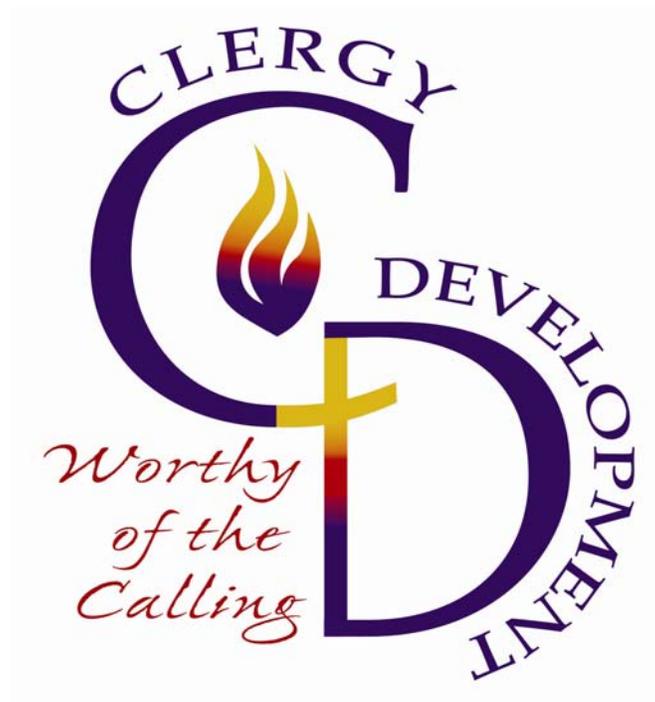

Student Guide

Investigating Christian Theology 2



Clergy Development
Church of the Nazarene
Kansas City, Missouri
816-333-7000 ext. 2468; 800-306-7651 (USA)
2003

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The **Modular Course of Study** is an outcome-based curriculum designed to implement the educational paradigm defined by the Breckenridge Consultations. Clergy Development is responsible for maintaining and distributing the Modular Course of Study for the Church of the Nazarene.

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Series Foreword

A Vision for Christian Ministry: Clergy Education in the Church of the Nazarene

The chief purpose of all persons—indeed, all of the creation—is to worship, love, and serve God. God has made himself known in His deeds of creation and redemption. As the Redeemer, God has called into existence a people: the Church, who embody, celebrate, and declare His name and His ways. The life of God with His people and the world constitutes the Story of God. That story is recorded principally in the Old and New Testaments, and continues to be told by the resurrected Christ who lives and reigns as Head of His Church. The Church lives to declare the whole Story of God. This it does in many ways—in the lives of its members who are even now being transformed by Christ through preaching, the sacraments, in oral testimony, community life, and in mission. All members of the Body of Christ are called to exercise a ministry of witness and service. No one is excluded.

In God's own wisdom He calls some persons to fulfill the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and caring for God's people, in a form referred to as the ordained ministry. God is the initial actor in this call, not humans. In the Church of the Nazarene we believe God calls and persons respond. They do not elect the Christian ministry. All persons whom God calls to the ordained ministry should continue to be amazed that He would call them. They should continue to be humbled by God's call. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states, "we recognize and hold that the Head of the Church calls some men and women to the more official and public work of the ministry." It adds, "The church, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, will recognize the Lord's call" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 400).

An ordained Christian minister has as his or her chief responsibility to declare in many ways the whole Story of God as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His or her charge is to "tend the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3, NRSV). The minister fulfills this charge under the supervision of Christ, the chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Such ministry can be fulfilled only after a period of careful preparation. Indeed, given the ever-changing demands placed upon the minister, "preparation" never ceases.

A person who enters the Christian ministry becomes in a distinct sense a steward of the gospel of God (Titus 1:7). A steward is one who is entrusted to care for what belongs to another. A steward may be one who takes care of another person or who manages the property of someone else. All Christians are stewards of the grace of God. But in addition, in a peculiar sense a Christian minister is a steward of the "mystery of God," which is Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah of God. In all faithfulness, the minister is called to "make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel" (Eph 6:19, NRSV). Like Paul, he or she must faithfully preach "the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph 3:8-10, NRSV).

In fulfilling this commission, there is plenty of room for diligence and alertness, but no room for laziness or privilege (Titus 1:5-9). Good stewards recognize that they are

stewards only, not the owners, and that they will give an account of their stewardship to the master. Faithfulness to one's charge and to the Lord who issued it is the steward's principal passion. When properly understood, the Christian ministry should never be thought of as a "job." It is ministry—uniquely Christian ministry. No higher responsibility or joy can be known than to become a steward of the Story of God in Christ's Church. The person who embraces God's call to the ordained ministry will stand in the company of the apostles, the Early Fathers of the Church, the Reformers of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformers, and many persons around the world today who joyfully serve as stewards of the gospel of God.

Obviously, one who does not recognize, or who understands but rejects, just how complete and inclusive a minister's stewardship must be, should not start down the path that leads to ordination. In a peculiar sense, a Christian minister must in all respects model the gospel of God. He or she is to "shun" the love of money. Instead, the minister must "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness." He or she must "fight the good fight of the faith" and "take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called" (1 Tim 6: 11-12, NRSV).

Hence, the Church of the Nazarene believes "the minister of Christ is to be in all things a pattern to the flock—in punctuality, discretion, diligence, earnestness; 'in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left' (2 Cor 6: 6-7)" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 401.1). The minister of Christ "must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, ⁸but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, ⁹holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching . . . able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1: 7-9, NASB).

In order to be a good steward of God's Story one must, among other things, give oneself to careful and systematic study, both before and after ordination. This will occur not because he or she is forced to do so, but out of a love for God and His people, the world He is working to redeem, and out of an inescapable sense of responsibility. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the attitude one brings to preparation for the ministry reveals much about what he or she thinks of God, the gospel, and Christ's Church. The God who became incarnate in Jesus and who made a way of salvation for all gave His very best in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. In order to be a good steward, a Christian minister must respond in kind. Jesus told numerous parables about stewards who did not recognize the importance of what had been entrusted to them (Mt 21: 33-44; 25: 14-30; Mk 13: 34-37; Lk 12: 35-40; 19: 11-27; 20: 9-18).

Preparation for ministry in Christ's Church—one's education in all its dimensions—should be pursued in full light of the responsibility before God and His people that the ministry involves. This requires that one take advantage of the best educational resources at his or her disposal.

The Church of the Nazarene recognizes how large is the responsibility associated with the ordained Christian ministry and accepts it fully. Part of the way we recognize our responsibility before God is seen in the requirements we make for ordination and the practice of ministry. We believe the call to and practice of Christian ministry is a gift, not a right or privilege. We believe God holds a minister to the highest of religious, moral, personal, and professional standards. We are not reluctant to expect those

standards to be observed from the time of one's call until his or her death. We believe Christian ministry should first be a form of worship. The practice of ministry is both an offering to God and a service to His Church. By the miracle of grace, the work of the ministry can become a means of grace for God's people (Rom 12: 1-3). One's education for ministry is also a form of worship.

The modules comprising the Course of Study that may lead a person to candidacy for ordination have been carefully designed to prepare one for the kind of ministry we have described. Their common purpose is to provide a holistic preparation for entrance into the ordained Christian ministry. They reflect the Church's wisdom, experience, and responsibility before God. The modules show how highly the Church of the Nazarene regards the gospel, the people of God, the world for which Christ gave His life, and Christian ministry. Completing the modules will normally take three or four years. But no one should feel pressured to meet this schedule.

The careful study for which the modules call should show that before God and His Church one accepts the stewardly responsibility associated with ordained ministry.

Acknowledgments

Every module is the accumulation of effort by many people. Someone writes the original manuscript, others offer suggestions to strengthen the content and make the material more easily understood, and finally an editor formats the module for publication. This module is no different. Many people have contributed to this module. Every effort has been made to represent accurately the original intent of the principal contributors.

Principal Contributor

The principal contributor for this module is Rodrick T. Leupp. Dr. Leupp was born in Portland, Oregon. His parents provided wonderful Christian nurture within the Church of the Nazarene, a church he has attended all of his life. He was educated at Northwest Nazarene University, Pacific School of Religion, and Drew University, earning the Ph.D. in Theology at Drew University.

Dr. Leupp has fifteen years of teaching experience, including eight formative years at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary in Metro Manila, the Philippines, from 1992 to 2000. There he met Stephanie Brank, and they were married in 1993. Their two daughters were both born in the Philippines.

In 1996 Rod's first book was published, a work in trinitarian theology entitled *Knowing the Name of God*. He has written dozens of book reviews and several articles for *Holiness Today*. He has also pastored many small, United Methodist congregations. He is devoted to the Wesleyan theological heritage.

Responder

Each module was reviewed by at least one content specialist to ensure that the content did not represent a single, narrow view or opinion. The responder provided suggestions the principal contributor could integrate into this module.

The responder for this module was Wesley D. Tracy. Dr. Tracy has coauthored several books on spiritual formation. *The Upward Call: Spiritual Formation and the Holy Life*, written with Morris Weigelt, Janine Tartaglia, and Dee Freeborn, was published in 1994 by Beacon Hill Press and has gone through several printings in English and Spanish. Dr. Tracy was the principal author of *Reflecting God*, a layperson's textbook on spiritual formation published by Beacon Hill Press and the Christian Holiness Partnership and sponsored by the 23 supporting denominations of CHP. This book is supported by three other items written by Wesley Tracy: *The Reflecting God Workbook*, *Reflecting God Leader's Guide*, and *The Reflecting God Journal*.

Tracy holds five higher education degrees including degrees from Southern Nazarene University, Nazarene Theological Seminary and two doctorates from San Francisco Theological Seminary. He has published more than 1,000 articles and has written or coauthored some 25 books. He has served as a pastor, as editor of eight Christian periodicals, and as an educator at MidAmerica Nazarene University, Nazarene Theological Seminary, as well as special adult education projects in Europe, Latin America, and Asia.

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Syllabus

Investigating Christian Theology 2

Educational Institution, Setting, or Educational Provider:

Location of the Course:

Course Dates:

Name of the Instructor:

Instructor's Address, Telephone, and E-mail Address:

Module Vision Statement:

Historically, theology has been known as “the Queen of the Sciences.” While calling it that today may seem overly dramatic, all pastors-in-training will agree that a basic grounding in Christian theology is essential. Everything a pastor does—praying, counseling, preaching, leading in worship—can and in one sense *must* be understood theologically. Whether acknowledged or not, theological implications assert themselves throughout the entire pastoral task, from first to last, top to bottom, front to back, side to side. It is too much to claim that theology is “the only game in town,” so far as the pastor is concerned, yet no other game makes any sense without theological awareness.

Even a seemingly non-theological task like conducting a church board meeting may be the occasion for theological reflection. For example, current approaches to God as triune suggest the Trinity is itself the model for perfect human community, being more than one that yet always functions, acts, and believes as one. Applied to the church board situation, this may mean the pastor does not dominate the meeting, but shares collegially with all present, working with them toward consensus or even unanimity.

It has been said that practical theology is the “crown jewel” of all theological study. These two modules are not strictly speaking courses in practical theology, and yet the practical dimension of theology must always be kept in view. Noted Nazarene theologian J. Kenneth Grider liked to talk about theology wearing overalls, and this homespun example is exactly correct. Albert Outler has well defined John Wesley's theology as an example of a “folk theology” at its best. Regarding Wesley's theology as a whole, “practical divinity” is the operative watchword.

Overall Hopes for These Two Modules

1. To survey the grand heritage and great tradition of orthodox Christian theology. Our survey will touch on biblical foundations, selected historical developments, and some contemporary problems and restatements.
2. The tone of these two modules is intentionally *irenic* (leading to consensus and peace) rather than *polemic* (tending to seek conflict and emphasizing disagreement with other Christian traditions). To use a cliché, this means we are more interested in building bridges than walls. Doctrines such as the triunity of

God, Jesus Christ as fully divine and fully human, the reality of sin, and Jesus Christ as God's anointed Redeemer are universally accepted across the Christian spectrum.

3. Having said that, Wesleyan distinctives such as prevenient grace and entire sanctification will be stressed where appropriate.
4. To understand something of how theologians work and what theologians do, which also means to appreciate the craft of theological thinking. We do this remembering that the local pastor is also a theologian. We desire to appreciate theology as both an intellectual and a practical discipline.
5. It is important to see links between Christian theology and both ethics and worship.
6. At times we may engage in some theological analysis of culture.
7. Overall, the goal of a deeper knowing of the Triune God must motivate our every impulse. Recall that Søren Kierkegaard said, "Only that which edifies is true for me." This is our goal: edifying truth.

A Few Governing Assumptions as We Begin

Virtually all systematic theologies have two or three central emphases that serve to govern and guide everything said, claimed, and articulated by that particular theology. Wesleyan or Nazarene theology has often been guided by

- a. the grace of God, especially the Wesleyan view of prevenient grace.
- b. the hope that Christian theology may be seen as an integrated whole. The *ordo salutis* (Latin, meaning "the order of salvation") is for Nazarene theology the organizing principle of the whole.

In "The Scripture Way of Salvation" John Wesley expressed the order of salvation in fluid and dynamic terms: "So that the salvation which is here spoken of might be extended to the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul till it is consummated in glory." Nazarenes have often stressed the two moments of justification (initial sanctification) and entire sanctification (Christian perfection). Wesley's quote means both of these two "moments" need to be taken in the broader context of the entire drama of salvation.

- c. the classic meaning of theology is that it is simply the study of God. To intend to study God may of course mean very many things, but it cannot mean *only* an intellectual and rational approach to God. Experiential knowing of God has always been important for Nazarene people. Studying God must always lead to praising Him. *Orthodoxy* (right or correct doctrine) cannot finally be separated from *Doxology*, the true worship of God. These must be wedded to correct conduct or action, which is *Orthopraxis*. These three realities—Doxology, Orthodoxy, Orthopraxis—in some ways function as a "holy trinity" of theological method and formulation. They can be conceptualized separately, but each needs the other two to be complete.
- d. Phineas F. Bresee believed Nazarene theology ought to be characterized by this dictum, which was not original with him, and yet reflected his way of theologizing and Christian ministry: *in essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things love*.

Educational Assumptions

1. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential to any process of Christian education at any level. We will consistently request and expect the Spirit's presence within and among us.
2. Christian teaching and learning is best done in the context of community (people being and working together). Community is the gift of the Spirit but may be enhanced or hindered by human effort. Communities have common values, stories, practices, and goals. Explicit effort will be invested to enhance community within the class. Group work will take place in every lesson.
3. Every adult student has knowledge and experiences to contribute to the class. We learn not only from the instructor and the reading assignments, but also from each other. Each student is valued not only as a learner but also as a teacher. That is one reason so many exercises in this course are cooperative and collaborative in nature.
4. Journaling is an ideal way to bring theory and practice together as students synthesize the principles and content of the lessons with their own experiences, preferences, and ideas.

Outcome Statements

This module contributes to the development of the following abilities as defined in the *U.S. Sourcebook for Ministerial Development*.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- CN 18 Ability to list and explain the Nazarene Articles of Faith
- CN 19 Ability to identify and explain the main characteristics of the nature of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Human Person, Sin, Salvation, the Christian Life, the Church and Sacraments, and Eschatology
- CN 20 Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry
- CN 21 Ability to demonstrate understanding of the sources of theological reflection, its historical development, and its contemporary expressions
- CN 22 Ability to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Wesleyan theology
- CN 23 Ability to identify and explain the doctrine of Holiness from a Wesleyan perspective
- CP 10 Ability to synthesize, analyze, reason logically for discernment, assessment, and problem solving, and live with ambiguity
- CP 11 Ability to analyze the validity of arguments and to identify their presuppositions and consequences
- CP 21 Ability to envision, order, participate, and lead in contextualized, theologically grounded worship

OUTCOME STATEMENTS

- Ability to integrate Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience for theological reflection
- Ability to describe the role of systematic (or Christian) theology in the life of the church
- Ability to systematically reflect on the Christian faith
- Ability to reflect theologically on specific activities in parish ministry and discover adequate foundations for appropriate actions

- Ability to give a theological rationale for leading a church-in-mission (i.e., a missional church)
- Ability to integrate Wesleyan disciplines into spiritual practices that are becoming significant enrichments to one's personal journey
- Ability to reflect systematically and comprehensively about the nature and content of the Christian faith, and to do so for the sake of Christ's church and His world
- Ability to discern theological trends in the wider culture, especially as these trends impact the progress of Christian ministry
- Ability to defend the historic Christian faith. Christian Theology 1 is not primarily an *apologetic* venture, yet everyone who takes this class must emerge with a defined sense of the integrity of the Christian faith, which would necessarily translate into the ability to be a defender of the faith to one degree or another.

Recommended Reading

The following books by Nazarene authors are used extensively in these modules on Christian Theology. They provide a rich understanding of theology for study in these modules and also for continued reference throughout the student's career. Whenever possible, they should be a part of every Nazarene pastor's personal library.

Dunning, H. Ray. *Grace, Faith, and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1988.

Grider, J. Kenneth. *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1994.

Lodahl, Michael. *The Story of God: Wesleyan Theology and Biblical Narrative*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1994.

Staples, Rob L. *Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The Place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1991.

Staples, Rob L. *Words of Faith: An Easy Reference to Theological Terms*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2001.

Wynkoop, Mildred Bangs. *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1972.

Course Requirements

- 1. Class attendance, attention, and participation** are especially important. Students are responsible for **all** assignments and in-class work. Much of the work in this course is small-group work. Cooperative, small-group work cannot be made up. That makes attendance imperative. Even if one does extra reading or writing, the values of discussion, dialogue, and learning from each other are thwarted. If one lesson is missed, the instructor will require extra work before completion can be acknowledged. If two or more classes are missed, the student will be required to repeat the whole module.

Small-Group Work. Nothing is more important in this course than small-group work. The class members will be assigned to groups of two to four students each. The group members will serve as study partners for explorations and discussion.

2. Assignments

Journaling: The only ongoing assignment for this module is your journal. It is to be used regularly, if not daily. On at least one occasion during the term, the instructor will check the journals. In each lesson a journal assignment is included.

The journal should become the student's friend and treasury of insights, devotions, and ideas. Here the integration of theory and practice occurs. The spiritual life nature of the journal helps guard against the course of study being merely academic as you are repeatedly called upon to apply the principles studied to your own heart and your own ministry situation.

This journal is not a diary, not a catchall. It is, rather, a guided journal or a focused journal in which the educational experience and its implications are selected for reflection and writing.

The framers of this curriculum are concerned about the way that students fall into learning "about" the Bible, or "about" the spiritual life rather than learning—that is coming to know and internalize the Bible and spiritual principles. The journaling experience ensures that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in the course of study. Be faithful with all journaling assignments.

Daily Work: This module has regular homework assignments. It is called daily work because even though the class may only meet once a week, the student should be working on the module on a "daily" basis. Sometimes the homework assignments are quite heavy. The assignments are important. Even if homework is not discussed in class every session, the work is to be handed in. This gives the instructor regular information about the student's progress in the course. The normal time for homework to be handed in is at the beginning of each class session. **All** assignments are to be completed.

Course Outline and Schedule

The class will meet for 26 hours according to the following schedule:

Session Date	Session Time	
		1. The Person of Jesus Christ, Part 1
		2. The Person of Jesus Christ, Part 2
		3. The Person of Jesus Christ, Part 3
		4. The Meaning of Atonement
		5. Atonement and Grace
		6. The Way of Life

	7. Justification, Adoption, and Resurrection
	8. Thinking Theologically about Christian Perfection
	9. Nazarene Theologians on Entire Sanctification
	10. Theology of the Holy Spirit, Part 1
	11. Theology of the Holy Spirit, Part 2
	12. The Doctrine of the Church, Part 1
	13. The Doctrine of the Church, Part 2
	14. Theology of the Sacraments, Part 1
	15. Theology of the Sacraments, Part 2
	16. Eschatology
	17. Now and Future Shapes of Nazarene Theology

Course Evaluation

The instructor, the course itself, and the student's progress will be evaluated. These evaluations will be made in several ways.

The progress of students will be evaluated with an eye for enhancing the learning experience by:

1. Carefully observing the small-group work, noting the competence of reports, the balance of discussion, the quality of the relationships, the cooperation level, and the achievement of assigned tasks
2. Careful reading of homework assignments
3. Completion of all homework assignments
4. Journal checks

The course materials and the teacher will be evaluated by frequently asking and discussing the effectiveness and relevance of a certain method, experience, story, lecture, or other activity.

Some evaluation cannot be made during the class itself. Some objectives will not be measurable for years to come. If students encounter the transforming power of God at deeper levels than ever before, learn devotional skills and practice them with discipline, and incorporate the best of this course into their own ministries, the fruit of this educational endeavor could go on for a long time. In truth, that is what we expect.

Additional Information

A reasonable effort to assist every student will be made. Any student who has handicaps, learning disabilities, or other conditions that make the achievement of the class requirements exceedingly difficult should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to see what special arrangements can be made. Any student who is having trouble understanding the assignments, lectures, or other learning activities should talk to the instructor to see what can be done to help.

Instructor's Availability

Good faith efforts to serve the students both in and beyond the classroom will be made.

Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration

Participating in the course of study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each course you will be required to listen to lectures, read several books, participate in discussions, write papers, and take exams. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The course work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritually formative work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head to your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work to faithfully spend time daily in your journal. Many people confess that this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling as time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, an ah-ha that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using

composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet, family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with course material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems that we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your course work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration, weaving together faith development with learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

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Lesson 1: The Person of Jesus Christ, Part 1

Due This Lesson

None

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- understand the importance of the doctrine of the Incarnation for Christian theology
- bring theology of Incarnation into ministry
- survey some New Testament witness to the Incarnation
- discover the New Testament testimony to the deity of Jesus Christ
- realize the dangerous allure of some Christological heresies

Homework Assignments

Study the Chalcedonian statement—Resource 1-8.

- Write a two-page essay showing how the various Christological heresies are refuted by the statement.
- What positively does the statement say about Christological orthodoxy?

Read Resource 1-9 in the Student Guide. Write out three discussion questions the material raises for you.

Write in your journal.

- Read the hymn, "Fairest Lord Jesus." Record two or three of the poetic images ascribed to Jesus by the hymn writer. Do you "resonate" with these images, or are they too sentimental for you?
- How does Christian orthodoxy inform the Christian in these pluralistic times?

Jesus Christ

“Regardless of what anyone may personally think or believe about him, Jesus of Nazareth has been the dominant figure in the history of Western culture for almost twenty centuries.”

Jaroslav Pelikan

“Jesus whom I know as my Redeemer cannot be less than God!”

Athanasius

“You should point to the whole man Jesus and say, ‘That is God.’”

Martin Luther

“The most pressing question on the problem of faith is whether a man, as a civilized being . . . can believe in the divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, for therein rests the whole of our faith.”

Feodor Dostoyevsky

“This Man Jesus Christ . . . does not only live through God and with God. He is Himself God.”

Karl Barth

The Center of the Center

“Jesus Christ, the condescension of divinity, and the exaltation of humanity.”

Phillips Brooks

The Christological Meanings of Epiphany

1. The birth of Jesus
2. The arrival of the wise men and the giving of gifts
3. The baptism of Jesus
4. The first of Jesus' many signs and miracles

The Reality of the Incarnation

“The meaning of the Word being made flesh is not that the divine nature was changed into flesh, but that the divine nature assumed our flesh.”

Augustine

“The Son of God adopted human nature and united it with his divine nature in the unity of one person. . . . Christ in his incarnation did not cease to be God, but he chose to meet us on our level in the garb of human flesh.”

Donald Bloesch¹

Søren Kierkegaard wrote of both the “qualitative degradation” and “quantitative degradation” that marked the life of Jesus Christ.

“God, in one of the modes of God’s triune being, was once for all made human in the person of Jesus Christ. He alone was and is God incarnate. Out of God’s steadfast love for humankind, a particular human venue—the history of Israel—was prepared for the coming of the divine Savior. Jesus of Nazareth was a Jew, and it was Jewish faith alone that could express in human form God’s nature and will for our salvation. The cross and resurrection of Jesus constitute God’s own self-involvement with suffering, sinful humanity, and God’s costly triumph over sin and death. Men and women are invited to respond in faith to what God has done for them in Christ, to accept the divine forgiveness and reconciliation, and to participate in the divine life through the indwelling spirit of the crucified and risen Christ.”

Brian Hebblethwaite²

New Testament Foundations

“The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

John 1:14

“For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.”

Colossians 1:19

“But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.”

Hebrews 1:2

Small Groups

In your small group read the three classical Christological hymns—quoted from NRSV.

Discuss the questions as pertaining to all three hymns.

Philippians 2: 6-11	Colossians 1: 15-20	Hebrews 1: 1-4
<p>Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.</p> <p>Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.</p>	<p>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.</p>	<p>Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.</p>

How is Jesus Christ named as the creator of the world? What is the relationship of Jesus Christ to the creation of the world?

What is the relationship between God the Father and God the Son in these passages?

What qualities does the Son possess?

What qualities does the Son willingly give up?

What are three lessons for living the Christian life present in these three passages?

Bible Study

In pairs, work together to match the first column with the second column.

Wainwright discusses the following seven scriptures as bearing a certain and definite witness to the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Scripture Reference	Witness Point
A. Romans 9:5	_____ The Son reveals the Father
B. Hebrews 1:8	_____ Jesus our Savior
C. John 1:1-2	_____ Christ over all
D. John 1:18	_____ Jesus is our great God
E. John 20:28	_____ The Son is eternal
F. Titus 2:13	_____ Personal Lord
G. 2 Peter 1:1	_____ Christ existed before time

Wainwright mentions seven additional scriptures that may offer evidence of the divinity of Jesus Christ, but which are not as valuable as the preceding seven.

Scripture Reference	Witness Point
H. 2 Thessalonians 1:12	_____ Knowing Christ is eternal life
I. Colossians 2:2	_____ Servanthood is with God and Christ
J. John 17:3	_____ Grace comes through Jesus Christ
K. 1 John 5:20	_____ Jesus is the King eternal
L. James 1:1	_____ Jesus' name means "God with us"
M. Matthew 1:23	_____ Christ the mystery of God
N. 1 Timothy 1:17	_____ The Son gives understanding and truth

Christological Heresies

Overstress on Christ's Humanity

- Ebionism

- Adoptionism

Overstress on Christ's Divinity

Docetism

Apollinarianism

Eutychianism

Two Additional Heresies

Arianism

Nestorianism

Chalcedon Creed

Following the holy Fathers, we all with one voice confess our Lord Jesus Christ one and the same Son, the same perfect in Godhead, the same perfect in humanity, truly God and truly man, the same consisting of a reasonable soul and a body, of one substance with the Father as touching the Godhead, the same of one substance with us as touching humanity, like us in all things apart from sin; begotten of the Father before the ages as touching the Godhead, the same in the last days, for us and for our salvation, born from the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, as touching humanity, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way abolished because of the union, but rather the characteristic property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person, or hypostasis, not as if Christ were parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God, Word, Lord, Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from the beginning spoke concerning him, and our Lord Jesus Christ instructed us, and the Creed of the Fathers was handed down to us.

