end to slavery. Although greatly discouraged at times because of intense opposition from other members of Parliament, he was nevertheless supported by another major player of the time—

John Newton, former captain of a slave ship and author of the hymn "Amazing Grace." As an interesting historical note, the last letter John Wesley wrote before his death was to encourage Wilberforce in his fight to end the slave trade. Today when there is a call for Christianity to be merely a private faith with no public voice, we have a clarion reminder that history tells another story. Were it not for Christianity many of the most important public battles for a more just society would not have been fought and won. *Amazing Grace* issues a call for courage in the face of all kinds of opposition in our own day and age.

The Way of Holiness



A Journal of Salvation Army
Theology and Ministry

This issue of *Word & Deed* includes two papers from a tri-territorial theological conference that brought together delegates from Australia and New Zealand. The first paper, "Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Why Not?" was written by Glen O'Brien, an ordained minister in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The second article, "Excelling in Love," by Roger Green, was the Frederick Coutts Memorial Lecture at the conference. Finally, David Rightmire, a faithful contributor to the journal, reminds us that holiness cannot be separated from the redemptive purposes of God.

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