Our Divine-Human Savior

Christology “From Above” and Christology “From Below”

What is the best starting position for Christological thought? For virtually all of the history of the Christian church, it was “from above.” Jesus Christ was God’s anointed one sent forth in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Some New Testament passages that point in this direction include Philippians 2:5-11, which is the famous “kenotic” Christology, Romans 8:3, and Galatians 4:4. Christology from above features a rhythm of descent and ascent. C. S. Lewis captures the image of descent when he ponders the depth of humiliation the Word of God willingly undertook. For the Eternal Word to become flesh is a bit like humans becoming crabs or slugs. Christ is never more humiliated than on the Cross, but is vindicated and exalted when God the Father raises Him to new life, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Standing behind every effort to realize and establish a “Christology from above” is the doctrine of the Trinity. In particular, the question becomes this: How can it be that the Logos, or the second person of the Trinity, can assume our human nature? This reminds us of Augustine’s concise explanation, “the meaning of the Word being made flesh is not that the divine nature was changed into flesh, but that the divine nature assumed our flesh.”³

Elizabeth Johnson believes Christology from above is most characteristic of the incarnational focus of the Gospel of John. This focus was carried on by the Church Fathers and into the middle ages. “Starting with the belief that this is the Word of God,” Johnson describes, “we trace his descent into our world, marveling at the love of God which impels such identification with us and our troubles.”⁴

By contrast, Johnson sees the Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke as leading logically to Christology from below. “Starting with the concrete memories of Jesus of Nazareth and his impact, we trace his ascent through death and resurrection to the glory of God, challenged to follow his way in our own lives as a believing community. In this approach, Jesus is named first of all a prophet and messenger from God—and more than a prophet; the greatest of the prophets; the eschatological prophet who brings the final word from God into the world, a word of compassionate and liberating love.”⁵

Johnson may be correct that the Synoptic Gospels specialize in what she calls “concrete memories.” Yet such memories and testimonies need not support *only* Christology from below, as she implies. What of the Roman centurion in Mark 15:39 who confesses, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”? While this remark may begin “from below” in the memory of one Roman soldier, it certainly ascends to the “above” of believing in the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Arguing against Christology from Above

Pannenberg clearly states the intent of Christology from above, but cannot agree with it. He gives three reasons why he does not think this to be the proper starting point for Christology:

- The most urgent task of any Christology is to investigate the divinity of Jesus Christ. Yet Christology from above does not seek to prove or reason toward Jesus' divinity, but merely asserts it.
- He further believes the humanity of Jesus and His real historical situation, especially His rootedness in the Judaism of His time, are largely ignored in Christology from above.
- Christology from above, Pannenberg asserts, must mean we have the wisdom that only God truly has. "One would have to stand in the position of God himself in order to follow the way of God's Son into the world."⁶

Any Benefits to Christology from Below?

The current trend among non-evangelical Christian theologians, especially those who should be called liberals, is definitely toward the Christology from below. For the sake of relevance, and intersecting with and ultimately elevating humankind, we need a Jesus who identifies with us in all of our humanness, say these voices.

There is much to be said for this approach, provided we do not take it too far. Some recent films have taken it too far, exploring such themes as the sexuality of Jesus and depicting Him as an "all too human" savior figure.

Since Nazarene theology is by nature conservative and values the received traditions from Christian antiquity, it has sometimes overlooked or slighted the full humanity of Jesus Christ. The divinity of Jesus Christ in fact saves us from our sins, but so also does His humanity. Unless we have a Savior who knows our human situation inside and out, the salvation He offers will not touch all human needs. One weakness of John Wesley's Christology is a relative neglect of Jesus Christ's true humanity. To the extent that Wesley ignored the humanity of Christ he failed to grasp the full salvific potential of Jesus Christ.⁷

Arguing for Christology from Above

As we said before, the weight of Christian history favors Christology from above. Thomas C. Oden presents five classic arguments in favor of Christ's divinity, or Christology from above. Notice how this material supports earlier borrowings from Arthur Wainwright in establishing the necessary correlation between Christology and Trinity.

1. Jesus Christ Was Called God

Scripture refers to Christ using such lofty language as "Only-begotten," "the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Light," "the Effulgence, the Impress, the Image, the Seal," "Lord, King, He That Is, the Almighty."

2. To Jesus Were Ascribed Divine Qualities

- holiness, "the Holy and Righteous One," Acts 3:14
- fullness of God indwells Him, Col 1:15-20
- preexistence, Jn 8:58; 17:5
- "the same yesterday and today and forever," Heb 13:8
- unsurpassable power, Mt 28:20; Mk 5:11-15; Jn 11:38-44
- penetrating insight into human nature, knowing the hearts of all, Acts 1:24; Mt 16:21; Lk 6:8; 11:17; Jn 4:29
- total truthfulness, Jn 14:6
- unfailing eternal love, Eph 3:19

3. Jesus Operated as Only God Could and Did

- forgiving sin, Mk 2: 1-12
- giver of life, Jn 5: 21
- being himself raised from the dead, Mt 28: 1-15; Lk 24: 1-12

4. Jesus Was Worshiped

- "Jesus is Lord," Rom 10: 9
- Son honored equally with the Father, Jn 5: 23

5. Jesus the Son and God the Father Were Equal

Historically, this was affirmed by the first ecumenical council of the church, at Nicaea in 325. Of course Nicaea was not inventing this doctrine, but confirming the New Testament belief in the coequality of the Father and the Son. See John 10: 30, where Jesus says, "I and the Father are one." The hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy!" is a confirmation of the Nicene faith, as is true also of the Nicene Creed. Either of these might be helpfully referred to. The relevant parts of the Nicene Creed are:

the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father

Sing to the Lord, selection 14

Oden gives this summary statement:

One who is addressed by ascriptions that could only be appropriate for God, who possesses attributes that only God could possess, who does the works only God could have done, who was worshiped as God without disclaiming it, and one who was viewed by the apostles as equal to God must be God.⁸

Can the Divinity of Jesus Christ Be Proven?

Most scholars agree that the climax of the Gospel of John is the verse we quoted earlier, Thomas's declaration in 20: 28, "My Lord and my God!" Many people would gladly exchange places with Thomas, not for the sake of doubting, but for the chance to encounter the post-Resurrection Christ on terms that would lead the most perplexed skeptic to faith.

In the strict sense of the word "proof," the divinity of Jesus Christ cannot be proven beyond all doubt. If it could be, what room would there be for faith? However, there are abundantly good reasons to have every confidence that Jesus Christ is the One whom the first Christians worshiped as Lord and God.

We have surveyed much of the relevant New Testament evidence for the divinity of Jesus Christ, at least citing the obvious places where one would look to find scriptural support. If one trusts the veracity of Holy Scripture, one will be at the same time convinced of the divinity—and true humanity—of Jesus Christ. Scripture is obviously foundational. But the other three elements of the Wesleyan quadrilateral must not be overlooked. Statements given in Scripture are not contrary to reason. The glorified and resurrected Jesus Christ was seen by more than 500 witnesses (1 Cor 15: 6). Are

we to assume that all of them were simply deluded? To believe that takes more courage than to accept the obvious fact of Jesus' divinity.

Anyone must come, like Thomas, to the point of personal decision regarding the person of Jesus Christ. There can be no substitute for that personal owning of the deity and lordship of Jesus Christ. We must imitate the wise men in worshiping the Christ as God:

Frankincense to offer have I
Incense owns a Deity nigh
Prayer and praising,
All men raising
Worship Him, God on high.

But personal decisions are seldom, if ever, made in a vacuum. Not only are there good reasons for affirming Jesus Christ as truly God and truly human; these reasons have been passed down through the Christian centuries to our day today. Our experience may be personal, but it is not isolated from those who have gone before us.

Jesus Christ and "the Scandal of Particularity"

Clearly, it is difficult, and finally not possible, to separate the *work* Jesus Christ came to do from the reality of His *person*. Lessons 4 and 5 of this module will be devoted to special consideration of the work of Jesus Christ.

Many people reject the person of Jesus Christ because they cannot accept that His *particular* work of salvation is in fact *universally* available and, moreover, *universally* effective for all people. One might even say *universally* demanded, in the sense of Acts 4:12, NRSV, "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

Perhaps better than any other single New Testament reference, Acts 4:12 expresses what is sometimes called "the scandal of particularity." In their evangelistic efforts Christians are not to use scriptures like this one as weapons to subdue and ultimately to conquer the pagan and heathen "enemy." Evangelistic tactics not filled with the very love, mercy, and grace that are indeed the hallmarks of the gospel of Jesus Christ will probably fail, and deserve to fail.

Yet "the scandal of particularity" must not be compromised. Every nation, culture, and individual must decide about Jesus of Nazareth. To beg off deciding is its own weak-willed decision. Negative comparisons between Jesus Christ and various other savior figures from other religions of the world have been in the past a common evangelistic method. Should such negative comparisons continue to be the order of the day?

In the opinion of this writer, at least, there is more to be lost than gained in making negative comparisons between Jesus Christ and other savior figures from the other religions of the world. Initially, at least, we should praise and glorify our Savior, like John the Baptist pointing beyond ourselves to the reality of the crucified, resurrected, and ascended Jesus Christ. Later conversations may require us to address specifically how the person and work of Jesus Christ are the true path to the knowledge of the One True God.

Lesson 2: The Person of Jesus Christ, Part 2

Due This Lesson

Two-page essay
Three discussion questions
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- ask about the proper starting place for Christology, whether “from above” or “from below”
- survey biblical evidence related to this question, especially that of the more traditional and conservative option of “from above”
- gain familiarity with the phrase “scandal of particularity”
- understand something of the classic approach to the person and work of Jesus Christ known as the “threefold office,” namely, Prophet, Priest, and King

Homework Assignments

In her book, *Consider Jesus*, Elizabeth Johnson summarizes how each of the five major New Testament writers looked at Jesus Christ.

- Paul—Jesus is the crucified and risen Christ.
- Mark—Jesus is the suffering Messiah.
- Matthew—Jesus is the new Moses, teacher of the new law.
- Luke—Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, is Savior of all.
- John—Jesus is the Word of God made flesh.

The assignment is to find at least two, but not more than four, scriptures in each of these five sources that support the description provided by Johnson. After these scriptures have been identified, write a two- or three-page descriptive essay showing how these scriptures taken together support the New Testament preaching of Jesus Christ as God’s anointed and the world’s Savior.

Read Resource 2-5, “Further Investigations into the Threefold Office.”

Try to imagine which *one component* of the threefold office is likely the most important for each of the following typical church offices (we are assuming these offices are held by members of the laity):

Leader of Nazarene Missions International	Coordinator of the cradle roll and nursery
Sunday School superintendent	Evangelism coordinator
Chairperson of the church board	Chairperson of the social committee
Chairperson of the finance committee	Chairperson of the trustees
Spouse of the pastor	

Write in your journal. How can I personally know the reality of the incarnation of Jesus Christ in my life and in my world? One time when I believe I experienced or encountered the Living Christ was when _____.

Christology

Elizabeth Johnson, in response to the Christological dogma of Chalcedon briefly mentioned at the close of the last lesson, has this to say:

Human nature is a deep questing mystery, thirsting for the infinite. Divine nature is the incomprehensible mystery of holy Love seeking to give Godself [God's very own self] away. The two come together in the incarnation in a personal unity which enables the human nature of Jesus to flourish. In this way of reading the dogma [of Chalcedon] we do not say, "Jesus is God, and in addition human as well." Rather, we start at the other end and say, "As this human being, Jesus is the Son of God. Precisely as this human being he is God in time. He is fully human, fully free, fully personal, and as such he is God who has self-emptied into our history." At the end of this progression of thought, what is restored to our consciousness is a way of envisioning Jesus to be genuinely human at the same time that the confession of his genuine divinity does not slip from view.

Johnson proposes that Christology may plausibly be started from one of two vantage points:

- Jesus is God, and in addition human as well.
- As this human being, Jesus is the Son of God.

Clearly, Johnson favors the second point of departure.

Do you agree with Johnson, and why or why not?

Jesus' Use of Titles

We may be confident that at no time did Jesus Christ allow any title accorded to Him to diminish His sense of calling or His availability to minister to those under His care. Jesus' acceptance and use of titles:

- expressed but never obscured the mission He came to accomplish
- beckoned the needy to Him, not drove them away
- revealed the heart of a Servant
- were not about reinforcing a stratifying hierarchy, but about breaking down walls and barricades

Christian Voices on Munus Triplex

Reformed

Friedrich Schleiermacher

- “the prophetic office of Christ consists in teaching, prophesying, and working miracles.”
- “the priestly office of Christ includes his perfect fulfillment of the law (his active obedience), his atoning death (his passive obedience), and his intercession with the Father for believers.”
- “the kingly office of Christ consists in the fact that everything which the community of believers requires for its well-being continually proceeds from him.”⁹

Karl Barth

- “Jesus Christ, the Lord as Servant” represents the priestly office.
- “Jesus Christ, the Servant as Lord” is the kingly office.
- “Jesus Christ, the Witness” or “the Guarantor” is the prophetic office.¹⁰

John Calvin

- “In order that faith may find a firm basis for salvation in Christ, and thus rest in him, this principle must be laid down: the office enjoined upon Christ by the Father consists of three parts. For he was given to be prophet, king, and priest. Yet it would be of little value to know these names without understanding their purpose and use. The papists use these names, too, but coldly and rather ineffectually, since they do not know what each of these titles contains.”¹¹

Roman Catholic

In 1992 the universally accepted *Catechism of the Catholic Church* stated, “Jesus fulfilled the messianic hope of Israel in his threefold office of priest, prophet, and king. . . . Jesus Christ is the one whom the Father anointed with the Holy Spirit and established as priest, prophet, and king. The whole People of God participates in these three offices of Christ and bears the responsibilities for mission and service that flow from them. . . . In the Church, Christ has entrusted to the apostles and their successors the office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing in his name and by his power.”¹²

Wesley's Munus Triplex

From Wesley's "Letter to a Roman Catholic," wherein Wesley explains how a true Protestant believes, taking into account the Nicene Creed:

I believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Savior of the world, the Messiah so long foretold; that, being anointed by the Holy Ghost, he was a Prophet, revealing to us the whole will of God; that he was a Priest, who gave himself a sacrifice for sin, and still makes intercession for transgressors; that he is a King, who has power in heaven and in earth, and will reign till he has subdued all things to himself.

From Wesley's *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*, expounding Matthew 1: 16:

The word Christ in Greek, and Messiah in Hebrew, signify "Anointed"; and imply the prophetic, priestly, and royal characters which were to meet in the Messiah. Among the Jews, anointing was the ceremony whereby prophets, priests, and kings were initiated into those offices. And if we look into ourselves, we shall find a want of Christ in all these respects. We are by nature at a distance from God, alienated from him, and incapable of a free access to him. Hence we want a Mediator, and Intercessor; in a word, a Christ in his priestly office. This regards our state with respect to God. And with respect to ourselves, we find a total darkness, blindness, ignorance of God and the things of God. Now here we want Christ in his prophetic office, to enlighten our minds, and teach us the whole will of God. We find also within us a strange misrule of appetites and passions. For these we want Christ in his royal character, to reign in our hearts, and subdue all things to himself.¹³

Small Groups

John Wesley, ever the theologian of experience, gives more practical information on the munus triplex than most other thinkers. Carefully note the experience-based nature of how Christ relates to us in terms of the three offices.

Your task is to plan a sermon on the Threefold Office of Christ. The main points of the outline are:

1. Christ as Prophet revealing God's will and love
2. Christ as Priest provides access to God
3. Christ the King must rule in our lives

Come up with illustrations, examples, anecdotes, stories, etc., to support each of the three main points in the sermon outline.

Be prepared to share your best illustration with the whole class.

Further Investigations into the Threefold Office

Five Ways of Understanding

At different times in the history of Christian thought the threefold office has been understood in various, if clearly overlapping, ways. Geoffrey Wainwright, in his book *For Our Salvation: Two Approaches to the Work of Christ*, performs a valuable service by identifying five of these.

Christological

Any title at all, be it president, pastor, senator, or prime minister, suggests some of the duties its holder will carry forth. A president governs and a pastor oversees the flock entrusted to his or her care. But function or utility is really only the porch or the doorway, not the dwelling itself. What is truly defining is the quality and character of the one who holds the office. However sterling and memorable the performance may be, it cannot mask corruption at the heart of the performer.

Likewise, the Christological use of prophet, priest, and king centers on the *person* of Jesus Christ. These gifts are bestowed by God the Father, and demonstrate Jesus to be the completion of Old Testament forebears. The fourth-century preacher John Chrysostom believed "Christ was to have three dignities: King, Prophet, Priest . . . Abraham was prophet and priest (cf Gen 15:9; 20:7). . . . David was king and prophet, but not priest. Thus Jesus is called the son of both, that the threefold dignity of his two forefathers might be recognized by hereditary right in Christ."¹⁴

Thomas Aquinas believed that because all grace had been poured out on Jesus Christ, all others could receive all graces from Him. He wrote:

Other men have certain graces distributed among them, but Christ, as being the Head of all, has the perfection of all graces. Wherefore, as to others, one is a lawgiver, another is a priest, another is a king; but all these concur in Christ as the fount of all grace.¹⁵

Statements like these have the cumulative effect of establishing that Jesus Christ has been endowed with the gifts of prophet, priest, and king, gifts He brought into flesh as the Son of God.

Baptismal

To be baptized in the thrice-blessed name of the holy Trinity is to receive the benefits of Jesus Christ, and to be obligated to live up to the high calling of Christian baptism. Through baptism the glories and responsibilities of the threefold office are passed from Christ to His believers. To be baptized is at once to be anointed and sealed by the Holy Spirit. John Chrysostom knew the baptized

have not received just one dignity, but all three at once, and that in a superior way. We taste the kingdom; we become priests, offering our bodies as a sacrifice, for it says "Present your members as living sacrifices, acceptable to God"; moreover, we are made prophets, for "what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, this has been revealed to us."¹⁶

To live up to the fullness of our baptismal covenant, to receive from Christ His gifts of king, priest, and prophet, is to return to original righteousness. Wainwright wisely states:

Redeemed and restored by Christ, we resume the original dignity and calling of humankind: to rule the earth as its benefactor and thus be free to enjoy it rather than exploit it; to sanctify the world by offering it to God rather than consuming it for ourselves; to discern the will of God and convey it to the world instead of seeking to possess the world in the absence of God.¹⁷

Soteriological

In their *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* John and Charles Wesley speak of the "divine oblation" Jesus Christ the High Priest offered up for our sakes to God His Father. The Wesleys continue:

*The death exalts thy ransomed ones,
And sets us 'midst the precious stones,
Closest thy dear, thy loving breast;
Israel as on thy shoulders stand;
Our names are graven on the hands,
The heart of our eternal Priest.*

Because Jesus Christ offered himself for our sakes, we are inspired by His example to give ourselves over to the Lord:

*On him, who all our burdens bears,
We cast our praises and our prayers,
Ourselves we offer up to God,
Implunged in his atoning blood.*

*Father, on us the Spirit bestow,
Through which thine everlasting Son
Offered himself for man below,
That we, e'en we before thy throne
Our souls and bodies may present,
And pay thee all thy grace hath lent.¹⁸*

As Wainwright suggests, the priestly work of Jesus Christ yields a twofold benefit that moves in two complementary directions at once. One is the descent of the Holy Spirit, which is perhaps Christ's greatest gift to all of us (Lk 24:49; Jn 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; Acts 2:33). The proper human response to this "downward" movement of Christ's gift of the Spirit can only be the "upward" ascent of the soul to God, participating in the very divine nature (2 Pet 1:4).

Ministerial

The fourth use of the threefold office needs to be seen as closely related to the fifth, which is the ecclesiological or the churchly use. The ministerial use of the *munus triplex* is especially represented by the Roman Catholic theology of the ordained ministry, where every priest assumes the threefold office of proper doctrinal teaching (*magisterium* or prophet), a priesthood capable of dispensing sanctifying grace (*ministerium*, or priest), and official and authoritative government (*regimen*, or king).

Nazarene pastors, whether those “in training” or those fully functioning in the pastoral office, need to develop a more profound theology of the Christian ministry. Roman Catholic doctrine stresses that priests function “*in persona Christi*,” that is, in the person of Jesus Christ.

The Protestant doctrine of “the priesthood of all believers” prevents Nazarene pastors from affirming the Catholic stance that a priest can forgive sins. However, ordination is a setting apart and a consecrating that makes a difference. Part of that difference could be that the Nazarene pastor is charged with true and honest teaching (the prophetic office), serving the sacraments (the priestly), and fair and judicious church government (the kingly).

The Ecclesiological or the Churchly

It has been suggested that “knowledge, power, endurance, are the three privileges of the Christian Church.”¹⁹ While these three capacities do not neatly correlate with the threefold office, knowledge is closest to the prophetic office, power to the priestly, and endurance to the kingly.

The point of the ecclesiological use of the threefold office is that, in Newman’s words, “all Christ’s followers in some sense bear all three offices.”²⁰

Fixing the Order

We have followed the order of the threefold office as it has been traditionally given and presented: Prophet, Priest, and King. This listing seems to be in keeping with a biblical or chronological order that begins in Christ’s “state of humiliation” and ends with His “state of exaltation.” Wainwright explains, “Prophecy may describe his earthly teaching ministry; on the cross he became priest and victim; kingship came with the resurrection and ascension.”²¹

Christ’s state of humiliation and state of exaltation are not mutually exclusive. While He was humiliated, He looked ahead to His exaltation; in His exalted and glorified state, Jesus Christ did not forget the reason for His humiliation, which was to save sinners.

We must say the same thing for prophet, priest, and king. They are not mutually exclusive. Jesus Christ may exercise His prophetic or teaching office in a regal manner, and His priestly ministrations may be at the same time prophetic.

By analogy, consider that many Christian pastors fulfill the following threefold office: student, spouse, parent. A pastor was a student long before he or she became a spouse, and should remain a student always, especially while fulfilling duties of spouse and parent. Those who are fortunate to be blessed with children do not forget how to be a husband or wife. If anything, parenting produces better spouses.

As Jesus Christ carries forth the threefold office, He may specialize in one of the three without forgetting the other two. In that sense the three are distinguishable and yet inseparable.

A Classic Nazarene Voice

Among Nazarene theologians, H. Orton Wiley shows the most interest in the threefold office. Wiley views the *munus triplex* in traditional terms.

Prophetic Office

As prophet Jesus Christ “is the perfect revealer of divine truth.” Wiley stresses that the Word of God exercised the prophetic office throughout all times, in the Old Testament prior to the Incarnation, during Jesus Christ’s earthly ministry, and also in the world to come.

Priestly Office

Wiley teaches, “The priestly office of Christ is concerned with objective mediation, and includes both sacrifice and intercession.” Jesus Christ, in Wiley’s understanding, is at one and the same time the Offering and the One-Who-Offers, nothing less than “the crucified God.” Christ’s priestly undertaking of redemption is made up of Intercession and Benediction, or blessing us before the Father. Wiley concludes, “After Pentecost the priestly work of Christ is continued through the Holy Spirit as a gift of the risen and exalted Savior.”

Kingly Office

As King, the exalted Christ rules “over all things in heaven and in earth for the extension of His kingdom.” All three aspects of the threefold office can be traced throughout the entire career of Jesus Christ—birth, teaching, miracles, exorcisms and healings, passion, death, resurrection, ascension—but Wiley fixes the formal assumption of the priestly office “on the eve of the crucifixion” and likewise the onset of the kingly office during the ascension.²²

Note

H. Ray Dunning’s excellent chapter 12 of *Grace, Faith, and Holiness* is “A Wesleyan View of the Atonement,” and he offers lengthy discussions of the prophetic, priestly, and kingly work of Jesus Christ. This should be consulted as complementary material to Wainwright and Wiley.

Discussion Questions

Bring to class at least three discussion questions this reading brought to your mind.

Lesson 3: The Person of Jesus Christ, Part 3

Due This Lesson

Two- to three-page essay
Reading of Resource 2-5
Threefold office in church positions
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- discuss and explain the threefold office of Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King
- consider two complementary views of Christology: the Spirit Christology and the Logos Christology
- examine other important Christological questions
- demonstrate awareness of the way all Christians share in the ministry of the offices of Christ

Homework Assignments

We have devoted considerable time to discussing the various aspects of Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King. Choose any three or four titles and activities from the list given below.

Chief Executive Officer	Attorney
Migrant Laborer	Business Executive
Fisherman	Inventor
Athlete	Judge
Politician	Nurse
Explorer	Entrepreneur

Write a creative essay on how Jesus Christ in this role might address the needs of today's world. This essay should be three to four pages in length. The intent of this assignment is not to put Scripture to the test by seeking wild alternatives to substitute for more traditional meanings attached to the person of Jesus Christ. Rather, the point is to see if more traditional "wine" can fit into newer wineskins.

Write in your journal.

- Think of two or three persons who in your understanding best exemplify the character of Jesus Christ. What sets them apart from the rest of the people you know?
- Something new I learned (or relearned) in the lesson on the offices of Christ that deserves further prayer and thought is _____.

The Holy Spirit within the Threefold Office

Geoffrey Wainwright sees that woven in and around and through all the various uses of the threefold office is the Holy Spirit. There is no cause for a separate accounting of a pneumatological use because

the Holy Spirit is the Father's gift by which Christ himself, Christians, and the church and its ministers are all anointed. The threefold office is *christocentric* but it is not *christomonist* [italics added]. It is set within a fully trinitarian frame. This means that a "Spirit-christology" should not be seen as an alternative to an "incarnation of the Word."²³

Salient Features of Spirit Christology

- In the Bible, the Holy Spirit is often represented as not only a life-giving breath, but also as an order-preserving constant, who defeats chaos.
- Jesus' being born of a virgin is direct witness to the Spirit's work in Him (Mt 1:18-23; Lk 1:34-35).
- At crucial times in His ministry, for example the baptism and wilderness temptations, Jesus was sustained and established by the Spirit.
- The ministry of Jesus, especially of deliverance, cannot be conceived of apart from the Holy Spirit. At the start of His public ministry in Luke, Jesus is handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and reads the first two verses of chapter 61.
- Jesus' self-offering on the Cross and His being raised by the Father together bear witness to the Spirit's continual presence in His life.

Summarizing Spirit Christology

- It is a truthful reflection of the early Christians' experience of their resurrected Savior. The primal Christian knowing of Jesus Christ is given and mediated by the Holy Spirit.
- Spirit Christology provides continuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament. The same Spirit seen brooding over the waters (Gen 1:1) is the dove of the Father's benediction upon Jesus' baptism.
- Evangelism and world missions are both furthered and clarified by Spirit Christology. In the case of world missions, missionaries arriving in new lands can look for the presence of the Holy Spirit, who has gone before them.

Logos Christology

It is overwhelmingly clear and certain that there can be no absolute contrast between Spirit Christology and Logos Christology. Nowhere is this more powerfully demonstrated than in Luke 1: 35, where the angel of the Lord announces to the Virgin Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you." It is only through the Holy Spirit that the Logos of God can assume human flesh.

The power of the Most High, rather than being a power of force and coercion, is a power of humility and emptying out.

Earlier in these lessons regarding the person of Christ we have paid attention to the central Christian claim of Incarnation, meaning simply and decisively the coming into human flesh of the Eternal Word of God. Human flesh means all that is or represents what it means to be human.

In Jesus Christ the finite takes on infinite weight and importance, and the infinite truly enfolds itself in human time and history. H. Orton Wiley lucidly expresses:

This Logos or Word was the Eternal Son, the second person of the Trinity. In Him as the express image of the Father were comprehended all the principles of truth, order, beauty, goodness and perfection. Hence as long as the relation between the finite and the Infinite was mediated through the Logos, it retained its true relationship to God.²⁴

Bible Study

In pairs carefully read John 13: 1-17 and Philippians 2: 5-11.

How do these passages relate to what we learned about doing Christology from "above" and from "below"?

What would "Spirit Christology" thinkers say the difference is between their claims and the claims of "Logos Christology" thinkers?

Christological Starting Point

“We should begin not with an abstract concept of deity (as in many christologies from above) nor with the historical Jesus (a christology from below) but with the living God incarnate in Jesus the man. I see Jesus not simply as a historical figure accessible to historical and scientific research but as the Word made flesh, the paradox of Eternity entering time at a particular point and place in history. This Jesus Christ is accessible—not to the probings of the historian nor to the speculations of the theologian but to the petitionings of the humble and penitent, who simply believe even as they try to understand. Those who pretend to see will be made blind; those who confess that they are in and of themselves blind will be made to see (Jn 9:39).”

Donald Bloesch²⁵

Small Groups

In groups of three match the item on the left with its correct answer on the right.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. _____ Spirit Christology | A. Threefold office of Jesus Christ |
| 2. _____ Christology "from above" | B. Centered in Jesus Christ, in a Trinitarian framework |
| 3. _____ Incarnation | C. To empty out |
| 4. _____ Munus Triplex | D. The Word made flesh |
| 5. _____ Logos Christology | E. Self-renunciation, subordination, self-limitation |
| 6. _____ Christocentric | F. Typically begins with the historical Jesus |
| 7. _____ State of Humiliation | G. Typically begins with the preexistent Christ |
| 8. _____ Kenosis | H. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." |
| 9. _____ Christomonist | I. Only Jesus Christ, neglecting God the Father and God the Spirit |
| 10. _____ State of Exaltation | J. All that Jesus did was Spirit-empowered |
| 11. _____ Christology "from below" | K. Stages of ascent: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decent into Hades• The Resurrection• The Ascension• Continual intercession |

Lesson 4: The Meaning of Atonement

Due This Lesson

Essay
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- understand the theological meaning of "atonement"
- appreciate how one's view of atonement impacts and affects other aspects of one's theological outlook, notably one's doctrine of God
- realize the uniqueness of the atonement of God-in-Christ

Homework Assignments

Make a list of seven ways that what you learned about the Atonement is pertinent to the task of pastor/teacher/evangelist.

Read Resource 4-13. Write out three discussion questions the material raises for you.

Write in your journal. Reflect on the following hymn.

Alas! and did my Savior bleed?
And did my Sov'reign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For sinners such as I?

Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe.
Here, Lord, I give myself away;
'Tis all that I can do.

Isaac Watts

The Atonement

“The subject of the Atonement is absolutely central in Christian theology; and it is directly related to that of the nature of God. Each and every interpretation of the Atonement is most closely connected with some conception of the essential meaning of Christianity, and reflects some conception of the Divine nature. Indeed, it is in some conception of the nature of God that every doctrine of the Atonement has its ultimate ground.”

Gustav Aulen²⁶

Defining Atonement

At—one—ment

Rob Staples

Atonement “has to do with ‘being in accord,’ or bringing together, two estranged parties. Sin breaks relationship with God, but God’s gracious love restores the possibility of having the relationship restored.”²⁷

Michael Winter

Atonement is “the restoration of a reciprocal relationship of love between God the Father and the human race.”²⁸

Martin Luther

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God’s own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus—it is He;
Lord Sabaoth, His name
From age to age the same;
And He must win the battle.²⁹

Gustav Aulen

“It is a work wherein God reconciles the world to Himself, and is at the same time reconciled.”³⁰

“God is pictured as in Christ carrying through a victorious conflict against powers of evil which are hostile to His will. This constitutes Atonement, because the drama is a cosmic drama, and the victory over the hostile powers brings to pass a new relation, a relation of reconciliation, between God and

the world; and, still more, because in a measure the hostile powers are regarded as in the service of the Will of God the Judge of all, and the executants of His judgment. Seen from this side, the triumph over the opposing powers is regarded as a reconciling of God Himself; He is reconciled by the very act in which He reconciles the world to Himself."³¹

Charles Wesley

Arise My Soul Arise

My God is reconciled;
His pard'ning voice I hear.
He owns me for His child;
I can no longer fear.
With confidence I now draw nigh,
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And, "Father, Abba, Father," cry.³²

Michael Lodahl

"There has been a common thread running through the Church's understanding of Christ's atonement ('at—one—ment,' being in accord): sin breaks relationship with God, but His love, a reconciling and forgiving love, restores the possibility or capacity for relationship."³³

Atonement Thinking

The very freedom that flexible atonement thinking seems to accord us should provoke all the greater care, discipline, thoughtfulness, and circumspection. The elasticity implied in the lack of an official doctrine is not irresponsibility. A well-developed theology of the Atonement must incorporate mature thoughts about divinity, humanity, incarnation, sin, grace, honor, justice, mercy, and love into a seamless whole, to name only the most obvious component parts.

A Proper Balance

Here, “objective” means, basically, that which is initiated and enacted by God, that for which God is ultimately responsible, that which can be done only and exclusively by God.

“Objective” may also refer to the changed atmosphere that results because of what God has done in Jesus Christ.

The counterpart to “objective” is “subjective.” If God is finally responsible for that which is ultimately true, it would be a weak, odd, and forgettable truth that did not become truth in and for *me*, the subject. The human subject to whom truth comes must receive that truth in the center of his or her being, and be changed by that truth.

Pelikan encapsulates both of these [objective and subjective] in his valuable analysis, that atonement theology had to emphasize that the Atonement was an act of God and to safeguard human participation in that act. Some theories were so objective in their emphasis upon divine initiative that the human race seemed to be a pawn in the transaction between God-in-Christ and the devil. Other theories so subjectively concentrated their attention on the human involvement and the human responses that the divine aspect of the Atonement could vanish from sight.³⁴

Stressing the Objective

To stress the objective aspect of atonement means at least these two things, and possibly others that are related:

1. Something has happened or changed within God, something flowing freely from the divine heart, will, and mind. This change does not contradict the nature of God, but rather expresses it fully and completely.
2. Because God has accomplished this act of atonement in Jesus Christ, everything is forevermore different and changed. Subjective human neglect, oversight, and rejection can in no way tarnish or minimize the reality of atonement God has effected in Jesus Christ. Atonement is a completed divine act, and one made on behalf of all the human race. Continuing human rejection of God's mercy sadly means that atonement is not fruitful in every life.

Respected Nazarene voice, J. Kenneth Grider, writes:

One way to think of the subjective and the objective aspects of the Atonement is to understand that the bar [or the obstacle] to our salvation lies partly in us, but chiefly in God. Thus its chief accomplishment is an objective one. The Atonement occasions the altogether-holy Father's becoming kindly toward us rebels.

Propitiation and Expiation

Propitiation is perhaps the easier word to define with clarity, because it has to do exclusively with God, whereas expiation is a bridge or gate that swings back and forth between divine and human; or better, the possibility of expiation resides in the kindness of God, but a human response is necessary to bring the benefits of expiation to resolution.

Grider alleges, with much truth, that in fact liberal Christians “overemphasize God’s love and say little about His holiness, [and therefore] deny that there is a propitiatory element in the Atonement. They oppose the view that Christ’s death on the Cross assuaged God’s holy wrath against us as rebellious sinners.”³⁵

Propitiation, then, as understood by conservative and evangelical Christians, says that indeed God does stand in need of being reconciled to humankind, because the offense a holy God has taken at sin is well considered, justified, and responsible. The death of Jesus Christ releases God the Father from His justified anger, and allows Father and His rebelling creatures to be united in love.

Grider’s summary analysis is worth repeating:

God is not capricious, nor is He one who is easily offended and who needs to be placated. Yet, due to His holiness, He is wrathful toward us when we lift puny fists in His face. He does not and cannot overlook such rebellion in the fashion of a doting grandfather. The death of a sinless Christ, on behalf of us sinful humans, the just for the unjust, assuages the Father’s holy wrath against sin, reconciles the Father to us, making it possible for Him to forgive all who repent and believe.³⁶

Correction to Penal Substitution

The penal or punishment view of the Atonement is not scriptural because "it throws God's infinite goodness into question."³⁷

God the Father is *not* a malevolent torture artist who delights in turning His Son into an accursed sinner. The Father's motives for what happened to Jesus Christ cannot be second-guessed, even if they also defy rational human understanding. Perhaps this is why love is such a mystery!

"All punishment is suffering," Grider wisely notes, "but not all suffering is punishment. The difference between the two is that punishment presupposes guilt, and suffering does not. Since Christ was sinless, He was guiltless. When He died for us, therefore, He suffered but was not punished. And since there was a substitution of His suffering for the punishment that believers otherwise would have received in hell, the Father could actually forgive us."³⁸

Expiation

The turning aside of the divine wrath toward sin is at the same time the expunging of human guilt. This is expiation. God's wrath is propitiated; human sin and guilt are expiated.

Expiation is something that happens *to us* and *in us*, but *not* something we can do for ourselves. Only Jesus Christ the Righteous can provide a sacrifice to expiate our guilt.

Three Points

1. Atonement Was Eternally Planned

Horace Bushnell once said, "From all eternity there has been a cross in the heart of God." Grider knows that "Christ came to earth for the purpose of giving His life on our behalf."³⁹

2. The Wherefore and the Why of Atonement Is Blood

Hebrews 9:22 is a crucial reference: "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

3. What Choices Did a Sovereign God Have?

Grider wisely safeguards the divine sovereignty against untoward human intrusion and speculation.

Bible Study

	NASB	RSV	NIV	NRSV
Rom 3:25	Jesus Christ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed.	Jesus Christ, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.	God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.	Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed.
Heb 2:17	Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.	Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people.	For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.	Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.
1 Jn 2:2	And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those <i>of</i> the whole world	And he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.	He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.	And he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.
1 Jn 4:10	In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.	In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins.	This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.	In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

The One True Atonement

- Human atonement stories presume the sinner and the sinned-against are roughly equivalent in the eyes of the civil or moral law. By contrast, God is the Creator of humankind and hence God and humanity are not equal.
- Who is to make the first move? In diplomatic relations between hostile countries, and certainly in the case of strained labor relations, this question is uppermost.

From first to last, God-in-Christ is a just and merciful God, slow to anger and abounding in mercy. God *always* makes the first move toward us in the drama of redemption, and always will.

- God makes the first move toward humankind and the world because only the Lord God is able to make good on His promises to redeem us.

This does not mean everyone *will* be saved, but all *can be* saved, and further that the atoning act God wrought in Jesus Christ is *full, total, complete, adequate, and perfect* in and of itself.

- Atonement as provided by God-in-Christ is *qualitatively* different from human atonement because God has made the first move toward reconciliation with humankind, and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit continues to move.

Litany of Atonement

by Wes Tracy
Based on Article of Faith VI, *Manual*

Leader: We believe that Jesus Christ, by His sufferings, by the shedding of His own blood, and by His meritorious death on the Cross . . .

People: May a grateful people praise His name.

Leader: Made a full atonement for all human sin . . .

People: May a repentant people confess their sins.

Leader: And that this Atonement is the only ground for salvation . . .

People: May a wayward people turn from their idols and false gods.

Leader: And that [this Atonement] is sufficient for every individual in Adam's race . . .

People: May all the people great and small lift thankful hands of praise.

Leader: The Atonement is graciously efficacious for the salvation of the irresponsible and for the children in innocency . . .

People: May thy people rejoice in Thy bountiful mercy, O Lord.

Leader: But is efficacious for the salvation of those who reach the age of responsibility only when they repent and believe.

People: May we all repent of our sins in full faith and trust only in our Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

Theories of the Atonement

Three Representative Theories

The Swedish theologian Gustav Aulen, to whom reference has already been made, identified and defined three main types of Atonement theory. Prior to his influential work, *Christus Victor*, first published in English in 1931, it was customary to identify two main approaches to the Atonement, which roughly corresponded to the objective and subjective views we have mentioned already.

Two figures from the Middle Ages, Anselm and Abelard (1079-1142), have been traditionally linked to the respective objective and subjective doctrines. The subjective, which even today enjoys much currency, especially among liberal Christians, "explains the Atonement as consisting essentially in a change taking place in men rather than a changed attitude on the part of God," in Aulen's explanation.⁴⁰

If these two types of Atonement theory had been accepted since the Middle Ages, why did Aulen feel the need to introduce a third type? The simple answer is that he believed neither of these two types represented the fullness of Christian truth. Furthermore, his proposed third type is deeply rooted and fully engaged in the New Testament and the Church Fathers. Aulen rejected the commonly held view that nothing of significant importance happened before the satisfaction theory expounded in Anselm's famous work, *Cur Deus Homo?* (Why Did God Become Human?)

Let us endeavor to set forth the basic outlines of the three positions Aulen analyzes:

Latin or Satisfaction

It is difficult to attach only one designator to the first tendency, because it has often been known by more than one identifier. "Latin" or "satisfaction" are probably the most common labels.

While this view was most cogently stated by Anselm, theologians prior to Anselm intuited what was really at stake, which is nothing less than the divine sense of justice and honor. For example, the church father Cyprian characterized God as a God of justice who necessarily ran His creation according to justice. Said Cyprian:

Since God as Judge watches over the exercise and maintenance of justice, which is for Him the greatest care of all, and since He regulates His government with a view to justice, how can there be any room for doubt that, as in general with reference to all our acts, so also here with reference to repentance, God must act according to justice?⁴¹

This stress on divine justice may add a new wrinkle to our customary expectations of and approaches to the Atonement. We typically see God's love, to which His justice is related, and possibly in a secondary or subservient way, as overwhelmingly front and center in Atonement thinking. It may seem odd that justice and honor are placed ahead of mercy and love in the divine character.

God's dignity and honor have been besmirched by human sin, the satisfaction theory argues, such that some satisfaction must be paid or recompense given directly to God the Father. Jaroslav Pelikan masterfully explains Anselm's theological thrust and logic in *Cur Deus Homo*:

According to this doctrine, sin was a violation of the honor of God. God offered life to the descendants of Adam and Eve if they rendered satisfaction for that violation; but the longer human history went on, the deeper the debt became. Only a life that was truly human and yet had infinite worth could give satisfaction to the violated honor of God on behalf of the entire human race. Such a life was that of Jesus Christ, whom the mercy of God sent as a means of satisfying the justice of God. Because he was truly human, his life and death could be valid for humanity; but because he was truly divine, his life and death could be valid for all humanity. Accepting the fruits of his life and death conferred the benefits of his satisfaction.⁴²

Jesus Christ, then, as the God-Human makes satisfaction for the sins of the world. The Father accepts the sacrifice of His righteous Son, and the benefits of this acceptance are made available to penitent men and women.

This satisfaction view of Atonement takes on a Latin color because the benefits won by Jesus Christ were thought largely to be applied and transferred through the Latin penitential disciplines such as fasting, mortification, and participating in the sacramental life of the Roman Catholic church. Aulen simply explains, "The Latin idea of penance provides the sufficient explanation of the Latin doctrine of the Atonement. Its root idea is that man must make an offering or payment to satisfy God's justice; that is the idea that is used to explain the work of Christ."⁴³

Two final summary points emerge from Aulen's analysis:

- The Latin view is legalistic, meaning the reality of grace is muted and possibly even absent.
- Aulen suspects the atoning work of Jesus Christ is performed "by Christ *as man* in relation to God."⁴⁴ His summarizing comment is illuminating:

Anselm's basic assumption is that the required satisfaction for transgression must be made by man, and the argument proceeds: Men are not able to make the necessary satisfaction, because they are all sinful. If we cannot do it, then God must do it. But, on the other hand, the satisfaction must be made by man, because man is guilty. The only solution is that God becomes man; this is the answer to the question *Cur Deus Homo*?⁴⁵

Classic or Dramatic

Aulen undertook his work largely as a corrective. He believed the received traditional view of two main atonement strands, the objective (what we have called the Latin or satisfaction view) and the subjective (the moral influence or liberal view), was an oversimplification.

Upon closer examination, Aulen believed, going back to the New Testament, was a line of Atonement thinking that could be called the classic or dramatic. Aulen briefly defined this impulse as follows: "Its central theme is the idea of the Atonement as a Divine conflict and victory; Christ—Christus Victor—fights against and triumphs over

the evil powers of the world, the 'tyrants' under which mankind is in bondage and suffering, and in Him God reconciles the world to Himself."⁴⁶

Careful distinctions needed to be drawn to demonstrate how the classic or dramatic view differed from the Latin or satisfaction. Here are the chief points of separation between the two:

- The classic view portrays the Atonement as a *continuous* work of God-in-Christ from first to last. The satisfaction view is for Aulen *discontinuous*, because it is "an offering made to God by Christ as man and on man's behalf."⁴⁷
- It therefore follows that *both* the divine and human natures of Jesus Christ are engaged in the classic view, whereas the satisfaction outlook was more interested in Jesus Christ's sacrifice as *perfect human*.
- The "double-sided" quality of the classic approach means, in the words of Aulen and following the theology of Irenaeus, God is both the Reconciler and the Reconciled. It is God who, as active, accomplishes the work of salvation; but at the same time He is also, as passive, reconciled, because the bondage of helplessness under the powers of evil, from which He delivers humanity, is also, from another point of view, an enmity involving humanity's guilt.⁴⁸ Double-sidedness does not mark the satisfaction approach, for it asserts the restoration of God's honor. God is the reconciled, but not necessarily the reconciler.
- More clearly than the satisfaction theory, the classic places Incarnation and Atonement in the closest proximity to each other. In Gregory of Nyssa we see this closeness:

The lofty stoops to the lowly without losing its loftiness, the Divine nature unites itself with the human nature, and becomes human, without ceasing to be Divine. . . . It is the nature of light to drive away darkness, and of life to overcome death. When now we had from the beginning strayed away from the right way, and turned away from life to death, what impossibility is there in the mystery that teaches us that Purity has stooped down to them that were defiled with sin, Life to them that were dead, the Guide to them that had gone astray, that the defiled might be made clean, the dead raised, and the wanderers led back to the right way?⁴⁹

Strengths of the Classic View

- From first to last the Atonement is a work of God. God's heart toward His creatures is truly changed, for God both Reconciler and Reconciled. In the Latin view, God may be said to have planned the Atonement, yet God's attitude toward His erring creatures may not change, although versions of the Latin stance do assert God's changed heart.⁵⁰
- God's victory in Jesus Christ is total, encompassing both the personal and the cosmic realms. Irenaeus, an exemplar here, knew that Christ's victory is over the three great enemies of our souls: sin, death, and the devil.
- Although the classic view has not always been well represented in the history of Christian thought, it is well attested in the New Testament, taught by many church fathers, and represented by Martin Luther and the Wesley hymns.⁵¹

The Subjective, Moral Influence, or Humanistic View

Both the classic/dramatic and the satisfaction/Latin are objective renderings of the Atonement: something very definite happens with the divine nature in the light of Christ's death, although seemingly this change is more evident in the classic than the Latin.

With the moral influence view the accent falls differently. It falls more on the inner change within the human heart as it takes in the magnitude of God's suffering love displayed through the cross of Jesus Christ. Therefore the perfect example of the moral influence persuasion must be the thief hanging alongside Jesus Christ, who said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Lk 23: 42).

This subjective pattern is an atonement "from below to above," from human aspirations to divine forgiveness. Pardon for sin may be real enough, but its chief meaning is a humanistic one realized by sensitive religious souls, rather than a dramatic change in the heart of God himself or a cosmic vanquishing of sin, death, and the devil.

Aulen's analysis is clarifying:

In the third type (the humanistic), the Atonement is no longer regarded as in any true sense carried out by God. Rather, the Reconciliation is the result of some process that takes place in man, such as conversion and amendment. If mention of Christ be made in this connection, His work is no longer thought of as the work of God for man's salvation: He is rather the perfect Example, the Ideal Man, the Head of the race. In so far as Christ's work can affect the relation between God and men, it is chiefly that God now sees mankind in a new light. Therefore in this case, also, it is a matter of an approach of man to God, from below upwards, and not of an approach of God to man.⁵²

Lesson 5: Atonement and Grace

Due This Lesson

- List of seven
- Reading of Resource 4-13 and discussion questions
- Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- recognize, appreciate, and apply four or five of the leading explanations of the Atonement, known in theological language as “theories of the Atonement”
- understand the doctrine of grace
- focus on the doctrine of prevenient grace, and understand how it impacts the entire theological outlook
- offer some contrasts between the Wesleyan view of prevenient grace and the Calvinist perspective of common grace
- consider whether the world as God made it might be thought of as “a graced world”—if so, what this means for our lives as Christians

Homework Assignments

Go to a public place such as a library, a park, or a shopping mall. Interview eight to ten people about their understandings of grace.

- The intent of this assignment is to see what people think of grace. The interviewer should formulate four to six questions that have some flexibility and “life” built into them.
- Try to spend five or six minutes with each person whom you interview. People will generally cooperate if approached in a polite manner. Allow the sensitivity of the Holy Spirit to guide these interviews.
- At the conclusion of the interviews, compile the results in a paper of three or four pages. Compare and contrast the public views of grace with the Christian views regarding grace.

Read Resource 5-10, “To Grow in Grace.”

Write in your journal.

- Prayerfully consider the four couplets in the following verse from “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing.”
- Select the couplet that has the most impact on you today. Rewrite it in your own words.

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I’m constrained to be!
Let that grace, now like a fetter,
Bind my yielded heart to Thee.
Let me know Thee in Thy fullness;
Guide me by Thy mighty hand
Till, transformed, in Thine own image,
In Thy presence I shall stand.

Robert Robinson

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

The Lord has promised good to me;
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Thro' many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come.
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

John Newton

Three Theories of Atonement

Match the four choices on the left with the corresponding answers on the right. Most of the choices on the left will have more than one corresponding correct response or match on the right.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| _____A. Cur Deus Homo | 1. Humanistic and moralistic. |
| _____B. Moral Influence View | 2. A double-sided and continuous work. |
| _____C. Satisfaction or Latin View | 3. Why did God become human? |
| _____D. Classic or Dramatic View | 4. Anselm's view. |
| | 5. Change occurs in humans, not in God. |
| | 6. God's violated honor must be set right again. |
| | 7. Legalistic and penitential. |
| | 8. The penitent thief on the cross. |
| | 9. Incarnation and Atonement in closest proximity. |
| | 10. <i>Christus Victor</i> . |
| | 11. An offering or payment due to God. |
| | 12. God is both the Reconciler and the Reconciled. |

Ransom Theory

The strength of the ransom theory of the Atonement is its being mentioned twice in the New Testament.

- Mark 10:45 and the parallel Matthew 20:28, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
- 1 Timothy 2:6, "Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time."

These references state the principle but offer little if any theological detail as to how the ransom theory works.

Jesus gave His life as a ransom, and this gift is clearly given freely and from a heart of love. The gospel references stress Jesus' servant quality in offering the gift of himself.

To whom was the ransom of Jesus Christ paid or given?

- To the devil?
In the end, Satan can have no claim on the Son of God, as Aulen states:

It is not fitting that the devil, who is a robber, should receive a price in return for what he had taken by violence, and a price of such value as the Son of God Himself. The devil had no rights; on the contrary, it was altogether right that he should be conquered and forced to surrender his prey.⁵³

- To God?
Why would the Father expect payment from His own Son, the Lamb of God come to take away the sins of the world?

Governmental Theory

- It takes seriously that a holy God has been offended by sin.
- God is the true Actor throughout the Atonement.
- The governmental view sees God as becoming reconciled to himself through the atoning work of Jesus Christ.
- The benefits of atonement reach to the entire human race.
- God governs the world through love and not fear.
- Jesus Christ acts in our stead.

Benefits of the Atonement

Jesus as Prophet

Jesus as Priest

Jesus as Prince

Jesus as Presence

Lodahl's key words are

- Prophet—reconciliation
- Priest—propitiation
- Prince—liberation
- Presence—participation

Grace

Titus 2:11-12 is a great text about grace that mentions two of the New Testament's firm teachings about grace:

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.

Pelikan writes:

Grace as healing . . . and grace as discipline have been the two privileged aspects of its definition in the history of Christian theology. Both in the vocabulary of the New Testament itself and in the language of church theologians, the term "the grace of God" is closely related to the "love of God" and to "the mercy of God," so that it is often difficult to distinguish among them; although the usage is by no means consistent, it is helpful, within the general category of love, to define mercy as forgiving love and grace as mediated mercy.⁵⁴

H. Orton Wiley

The Reality of Grace

- Grace is an eternal fact in the inner relations of the Trinity.
- It existed in the form of sacrificial love before the foundation of the world.
- It extended order and beauty to the process and product of creation.
- It devised the plan for the restoration of sinful man.
- It is manifested specifically through revealed religion as the content of Christian theology.
- It will find its consummation in the regeneration of all things, of which our Lord testified.⁵⁵

Prevenient Grace

Wiley offers the following fundamental definition of prevenient grace, calling it the grace that

prepares the soul for entrance into the initial state of salvation. It is the preparatory grace of the Holy Spirit exercised toward man helpless in sin. As it respects the guilty, it may be considered mercy; as it respects the impotent, it is enabling power. It may be defined, therefore, as that manifestation of the divine influence which precedes the full regenerate life.⁵⁶

Grider asserts:

It is proper to say that the Arminian-Wesleyan tradition teaches human freedom in the context of prevenient grace. We can either accept Christ or reject Him—and our eternal destiny depends upon our free response to God's offer of salvation.⁵⁷

Albert C. Outler:

Wesley brought to this complex heritage [of what he had inherited from the Christian past] two new elements: the first, a distinctive stress on the primacy of Scripture (not merely as 'standing revelation' but as a 'speaking book'); and, second, as [sic] insistence upon the personal assurance of God's justifying, pardoning grace (which is what he always meant by such terms as 'experience', 'experimental', 'heart religion'). The constant goal of Christian living, in his view, is sanctification ('Christian perfection' or 'perfect love'); its organizing principle is always the order of salvation; the divine agency in it all is the Holy Spirit. Thus it was that Wesley understood prevenience as the distinctive work of the Holy Spirit and as the primal force in all authentic spirituality.⁵⁸

Michael Lodahl:

This 'grace that comes (or goes) before us' simply means that God is lovingly and graciously present and active in every human life,

from fervent Christian to adamant atheist to mindful Buddhist. This is the Holy Spirit, God's own presence, that 'light' of which John's Gospel speaks, 'a light that enlightens every person' (1:9). It is this light, this gracious presence of God in human life, taught Wesley, that encounters us, calls us, and woos us from sin and self-centeredness back toward God. Prevenient grace is God never giving up on anyone. It is this gracious presence of God in human life and societies that makes and keeps us human and humane. The doctrine of prevenient grace affirms that no living human being is without at least some light, some glimmering, flickering awareness of the Holy.⁵⁹

Prevenient Grace and Common Grace

Prevenient grace extends God's gracious offer of fellowship to all of humanity. To poeticize a little, it may be like glowing coals implanted within us by the Holy Spirit; prevenient grace directly points to the universality of atonement that is a hallmark of Wesleyan commitment.

Common grace, by contrast, may or may not lead to electing grace, because only God is truly the Electing God, and human alliance or cooperation with God is not often highly valued in Calvinism.

For the Wesleyan, prevenient grace plus human cooperation equals a beginning toward salvation and an eventual full restoration of God's image in man. For the Calvinist, common grace will yield to electing grace in those whom God chooses to elect.

To Grow in Grace

by Roderick T. Leupp
Holiness Today, August 2002

To what may we compare the grace of God? Søren Kierkegaard crafts a lovely image of a thirsty hiker in need of water. The hiker cannot find the stream, so the stream seeks him out instead, overflowing its banks and offering itself to him. This is the grace of God.

In one theological dictionary, grace is listed under eight or nine subheadings. The collective and historical theological discernment of the Church of the Nazarene has usually seen God's grace as one divine impulse that yet can be understood in several steps corresponding to the progress of the Christian life.

Perhaps the most distinctive step of all is the grace that goes before—prevenient grace. John the Baptist had this in mind when he cried, "Make straight the way of the Lord" (Jn 1:23, NRSV), for prevenient grace raises valleys and humbles mountains. Prevenient grace is anticipatory and expectant grace. It is stirring and kindling grace. The Holy Spirit gently yet decisively blows stubborn human coals to flames.

The passage between prevenient grace and justifying grace is convicting grace, a God-wrought coming to oneself that ends in justification, or "the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding" (Eph 1:7-8).

Regardless of the particular episode of grace, the common denominator is the undeserved favor God lavishes upon us in Jesus Christ. Grace comes to us also as sacramental, sanctifying, and ultimately glorifying grace. Paul understood three related seasons of grace in contrasting the Corinthians' grace-filled lives with their previous misery as slanderers and swindlers. Their new lives were new exactly because they were washed (a clear reference to baptismal grace), sanctified, and justified (1 Cor 6:11).

Jesus' feeding miracles are stories of God's abounding and unstinting generosity. The stuffed but untorn fishing net that provided breakfast to the resurrected Christ and His disciples is another sign of profuse grace (Jn 21:9-14). Ultimately there is an infinity of signs of grace. Our blindness and obtuseness alone keep us from seeing and receiving a fuller spectrum of God's riches.

The grace of God operates in ways we cannot begin to fathom. Visible signs of grace are ever near, ever within reach, and inexhaustible yet respectfully aware of our God-bestowed freedom to refuse their overtures. Yet this must be admitted: the burden of proof and responsibility rests squarely upon those who continue to refuse grace, for what thirsty hiker would not gladly kneel and drink to satisfaction?

The source of grace is not mysterious; it is none other than the triune God. The availability of grace is not puzzling; as John Wesley said, grace is free for all and free in all. The promise of grace is not confounding; it is the promise fulfilled by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Yet the intricacy of the workings of grace is fully known only

to God. Paul appreciated the order of grace when he wrote, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth" (1 Cor 3:6, NRSV). God does expect us to do something, but He enables what He expects. This enabling is grace.

The expectations of God are classically summarized as the means of grace. Wesley's accounting of these means is comprehensive and compelling. To walk in this way is to walk in righteousness. Praying privately or with the Body, searching the Scriptures, receiving the Lord's Supper, fasting, and gathering intimately with fellow believers in what Wesley called "Christian conference" propel the Christian life along.

Sadly, the pathway marks of grace are more often acknowledged than followed. For race to complete the God-ordained circle from God to humanity and back to God, human cooperation is essential. Humans cannot create the circle, for grace is God's alone to give. But humans can and often do frustrate the completion of grace by rejecting the kindness of God.

Human circumstances change, but God's grace is constant. In south central Idaho, I often venture off the road to see Shoshone Falls, billed as "the Niagara of the West." More often than not, it does not disappoint. The roar, the spray, the precipitous rocks make for a thrilling experience. But one summer, when farmers upstream needed water for irrigation and dams reduced the flow, the roar was a trickle. Not so with God's grace. It is evermore abundant.

Lesson 6: The Way of Life

Due This Lesson

Paper on Grace
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- be familiar with the terminology of *ordo salutis* and understand several representative orders of salvation
- contrast the Wesleyan order of salvation with the Calvinist

Homework Assignments

Read the story of the rich young ruler, Matthew 19:16-30, who came to Jesus asking, "What must I do to have eternal life?" After considering the story and what you have learned about the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Atonement, and the order of salvation compose a letter of not more than 600 words to the man who asked Jesus the question.

Write in your journal. In an earlier lesson we saw the sixth Nazarene Article of Faith made into a litany for public worship. Look again at Articles of Faith 7, 8, and 9 and write a worship litany based on one or more of the articles.

Roman Road to Salvation

1. Understanding of our dire need of forgiveness:
For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (3:23).
2. Although surrounded by death, in Jesus Christ there is the Way to true life:
But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (5:8).
3. Repentance of sin leads to eternal life:
For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (6:23).
4. Confessing Jesus Christ as Lord and believing in your heart that God raised His Son from the dead leads to your salvation:
That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with the heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved (10:9-10).
5. Simply by calling upon the name of Jesus Christ, you will be saved! There are no other religious rituals to satisfy:
Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (10:13).

The Way of Salvation

To set forth unified stages of the soul's progress is commonly called the *ordo salutis*—Latin for “the order of salvation”—and less frequently the *via salutis*—“the way of salvation.”

Toward the beginning of one of his renowned sermons, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” John Wesley describes what may fairly—indeed what *must be*—investigated under the general topic of salvation:

So that the salvation which is here spoken of might be extended to the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul, till it is consummated in glory.⁶⁰

Orders of Salvation

Thomas C. Oden

Primitive and apostolic order:

- Repent
- Be baptized for the remission of sins
- Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit

Elaborate order:

- Sin is restrained by the Spirit, allowing time for repentance.
- A sinner is convicted of sin by the Spirit.
- Repentance. Here the Holy Spirit leads the penitent soul to remorse for sin, to reform behavior, to repair damage done to others, along with revulsion against sin, and confession of sin.
- Faith, an enablement by the Holy Spirit to put trust in Jesus Christ the Savior.
- Regeneration, by which the Spirit quickens life spiritually so as to begin a new life born of God, born by adoption into the family of God.
- Holy Spirit indwells and takes up residence in the heart.
- Baptism with the Holy Spirit, "by which the new person becomes dead to the old way and alive to the new."
- "The sealing of the Holy Spirit, by which the Spirit confirms the living Word in the heart."
- Assurance, the confirmation of the believer being in reality the son or daughter of God.
- The filling of the believer with the Holy Spirit.
- Sanctification, "by which the Spirit works to bring the regenerate spirit into full participation in the life of God through union with Christ."⁶¹

Ministry of the Holy Spirit

The Church Father Basil summarizes how the ministry of the Holy Spirit guides all of our steps:

Through the Holy Spirit comes our restoration to paradise, our ascension into the kingdom of heaven, our return to the adoption of sons, our liberty to call God our Father, our being made partakers of the grace of Christ, our being called children of light, our sharing in eternal glory, and, in a word, our being brought into a state of all "fullness of blessing."⁶²

Wesley's Ordo Salutis

- Conscience
- Conviction of sin
- Repentance
- Reconciliation
- Regeneration
- Sanctification
- Glorification

Outler's summary statement is quite dense and even technical, but worth quoting in full:

Wesley's theology was elliptical in its form. Its double foci were the doctrines of justification and sanctification in a special correlation—two aspects of a single gracious intention, but separated along a continuum of both time and experience. The problem in justification was how Christ's sufficient merits may be imputed to the penitent believer as the righteous ground for God's unmerited mercy (i.e., the formal cause of justification). And it was on this point of formal cause that Wesley parted from the Calvinists. They had stressed the Father's elective will, the prime link in "a golden chain" of logic which led them link by link to the famous "Five Points" of High Calvinism. Wesley tilted the balance the other way because of his sense of the importance of the Holy Spirit's prevenient initiative in all the "moments" of the *ordo salutis*. He could thus make room for human participation in reaction to the Spirit's activity and for human resistance as well—yet always in a very different sense from any Pelagian, or even "Semi-Pelagian", doctrine of human initiative.⁶³

Nazarene Articles of Faith

VIII. Repentance

We believe that repentance, which is a sincere and thorough change of the mind in regard to sin, involving a sense of personal guilt and a voluntary turning away from sin, is demanded of all who have by act or purpose become sinners against God. The Spirit of God gives to all who will repent the gracious help of penitence of heart and hope of mercy, that may believe unto pardon and spiritual life.

IX. Justification, Regeneration, and Adoption

We believe that justification is the gracious and judicial act of God by which He grants full pardon of all guilt and complete release from the penalty of sins committed, and acceptance as righteous, to all who believe on Jesus Christ and receive Him as Lord and Savior.

We believe that regeneration, or the new birth, is that gracious work of God whereby the moral nature of the repentant believer is spiritually quickened and given a distinctively spiritual life, capable of faith, love, and obedience.

We believe that adoption is that gracious act of God by which the justified and regenerated believer is constituted a son of God.

We believe that justification, regeneration, and adoption are simultaneous in the experience of seekers after God and are obtained upon the condition of faith, preceded by repentance; and that to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness.

Wesley and Calvin

Wiley writes that Calvinism holds

that regeneration is the first step in the *ordo salutis*, or order of salvation; that this is effected unconditionally by the Holy Spirit apart from any preparatory steps; and that the mind of man is, therefore, perfectly passive in its reception.⁶⁴

The Calvinist order of salvation thus becomes:

- Regeneration
- Faith
- Repentance
- Conversion

Wesleyan theology objections to this *ordo salutis*:

- It negates the reality of prevenient grace.
- Calvinism argues that God must first purge and purify any vessel before it is fit for divine cleansing and indwelling. Wiley's opinion: "Thus we have according to this system [of Calvinism], a regenerated person who has not yet repented, who has not been pardoned, and hence is still a sinner."
- While Wesleyanism agrees with Calvinism that regeneration comes solely from the Holy Spirit, human agency cannot be set aside.
- The extreme passivity engendered by Calvinism may lead to either "carelessness or despair" or antinomianism, which is lawlessness.⁶⁵

Wiley's Six Points

1. Foundationally, regeneration is a moral change accomplished in human hearts through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Regeneration is not the destruction of any God-given human capacity, but is rather the infusion of new spiritual life.
2. Regeneration is closely linked to the new birth, a birth not effected by human instrumentality but through the Spirit of God. Prevenient grace acts upon the waiting believer to invite the Spirit to accomplish His work, but regenerating grace is wholly the Spirit's.
3. Wesleyans believe regeneration happens *simultaneously* with justification and adoption. Wesleyans view regeneration as that work of the Spirit by which grace preventively bestowed issues in a new spiritual life for the individual soul.
4. Wiley's summary statement:

While concomitant with justification and adoption, [regeneration] is nevertheless distinct from them. Justification is a work which God does for us in the forgiveness of our sins and in the changing of the relation which we bear to Him; regeneration is the renewal of our fallen nature through the bestowment of life on the ground of this new relationship; while adoption is the restoration of the privileges of sonship by virtue of the new birth. The necessity for justification is found in the fact of guilt; that of regeneration in the fact of depravity; that of adoption in the loss of privilege. Arminianism holds that all three, while distinct in nature and perfect in their kind, are nevertheless bestowed by the same act of faith and consequently concomitant in personal experience.

5. The truth and light into which the regenerated soul is brought are not to be separated from the Holy Spirit, but are in fact the Spirit's work.
6. Following Wesley, Wiley names regeneration as "the gateway to sanctification," and makes the familiar distinction between initial sanctification, to which regeneration belongs, and entire sanctification. But Wiley believes regeneration "is not a remaking of the old life, but an impartation of new life. Regeneration, therefore, 'breaks the power of cancelled sin and sets the prisoner free,' but it does not destroy the inbeing of original sin."⁶⁶

Small Groups

Working in groups of three respond to the following teaching task.

Suppose you are going to teach a class of young adults at your church next Sunday. The class period is 45 minutes in length. The topic: "The Way of Salvation."

Consider all the resources and information you have from this lesson.

Be prepared to share your "lesson plans" with the whole group.

Teaching the Order of Salvation

1. What do I want my students to KNOW?
That is, what do I want them to understand, to grasp, to master?

What learning activities will I use to achieve the KNOW objective?

2. What do I want my students to FEEL?
That is, what do I want them to appreciate, embrace, own, value?

What learning activities will I use to achieve the FEEL objective?

3. What do I want my students to DO?
Just learning facts and stirring feelings is not enough—for the education goal to be met, students must act, decide, change, or do something.

What learning activities will I use to achieve the DO objective?

Lesson 7: Justification, Adoption, and Resurrection

Due This Lesson

Letter to the rich young ruler
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- comprehend the importance of the doctrine of justification, including some contrasts between Protestant and traditional Roman Catholic views
- understand the centrality of the doctrine of resurrection

Homework Assignments

Make appointments to speak with two local pastors, one United Methodist and one Lutheran. A Presbyterian pastor might serve as a suitable substitute for either of these. Also visit a Roman Catholic priest. Ask all three of these ministers about their respective understandings of the doctrine of justification by grace through faith.

- If possible, try to ask the same list of six or eight questions to each of the three pastors.
- Summarize what you have discovered in a three- or four-page essay.
- In discussing the Roman Catholic view of justification, care was given to say that the “traditional” view of justification was being discussed. In some Roman Catholic circles of today, the view taught is much closer to the Protestant—we would also say the biblical view—of the subject.

You have just finished several weeks of intense study on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Review your resources, notes, and papers. Write out four questions you would ask if you were preparing a unit examination for this class.

Write in your journal. If resurrection is not only a personal but also a cosmic event, there should be signs of Christ’s resurrection glory erupting all over, even in the secular world. Do you discern any such signs in unexpected places? Where and under what conditions?

Justification, Adoption, and Resurrection

For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away our sins.

Romans 3:23-24 (NLT)

Abraham was, humanly speaking, the founder of our Jewish nation. What were his experiences concerning this question of being saved by faith? Was it because of his good deeds that God accepted him? If so, he would have had something to boast about. But from God's point of view Abraham had no basis at all for pride. For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, so God declared him to be righteous." When people work, their wages are not a gift. Workers earn what they receive. But people are declared righteous because of their faith, not because of their work.

Romans 4:1-5 (NLT)

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.

Romans 5:1 (NLT)

Justification

Justification is what Jesus Christ does *for* us and regeneration what the Holy Spirit works *within* us.

“That we are justified,” Staples writes, “means that our guilt has been removed and our broken relationship with God has been restored by God’s act of free grace and forgiveness.”⁶⁷

Ephesians 2:8-9 has been called a great Protestant text. It is at least that, and should be called a great text *period*. To believe, “it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” is to affirm that faith—or at least the potential to exercise faith—is itself a divine bestowment. Simply to affirm “justification by faith” may leave the impression that faith is *only* a human accomplishment, but adding “by grace” qualifies our faith as being an interplay between divine prompting and human response.

Jaroslav Pelikan captures some of this drama in writing that justification points to “the ‘righteousness’ by which the defendant, who stands before the judge and in total trust throws himself on the mercy of the court, is pronounced innocent.”⁶⁸

Protestant Reformers and Roman Catholic Views Compared

Great Catholic thinkers such as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas believed that through justification, humanity is made ethically righteous through the gift or infusion of divine grace. Having made us righteous through His grace, God is then able to accept and even sanctify us. In fact, some would even say that it is precisely on the basis of having sanctified us that God is then able to justify us.

Classic Protestant Reformers such as Luther and Calvin saw the danger in this, but overreacted, ending in the view of justification as *only* imputation, or in Luther's understanding "alien righteousness." In this case it is possible that justification remains altogether external, that nothing changes within the human heart as it is justified.

Relational View of Justification

This relational view, declares Dunning,

does not involve a prior righteousness that in some way becomes the basis of the new relation [this is the Roman Catholic view], but it is a reality that is created in and with the forensic declaration of God that the man of faith is justified. Justification is God's proclamation that a person is righteous, and that proclamation makes it so. In this way the Catholic way of works righteousness is avoided on the one hand and the Reformation concept of a legal fiction on the other.

This coincides with Wesley's famous declaration that justification constitutes a "relative change" whereas sanctification is a "real change."⁶⁹

Justifying Grace

This triumphant message of God's surprising grace is undoubtedly the distinctive note of the gospel. God's grace is surprising because so often in schools, the workplace, friendships, and, tragically, even within many families, our worth and standing are evaluated on the basis of performance. God's promise to us in the life, words, death, and resurrection of Jesus, however, is that we are loved and accepted by Him just as we are!

If we accept that promise and rest in that grace, we like Abraham are "reckoned righteous." We are justified, or brought into proper relationship to God—a relationship that is grounded in the trustworthiness of the One who promises, but actualized in our believing in the promise. Our tendency, learned from society and family, is all too often to attempt to please God by being pleasing, to gain His favor by being good, to merit His mercy and love by becoming lovable. Our very attempts to become worthy of divine love and grace actually obstruct us from receiving what is already freely offered. The good news is that God loves us and offers us forgiveness now.

Michael Lodahl⁷⁰

Resurrection

Resurrection is perhaps the most encompassing and embracing of all Christian teachings. The resurrection of Jesus Christ—a Trinitarian event undertaken by God the Father, raising God the Son in the power of God the Holy Spirit—is a unique and yet also representative happening. It is unique because only Jesus Christ is the Resurrected Son of God, but also representative in that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is God's promise that those who follow the way of the Cross will also be resurrected. We agree totally with the wise analysis of Rob Staples: "Resurrection is a trustworthy description of our future, because it has already happened in history. Christ's resurrection is the central event of the New Testament, which gave birth to the Christian faith."⁷¹

Resurrection may also hold hope for the entire progress of the world. The conjunction of celebrating Easter amidst the springtime renewal of the earth may bode well for the entire creation. Resurrection is not only an individual and personal affair, but importantly it is also a cosmic and universal affair also.

Three Resurrection Options

Denial of the Resurrection's Historicity

Friedrich Schleiermacher—his worldview could not accommodate a physical resurrection. Whatever theological, religious, and devotional worth the Resurrection imparted, Schleiermacher believed it could be impressed on the heart from within. Outward proof was not only impossible but also probably unnecessary.

Rudolph Bultmann famously probed the relevance of the Resurrection for the “modern man.” What counted for Bultmann was the changed lives of the disciples, whose witness ought to change lives in those who looked back at them from the vantage point of the 20th century.

Resurrection Is Only a Spiritual Happening

Emil Brunner considered the Resurrection as only a spiritual event. Brunner does not at all minimize the Resurrection for Christian faith, but he does transpose it into the higher key of the spiritual.

A Resurrection in Time and Space

New Testament Evidence

- The apostolic witness esteeming the Resurrection as a fact to build one's life around, not a theory for endless speculation: “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact” (Acts 2: 32).
- Details of post-Resurrection appearances recorded in the Gospels, such as Jesus' eating food (Lk 24: 41-43).⁷²

The Resurrection in a Trinitarian Light

Grider helpfully brings the Trinitarian setting of the Resurrection to the fore, where it belongs:

This New Testament teaching that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead is of considerable importance. For one thing, it indicates that God the Father, the eternally unoriginated Member of the Trinity, not eternally begotten as is the Son, nor eternally proceeding as is the Spirit, is the One who is “all and in all,” purposing our redemption, structuring its means, and finally granting it.

The passive-voice Resurrection also means that there is a significant commonality between the Virgin Conception as the way Christ entered the world, and the Resurrection as the way in which He left it. In both cases Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, was acted upon by another Person of the Trinity—in the case of the Virgin Conception, by the Holy Spirit; in the case of the Resurrection, by God the Father. The three Persons of the Trinity work together in harmony to provide and grant our redemption.

The passive-voice Resurrection also means that if Christ himself was this dependent on the Father, surely we merely human creatures are utterly dependent on God the Father.⁷³

Lesson 8: Thinking Theologically about Christian Perfection

Due This Lesson

Essay from interviews
Four questions
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- recognize and explain such terms and ideas as “evangelical catholicism,” Christian perfection, entire sanctification, and contextualization of theology
- explain the central affirmations of faith in Article X of the Nazarene Articles of Faith
- have a deeper appreciation of the rich “holiness” heritage rooted in the Wesleyan tradition and the American Holiness Movement
- express how the content and heritage of the Nazarene doctrine of entire sanctification can inform the student’s own present and future ministry

Homework Assignments

Take the list of the 18 to 20 terms or names Kenneth Grider utilizes as descriptions of entire sanctification.

- With this list in hand, interview at least four people from your local Nazarene congregation. At least one of these should be a Nazarene “saint” who has been a regular attendee of a Nazarene fellowship for at least 25 to 30 years.
- From each of the four people whom you interview, ascertain which of the terms on the list continue to be meaningful, and why, and which terms seem no longer to have the power of explanation.
- Also ask the four people if they have any new names to use in identifying the truth of Christian perfection.
- Compile the results of your interviews in an essay of two pages.

Read Resources 8-8, 8-9, and 8-10. Write out at least one or two questions or ideas raised in your mind from each of the three writers.

Write in your journal. Find a copy of Charles Wesley’s hymn “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.” Meditate and write on its meaning as describing Christian perfection.

True Spiritual Life

“Sanctification is the whole complex of redemption procedure structured by decisive steps under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in His immediate presence.”

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop⁷⁴

“True moral experience is not exhausted by or completed in the experience of the grace of justification. Sanctification is not simply a mathematical addition that is needed but the rounding out of what constitutes true spiritual life.”

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop⁷⁵

“Sin is love locked into a false center, the self. The falseness is always multi-faceted, excentric, destructive. Sin is the distortion of love. . . . Holiness is love locked into the True Center, Jesus Christ our Lord. Being ‘true,’ all of the self—and progressively all of life—comes into harmony and wholeness and strength.”

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop⁷⁶

Wesleyan Christian Perfection

In formulating his distinctive doctrine of Christian perfection, John Wesley drew from many streams within the wide wealth of Christian tradition. In some ways he was a theological man for all seasons. Wesley was a discriminating and informed reader and thinker. He had a taste for building consensus, yet knew when something essential could not be negotiated away.

Evangelical Catholicism

“Evangelical” we all know: the urgency of the gospel, the call to repentance, the assurance of the Holy Spirit’s indwelling, a heart turned toward the Lord. “Catholic” we may not resonate with as deeply as with evangelical. Yet all of us should strive to be “catholic Christians,” meaning those Christians with a universal scope to their beliefs, practice, and proclamation. Expanse of vision, care with the truth, penetration of every secular realm—these are some of the marks of the catholic way.

Bresee also urged the Church of the Nazarene to “Christianize Christianity;” in Bresee’s heart he only desired that the full measure of gospel power might saturate all personal and social life; to Christianize Christianity meant to lift up Jesus Christ, to witness to His shed blood, to believe in His redemption, to accept the Spirit’s sanctifying presence.

The “catholicism” part of the evangelical catholic equation will enable the truths of entire sanctification to be addressed to as wide an audience as possible, both within and without the Church, never retreating to the obscurities of arcane terminology or denominational safeguards.

Spiritual Holiness

“John and Charles Wesley believed it was the divine calling of the Methodists to ‘spread scriptural holiness throughout the land’ of England and beyond. So, too, Christians of the Wesleyan tradition—particularly those of the Holiness Movement, whose immediate historical roots are in 19th-century American revivalism—continue to view holiness, or the doctrine of entire sanctification, as deserving primary emphasis. They believe their function in the larger, more comprehensive Body of Christ is to bear witness, both by word and by life, to the explicit call toward ‘holiness of heart and life’ in the Story of God.”

Michael Lodahl⁷⁷

Small Groups

In your group discuss the following:

1. How important is identity? Think of famous entertainers such as Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra, and others like them, whose entry was often announced by a theme song. For the U.S. president it is "Hail to the Chief."
2. Is the Nazarene laity reasonably well informed on the historic connection between holiness and the Nazarene movement? How can newer Nazarenes, who may know little or nothing about the history of the Church of the Nazarene, be brought to this awareness?
3. What responsibility does the local Nazarene pastor have to promote the holiness legacy?
4. How well does the typical pastor understand the holiness heritage?
5. Do you agree that "evangelical catholicism" might be a good way to describe the intent of Nazarene theology? Or is the association of "catholic" with Roman Catholic so deep as to render that word unusable in any other context?
6. Read Article X, "Entire Sanctification," from the *Manual*, Church of the Nazarene. What line or section is the most powerful for you personally?

Entire Sanctification

We believe that entire sanctification is that act of God, subsequent to regeneration, by which believers are made free from original sin, or depravity, and brought into a state of entire devotement to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect.

It is wrought by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and comprehends in one experience the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, empowering the believer for life and service.

Entire sanctification is provided by the blood of Jesus, is wrought instantaneously by faith, preceded by entire consecration; and to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness.

This experience is also known by various terms representing its different phases, such as "Christian perfection," "perfect love," "heart purity," "the baptism with the Holy Spirit," "the fullness of the blessing," and "Christian holiness."

We believe that there is a marked distinction between a pure heart and a mature character. The former is obtained in an instant, the result of entire sanctification; the latter is the result of growth in grace.

We believe that the grace of entire sanctification includes the impulse to grow in grace. However, this impulse must be consciously nurtured, and careful attention given to the requisites and processes of spiritual development and improvement in Christlikeness of character and personality. Without such purposeful endeavor, one's witness may be impaired and the grace itself frustrated and ultimately lost.

Names for Entire Sanctification

These are, in the order given by Grider:⁷⁸

- Perfection or Christian Perfection
- Perfect Love
- The Second Blessing
- The Second Work of Grace
- Love
- Christian Holiness
- Holiness
- Scriptural Holiness
- Second-Blessing Holiness
- Canaan
- The Second Rest
- Wesleyanism
- Heart Purity
- The Fullness of the Blessing
- Sanctification
- Entire Sanctification
- Baptism with the Holy Spirit

Holiness for Today

For modern secular cultures tending toward the postmodern, the chief challenge may be simply to protect the integrity of the word “holy,” especially as holiness is qualified and defined as *Christian* holiness.

Christians believe the holy is given to us not by rational deduction but by transcendent revelation, although when subjected to critical and rational scrutiny the claims of revelation are shown to be “ecstatic,” not against but rather above reason. The person of Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit fill the content of the holy with moral and relational meaning.

The holy as separation *from* the world and *unto* God, and the parallel definition of purity and cleanliness are two traditional Nazarene beliefs. What might these mean to the postmodern world? Our cash-driven world often embraces consequences and outcomes and forgets about motives. Yet the purity of heart characteristic of Christian perfection cares much more about pure motives than about the bottom line.

Christian Perfection—Contextualized

In your group discuss the following questions and thoughts. Be prepared to report to the class on your ideas and conclusions.

1. *What does the common person in secular America mean when he or she uses the word "holy"?*
2. *Do you agree or disagree that the doctrine of entire sanctification needs to be contextualized? If so, what are some steps to be taken toward this end?*
3. We speak of *Christian* perfection, which is a very different reality from "perfect" perfection. Albert C. Outler rightly insisted the Wesleyan view was of "perfecting perfection" and not "perfected perfection." In her influential book, *A Theology of Love*, Mildred Bangs Wynkoop offers numerous critiques of what she calls "perfectionism," which is to be contrasted with Christian perfection.

How can we then continue to use "perfection" to describe the experience of entire sanctification?

Rob L. Staples offers some helpful words that go a great distance toward rescuing "perfection" as a vital concept:

"Perfect" in the Bible does not have a legalistic background. Nor does it have a pietist authority as though perfection could be achieved by human effort in the "imitation of Christ." It belongs in the category of grace. "Be perfect" is the command of God that can call forth from our hearts only one response, that of faith.

Our obedience in faith is not the beginning of some vague progress in climbing up a ladder of moral achievement. It is the acceptance of grace, which is always whole, complete, perfect. In the strength of this encounter we live our lives. "Perfect" belongs only to God. It comes to us through our contact with Him, not as an achievement, but as a gift. All that God is and has is perfect and whole, never partial. Our share in this kind of wholeness is determined by the veracity of our relation to Him.

4. Look again at Article of Faith X. *What lines, phrases, or terms—if any—would be better understood by your generation? Your church members? Your unchurched neighbors? If they were expressed differently?*

Sanctification: Renewal in the Image of God

H. Ray Dunning

Excerpts from his book *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*

The New Testament and John Wesley speak with one voice in proclaiming that the great purpose of redemption is to restore man to the image of God . . . The total process of sanctification from its beginning in the new birth, its “perfection in love” at entire sanctification, and its progressive development toward final salvation has as its objective the restoring of man to his original destiny.

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This understanding of the meaning of sanctification did not disappear from the theological scene with the close of the New Testament only to be rediscovered by John Wesley in the 18th century. It was identified by all major interpreters of the Christian life throughout the whole period . . . The chief issue is not whether this is a proper way of speaking about the substance of sanctification, but rather (1) what is the significance or meaning of the *imago* to which man is called, and (2) how and to what degree it is restored. (478)

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We now turn to the positive side of the overall work of salvation interpreted as renewing man in the image of God. This focuses our attention upon the total Christian life in its continuity so that the stages in the Christian life become somewhat less conspicuous. (485)

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It is our purpose in this section to focus upon this larger vision of the totality of God’s saving intention that is implemented in the new birth, entire sanctification, and progressive sanctification (growth in grace). It commences at the dawn of spiritual life and continues—ideally—in an uninterrupted progression throughout all finite existence. Therefore one should never ask the question, “At what point in the Christian life does this occur?” It is occurring from the beginning on.

In our discussion of the idea of sin in chapter 9 we explored the implications of the image of God for this doctrine. There we suggested that a theological exegesis of the relevant biblical passages would indicate that the *imago* could be identified as a four-fold relation: to God, to other persons, to the earth, and to self. We characterized these relations in the state of integrity as freedom for God, freedom for the other person, freedom from the earth, and freedom from self-domination. All of these relations were disrupted by the Fall, and man stands in need of having the relations restored by the redemptive process.

These four relationships constitute what the Hebrew word *shalom* (peace) signifies. It means far more than the absence of conflict. It involves the harmony of an individual with himself, with nature, with the world of people, and clearly with God. (485-86)

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Thus *shalom* best describes the Edenic, pre-Fall state; but even more, it is the summary term that encompasses the goal toward which all God's redemptive acts are directed. He desires to transform the present fragmented state into healing and wholeness. Holiness is wholeness and is embodied in the beautiful *shalom* of God's plan for His people.

There is obviously a hierarchical relation between these, with man's relation to God being the primary and determining one. However, each relation is known in and with the others, and therefore they cannot be artificially separated as four unrelated, discrete realities. Nonetheless they may be analyzed seriatim for discussion purposes, but there will of necessity be an interpenetration, or cumulative effect.

When repentance and faith have restored man to the favor of God, it is God's intention to bring man to his appointed destiny, which has long been thwarted by sin. That destiny, we are saying is embodied in the image of God. This is not only what man was but also what he is intended by God to become. Thus, in the salvation process, God accepts man just as he is and at that moment begins the process of making him into the kind of person He intend him to be. This latter is the working of grace that is described in a shorthand way by the term sanctification. (486)

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But Wesley discovered in the Scripture and other devotional sources another way of interpreting man's relation to God other than by law. He began this process of discovery. . . when he was asked what Christian perfection or entire sanctification meant, he always replied, "It is the loving God with the whole heart, soul, mind, and strength," and "our neighbor as ourselves." While in our fallen condition we can never achieve the level of perfect performance and be restored to the image of God in its untarnished splendor, we may, by grace, stand in perfect relation to Him through the "expulsive power of a new affection" (Thomas Chalmers). And from that point, man can seek ever more perfectly to reflect God's character in his character and personality until the beauty of Jesus is more and more seen in and through his life.

We are suggesting that the image of God as **Freedom for God** is restored in this relationship of love understood as complete openness to the Heavenly Father. We may note briefly three consequences of this interpretation.

First, it implies that man enjoys the presence of the Lord. While it may be a weak analogy, some intimation of this love relation may be seen in the joy persons receive by being in the presence of another person who is loved very much. There does not necessarily need to be a flood of words; just being there is adequate to satisfy a deep sense of relation. (487-88)

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Second, love of God implies total obedience. As Jesus said to His disciples, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). . . . The relation is initiated and determined from His side, but when it is seen clearly that *agape* love is the origin of the relation from God's side, the proper response is love from man's side. (489)

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Third, it is quite clear that the fruit of the Spirit is various manifestations of love. The unitary character of the fruit (the term is singular, not plural) is due to the fact that it flows forth, like a stream from a fountain, from a single source. Joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23, cf. ASV, KJV) are all present at the beginning of the Christian life because love is present from the beginning. (489)

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Freedom for the Other. We now turn to the second relation, which we have suggested as constituting the *imago Dei*. It is derived from the first. In the Genesis account we noted how the absence of clothes symbolized the radical openness marking the love relationship between the first pair. Furthermore, the loss of this openness resulted in the covering of the body with clothes. (490)

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The new people of God, the new Israel, the Church, is constituted by the Holy Spirit. One of the central truths that Luke is seeking to set forth in the Book of Acts is the fact that the gift of the Spirit creates a new reality, a corporate body brought into being by the infilling of the Spirit of Christ. The gift of the Spirit is not an individualistic gift, to be received in isolation from the community. It is a personal gift that creates an organic connection with other Spirit-filled persons. (492)

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What we have in Luke's picture of the Early Church is a portrayal of a sanctified church constituted by the infilling of the Holy Spirit. It is more than a group of individually sanctified persons enjoying fellowship of a more or less social nature. What is seen there is a binding together of Spirit-filled persons into an organic unity of love created by the "community-creating Spirit" who abides within. It may be further noted that we also observe there the fulfillment of Jesus' high-priestly prayer for His followers that God would sanctify them "that they may be one" (John 17:22). (492)

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The third dimension of the *imago* involves **Freedom from the Earth**. In his original, created condition man was given dominion over the remainder of created reality. This dominion seems to be directly related to man's own submission to the dominion of the Creator. But with the revolt against God, the earth revolted against man, and the proper relation was lost; man was no longer free from the earth. Augustine provides a penetrating analysis of the present condition of men in this dimension when he observed that we ought to love God and use things, but instead we tend to love things and use God.

We can see the significance of sanctification as restoring the proper relation to the earth by exploring the teaching of the New Testament on the topic of possessions, riches, or wealth. All of these are the products of the earth. It is astounding how pervasive this theme is in the Bible, especially in the New Testament. (494)

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Freedom from Self-domination. We have noted how each of the other three dimensions of the *imago* are actually informed by the relationship to self and are skewed when man intrudes himself into the role of sovereign of his existence. Sin, in essence, is idolatry because it elevates the finite, created self to the position rightly held only by the Creator. It is for this reason that the most decisive work of grace in human life addresses the issue of self-sovereignty. It is this that Wesley means when he speaks of the "root of sin" or the "seed of sin." He is not referring to some ontological substance, but to the perversion of authority that occurs when love of God is not the controlling intention of the human heart.

Renewing man in the image of God entails the proper relation to self. It is not the annihilation of self, as certain Eastern religions desire. It is the submission of self to God's authority so that the love for God and neighbor is not modified improperly by self-interest, and one does not relate to the earth solely as a means of self-gratification. (496-97)

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The renewed relation to the self that results from the sanctifying work of the Spirit is much like the relation to the earth. Just as the ownership of possessions is not within itself to be rejected, the issue with self pertains to whether or not one seeks to be the lord of his own life. It does not imply that one hates himself or has low self-image. In fact, the proper relation to self is the way to a psychologically sound self-image. (497)

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That there is a genuine sense of self-realization involved in the idea of the restoration of the *imago* that we are proposing is freely admitted. Yet there is a significant contrast between directly seeking one's own ends and indirectly finding fulfillment as a consequence of "seek[ing] first the kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:33). (498)⁷⁹

A Theology of Love

Mildred Bangs-Wynkoop
Summarized by Roderick T. Leupp

Theology can never be reduced to autobiography, and yet at least three factors probably contributed to Wynkoop's mature theology in *A Theology of Love*. One was her being a doctorally-trained woman theologian in an era when this was highly unusual. A second is her going along with her husband to Japan for several years of missionary service. This broadened and clarified her outlook. Third is her desire to speak a timely word about holiness and love to a tumultuous time, the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Wynkoop offers the following synthesizing summary of her view of holiness:

It [holiness] is not something imparted from without, such as the superadded grace of Catholic theology. It is not simply the added presence of the Holy Spirit which creates a moral dualism in the human personality. It is not a change in the substance of the soul—an irrational, nonmoral concept. It is very much more than an imputed judicial standing. It is moral health in the same way that a physical body is healthy, in that health is not a quantity which can be measured or counted, or added, but is a proper relationship of all parts. But holiness in man cannot be self-existent, as is God's holiness, because moral experience is not completed within the resident resources of the human personality (359-60).

All of Wynkoop's major affirmations are sounded here, and perhaps one or two ideas she opposed. Positively, the holy life is to be a moral life of ever-increasing communion with a holy God. The holiness of God is a unifying attribute for Wynkoop, which is in keeping with other Nazarene theologians. "Holiness in God is not one attribute among others. He does not *have* holiness. Holiness is not a quality which stands against justice or love. God *is* holy. Holiness is the nature of God in which all elements of His being exist in perfect balance and relation. It is the white light which is the sum of all the colors of the spectrum" (359).

The discipline of psychology is perhaps of greater consequence to Wynkoop than to other Nazarene theologians. Psychology aims for an integrated personality at peace with itself, its surroundings, and for the Christian psychologist, with God. Christian experience is also of utmost interest to Wynkoop, and by that she means an experience of the Holy Spirit.

The tone of Wynkoop's book is friendly, approachable, and irenic. Nothing less would be expected from a book about love! She does not always agree with her theological predecessors, but she approaches all persons and situations with love. "Spiritual and cultural provincialism needs the enlarging therapy of love," she writes (339), inviting all to draw from the therapeutic wells of love. For her love is obviously way more than a warm, fuzzy feeling. It is what moves the world. It is what we are called to incarnate in our lives by the Holy Spirit.

How does Wynkoop seek to address and to correct what she has received from her Nazarene theological legacy? Her chief means is to accept some of the traditional

concepts, and then fill them with her own meaning. For one, she accepts the definition of sanctification as meaning “both dedication, or separation, and a making pure.” She believes these two definitions are mutually reinforcing, two sides of the same coin. “Separation, in the New Testament, *is* purity or moral rightness. Love is defined by purity, and love purifies. But neither of these is static and self-sustaining. Love flows away from itself endlessly” (359).

The careful observer will note that Wynkoop is uncomfortable with words and concepts such as static, self-sustaining, and substance. For example, Wynkoop believes it is wrong to emphasize a state of purity, because “state” by definition is static and tends over time to degenerate. Instead, her focus is properly on “a *maintained condition of purity*—a moment-by-moment salvation. ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, *all the time*, by cleansing us every *Now*” (354).

Two final issues will conclude our discussion:

1. The Relationship Between Justification and Sanctification

On the whole Wynkoop is more inclined to speak of perfect love or Christian perfection, and less of entire sanctification. She spends much of one chapter (14) surveying biblical evidence for Christian perfection. While sanctification is also of course a biblical idea, “entire sanctification” is mentioned only once in the Bible, in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (348), in contrast to the biblical profusion regarding perfect love.

She believes it is a mistake to qualify or modify the reality of sanctification with such terms as *initial* or *entire* (352). She finds these descriptions to be “human ways to distinguish man’s spiritual progress and they are legitimate expressions only when so understood.”

However, her intent here is not so much to denigrate traditional Nazarene terminology (recall that Grider believed “entire sanctification” to be the best designation), as it is to show the organic link between justification and sanctification. Justification is a definite moment, the moment of conversion, in a way that sanctification is not. Sanctification is for Wynkoop the more encompassing of the two terms. “*Sanctification* is the whole complex of redemption procedure structured by decisive steps under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in His immediate presence” (338).

There never can be a time, space, or moment along the Christian trail where sanctification cannot be used to describe at least part of what is happening. “Sanctification, then, is begun in repentance and believing, but is given moral meaning and brought into moral experience by the deeply personal commitment of the justified person to God. All the potential of sanctification lies in the justified relationship” (346). Her double use of “moral” in this summary reinforces Wynkoop’s overarching view that the sanctified life is the moral life, because God is a moral God. Chief among God’s moral requirements is holy love.

2. What about “the Second Work of Grace”?

Mildred Wynkoop emphasizes spirit and spontaneity over what is routine and predictable. True to form, Wynkoop does not endorse the formulaic language of a second definite work of grace. She believes in “an experience beyond conversion” (357). For some, but surely not for all, this “experience beyond conversion” could take the form of the traditional second work of grace. But to mandate an identical

experience for everyone, whether in form or in content, seems to Wynkoop to rob the Holy Spirit of His creativity and the Christian pilgrim of his or her responsibility to live in love before God and among humankind.

Wynkoop may not embrace a formulaic, lockstep progression from a first work of grace to a second. Yet she does accept what she perceives the second work of grace to teach and include. "The meaning of 'second' is not in the mathematical sequence of blessings. What is called 'second' points to a different *kind* of step in the process of redemption, a 'depth' relationship for want of a better term" (347). An explanatory analogy also serves to clarify: "Forgiveness is the launch into a new orbit. The second 'moment' is a crucial, midpoint correction which 'locks' the compass to the Morning Star" (347).

Clearly Wynkoop believes in moments of crisis that mark and propel the soul toward God. But she is reluctant to single out a one-size-fits-all second work of grace. Our moral relationship to God is marked by both privilege—first work of grace—and responsibility—second work of grace—which are "two sides of the same coin" (349). These two qualities are for Wynkoop "two related kinds of human response in moral experience," and "in the two kinds of response to God lie all the crisis moments, major and minor, and the processes in grace which characterize responsible Christian experience" (347).⁸⁰

Scriptural Holiness

by Michael Lodahl

Excerpts from his book *The Story of God*

John and Charles Wesley believed it was the divine calling of the Methodists to “spread scriptural holiness throughout the land” of England and beyond. So, too, Christians of the Wesleyan tradition—particularly those of the Holiness Movement, whose immediate historical roots are in 19th-century American revivalism—continue to view holiness, or the doctrine of entire sanctification, as deserving primary emphasis.⁸¹ They believe their function in the larger, more comprehensive Body of Christ is to bear witness, both by word and by life, to the explicit call toward “holiness of heart and life” in the Story of God.

There is no mistaking it: throughout the Bible the expectation that God’s people can and should be holy is an explicit theme. That divine call is rooted in the recognition that God is holy and seeks a people who will represent Him in holiness.

The critical question, then, is What is Holiness? What do the Scriptures mean by this term? In the Hebrew Scriptures, holiness (**kadosh**) refers first of all to the very *Godness* of God, to His awesome glory, His unspeakable otherness, His unfathomable majesty and mystery that may simply overwhelm human beings. Think of the prophet Isaiah’s experience in the Temple, in which he “saw the Lord . . . high and exalted” (6: 1). In the Hebrew tradition, it was believed to be impossible to “see” God because the experience would be so overwhelming as to destroy the beholder. Hence, for Isaiah simply to make such a claim was revolutionary and signaled the strangeness of the event. Isaiah reports having heard seraphim (what we might call angels) crying out, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory” (v. 3 NASB). This encounter with the Holy reduced Isaiah to utter terror: “Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (v. 5). We find similar responses in the Israelites’ fear of the manifestation of divine glory and holiness at Mount Sinai (Exod. 20: 18-21), in Job’s final exclamation of utter humility in response to the Voice in the whirlwind (42: 1-6), and in the disciples’ falling on their faces when God speaks from the cloud of glory in the Transfiguration accounts (e.g., Matt. 17: 1-8).

In this first sense of the word, then, God is holy because God is wholly Other, different, mysterious, unique. “Who is like Thee among the gods, O Lord?” sang Moses and the Israelites after their deliverance from the Egyptians in the Exodus. “Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?” (Exod. 15: 11 NASB). (192-3)

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It is the conviction of Wesleyan Christians in the holiness tradition that, as we willingly offer our lives to God’s sanctifying presence, it is possible by the transforming power of God to become “perfected in love,” a favorite phrase of John Wesley, found in his favorite book of the Bible (1 John 4: 16-18). If Jesus not only taught but also wrought love for God and neighbor, then to be re-created by the Spirit is to be increasingly like Jesus, which is to be increasingly a lover of God and people. This takes us back to

relationships as the real arena of the sanctified life, the life set apart for God: do we express God, do we represent Him, in our relationships to those around us? Remember that Leviticus 19, the Holiness Code of Moses, included a great deal about how being holy as God is holy involved the Jews' everyday relationships and practices. And if we interpret Jesus' Sermon on the Mount as His holiness code, the same truth emerges: Jesus, who challenges His disciples to be "perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect," does not leave us in the dark about the perfection He has in mind. He is talking about relationships with people. (195)

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To speak of sanctification as a life filled with love for God and neighbor, as we are here, is to speak in *relational* terms. Within this framework of understanding, sin is not some thing or substance God uproots and takes out of us; rather, sin is *lovelessness*, a lack or privation of authentic, loving relationship to God. When God begins to salvage us through Jesus Christ, we are then brought into relationship with God (reconciliation). And we are at that point sanctified, set apart by God in Christ Jesus. We are, in New Testament terms, already saints! We are brought into a new relationship with God (justified) and given His Spirit (regenerated), and that same Spirit bears witness that we are not God's children (adopted).

People in the Wesleyan-holiness movement would do well to recall Wesley's advice that, while recommending entire sanctification to one's hearers, one ought not to belittle or ignore regeneration, in which the process of sanctification is already begun (and hence sometimes called *initial sanctification*, as noted earlier). It has been suggested that what occurs in entire sanctification (not as opposed to, but as a furtherance of, initial sanctification) is that we begin truly to recognize the implications of our having been set apart by God in our conversion to Christ. In this recognition of the deeper implications of relationship to God and others, we actively and willingly and lovingly entrust our redeemed selves to God.

The "secondness" ("a second definite work of grace" is an important phrase in the holiness tradition) of sanctification is this deeper relationship to God that is based upon our response to His love—a response of entire consecration, a response of offering our deepest selves as a living sacrifice. *So long as a person continues*, by the gracious empowering of God's Spirit, in that relationship, he or she is entirely sanctified—for that commitment is essentially one of love of one's entire being for God, and love of one's neighbor express in concrete acts of commitment to the other's well-being. And that orientation of active loving, John Wesley argued, excludes sin by definition—if sin is understood to be the absence or rejection of that deeper relationship of love, and sins are understood to be attitudes and actions (or nonactions) that manifest that lovelessness. In his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, Wesley put it this way: "Scripture perfection is, pure love filling the heart, and governing all the words and actions. . . . But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin therein. . . . [It is] love filling the heart, expelling pride, anger, desire, self-will; rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks."⁸²

When, by the grace of God, we do live in such a relationship of love to God and others, we are *perfect* (Gr., **teleios**, aim or purpose) in the sense that we are being what we are created to be. We are perfect in *intention*, for the underlying motivation of our lives will be to love God and neighbor. We are also perfect in *direction*, for our lives will be aimed toward becoming increasingly Christlike, which, as Wesley pointed

out, is to be increasingly a person of love. This is the sanctified life, the life set apart for loving God and others. When we are in this open, growing, deepening relationship to God through the gracious presence of His transforming Spirit in our lives, the “bent to sinning” (Charles Wesley) is necessarily gone—because the “bent to sinning” means precisely the fundamental bending inward of ourselves toward ourselves (lovelessness). It is important to remember, however, that since this understanding of sanctification is framed in relational terms, there is no absolute guarantee that the “bent to sinning,” or carnal nature, cannot return. After all, it is not a *thing* that is taken out of us in such a way that it cannot return. Since with the word *love* we are referring to a relationship to God in which we seek nothing but His will (and with *sin* the rejection or perversion of that relationship), it is a relationship out of which it is possible to fall. Yet surely the God who “gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:57) offers us all the grace and help necessary to remain in a sanctified relationship to God and others.

At the center of the issue of the doctrine of entire sanctification is what the Bible calls the heart, or the deepest self. The self never is destroyed, nor is it “cleansed” in such a way that some thing or blot is removed, never to return. The words *love* and *sin*, as here used, describe the basic qualities of relationship to God and neighbor in which we may live. Hence, we are talking about relationship—and relationship by definition means that oneself is always involved. Being “filled with the Holy Spirit” does not remove or negate one’s selfhood, either, though sometimes it is mistakenly described as being “controlled” by the Spirit in ways that veer dangerously close to suggesting that we become a God-operated robot or a puppet on His string. Such images of God are obviously in direct contradiction to the emphasis in this book on God’s desire for covenantal partnership, and with the Arminian-Wesleyan understanding of synergism. In this connection, it is significant that Paul’s list of the fruit of the Spirit includes “self-control” (Gal. 5:23), and that Timothy is told that God’s gift to us is not “a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline” (2 Tim. 1:7).

God is creating the unique selves that we are to become, and His intention, according to the Scriptures, is to redeem our selves and call us to our highest potential. But what is that? Keep in mind that human beings are created in God’s image, and further that God is love; the implication, then, is that the human being’s primary intention ought to be to *love*. That was indeed embodied for us, narrated for us, in the words and acts of Jesus, who said to His followers, “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. . . . The world will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 15:12; 13:35 NASB). Jesus’ own life makes it obvious that the love He means is not a flowery, romantic idealism; it consists in laying down our lives and thus is best exemplified in Jesus’ self-giving on the Cross (15:13; 1 John 3:16-17). Thus, the biblical idea of love is not emotionalism, but the everyday, every-moment commitment to laying down our lives for others, whether in terms of time, interests, money, or our very selves.

This, then, is the Christian ideal, God’s calling upon every Christian life, as envisioned by John Wesley as he read the Scriptures: that it is possible *in this moment* and in each passing moment, by the graciously transformative power of God’s Holy Spirit, to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. To live in this way is to be delivered from sin (1 John 1:6—2:1, 7; 3:11; 4:19-21). It is to be loved by God, and to know it, and then to return that love by giving oneself to God and neighbor as God has given himself to us in Christ. (196-98)⁸³

Lesson 9: Nazarene Theologians on Entire Sanctification

Due This Lesson

Two-page paper
Questions or ideas from Resources 8-8, 8-9, 8-10
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- appreciate commonalities and distinctions in the respective holiness and sanctification theologies of three Nazarene writers
- become familiar with some of the distinctive holiness vocabulary, and how best to understand it
- develop his or her own sanctification theology by the study of representative Nazarene writers

Homework Assignments

Read Resource 9-5, the selections "Holiness," "Sanctification," "Perfection" from Rob L. Staples, *Words of Faith*. Also read Resource 9-6, John Wesley's sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation."

Following the reading of these four selections, write a three-page essay of your personal understanding of sanctification, drawing upon resources as needed.

Read Resource 9-7, "Theology of the Holy Spirit."

Write in your journal. Read Matthew 5:48 and reflect on this commandment of Jesus Christ. Open your heart to the sanctifying Spirit in your life. Write out your prayer.

Discussion Guidelines

The following several questions about the general nature of holiness doctrine will guide our thinking, and discussion for any comparative analysis among the three theologians. Obviously, not all of the three can be made to speak to all of the questions, but the questions remain foundational, ones that need to be addressed, whether explicitly or in spirit.

- What is the common or baseline definition of holiness that emerges?
- What is the understanding of sin?
- How is the holiness of God viewed?
- Is one way of naming or describing the experience of holiness to be preferred over the others?
- How is the legacy of John Wesley appropriated?
- What is the attitude toward some traditional Nazarene ideas?

Knowing the Holy God

The good news of all biblical faith is that God has chosen to unveil himself to offer covenant friendship between himself and the human family.

To know the Son is to know the Father: "I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:30). This knowing of the Father's true Word, Jesus Christ, is fruitful only as the Holy Spirit takes us into the company of the Father, through the atoning sacrifice of the Son.

The holiness of God is unapproachable in human terms. To approach God in His holiness with defiled hands is to risk judgment and even annihilation. No one can stand before God dressed in his or her own righteousness. Only the Holy One of God, Jesus Christ the Righteous, can bring us into the Father's company.

We share in God's nature through grace, not through any exact identification with His essence. Only God is God. Only God remains God. But God condescends, lowers himself, makes himself available, in the person of Jesus Christ. God's lowering in Christ elevates us and enables us to escape from the corruptions and perversities rampant in the world. Entire sanctification is re-creation in the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In one way or another, every Christian theology and every strand from within the rich tapestry making up Christian doctrine addresses this hope for our re-creation.

The grace of God always imagines and envisions more for us and in us than we can envision for ourselves. In other words, to be entirely sanctified is to grasp, to hold, and finally to own God's vision of what we can become in the resurrection life of Jesus Christ. It is to accept God's verdict of the restorative power of His Holy Spirit, rather than our own puny efforts.

As the Nazarene article on entire sanctification teaches, the *desire* to be pure can be satisfied instantaneously in the moment when God the Spirit descends and baptizes the human heart, routing self-will. The desire toward purity must bear fruit in the life of every Christian, and this development of character and Christian virtue, far from being over and done in an instant, is a lifelong task.

Christian doctrine is not a straitjacket. It is meant to promote and not inhibit the life of God in the human soul, by freeing the full measure of the Holy Spirit. Entire sanctification or Christian perfection is a faithful representation of the highest calling God can place on the soul: to be re-created in the image of His Son.

Small Groups

Dunning structures his theology around four key relationships. Under each of the four relationships students are to suggest three or four implications of this relationship for the holy life.

Freedom for God

Freedom for the Other

Freedom from the Earth

Freed from Self-domination

What might be evidences or expressions of these four relationships in the holy life?

Explaining Entire Sanctification

A new Christian, who has little background in Christianity or the Nazarene traditions, has come to you with the question, "What does entire sanctification mean?"

Write a one-page explanation this person can understand, which is biblically and doctrinally sound.

Words of Faith

by Rob L. Staples

Holiness⁸⁴

The word “holiness” describes the essential nature of God. One of the great Christian hymns addresses the deity as “Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!” and one of its lines is “only Thou art Holy—there is none beside Thee.”

To say that God is holy is simply to say that God is God. Holiness means separation. “I am God, and there is none like me” (Isa. 46:9). To be holy means basically to be “set apart.” It means to be “different.” God is different from all created things in terms of His transcendence, majesty, moral perfection, and sovereign love. That God is holy means He is different from everything that is not God.

In describing God as the “Holy One,” the Bible declares the majesty, glory, sovereignty, and unfathomable mystery that mark the divine being. Thus, holiness belongs to the very definition of God. Even love, which is the center of the Christian concept of God, must be seen against the background of His holiness.

God alone is holy. His holiness is unique to Him and belongs to no other being except as He imparts it. It points to the inscrutable mystery and otherness of God, to the separation between the Creator and the creaturely.

We begin to see the richness of the biblical understanding of God’s holiness in Exod. 3:5. The ground on which Moses stands is holy; because God is there. Only God and that which is associated with Him can be called holy. Holiness is inseparable from God’s presence.

Following Moses’ encounter with God at the burning bush, many things are called holy in the Old Testament. For instance, there are holy places, holy vessels, holy oil, holy seasons, and holy people. But all these are called holy for one reason only—they stand in a particular relation to the holy God. They are substantially the same as other places, vessels, oil, seasons, and people that are not called holy. The difference is that some are set apart for God and some are not. Thus, when any of God’s creations, including human beings, are said to be holy, it means they are set apart for God’s exclusive use.

Insofar as holiness may be ascribed to beings other than God, it is a derivative of God’s holiness and has its origin in Him. This means that holiness is first and foremost a *religious* concept and not a moral or ethical one. In other words, its primary focus is *vertical* in the Bible, rather than *horizontal*. But “holiness,” as it is progressively revealed in the Bible, takes on a secondary and consequential meaning that is moral and ethical (that is, horizontal), affecting all our relations with other people and with the created order. This is because God’s holiness and His love are always related. The same holy love that redeems also demands that the redeemed be like Him. Fellowship with the Holy God can be established only on the basis of holiness, for “it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy’” (1 Pet. 1:16).

The first commandment defines what it means for a person to be holy: "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3). One who is holy is one who has no other gods.

Although the holiness of God, a central theme of the Old Testament, is assumed in the New Testament, the latter places the emphasis on Jesus Christ. Holiness now is defined by Jesus Christ and who He is. Jesus is the "Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; John 6:69). His Incarnation and Atonement were for the purpose of providing a way for unholy people to be made holy and live in fellowship with a holy God (Heb. 12:14; 13:12). Thus, the term basically applied to God in the Old Testament is now seen as God's *provision* (Col. 1:22), God's *will* (1 Thess. 4:3-7), and God's *requirement* (Heb. 12:14; Rev. 22:11) for every believer.

Jesus is the very embodiment of holiness. Therefore holiness is simply Christlikeness, made possible only by divine grace. One's holiness is not to be ascertained on the basis of legalism, emotionalism, or any other criteria that we, in our humanity, are prone to impose. The only criterion is Christ. God is a Christlike God, and believers are called to be Christlike. The Living God who is Holy Love calls us to holy living and loving as Jesus the Holy One lived and loved.

Sanctification⁸⁵

Sanctification is a precious word to people in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. It is also perhaps also the most misunderstood, due to the fact that in this tradition the word is used in several senses, each sense depicting an important aspect of salvation.

In its broadest sense, sanctification is the lifelong process by which Christians become the "saints" they were called to be (1 Cor. 1:2, KJV; Eph. 1:1), "perfecting holiness out of reverence for God" (2 Cor. 7:1). It is the process of moving step by step, by grace, toward our destiny. And what is our destiny? It is defined by the *imago Dei* (image of God) in which we were created (Gen. 1:27). In our sin we turned away from our destiny. The "image" that is our destiny is now defined by Jesus Christ, who is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15), and the "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Heb. 1:3). Into that same image we "are being transformed" (2 Cor. 3:18). In short, our destiny is "to be conformed to the likeness of his Son" (Rom. 8:29).

From its human side, sanctification basically means a commitment toward Christlikeness. This commitment has been called "consecration." It is not a Christlikeness that can be attained by exerting human strength, but one that is the gift of grace and to which we are to be continually open, "Now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).

In this total process of sanctification are various submeanings to the word. Wesleyans hold that sanctification is both gradual and instantaneous. Regarding salvation, which he said consisted of "two grand branches, justification and sanctification," Wesley wrote,

All experience, as well as Scripture, show this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual. It begins the moment we are justified, in the holy, humble, gentle, patient love of God and man. It gradually increases from that

moment . . . till, in another instant, the heart is cleansed from all sin, and filled with pure love to God and man. But even that love increases more and more, till "we grow up in all things into Him that is our Head;" till we attain "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (*Works*, 6:509).

Let us analyze that statement, for it contains the various senses in which Wesleyans use the term "sanctification." That which "begins the moment we are justified" is often called *initial sanctification*, which is one aspect of the conversion experience.

This sanctification, beginning at conversion, "gradually increases from that moment" and may be called *gradual* sanctification.

"Till, in another instant, the heart is cleansed from all sin, and filled with pure love to God and man." This is called *entire sanctification* and is the most distinctive aspect of the Wesleyan understanding of holiness. All historic Christian churches believe in sanctification, but some deny the possibility of *entire* sanctification in this life.

"But even that love increases more and more." Both before and after the instantaneous work of entire sanctification, the gradual work of sanctification goes on. Sanctification is never a "static state" that "does not admit of a continual increase" (*Works*, 6:5). Some Holiness writers have claimed that sanctification is always instantaneous and never gradual. They claim that there is the "instant" of *initial* sanctification and another "instant" of *entire* sanctification, and that everything before, between, and following those instants is simply "growth in grace." But to attempt to define "growth in grace" as anything other than gradual or progressive sanctification seems like a hairsplitting exercise in futility. It's difficult, if not impossible, to clearly show the difference. It's better to stick with the original Wesleyan understanding that sanctification is *both* instantaneous *and* gradual. Of course, in Wesleyanism, *entire* sanctification is instantaneous (there may come an instant when, in the words of Wesley quoted above, "the heart is cleansed from all sin"), but *sanctification* in its broadest meaning is both/and.

We may also speak of *final* sanctification, occurring at the resurrection, when scars from sin will be forever healed. The point is that there are several senses in which Wesleyans use the term "sanctification." To understand these is to be a better-informed Christian in the Wesleyan tradition.

Perfection⁸⁶

Perfection. What a scary word! "So who's perfect?" we ask when we slip up and make some goofy mistake.

Perfection! When used in a religious context, the word frightens some Christians and discourages many others. It seems so absolute. So impossible.

But the word found in the Scriptures is not so impossible. Unfortunately, our modern use of the word is closely associated with flawlessness, like a perfectly cut diamond in the jewelry store window with its facets sparkling in the light. It is often understood as the last state in a progression. (It is possible that Luke perceived such a possible connotation of the word used by Matthew in 5:48, and uses instead the word "merciful" in Luke 6:36.)

To be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48) is to be wholly turned, with the whole will and being, to God, as He is turned to us. It is the response of obedience carried out in faith. It is the call to be pure in heart, and to will one thing. The command falls within a *religious* situation, not simply a moral situation of improving our conduct by strenuous effort.

“Perfect” in the Bible does not have a legalistic background. Nor does it have a pietist authority as though perfection could be achieved by human effort in the “imitation of Christ.” It belongs in the category of *grace*. “Be perfect” is the command of God that can call forth from our hearts only one response, that of faith.

Our obedience in faith is not the beginning of some vague progress in climbing up a ladder of moral achievement. It is the acceptance of grace, which is always whole, complete, perfect. In the strength of this encounter we live our lives. “Perfect” belongs only to God. It comes to us through our contact with Him, not as an achievement, but as a *gift*. All that God is and has is perfect and whole, never partial. Our share in this kind of wholeness is determined by the veracity of our relation to Him.

John Wesley preached “Christian perfection” (not the same thing as “sinless perfection”), and what he meant by it was so often misunderstood that on at least one occasion he considered dropping the term. He said his opponents continually thrust it on him by asking what he meant by it. But in spite of this claim, Wesley did frequently use the term in his preaching and writings. The reason was that it was a scriptural term, and Wesley was passionately attached to the language of Scripture. He claimed that no one could in good conscience object to such a scriptural term “unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school and teach Him to speak who made the tongue” (*Letter*, 4:212).

Nevertheless, instead of “Christian perfection,” Wesley preferred the term “perfect love.” In his proclamation of Christian perfection, the stress always fell on love, “love filling the heart, and governing all the words and actions” (*Works*, 11:401).

This love of which Wesley spoke was not mere sentiment, not mere feeling or emotion. It was love as an attitude, a state of mind, and a set will. This love was robust, objective, and sometimes stern. He did not preach love as a mystical and emotional relation to Christ, as of a bride to her husband. He disliked such doctrines, thinking them smudged with sentimentality and leading to erotic excess.

Love was, to Wesley, the essence of perfection, and to attempt to define it in any other category was to go astray. “Let this love be attained, by whatever means,” he said, “and I am content; I desire no more. All is well, if we love the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves” (*Letters*, 2:75).

So who’s perfect? Only those who are perfectly turned toward God, in the spirit of the psalmist, who could pray, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Ps. 139:23-24). Only those who are perfectly turned toward their needful neighbor in love and compassion. Only those who know they are not flawless but are maturing. Only those who can come to God in complete faith, in the utter dearth of feelings, with the weight of failures, neglects, and imperfections pressing heavily on their heads, and say to Him, “You are my refuge.”

Wesley Sermon

The Scripture Way of Salvation

"Ye are saved through faith."—Ephesians 2:8.

1. Nothing can be more intricate, complex, and hard to be understood, than religion, as it has been often described. And this is not only true concerning the religion of the Heathens, even many of the wisest of them, but concerning the religion of those also who were, in some sense, Christians; yea, and men of great name in the Christian world; men who seemed to be pillars thereof. Yet how easy to be understood, how plain and simple a thing, is the genuine religion of Jesus Christ; provided only that we take it in its native form, just as it is described in the oracles of God! It is exactly suited, by the wise Creator and Governor of the world, to the weak understanding and narrow capacity of man in his present state. How observable is this, both with regard to the end it proposes, and the means to attain that end! The end is, in one word, salvation; the means to attain it, faith.

2. It is easily discerned, that these two little words, I mean faith and salvation, include the substance of all the Bible, the marrow, as it were, of the whole Scripture. So much the more should we take all possible care to avoid all mistake concerning them, and to form a true and accurate judgement concerning both the one and the other.

3. Let us then seriously inquire,

I. What is salvation?

II. What is that faith whereby we are saved? And,

III. How are we saved by it?

1. I. And, first, let us inquire, What is salvation? The salvation which is here spoken of is not what is frequently understood by that word, the going to heaven, eternal happiness. It is not the soul's going to paradise, termed by our Lord, "Abraham's bosom." It is not a blessing which lies on the other side death; or, as we usually speak, in the other world. The very words of the text itself put this beyond all question: "*Ye are saved.*" It is not something at a distance: it is a present thing; a blessing which, through the free mercy of God, ye are now in possession of. Nay, the words may be rendered, and that with equal propriety, "*Ye have been saved*": so that the salvation which is here spoken of might be extended to the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul, till it is consummated in glory.

2. If we take this in its utmost extent, it will include all that is wrought in the soul by what is frequently termed "natural conscience," but more properly, "preventing grace"; —all the drawings of the Father; the desires after God, which, if we yield to them, increase more and more; —all that light wherewith the Son of God "enlighteneth every one that cometh into the world;" showing every man "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God"; —all the convictions which His Spirit, from time to time, works in every child of man—although it is true, the generality of men stifle them as soon as possible, and after a while forget, or at least deny, that they ever had them at all.

3. But we are at present concerned only with that salvation which the Apostle is directly speaking of. And this consists of two general parts, justification and sanctification.

Justification is another word for pardon. It is the forgiveness of all our sins; and, what is necessarily implied therein, our acceptance with God. The price whereby this hath been procured for us (commonly termed "the meritorious cause of our justification"), is the blood and righteousness of Christ; or, to express it a little more clearly, all that Christ hath done and suffered for us, till He "poured out His soul for the transgressors." The immediate effects of justification are, the peace of God, a "peace that passeth all understanding," and a "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God" "with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

4. And at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins. In that instant we are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit: there is a *real* as well as a *relative* change. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel "the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us"; producing love to all mankind, and more especially to the children of God; expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honour, of money, together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper; in a word, changing the earthly, sensual, devilish mind, into "the mind which was in Christ Jesus."

5. How naturally do those who experience such a change imagine that all sin is gone; that it is utterly rooted out of their heart, and has no more any place therein! How easily do they draw that inference, "I *feel* no sin; therefore, I *have* none: it does not *stir*; therefore it does not *exist*: it has no *motion*; therefore, it has no *being*!"

6. But it is seldom long before they are undeceived, finding sin was only suspended, not destroyed. Temptations return, and sin revives; showing it was but stunned before, not dead. They now feel two principles in themselves, plainly contrary to each other; "the flesh lusting against the Spirit"; nature opposing the grace of God. They cannot deny, that although they still feel power to believe in Christ, and to love God; and although His "Spirit" still "witnesses with their spirits, that they are children of God"; yet they feel in themselves sometimes pride or self-will, sometimes anger or unbelief. They find one or more of these frequently *stirring* in their heart, though not *conquering*; yea, perhaps, "thrusting sore at them that they may fall"; but the Lord is their help.

7. How exactly did Macarius, fourteen hundred years ago, describe the present experience of the children of God: "The unskillful," or inexperienced, "when grace operates, presently imagine they have no more sin. Whereas they that have discretion cannot deny, that even we who have the grace of God may be molested again. For we have often had instances of some among the brethren, who have experienced such grace as to affirm that they had no sin in them; and yet, after all, when they thought themselves entirely freed from it, the corruption that lurked within was stirred up anew, and they were wellnigh burned up."

8. From the time of our being born again, the gradual work of sanctification takes place. We are enabled "by the Spirit" to "mortify the deeds of the body," of our evil nature; and as we are more and more dead to sin, we are more and more alive to God. We go on from grace to grace, while we are careful to "abstain from all appearance of evil," and are "zealous of good works," as we have opportunity, doing good to all men; while we walk in all His ordinances blameless, therein worshipping

Him in spirit and in truth; while we take up our cross, and deny ourselves every pleasure that does not lead us to God.

9. It is thus that we wait for entire sanctification; for a full salvation from all our sins, —from pride, self-will, anger, unbelief; or, as the Apostle expresses it, “go unto perfection.” But what is perfection? The word has various senses: here it means perfect love. It is love excluding sin; love filling the heart, taking up the whole capacity of the soul. It is love “rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, in everything giving thanks.”

II. But what is faith through which we are saved? This is the second point to be considered.

1. Faith, in general, is defined by the Apostle, *ελεγχος πραγμάτων ου βλεπομενων*. *An evidence*, a divine *evidence and conviction* (the word means both) *of things not seen*; not visible, not perceivable either by sight, or by any other of the external senses. It implies both a supernatural *evidence* of God, and of the things of God; a kind of spiritual *light* exhibited to the soul, and a supernatural *sight* or perception thereof. Accordingly, the Scripture speaks of God’s giving sometimes light, sometimes a power of discerning it. So St. Paul: “God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” And elsewhere the same Apostle speaks of “the eyes of” our “understanding being opened.” By this two-fold operation of the Holy Spirit, having the eyes of our soul both *opened* and *enlightened*, we see the things which the natural “eye hath not seen, neither the ear heard.” We have a prospect of the invisible things of God; we see the *spiritual world*, which is all round about us, and yet no more discerned by our natural faculties than if it had no being. And we see the *eternal world*; piercing through the veil which hangs between time and eternity. Clouds and darkness then rest upon it no more, but we already see the glory which shall be revealed.

2. Taking the word in a more particular sense, faith is a divine *evidence and conviction* not only that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,” but also that Christ loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*. It is by this faith (whether we term it the *essence*, or rather a *property* thereof) that we *receive Christ*; that we receive Him in all His offices, as our Prophet, Priest, and King. It is by this that He is “made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

3. “But is this the *faith of assurance*, or *faith of adherence*?” The Scripture mentions no such distinction. The Apostle says, “There is one faith, and one hope of our calling”; one Christian, saving faith; “as there is one Lord,” in whom we believe, and “one God and Father of us all.” And it is certain, this faith necessarily implies an *assurance* (which is here only another word for *evidence*, it being hard to tell the difference between them) that Christ loved me, and gave Himself for me. For “he that believeth” with the true living faith “hath the witness in himself”: “the Spirit witnesseth with his spirit that he is a child of God.” “Because he is a son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into his heart, crying, Abba, Father”; giving him an assurance that he is so, and a childlike confidence in Him. But let it be observed, that, in the very nature of the thing, the assurance goes before the confidence. For a man cannot have a childlike confidence in God till he knows he is a child of God. Therefore, confidence, trust, reliance, adherence, or whatever else it be called, is not the first, as some have supposed, but the second, branch or act of faith.

4. It is by this faith we are saved, justified, and sanctified; taking that word in its highest sense. But how are we justified and sanctified by faith? This is our third head of inquiry. And this being the main point in question, and a point of no ordinary importance, it will not be improper to give it a more distinct and particular consideration.

III. 1. And, first, how are we justified by faith? In what sense is this to be understood? I answer, Faith is the condition, and the only condition, of justification. It is the *condition*: none is justified but he that believes: without faith no man is justified. And it is the *only condition*: this alone is sufficient for justification. Every one that believes is justified, whatever else he has or has not. In other words: no man is justified till he believes; every man when he believes is justified.

2. "But does not God command us to repent also? Yea, and to 'bring forth fruits meet for repentance'—to cease, for instance, from doing evil, and learn to do well? And is not both the one and the other of the utmost necessity, insomuch that if we willingly neglect either, we cannot reasonably expect to be justified at all? But if this be so, how can it be said that faith is the only condition of justification?" God does undoubtedly command us both to repent, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance; which if we willingly neglect, we cannot reasonably expect to be justified at all: therefore both repentance, and fruits meet for repentance, are, in some sense, necessary to justification. But they are not necessary in the *same sense* with faith, nor in the *same degree*. Not in the *same degree*; for those fruits are only necessary *conditionally*; if there be time and opportunity for them. Otherwise a man may be justified without them, as was the *thief* upon the cross (if we may call him so; for a late writer has discovered that he was no thief, but a very honest and respectable person!); but he cannot be justified without faith; this is impossible. Likewise, let a man have ever so much repentance, or ever so many of the fruits meet for repentance, yet all this does not at all avail; he is not justified till he believes. But the moment he believes, with or without those fruits, yea, with more or less repentance, he is justified. —Not in the *same sense*; for repentance and its fruits are only *remotely* necessary; necessary in order to faith; whereas faith is *immediately* necessary to justification. It remains, that faith is the only condition, which is *immediately* and *proximately* necessary to justification.

3. "But do you believe we are sanctified by faith? We know you believe that we are justified by faith; but do not you believe, and accordingly teach, that we are sanctified by our works?" So it has been roundly and vehemently affirmed for these five-and-twenty years: but I have constantly declared just the contrary; and that in all manner of ways. I have continually testified in private and in public, that we are sanctified as well as justified by faith. And indeed the one of those great truths does exceedingly illustrate the other. Exactly as we are justified by faith, so are we sanctified by faith. Faith is the condition, and the only condition, of sanctification, exactly as it is of justification. It is the *condition*: none is sanctified but he that believes; with out faith no man is sanctified. And it is the *only condition*: this alone is sufficient for sanctification. Every one that believes is sanctified, whatever else he has or has not. In other words, no man is sanctified till he believes: every man when he believes is sanctified.

4. "But is there not a repentance consequent upon, as well as a repentance previous to, justification? And is it not incumbent on all that are justified to be 'zealous of good works'? Yea, are not these so necessary, that if a man willingly neglect them he cannot reasonably expect that he shall ever be sanctified in the full sense; that is,

perfected in love? Nay, can he grow at all in grace, in the loving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? Yea, can he retain the grace which God has already given him? Can he continue in the faith which he has received, or in the favour of God. Do not you yourself allow all this, and continually assert it? But, if this be so, how can it be said that faith is the only condition of sanctification?"

5. I do allow all this, and continually maintain it as the truth of God. I allow there is a repentance consequent upon, as well as a repentance previous to, justification. It is incumbent on all that are justified to be zealous of good works. And there are so necessary, that if a man willingly neglect them, he cannot reasonably expect that he shall ever be sanctified; he cannot grow in grace, in the image of God, the mind which was in Christ Jesus; nay, he cannot retain the grace he has received; he cannot continue in faith, or in the favour of God. What is the inference we must draw herefrom? Why, that both repentance, rightly understood, and the practice of all good works, —works of piety, as well as works of mercy (now properly so called, since they spring from faith), are, in some sense, necessary to sanctification.

6. I say, "repentance rightly understood"; for this must not be confounded with the former repentance. The repentance consequent upon justification is widely different from that which is antecedent to it. This implies no guilt, no sense of condemnation, no consciousness of the wrath of God. It does not suppose any doubt of the favour of God, or any "fear that hath torment." It is properly a conviction, wrought by the Holy Ghost, of the *sin* which still *remains* in our heart; of the *φρονημα σαρκος*, *the carnal mind*, which "does still *remain*" (as our Church speaks) "even in them that are regenerate"; although it does no longer *reign*; it has not now dominion over them. It is a conviction of our proneness to evil, of an heart bent to backsliding, of the still continuing tendency of the flesh to lust against the spirit. Sometimes, unless we continually watch and pray, it lusteth to pride, sometimes to anger, sometimes to love of the world, love of ease, love of honour, or love of pleasure more than of God. It is a conviction of the tendency of our heart to self-will, to Atheism, or idolatry; and above all, to unbelief; whereby, in a thousand ways, and under a thousand pretenses, we are ever departing, more or less, from the living God.

7. With this conviction of the sin remaining in our hearts, there is joined a clear conviction of the sin remaining in our lives; still *cleaving* to all our words and actions. In the best of these we now discern a mixture of evil, either in the spirit, the matter, or the manner of them; something that could not endure the righteous judgement of God, were He extreme to mark what is done amiss. Where we least suspected it, we find a taint of pride or self-will, of unbelief or idolatry; so that we are now more ashamed of our best duties than formerly of our worst sins: and hence we cannot but feel that these are so far from having anything meritorious in them, yea, so far from being able to stand in sight of the divine justice, that for those also we should be guilty before God, were it not for the blood of the covenant.

8. Experience shows that, together with this conviction of sin *remaining* in our hearts, and *cleaving* to all our words and actions; as well as the guilt which on account thereof we should incur, were we not continually sprinkled with the atoning blood; one thing more is implied in this repentance; namely, a conviction of our helplessness, of our utter inability to think one good thought, or to form one good desire; and much more to speak one word aright, or to perform one good action, but through His free, almighty grace, first preventing us, and then accompanying us every moment.

9. "But what good works are those, the practice of which you affirm to be necessary to sanctification?" First, all works of piety; such as public prayer, family prayer, and praying in our closet; receiving the supper of the Lord; searching the Scriptures, by hearing, reading, meditating; and using such a measure of fasting or abstinence as our bodily health allows.

10. Secondly, all works of mercy; whether they relate to the bodies or souls of men; such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, entertaining the stranger, visiting those that are in prison, or sick, or variously afflicted; such as the endeavouring to instruct the ignorant, to awaken the stupid sinner, to quicken the lukewarm, to confirm the wavering, to comfort the feeble-minded, to succour the tempted, or contribute in any manner to the saving of souls from death. This is the repentance, and these the "fruits meet for repentance," which are necessary to full sanctification. This is the way wherein God hath appointed His children to wait for complete salvation.

11. Hence may appear the extreme mischievousness of that seemingly innocent opinion, that there is no sin in a believer; that all sin is destroyed, root and branch, the moment a man is justified. By totally preventing that repentance, it quite blocks up the way to sanctification. There is no place for repentance in him who believes there is no sin either in his life or heart: consequently, there is no place for his being perfected in love, to which that repentance is indispensably necessary.

12. Hence it may likewise appear, that there is no possible danger in *thus* expecting full salvation. For suppose we were mistaken, suppose no such blessing ever was or can be attained, yet we lose nothing: nay, that very expectation quickens us in using all the talents which God has given us; yea, in improving them all; so that when our Lord cometh, He will receive His own with increase.

13. But to return. Though it be allowed, that both this repentance and its fruits are necessary to full salvation; yet they are not necessary either in the same sense with faith, or in the same degree: —Not in the *same degree*; for these fruits are only necessary *conditionally*, if there be time and opportunity for them; otherwise a man may be sanctified without them. But he cannot be sanctified without faith. I likewise, let a man have ever so much of this repentance, or ever so many good works, yet all this does not at all avail: he is not sanctified till he believes. But the moment he believes, with or without those fruits, yea, with more or less of this repentance, he is sanctified. —Not in the *same sense*; for this repentance and these fruits are only *remotely* necessary, —necessary in order to the continuance of his faith, as well as the increase of it; whereas faith is *immediately* and *directly* necessary to sanctification. It remains, that faith is the only condition which is *immediately* and *proximately* necessary to sanctification.

14. "But what is that faith whereby we are sanctified, —saved from sin, and perfected in love?" It is a divine evidence and conviction, first, that God hath promised it in the holy Scripture. Till we are thoroughly satisfied of this, there is no moving one step further. And one would imagine there needed not one word more to satisfy a reasonable man of this, than the ancient promise, "Then will I circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." How clearly does this express the being perfected in love! —how strongly imply the being saved from all sin! For as long as love takes up the whole heart, what room is there for sin therein?

15. It is a divine evidence and conviction, secondly, that what God hath promised He is able to perform. Admitting, therefore, that "with men it is impossible" to "bring a clean thing out of an unclean," to purify the heart from all sin, and to till it with all holiness; yet this creates no difficulty in the case, seeing "with God all things are possible." And surely no one ever imagined it was possible to any power less than that of the Almighty! But if God speaks, it shall be done. God saith, "Let there be light; and there" is "light"!

16. It is, thirdly, a divine evidence and conviction that He is able and willing to do it now. And why not? Is not a moment to Him the same as a thousand years? He cannot want more time to accomplish whatever is His will. And He cannot want or stay for any more *worthiness* or *fitness* in the persons He is pleased to honour. We may therefore boldly say, at any point of time, "Now is the day of salvation!" "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts!" "Behold, all things are now ready; come unto the marriage!"

17. To this confidence, that God is both able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more, —a divine evidence and conviction that He doeth it. In that hour it is done: God says to the inmost soul, "According to thy faith be it unto thee!" Then the soul is pure from every spot of sin; it is clean "from all unrighteousness." The believer then experiences the deep meaning of those solemn words, "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

18. "But does God work this great work in the soul gradually or instantaneously?" Perhaps it may be gradually wrought in some; I mean in this sense, —they do not advert to the particular moment wherein sin ceases to be. But it is infinitely desirable, were it the will of God, that it should be done instantaneously; that the Lord should destroy sin "by the breath of His mouth," in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And so He generally does; a plain fact, of which there is evidence enough to satisfy any unprejudiced person. *Thou* therefore look for it every moment! Look for it in the way above described; in all those *good works* whereunto thou art "created anew in Christ Jesus." There is then no danger: you can be no worse, if you are no better, for that expectation. For were you to be disappointed of your hope, still you lose nothing. But you shall not be disappointed of your hope: it will come, and will not tarry. Look for it then every day, every hour, every moment! Why not this hour, this moment? Certainly you may look for it *now*, if you believe it is by faith. And by this token you may surely know whether you seek it by faith or by works. If by works, you want something to be done *first, before* you are sanctified. You think, I must first *be* or *do* thus or thus. Then you are seeking it by works unto this day. If you seek it by faith, you may expect it *as you are*; and expect it *now*. It is of importance to observe, that there is an inseparable connexion between these three points, —expect it *by faith*; expect it *as you are*; and expect it *now*! To deny one of them, is to deny them all; to allow one, is to allow them all. Do *you* believe we are sanctified by faith? Be true then to your principle; and look for this blessing just as you are, neither better nor worse; as a poor sinner that has still nothing to pay, nothing to plead, but "Christ *died*." And if you look for it as you are, then expect it *now*. Stay for nothing: why should you? Christ is ready; and He is all you want. He is waiting for you: He is at the door! Let your inmost soul cry out,

Come in, come in, thou heavenly Guest! Nor hence again remove;
But sup with me, and let the feast Be everlasting love.

Edited by Anne-Elizabeth Powell, Librarian at Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, California with minor corrections and formatting by Ryan Danker and George Lyons of Northwest Nazarene University (Nampa, Idaho) for the Wesley Center for Applied Theology.

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Theology of the Holy Spirit

Winds of the Spirit

When the history of the Christian faith in the 20th century is written, a prominent place will necessarily need to be given to the Holy Spirit. In terms of raw numbers, if not always of cultural influence, it would seem the 20th century is the “Pentecostal century,” so phenomenal was the growth of Pentecostal forms of Christianity during this period. Many estimates suggest there may be at least 300 million Pentecostal Christians in the world today, most of them the product of the rise of Pentecostalism in the early 20th century. Many will know that in its early years the Church of the Nazarene was in fact called the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. The name was changed as differences regarding doctrine and Christian practice developed between Nazarenes and classic Pentecostals.

Obviously, the Holy Spirit is not the special province *only* of those who consciously identify themselves as Pentecostals or Charismatics. The Holy Spirit indeed belongs to the entire Christian world, and clearly to the entire world *period*. In our next lesson we will explore some of the importance of viewing the Holy Spirit as a universal Presence pervading the entire world.

We will not address ourselves specifically to a Pentecostal theology of the Holy Spirit. Obviously, the Church of the Nazarene shares a great deal of common history and theology with many classic Pentecostal movements. This reality is often forgotten, for various reasons, perhaps chief among them this one: In some Pentecostal quarters speaking in tongues is taken to indicate the true beginning of the sanctified life, in some cases even being referred to as “the third work of grace.” We have no desire to prove the Nazarenes “right” and the Pentecostals “wrong.” Instead, we will give a very brief overview of some relevant theological points that must be considered when approaching the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Later in the lesson, however, we will offer some critical comments regarding speaking in tongues, drawn from William Greathouse’s recent book *Wholeness in Christ*.

The first thing that must be said is that there has always been a strong identification between the doctrine of the Trinity and the theology of the Holy Spirit. As Jaroslav Pelikan points out—“Holy Spirit” in *The Melody of Theology*—when the Nicene Creed was first confessed in 325 at the Council of Nicea, faith in the Holy Spirit was expressed simply as “And [we believe] in the Holy Spirit.” This wording was virtually identical to the earlier Apostles’ Creed, which stated “I believe in the Holy Spirit.” By the year 381 the earlier Nicene Creed had been expanded, and the Holy Spirit was now given an entire paragraph:

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The Lord and Giver of life,
Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;
Who spoke by the prophets.

The Nicene Creed

Between 325 and 381 was activity heightened surrounding the theology of the Holy Spirit, such that the addition was mandated in 381. Pelikan's words are apt here: "So it came about that after more than three centuries of almost complete neglect, the dogma of the Holy Spirit had been placed on the doctrinal agenda of both East and West, debated by Greek and Latin theologians, and settled by an ecumenical council of the church in the capital city of the Roman Empire—all in the space of about two decades."⁸⁷

The Eastern Church Father Gregory of Nazianzus believed the doctrine of the Holy Trinity may have been revealed in a progressive fashion: "The Old Testament proclaimed the Father manifestly, and the Son more hiddenly. The New [Testament] manifested the Son, and suggested the deity of the Spirit. Now the Spirit itself is resident among us, and is providing us with a clearer explanation of itself."⁸⁸ Gregory's closing thought is illuminating. True knowledge of the Holy Spirit can only come through the experiencing of the Spirit's grace, truth, and power.

Naming the Spirit

An important issue that should be addressed at the outset is the proper way to address the Holy Spirit. In traditional Nazarene use the Spirit is referred to as "He," but as we observe above, Gregory calls the Spirit an "It." For many, to refer to the Holy Spirit as "It" only serves to depersonalize Him. Pelikan remarks that the Greek expression for the Holy Spirit is neuter, *to Hagion Pneuma*, and not masculine. By contrast, the Latin *Spiritus* is masculine and the Hebrew *Ruach* is often but not always feminine. Hence there is much evidence on both sides of the question. Some have advocated calling the Spirit "She" in the interest of balancing gender in the Holy Trinity, but this may only serve to confuse the issue, because the triune God has no gender.

Clark Pinnock offers helpful comments in this general area. He allows that on occasion it might be permissible to refer to the Spirit using feminine gender. He qualifies this proposal as follows: "We would not want to refer to the Spirit only in a feminine way, as if no masculine or neutral nuances were possible. Doing so might cause one to ignore the feminine dimensions of Father and Son. One does not want to pose the femininity of Spirit against the nonfemininity of Father and Son. We human beings are male and female in the image of the triune God—Father, Son and Spirit. Using *she* could project a feminine persona onto Spirit or be stereotypical with regard to so-called feminine traits."⁸⁹ We will follow traditional usage in these lessons and typically refer to the Holy Spirit as "He," while yet believing, as Pinnock suggests, that all three divine Persons have a feminine dimension.

Devotion to the Holy Spirit

The early Church Father Origen believed proper prayer should be addressed *to* God the Father, *through* God the Son, *in the power of* God the Spirit. This formula, however orthodox it may be, has sometimes had the net effect of putting the Spirit on the margins, of demonstrating once again the often-repeated analysis that the Holy Spirit is indeed "the shy member of the Holy Trinity." Furthermore, the frequent calling of the Holy Spirit "the Third Person" of the Trinity may have the same effect.

As an experiment that may lend credence to the allegation that the Holy Spirit is "under-appreciated" during Christian worship, consult the back of the Nazarene hymnal *Sing to the Lord*. Review the "Topical Index of Hymns and Readings" from

780-792. Notice how many more hymns are listed under such categories as God Our Father (with several subheadings) and Jesus Our Savior (with even more subheadings), and then compare the modest hymns with a specific, Holy-Spirit focus. A contemporary chorus book may also be consulted. It may yield a somewhat richer harvest of musical devotion to the Holy Spirit.

Evidence of the Deity of the Holy Spirit

It was suggested above, in discussing the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Nicene Creed, that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was something of a “late bloomer” in the history of Christian doctrine. By the end of the fourth century Christian orthodoxy testified to the deity of the Holy Spirit, extending the same Greek word, *homoousios*—of the same essence, being, or nature—that had earlier been ascribed to Jesus Christ. But up until that time the deity of the Holy Spirit was in some quarters suspect. He was viewed as being the One who inspired the Scriptures, by whom the prophets spoke, but not always as being of equal divinity with Father and Son.

The particular phrase “Holy Spirit” appears only three times in the Old Testament: Psalm 51:11 and twice in Isaiah 63:10-11. On other occasions there are references to the Word and Wisdom of God, which reinforce the general principle that in the Old Testament there is dynamism and motion within the One God.

Isaiah 11:2 was often cited in the early and medieval church as testimony to the sevenfold identity of the Spirit. This scripture is worthy of our serious consideration and meditation:

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
The Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and of power,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

The sevenfold identity of the Spirit is as follows:

- of the Lord (as opposed to being the spirit of a malevolent and wicked being)
- of wisdom
- of understanding
- of counsel
- of power
- of knowledge
- of the fear of the Lord

Gregory of Nazianzus, whom we have already quoted, believed the Holy Spirit has:

- Always existed, and exists, and always will exist,
- Who neither had a beginning, nor will have an end . . .
- Ever being partaken, but not partaking;
- Perfecting, not being perfected;
- Sanctifying, not being sanctified;
- Deifying, not being deified . . .
- Life and Lifegiver;
- Light and Lightgiver;
- Absolute Good, and Spring of Goodness . . .
- By whom the Father is known and the Son is glorified . . .

Why make a long discourse of it? All that the Father has the Son has also, except the being Unbegotten; and all that the Son has the Spirit has also, except the Generation.⁹⁰

Nazarene Focus

It is probably a coincidence, owing to the relative commonality of the phrase, but both H. Ray Dunning and William Greathouse have book chapters with the title "The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit." The origin of this phrase may lie in the 1911 book by this name authored by H. Wheeler Robinson.

H. Ray Dunning

H. Ray Dunning is not only a profound Wesleyan and philosophical theologian. He is at the same time a profound biblical theologian, which ultimately must be the basis for any theological work at all. In *Grace, Faith, and Holiness* Dunning begins his consideration of the person of the Holy Spirit by a brief but trenchant examination of the concept of experience. This comes at the very start of the fifth major section of *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, wherein Dunning considers the person and work of the Holy Spirit, the reality of sanctification as renewal in the image of God, the doctrine of the Church, and the Christian sacraments.

Dunning comes to the topic of experience in the holistic way of wanting to emphasize that experience is *both* subjective and objective. The subjective quality of religious experience may not differ greatly from, for example, the experience of a great symphony, the love of a child, the forest primeval, or a favorite art gallery. Such encounters may put one in a reflective mood, and there may be accompanying physical changes as well.

The experience of God, however, is *qualitatively* distinct from all of these other experiences, Dunning believes. The difference comes in what Dunning calls "the incarnational principle."⁹¹ This simply means there is Someone who is "ultimately real" behind and supportive of the experience. Of course the forest, the sunset, the child, the art gallery are all real enough in their respective ways, but their reality is only finally and fully derived from the triune God. Dunning's incarnational principle recognizes that the "objective" pole of all Christian experience is none other than the triune God.

This centering principle takes us directly to the Incarnate Word of God who is Jesus Christ, and also to the written word of God, the Holy Bible. Religious experience that does not take seriously the incarnational principle succumbs, Dunning warns, to "doctrinal and ethical vagaries."⁹²

After this opening salvo regarding the right way to look at religious experience, Dunning moves to concise and informed surveys of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, in the Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ, in the Early Church, and in the Apostle Paul. Here, we will highlight Dunning's consideration of the interface between the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ in the Gospel of John.

Dunning explicates five truths that demonstrate his main thesis: "The Holy Spirit must be understood as inseparably related to the person of Jesus Christ."⁹³ They are:

- The Spirit's coming in fullness is dependent on Jesus' departure from earth.
- The very meaning of the Spirit's name implies a continuation of the work of Christ.
- To receive the Holy Spirit is dependent upon a prior knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus identifies the Spirit's coming with His own personal, abiding presence.
- The Spirit's work is decisively Christ-centered.

Six scriptures from the Gospel of John are prominent indicators to and supporters of the themes Dunning explores. They are as follows: John 14:15-17; 14:25-26; 15:26-27; 16:5-11; 16:12-15; 20:22.

William M. Greathouse

William Greathouse has been something of a "man for all seasons" in the Church of the Nazarene. He has been a pastor, college professor of theology and related subjects, president of Nazarene Theological Seminary, and finally a general superintendent. When he speaks in a theological voice it behooves Nazarenes to listen.

His 1998 book, *Wholeness in Christ: Toward a Biblical Theology of Holiness*, is probably the climax of his writing career. In his chapter on "The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit" he focuses on the Holy Spirit in some of the Epistles of the New Testament. His particular interest is in promoting the teaching of entire sanctification. Compactly, he writes, "The work of the Spirit in human life defines the meaning of sanctification."⁹⁴ He characterizes the knowing of the Holy Spirit as not merely experience for its own sake, but for the sake of witnessing to Jesus Christ: "Strictly speaking, 'the Christian experience of the Holy Spirit' is not simply an 'experience.' It is indeed an experience, but it is more; it is most profoundly a relationship with God, grounded on faith in Christ, and bringing the indwelling Spirit (Rom 8:1-4, 9). That Spirit, says Paul, is the Spirit of Christ: 'Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him' (v. 9)."⁹⁵

Two Cautionary Notes

Greathouse structures his compact consideration of sanctification in some of the Epistles by suggesting two clusters of experience one does well to avoid. He finds these struggles most clearly expressed in 1 Corinthians and Galatians. They are the struggles regarding the exercise of glossolalia (speaking in tongues) and legalism. An authentic life in the Spirit, Greathouse believes, is:

1. "primarily a life of agape love rather than the exercise of charismata—the grace gifts of the Spirit, particularly glossolalia or tongues-speaking (in 1 Corinthians);
2. the freedom in the Spirit to serve others in love and fulfill the law spontaneously, as opposed to loveless legalism (in Galatians)."⁹⁶

Greathouse quotes with approval the author James S. Stewart, who argues that the gift of speaking in tongues is assuredly a gift, but not the choicest gift the Holy Spirit might bestow:

In the primitive Christian community there was a tendency at the first—perhaps quite natural under the circumstances—to revert to the cruder conceptions of the Spirit, and to trace His workings mainly in such phenomena as speaking with tongues. It was Paul who saved the nascent faith from that dangerous

retrogression. Not in any accidental and extraneous phenomena, he insisted, not in any spasmodic emotions or intermittent ecstasies were the real tokens of God's Spirit to be found; but in the quiet, steady, normal life of faith, in power that worked on moral levels, in the soul's secret inward assurance of its sonship of God, in love and joy and peace and patience and a character like that of Jesus.⁹⁷

For his part, Greathouse (borrowing here from C. K. Barrett) fears that speaking in tongues may indeed witness to a "lord," but there is no guarantee that the "lord" is Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor 10:20; 12:2). Speaking in tongues could conceivably veer dangerously off into "unbridled emotionalism" or a "mindless spirituality" that is "subnormal Christianity."⁹⁸

Greathouse recognizes speaking in tongues as a spiritual gift, but not the highest gift. The exercise of glossolalia may serve to divide the Church. "The measure of any gift," believes Greathouse, "is the degree to which it builds up the Body of Christ. To repeat, 'To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit *for the common good*' (1 Cor 12:7, emphasis added), to build up the entire Body in love (vv. 12-27). On this basis, prophecy is the highest, glossolalia the lowest of the gifts."⁹⁹

The second cautionary note sounded by Greathouse is settling for a legalistic Christian life instead of a full-blown launch into the freedom the Holy Spirit wants to bestow. Legalism is defined by Greathouse as "adding something else to faith in Christ as the condition of being saved,"¹⁰⁰ and he laments, "Many sincere Christians in the Wesleyan-Holiness Movement have understandably been turned away from scriptural holiness by legalism masquerading as holiness."¹⁰¹

Galatians 5:1 gives the lie to legalism: "For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." About this verse Greathouse comments, "the legalist does not believe that life in the Spirit is sufficient to guard against the flesh and hence is tempted to resort to the Law as a means of avoiding libertinism. However, in turning to the Law for moral strength, the legalist inevitably lapses into the bondage of fear (see Rom 8:15-16). Life in the Spirit is sufficient of itself if we obey Paul's gospel imperatives in this Epistle."¹⁰²

Two Gospel Imperatives

"Faith working by love" (Gal 5:6) was hailed by John Wesley as "the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection." To love in the way of *agape* love is for Greathouse the perfect antidote to the dangers of legalism. Greathouse also quotes Martin Luther in this connection, his famous declaration that "a Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none; a Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all."¹⁰³ To love legalistically is to love only conditionally in a measured, calculating way that expects a healthy return on its investment of love. This is not love at all. But *agape* love does not count the cost of love, instead striving through the grace of the Holy Spirit to love without conditions or strings attached. Greathouse's second gospel imperative is to live "a life of disciplined obedience." Sinful tendencies devolve toward the life of the "flesh," which for the apostle Paul is totally opposed to life in the Spirit.

Lesson 10: Theology of the Holy Spirit, Part 1

Due This Lesson

Reading of Resources 9-5, 9-6, and 9-7
Three-page paper
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- have a basic biblical understanding of the Holy Spirit
- focus especially on scriptures that confirm the divinity of the Spirit
- consider the importance of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of Jesus Christ
- contemplate the devotional question of how and why we sing and pray to the third person of the Holy Trinity

Homework Assignments

Read Resource 10-5

Use of the word "spirit."

- Go into a department store like Wal-Mart or Target and look for merchandise described or marketed through the use of the word "spirit."
- Look in and listen to popular media such as motion pictures, television, newspapers, radio, and magazines. Once again the assignment is to discern patterns of popular use for the word "spirit."
- After you have collected at least a dozen samples, analyze them. How many of the examples would support a truly *Christian* understanding of the Holy Spirit? Of those that do, how many tend toward a more personal view of the Spirit's presence, and how many to a more cosmic and universal outlook?
- Compile the results of your search in a paper of three or four pages.

During the next lesson journals will be checked to verify that the journaling aspect of the homework assignment is being faithfully completed. The individual entries will not be read, but the overall layout and organization will be inspected.

Write in your journal. Throughout this lesson there have been many opportunities to look at particular biblical references having to do with the Holy Spirit. Recall the two or three most meaningful references you uncovered, and meditate upon them.

The Holy Spirit

“The fruits of the Spirit are none other than the virtues of Christ.”¹⁰⁴

Friedrich Schleiermacher

“To explore a theology of the Holy Spirit is to ask fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life. No period in history has been in greater need of God’s present activity in the world and a comprehensive and integrated spiritual vision for the future and destiny of planet Earth than the present. The Christian church’s theology, however, has been glaringly deficient in setting forth a detailed doctrine of the Spirit, although scripture contains a strong basis for theological reflection. An urgent need exists for a doctrine of the Holy Spirit, especially in light of the new scientific picture of the cosmos, which has evoked questions about humanity’s most cherished religious and philosophical perspectives of reality.”¹⁰⁵

Lora Gross

Small Groups

Biblical Evidence for the Deity of the Holy Spirit

Listed below are several relevant scriptures. Beneath each reference, write a sentence as to why this scripture demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is God, and in what particular way. Be prepared to share answers with the other groups after a few minutes.

Isaiah 40:13

1 Corinthians 2:10-14

Psalms 139:7-10

Job 33:4

Psalms 104:30

Hebrews 9:14

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

Matthew 12:28

Romans 8:2, 11

Ephesians 4:4

Romans 1:4

Genesis 1:2

Matthew 3:16

1 Peter 1:11

Luke 4:18

Read Article III, "The Holy Spirit." Does the Article of Faith include all that Scripture reveals? Does it clearly state the position of the church in a way that communicates to today's world?

III. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Triune Godhead, that He is ever present and efficiently active in and with the Church of Christ, convincing the world of sin, regenerating those who repent and believe, sanctifying believers, and guiding into all truth as it is in Jesus.

Small Groups

Jesus and the Spirit in the Gospel of John—Dunning

Dunning explicates five truths that demonstrate his main thesis: “the Holy Spirit must be understood as inseparably related to the person of Jesus Christ.”¹⁰⁶

They are:

- The Spirit’s coming in fullness is dependent upon Jesus’ departure from earth.
- The very meaning of the Spirit’s name implies a continuation of the work of Christ.
- To receive the Holy Spirit is dependent upon a prior knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus identifies the Spirit’s coming with His own personal, abiding presence.
- The Spirit’s work is decisively Christ-centered.

Six scriptures from the Gospel of John are prominent indicators to and supporters of the themes Dunning explores. They are as follows: John 14:15-17; 14:25-26; 15:26-27; 16:5-11; 16:12-15; 20:22.

The Assignment: Read the six scriptures above, and correlate the evidence in them with the five themes Dunning sets forth. You may want to make a list of five or six ways in which the scriptures prove or demonstrate the truth of Dunning’s analysis.

Two Cautionary Notes—Greathouse

Especially for students who have been in the Church of the Nazarene for some years, the warnings raised by William Greathouse will ring familiar. Legalism always crouches at the door of Nazarene personal ethics. Speaking in tongues may disrupt the freely flowing life in the Spirit that Greathouse promotes. Glossolalia may be divisive and disturbing.

What are your own personal experiences regarding legalism and glossolalia? Soon you will be shepherding parishioners for whom these may be very real issues. Are you prepared to give biblical answers that are in keeping with Phineas Bresee’s dictum quoted earlier: “In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity”?

Small Groups

It is customary to say that the Acts of the Apostles is really the Acts of the Holy Spirit. The second volume in Luke's two-volume work is replete with references to the Holy Spirit. Luke's Gospel also shows much interest in the reality of the Holy Spirit, more so than either Matthew or Mark.

This learning exercise invites us to reflect on the Spirit's activity in the Acts of the Apostles, and attempt to build bridges between then and now. *How, when, where, and why* is the Holy Spirit active in today's world, and especially in the Church?

Several scripture references are given below. Under each of them write two points of relevance to the theology of the Holy Spirit.

Be prepared to report to the class.

1:16

- 1.
- 2.

8:29

- 1.
- 2.

10:19-20

- 1.
- 2.

11:12

- 1.
- 2.

13:2

- 1.
- 2.

28:25-27

- 1.
- 2.

16:6-7

- 1.
- 2.

15:28-29

- 1.
- 2.

20:28

- 1.
- 2.

13:4

- 1.
- 2.

5:32

- 1.
- 2.

20:22-23

- 1.
- 2.

8:39

- 1.
- 2.

5:3

- 1.
- 2.

7:51

- 1.
- 2.

Some New Testament scholars claim in the Acts of the Apostles the Holy Spirit at times is evident more as an impersonal force than a personal comforter and guide. What do you think?

Theology of the Holy Spirit

Constructive Pneumatology from Clark Pinnock

Overview

The name Clark Pinnock will be familiar to many students of Nazarene theology. Among evangelical theologians of his generation, he has been among the most widely read, especially by Christian theologians who do not necessarily share the evangelical perspective. Formerly Pinnock was committed to Calvinism, but in recent days has undergone something of a “conversion” to the Arminian position that has so long been a central plank for Nazarene theology. In his 1996 book, *Flame of Love*, Pinnock crafted a major evangelical pneumatology, and we will draw from this book in this section. Prior to that, Pinnock wrote (along with four coauthors) *The Openness of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), which we have referred to elsewhere in these modules, and more recently *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God’s Openness*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001). Followers of Karl Barth’s theology, with its stern warnings against diminishing the transcendence of God, have been critical of the entire “openness theology” movement.

Flame of Love is a work in seven chapters. Pinnock is a sincere and often captivating writer who understands the continuing priorities of evangelical theology. These include a quickened awareness of the Holy Spirit within one’s heart as the Spirit testifies to the saving work of Jesus Christ. Pinnock also knows this warm-hearted evangelicalism carries with it a mandate to share this gospel around the world. He is always aware of this wider context of mission and evangelism. He also seeks to remain rock-solid faithful to a biblical portrait of the Holy Spirit. For Pinnock, “The Bible contains few abstract statements about the Spirit, but many symbols such as water, wind and fire” (13). In Hebrew and Greek, “Spirit” often conveys the movement of air. The direction and intensity of this movement often depends upon the context. John 20:22 is a mild and tender breath, but Exodus 15:8 is a full-force gale (14).

Pinnock’s certain evangelical commitments do not at the same time preclude his interest in engaging the wider ecumenical Christian world in discussion about the Holy Spirit. For example, the Roman Catholic mystical writer, John of the Cross (b. 1542), called the Holy Spirit the “flame of love,” and Pinnock borrows this as his book’s title. Pinnock adds that the Spirit is “the nimble, responsive, playful, personal gift of God” (9).

Our handling of Pinnock’s main themes will be limited to chapters 1, 2, 5. Other parts of these lessons have already dealt with many of the issues Pinnock raises in the remaining four chapters.

The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Trinity and in Creation

Spirit in Trinity

Jürgen Moltmann, who will be featured later in this lesson, describes the Holy Spirit as “the loving, self-communicating, out-fanning and out-pouring presence of the eternal

divine life of the triune God" (quoted in *Flame of Love*, 15). Moltmann is a firm believer in what is often called "the social analogy or doctrine of the Trinity," which stresses that God is within himself a communal and relational Being, and therefore all human relations ought to be modeled upon the triune God. Pinnock describes God as "pure relationality," and ties in this understanding with grace, a prime theme of Wesleyan theology: "If God is a loving relationality, grace is primary, because it is rooted in the loving divine communion" (23).

Traditionally, the Holy Spirit has been called the bond of love between God the Father and God the Son. It is possible, and even likely, that the "bond of love" loses His own identity precisely in being that bond of love. Many women give their lives to their husbands and their children. In the process they certainly bind a family together in love, but may forfeit their own identities. Something like this may happen in Trinitarian theology stressing the Holy Spirit as this bond between Father and Son. That is one reason why the Spirit is sometimes called "the shy member of the Trinity." He has also been called "the go-between God" because of the way He unites humans with God.

Pinnock believes in the social approach to the Trinity. To say "social Trinity" means for Pinnock, "There are three Persons who are subjects of the divine experiences" (35). Furthermore, he affirms that the drama of salvation can only be understood on the terms provided by the social vision of the triune God. "The Father sends the Son into the world, and his suffering for us in union with the Father in turn releases the Spirit. The story reveals God as a fellowship of Persons who are open to the joy and pain of the world. Trinity bespeaks a livingness in God, both beyond and within our world" (41).

Mildred Wynkoop's emphasis on the theology of love finds an echo in Pinnock when he writes, "God is the ever-expanding circle of loving, and the Spirit is the dynamic at the heart of the circle" (48). The Holy Spirit, who is the "bond of love" between Father and Son, need not lose His identity as He cements Father and Son together. Even as the love of a mother will expand and grow as she gives it away to family members and others in her circle of influence.

The "open" God, whom Pinnock has championed at great length, is for him characterized by "the dance of trinitarian life" (47). Traditional descriptions of God as sovereign and holy may detract from God's loving relationality, although Nazarene theology has often spoken of God's holiness as chief among His moral attributes, which means holiness and love are really two sides of the same coin.

Christian theology should lead one ever closer to the true knowledge and praise of the triune God. Otherwise it is merely empty posturing, and may even damage growing faith. Pinnock's treatments of the Holy Spirit are fully aware that *theology must be doxology*, the praise of the living God. This is clear when he writes:

We praise the Father, who is primordial light and unoriginated being, absolute mystery, without beginning or end. We praise our Lord Jesus Christ, everlasting Son of the Father, who lives in fellowship with the Father, ever responding to his love. We praise the Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who is breathed out everlastingly—living, ecstatic, flaming. Each person of the Trinity exists eternally with the others, each has its gaze fixed on the others, each casts a glance away from itself in love to the others, the eye of each lover ever fixed on the beloved other (42).

In John 4:24 Jesus declared, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." Commenting on this verse, Pinnock answers that this does not mean God is a ghost, but rather, "God is the power of creation, the incalculable energy that can give life to the dead and call things that do not exist into being" (25).

Spirit in Creation

Elihu, who questioned and analyzed Job when Job was challenged by God, testified, "The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life" (Job 33:4). In the next chapter he understands the disaster God's withdrawing of His Spirit would bring upon humanity: If "he withdrew his spirit and breath, all mankind would perish together and man would return to dust" (Job 34:14-15). The breath or Spirit of God is not only vital to creation—the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters in Genesis 1:2—but also to God's providential oversight and sustenance of the world He has made.

Scriptures like these are enough to convince us of the cosmic dimension of the Holy Spirit's work. Pinnock claims, "The Spirit is at work in the world and should not be degraded to an ornament of piety" (50). Furthermore, "The power of love is at work everywhere in the world, not just in the churches" (52).

Pinnock's assessment of the typical evangelical experience of the Holy Spirit as "an ornament of piety" may be offensive to some people, but he is unfortunately largely correct. Too often the power of the Holy Spirit has been severely localized to *only* the individual human heart, blunting the Spirit's worldwide effectiveness.

Pinnock challenges us not to neglect the omnipresence of the Spirit of God: "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?" (Ps 139:7). We have all heard of pastors who have pursued potential converts into bars, saloons, and taverns. Are we to assume the Spirit of God is *not* present in such places? If so, on what basis? Is the Holy Spirit present *in a different way* in a cathedral than in a tavern?

Remember that at one time John Wesley believed it was almost a sin if a soul was not saved in a church. But the Methodist revival began exactly when Wesley undertook a ministry of open-air field preaching, far removed from the "proper" Church of England churches where Wesley was accustomed to welcoming the Holy Spirit. Can we learn from this example?

The Spirit Who Saves and Divinizes

Clark Pinnock is not a Nazarene, but at times in his chapter on "Spirit & Union" he sounds like one. The main intent of this chapter is to remind readers that one of the Holy Spirit's primary activities—most Nazarenes would say it is *the* primary one—is to bring the divine and the human into saving and sanctifying contact. The theme of this chapter is to view salvation in "relational, affective terms" (149). Biblical examples like the prodigal son insure that God extends and indeed overextends himself in the effort to save wasted humanity.

The union the Holy Spirit wishes to create might even be expressed in terms otherwise thought to be sensual. Showing once again his ecumenical sensibilities, Pinnock quotes the Roman Catholic spiritual writer Bernard of Clairvaux, who believed, "If the

Father kisses the Son and the Son receives the kiss, it is appropriate to think of the Holy Spirit as the kiss" (quoted in *Flame of Love*, 150).

Second Peter 1:4 is probably the clearest New Testament reference to a teaching at the heart of Eastern Orthodox spiritual theology, and known by the various names of *theosis*, deification, and divinization. It reads, "Through these [God's glory and goodness] he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

The key phrase is of course "participate in the divine nature." Eastern Orthodox theologians teach that through divinization *we become by grace what God is by nature*. Some would see this claim as being a profound blurring of the line between the human and the divine. Pinnock disagrees with this negative assessment, and clarifies just what he means by deification:

What we call union (theosis or divinization) is not pantheism—there is no absorption of the person in God. By the grace of God and as creatures we participate in him. United to Christ without becoming Christ, we are also united to God without becoming God. It is a personal union in which the distinction between Creator and creature is maintained. We enter the dance of the Trinity not as equals but as adopted partners (154).

Prevenient grace, in which Pinnock very definitely believes, does not set aside the severity and gravity of original sin. But the reality of prevenient grace means no one is beyond the stretch of the love of God. "There is an ember of the image of God still in us," Pinnock believes, "and the Spirit blows upon it. People have capacity for the faith God looks for. The Spirit woos us but does not impose on us" (160). Another striking image underscores Pinnock's commitment to the profusion of God's grace, and yet to the Arminian sense that people may still reject that grace: "God's grace is like a river sweeping objects ahead of it, but sinners can still cling to the banks to avoid being swept along" (161).

For some, Pinnock's image may seem too overpowering to the point of minimizing the capacity of humans to respond. The current of some rivers is strong to the point of being deadly. No one, sinner or not, may be able to cling to the banks of such a torrent. On the other hand, some rivers have a relatively mild current, not a death current but a buoyant and supporting tide. Is there another image that might convey the truth Pinnock intends in a better way?

The dynamics of spiritual union as effected by the Holy Spirit is something every Nazarene can applaud about the work of Clark Pinnock. He is, however, more open to speaking in tongues than Nazarenes would be.

Concluding Assessment

Flame of Love is the mature pneumatology of a theologian who has been thinking through these issues for an entire theological lifetime. We touched only briefly on three of his seven chapters, concerning ourselves with Spirit and Trinity, Spirit and Creation, and Spirit and Salvation. Pinnock's other four chapters are about Spirit and Jesus Christ, Spirit and Church, Spirit and Christian Mission, and Spirit and the Quest for Truth.

At least three groups of Christians who sometimes ignore each other can learn from Pinnock's treatment. Some liberal Christians believe the Holy Spirit is at work in the world at large, in history, politics, and culture, and are yet leery of claiming too much personal involvement of the Spirit in an individual's life. Another group would be Pentecostals and Charismatics, who might believe they have the corner on the market of Holy Spirit theology and devotion. A third group is evangelicals like Nazarenes who are not liberals and not Pentecostals either.

In some ways Pinnock tries to bring these three groups, and perhaps others as well, to some kind of common ground. Liberals need to be convinced of the Spirit's intimate conveying of saving and sanctifying grace. Evangelicals like Nazarenes should know that seeking after charismatic gifts need not divide churches, but may edify the Body of Christ. And Pentecostals should realize that other understandings and expressions of the Holy Spirit are as truthful and legitimate as theirs are.

Images and Understandings of the Holy Spirit in Jürgen Moltmann

Jürgen Moltmann of Germany is one of the most creative Protestant theologians of our day and time. He is one of the primary architects of the "theology of hope," which has been credited as being one of the reasons for the end of communism in Eastern Europe.

In his book about the Holy Spirit, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, Moltmann discusses a dozen "metaphors for the experience of the Spirit." We will list these now, and invite students to add their own understandings to each of the 12.

Personal Metaphors

Lord

The intent of this personal metaphor is summarized for Moltmann by 2 Corinthians 3:17: "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." In today's world we sometimes associate the idea of "lord" with "lording it over" or the absence of freedom. But for Moltmann the apostle Paul is ringing the chimes of freedom. Moltmann says, "The name 'Lord' has nothing to do with enslavement. Its context is liberation" (271). The Holy Spirit as Lord leads us into the paths of justice and righteousness, and away from falsehood. The Lordship of the Holy Spirit is what sets the believer free for love and for service.

Mother

If the Lordship of the Holy Spirit emphasizes our being made free, the Motherhood of the Spirit points to our coming alive. Passages like John 3:3-6, which testify to our being born anew, suggest the mothering and life-giving capacities of the Holy Spirit. "The rebirth to life corresponds to the conquest of sin, with its separation, and death, with its lack of relations," Moltmann writes. "Freedom and life are the two key facts in experiences of the divine Spirit. Freedom without new life is empty. Life without freedom is dead" (271). Nurture and compassion characterize Holy Spirit as Mother. "The mother who gives life also frees the child for its own independent existence, and keeps that freedom alive through her nurturing commitment" (273).

Judge

“Living freedom” and “free life” flow from Holy Spirit as Lord and as Mother respectively. Moltmann sees these two factors meeting in the quest for justice, and therefore it is appropriate to name the Holy Spirit as just judge. “Living freedom and free life can endure only in justice and righteousness” (271). In the Old Testament, the coming Messiah will “judge with righteousness,” as in Isaiah 11. Because the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon Messiah, the Holy Spirit may be called the judge who enables the Messiah to judge rightly.

Formative Metaphors

Energy

Ruach, the Hebrew concept that conveys the Spirit’s rich capacity for movement and vitality, supports viewing the Holy Spirit as energy. “We sense in ourselves the personal dynamic given to us,” Moltmann claims, “and then perceive it in everything else that lives” (274).

Borrowing some insights from physics, Moltmann suggests that energy really has two faces: cosmos and chaos. These two forces are related to one another not only in destructive ways, but in creative ways also. “What is ‘between’ people on the emotional level is like a field of attraction and repulsion—an order that soothes us and does us good, and a deranging chaos” (275). For Moltmann, the potential friction arising between cosmos and chaos is a good thing, for it “frees new energies and awakens unguessed-of vitality” (275).

The creative energy unleashed in human relations is for Moltmann a pointer to our experiencing the energies of God through the Holy Spirit. “To feel the closeness of the living God is to experience new vitality. To believe and sense the closeness of the risen Christ means that body and soul are lifted up by ‘the power of the resurrection’” (275). To say that God is “the spring of living water” (Jer 17:13) and that believers in Jesus Christ will have streams of living water flow from them (Jn 7:38) is to know the Spirit in all of His vivifying energy.

The medical profession has recently been exploring the phenomenon of “healing hands,” hands that radiate love, energy, and healing. Moltmann seems to supply some theological justification for this impulse when he writes, “People touched by the Spirit will pass on the energies of the life that gives life, and apparently not only from soul to soul, but through their bodies too. The bodily zones that radiate energy are the glowing face, the shining eyes, the speaking mouth, the play of features and the gestures which show affection and commitment. It is these which supply and charge the metaphors for the life-giving, stimulating and electrifying closeness of God in the Spirit” (276).

Space

Energy needs space. The creation story reveals that God first of all created space before investing that space with life forms. “The free spaces sustain our freedom,” Moltmann concludes, “and invite us to our full unfolding” (276). The space the Holy Spirit provides for free life is liberating space.

The Holy Spirit's creation of space is suggested in Psalm 31:8: "You have not handed me over to the enemy, but have set my feet in a spacious place." The safe-keeping space of Holy Spirit is known by Psalm 139:5: "You hem me in, behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me."

Gestalt

Gestalt sometimes describes a school of psychology that seeks to find overall patterns or configurations. The motto of the Gestalt school is that the whole is greater than the mere sum of all of the parts. The whole is more than a random adding up of parts. The German literary figure, Goethe, described Gestalt as "minted form which takes shape as it lives" (quoted in *The Spirit of Life*, 277).

Since Gestalt is about pattern, shaping, configuration, and equilibrium, the Holy Spirit seen as Gestalt is the Spirit who forms our lives after the image of Jesus Christ. Dietrich Bonhoeffer described the spiritual life as "Christ's taking form in us" (quoted in *The Spirit of Life*, 278). "To be conformed to the likeness of [God's] Son" is the promise of Romans 8:29, and our future hope points to the time when the Lord Jesus "will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body" (Phil 3:21).

Movement Metaphors: Tempest—Fire—Love

Moltmann links these three common understandings of the Holy Spirit under the heading of movement. He believes

they express the feeling of being seized and possessed by something overwhelmingly powerful, and the beginning of a new movement in ourselves. They describe a movement that sweeps people off their feet, which possesses and excites not only the conscious levels but the unconscious depths too, and sets men and women affected themselves on the move toward unsuspected new things. Deeply moved, we ourselves move, and go out of ourselves. The primal image is the Pentecost story, which tells how the experience of the Spirit turns a crowd of Jesus' intimidated disciples into free witnesses to Jesus Christ (278-79).

Mystical Metaphors: Light—Water—Fertility

Moltmann catalogues these familiar images of God the Holy Spirit as mystical, which points to "so intimate a union between the divine Spirit and what is human, and between the human spirit and what is divine, that it is hardly possible to distinguish the two" (281).

The words "mystical" and "mysticism" are highly charged words, such that caution must be taken in defining and using them. Jaroslav Pelikan defines the mystical as "the immediate experience of oneness with Ultimate Reality" (*The Melody of Theology*, 171). Eastern religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism are mystical in ways that obscure all boundaries between the divine and the human, an erasing unacceptable to most Christians.

Mildred Wynkoop provides wise counsel on this point. She fears that some charismatic groups will go too far along the mystical trail, and that in so doing "all vital contact with Scripture and Christian history and life is lost." True mystical experience must be *of God* and not simply *of experience*. "Wesley stands in the mystical tradition insofar as he stressed personal experience of grace," Wynkoop believes. She offers the

following delimitation of Wesley as mystic: "But that is as far as it can be said that he was a mystic. His feet were solidly planted in social relationships and he was an outspoken enemy of the erotic in life, in preaching, in testimony, in song, or in religious emotion. Perfection, to him, was to be defined rationally, biblically, ethically, socially" (*A Theology of Love*, 273).

Moltmann finds that simple plant life weaves light, water, and fertility into one package. Light and water and soil combine to produce growth.

Activity

Go outside and look for evidence around you of God the Holy Spirit in light, in water, and in fertility. Be prepared to share your findings with the class.

Lesson 11: Theology of the Holy Spirit, Part 2

Due This Lesson

Five-page essay
Reading of Resource 10-5
Journal check
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- incorporate the theology of the Holy Spirit's personhood and the ways He is active in the world today
- consider some new ways of thinking about the Spirit's personhood
- reflect on such traditional symbols of the Holy Spirit as wind, water, fire, dove, and so forth
- create a proper worship service to the Holy Spirit

Homework Assignments

Return to the Nazarene hymnal *Sing to the Lord* and look once again at the hymns whose primary theme is the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

- Select any three of these hymns. Analyze them in terms of what they say about the Holy Spirit, especially noting the following five areas:
 1. What is the Spirit's relationship with Jesus Christ?
 2. Are there any ethical mandates connected with knowing the Holy Spirit?
 3. How is the Spirit made known in a human life?
 4. What is the Spirit's role within the Trinity?
 5. How does the Spirit sanctify?
- Write a five-page essay.

Write in your journal. Read 1 Corinthians 2: 10-12 in two or three different versions. Record two or three key insights the Holy Spirit desires to teach you from these words.

Holy Spirit

“Holy Spirit, renew your wonders in our day as by a new Pentecost.”

Pope John XXIII¹⁰⁷

“God’s Spirit, the Holy Spirit . . . is God Himself, so far as He cannot only come to human beings, but be in them, and so open up human beings for Himself, make them ready and capable.”

Karl Barth¹⁰⁸

“The Holy Spirit is perhaps the most difficult person of the Trinity to conceive. It is hard even to say what one is talking about when one speaks of the Holy Spirit. The identity of the Holy Spirit is elusive, to say the least. Is it even comprehensible?”

Michael Welker

“How can the actions of Jesus of Nazareth be more today than illustrations, at best, of the concreteness in which the forgiveness of sins would have to operate? And as for the provision and restoration of freedom and the capacity for action, do we not today most effectively call upon our systems of health care and education? . . . What concrete use do we have for the activity of the bearer of the spirit [Jesus Christ] and for the activity of the Holy Spirit?”

Michael Welker

“The Holy Spirit does not work in a way that bypasses finite human beings, but rather in and with our earthly existence.”

Michael Welker¹⁰⁹

The Holy Spirit as Wind, as Fire, as Love

Listed below are scriptures Moltmann cites in his discussion of Holy Spirit as Tempest, as Fire, as Love. How do these scriptures illustrate the “movement metaphors” of God the Spirit?

Acts 2:2-4

Acts 1:8

Psalms 104:4

Ezekiel 43:2

1 Kings 19:11-12

Exodus 3:2

Numbers 9:15

Deuteronomy 4:24

Psalms 79:5

Psalms 89:46

Zephaniah 1:18

Hebrews 12:29

Psalms 18:8

Luke 12:49

Matthew 3:11

Luke 3:16

Malachi 3:2-3

Song of Songs 8:6

Worship Planning

To Worship the Holy Spirit—A Pentecost Sunday Service

Call to Worship: A Bible verse studied in this lesson or the previous one would be a good choice.

Invocation:

Hymns: Select at least two. Consider one of Wesley's hymns.

Old Testament Reading:

Prayer:

Affirming Our Faith: A responsive reading or litany from the Article of Faith "The Holy Spirit."

New Testament Reading:

Offering/Offertory:

Sermon Theme, Title and Text:

Call for Response:

Benediction:

Commission to Go and Serve in the Power of the Spirit:

There is latitude in arranging these and other elements of the service in the order they would be most helpful. Consider incorporating, at some point, the classic hymn for the Feast of Pentecost written by Rabanus Maurus that appears on Resource 11-4.

Feast of Pentecost

Come, O creator Spirit, come,
And make within our hearts thy home;
To us thy grace celestial give,
Who of thy breathing move and live.

O Paraclete, that name is thine,
Of God most high the gift divine;
The well of life, the fire of love,
Our souls anointing from above.

Thou dost appear in sevenfold dower [a reference to Isaiah 11:2]
The sign of God's almighty power;
The Father's promise, making rich
With saving truth our earthly speech.

Our senses with thy light inflame,
Our hearts to heavenly love reclaim;
Our bodies' poor infirmity
With strength perpetual fortify.

Our mortal foe afar repel,
Grant us henceforth in peace to dwell;
And so to us, with thee for guide,
No ill shall come, no harm betide.

May we by thee the Father learn,
And know the Son, and thee discern,
Who art of both; and thus adore
In perfect faith for evermore.

Rabanus Maurus¹¹⁰

Lesson 12: The Doctrine of the Church, Part 1

Due This Lesson

Essay
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- survey some New Testament images of the church
- investigate some theological statements and analyses that have been made regarding the church
- inquire about the current state of Nazarene ecclesiology
- familiarize themselves with the *Manual* statements about the church

Homework Assignments

Choose to do **one** of the following and write a two- to three-page paper:

1. Think of five places where people customarily gather; for example, a stadium, the seashore, a shopping mall, etc.
 - How are these “secular” places *like* the church? More importantly, what sets the church *apart* from all other places where people gather?
 - What is the difference between *congregating* and *gathering*?
2. Work with the biblical assertions of the Church discussed in this lesson. Choose at least *three* of them, including at least one major and one minor one.
 - How do these images resonate with the world today?

Read Resource 12-6.

Write in your journal.

My first conscious recollection of “church” was . . .

My most recent thought of the church is . . .

Is there a connection between these two?

The Church

“There is one body! ‘I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.’ The unity of the Church is often obscured by the fragmentation of a divided Christendom. Yet the Church remains one. There are many members but one body, and ‘to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it’ (Eph 4:7). The Church, which is Christ’s Body, is not to be built out of the denominational structures, but *into* them! Baptism expresses our initiation into this one Body. As divergent as our several denominational traditions may be, it is a tremendous truth that one baptismal formula gathers us all together as one body—‘in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’ Amen.”

Rob Staples¹¹¹

“The Church, before it is anything else, is a body of believers that, throughout the ebb and flow of historical circumstance, is gathered together by the God of all grace to recite the story of salvation and to worship the One around whom the story revolves.

“The Church, this body of believers gathered to tell, hear, and live God’s Story, transcends the normal human boundaries of generation and geography. It includes within itself people of widely divergent denominations, languages, cultures, colors, and historical eras. This variety makes for an incredible richness and diversity of expression in the Church’s worship of the living God.”

Michael Lodahl¹¹²

Founding of the Church of Jesus Christ

Three proposals

- Divine call of Abraham
- Founded upon Peter
- Pentecost

Seven interlocking realities at Pentecost

- Now the people of God are known as the Church.
- Pentecost marks the auspicious beginning of greater things to come (Acts 11:15-17).
- The Holy Spirit has now come in fullness.
- Evangelism goes ahead full throttle.
- The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ are living memories inspiring the Church.
- The Lord's Supper has now been instituted.
- The Church is organized for its ongoing tasks.

Minor and Major Biblical Analogies of the Church¹¹³

Minor

- “the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth” (1 Tim 3: 15)
- “God’s field, God’s building” (1 Cor 3: 9)
- bread or a loaf of bread (1 Cor 5: 7-8; 10: 16-17)
- a vineyard (1 Cor 9: 7)
- an olive tree (Rom 11: 13-24)
- members of God’s household (Eph 2: 19)
- the family of believers (Gal 6: 10)

Major

The Bride of Christ

- 2 Corinthians 11: 1-2
- Ephesians 5: 22-32
- Revelation 19: 7-8

The Body of Christ

- Romans 12: 5
- Ephesians 1: 23; 3: 6; 4: 4, 12, 16; 5: 30
- Romans 7: 4
- 1 Corinthians 10: 16-17; 11: 24
- 1 Corinthians 12: 12-13, 27
- Colossians 1: 18, 24; 2: 19; 3: 15

The True Israel

- Galatians 6: 16
- Romans 2: 28-29; 9: 6-8
- Romans 11
- 2 John 1
- Ephesians 2: 11
- 1 Peter 2: 9

XI. The Church

We believe in the Church, the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, the covenant people of God made new in Christ, the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

God calls the Church to express its life in the unity and fellowship of the Spirit; in worship through the preaching of the Word, observance of the sacraments, and ministry in His name; by obedience to Christ and mutual accountability.

The mission of the Church in the world is to continue the redemptive work of Christ in the power of the Spirit through holy living, evangelism, discipleship, and service.

The Church is a historical reality, which organizes itself in culturally conditioned forms; exists both as local congregations and as a universal body; sets apart persons called of God for specific ministries. God calls the Church to live under His rule in anticipation of the consummation at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹¹⁴

The General Church

The Church of God is composed of all spiritually regenerate persons, whose names are written in heaven.

The Churches Severally

The churches severally are to be composed of such regenerate persons as by providential permission, and by the leadings of the Holy Spirit, become associated together for holy fellowship and ministries.

The Church of the Nazarene

The Church of the Nazarene is composed of those persons who have voluntarily associated themselves together according to the doctrines and polity of said church, and who seek holy Christian fellowship, the conversion of sinners, the entire sanctification of believers, their upbuilding in holiness, and the simplicity and spiritual power manifest in the primitive New Testament Church, together with the preaching of the gospel to every creature.¹¹⁵

Small Groups

Seven theological qualities and understandings provide further definition as to the Church's true nature and function.¹¹⁶

In your groups give *Manual* statements and biblical references to support the following assertions. Select someone to give a report to the class.

The community of believers. This is "a peculiarly Protestant understanding," which in other words may be known as the priesthood of all believers.

The saved and saving community. This means the Church is comprised of those converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The chief duty of the saved is to worship God, followed closely by the call to evangelize.

An extension of the Incarnation. Living the kind of life urged by Christ, the Church extends the Incarnation into every present moment.

Both human and divine. The Church's four marks—unity, holiness, universality, and apostolic quality—are finally validated by their rootedness in Jesus Christ. Hence the Church is divine. But, of course, the Church is all too human, as too often displayed by its members.

Unconquerable and conquering. Not only can the Church *not* be eliminated through persecution, the suffering of God's people often is the occasion for the Church's greatest growth and revival.

A mystery. That Christ should so love the Church is a mystery. The Church is a mystery because of its ministry.

Militant and triumphant. The famous "full armor of God" passage in Ephesians 6 is a resounding witness to the Church's bringing the battle to the powers and principalities of this present age. Those who have died in the faith make up the Church Triumphant.

WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHURCH¹¹⁷

Sermon by Rev. David Busic

1 Peter 2:9-10 (NIV)

In case you haven't noticed, we are in the process of building around here. It is an exciting time. After a lot of hard work, the building is coming together.

But, the church of Jesus Christ is not a building. The building is only a tool for ministry. YOU are the church! What makes this space beautiful is you as the Holy Spirit shines through you. The church is not a building—it is a people!

There are people who say: "I don't need the church. I really don't need organized religion in my life to be a Christian, or even to be a good person. I believe in God. I even believe in Jesus. I try to live according to the Bible. Isn't that good enough?"

Listen, if I believed that you did not need the church, I'd go do something else. I am absolutely, 100% persuaded that to be an effective Christian you must be involved in the church. Because the church isn't just a human idea . . . the church is Jesus' idea. He started the church when he organized his followers together. The church is absolutely essential for God's purposes in your life and for the world, and in the next few minutes we're going to explore the reasons why.

Let's begin by talking about what the church is. The New Testament has several different images or metaphors that help us understand the meaning of the church.

Ecclesia

Ecclesia is the Greek word that's translated church in the English. In the common vernacular it simply meant a gathering of people together. But in the early church they took that word and said: "This is how we're going to describe who we are." *Ecclesia* is two words put together: *Ek* meaning "out of," and *klesia*, from the word *kaleo*, meaning, "to call." And so you COULD say that the church is made up of those who have heard the call of Jesus on their lives and who have responded to his invitation to "follow him." *Ecclesia* means, you have been called out to follow Christ.

But it also means something else. As the church you are also those who have been called out FROM the world. We are called out from the world to be different from the world. The church has a very different value system and ideology than the world. When people look at us they should see something different. We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood! a holy nation, a people belonging to God. We are called out to be different than the world.

And then, as the church, we are called back TO the world. God has called us out from the world to go back into the world, and to be used by him to accomplish his purposes and to make a difference for Christ. This is what it means to be the *ecclesia*—we are the church called by Jesus to follow him, called out from the world to be different, and called to go back into the world to serve in Jesus' name.

The Body of Christ

A few weeks ago we talked about how God became incarnate in Jesus Christ. He was God among us in tangible form so people could see him, touch him, and experience his physical presence. Jesus said: "I'm going to leave, but I'm going to send you the Holy Spirit, and now YOU are going to be God's physical, tangible presence in the world."

In his earthly ministry Jesus was limited to one human body; now the body of Christ is made up of millions and millions of human bodies stamped with his image! That's what you are as the church. You are the body of Christ. You make Christ real and present in the world. That's why God accomplishes the majority of his work through the church.

We don't have to have a study committee spend a year trying to determine what the mission of our church is. It's just not that complicated. It is not hard to figure out what our church is supposed to do if we remember that the church is the body of Christ. And if the church is the body of Christ, then our driving passion must be to do the things that Jesus wants done.

How do we know what Jesus wants done? Well, first, we pray and we read scripture. But if you simply look at what Jesus did while he was on earth you have a picture of the kind of stuff we're supposed to be doing. Jesus cared for people—loved people—he had compassion—he reached out to those who were lost and hurting—preached the Good News to those who would listen—and he directed people toward God. And if that's what Jesus did while he was on earth that's also what we have to be about, because we are the body of Christ.

There's one other implication of this. It's important that we remember that if the church is the body of Christ, the church does not belong to us. It does not belong to me as your senior pastor, it doesn't belong to the staff, it doesn't belong to the lay leadership, it doesn't belong to the General Superintendents, or the denomination.

Central Church of the Nazarene, and every local congregation, belongs to Jesus Christ. That means that our driving passion has to be knowing and doing the will of God. That's our ultimate goal! Not what do "I" want? Not what do "you" want? But what does the Lord want from this church? We are his body and we belong to him.

The Family of God

The New Testament church was different than any other organization in Roman society. In the Roman world people were organized into various social strata. Now we have levels in our society today, but nothing like the Roman world did.

The boundary lines were clear and defined. There were slaves at the bottom of the ladder, there were the common people, and above them were the aristocrats and rulers, and the very wealthy were at the top. And these different layers of society never really mixed . . . except in the church.

And the church became a place that welcomed everyone. It wasn't just a men's club—it was for men and women. It wasn't just for wealthy people—it was also for poor people. When they walked in the door of the home where a church was meeting, there

were no more lines to distinguish between them. The barriers were broken down. They were all one in Christ.

When they received Holy Communion together, there might be an aristocrat offer the bread to a slave, or a man to woman, because they were on level ground now. They were brothers and sisters in Christ.

But it wasn't just when they worshiped together . . . it was also when they walked back out. They couldn't look at each other in quite the same way once they walked out the door. Because now they were brothers and sisters in Christ, no matter where they came from. They were the family of God.

They were also the family of God in the way they cared for each other. When you read through the Book of Acts you discover that these early believers sold their possessions, and they gave it to those who were in need. In the Roman world when you gave something to somebody else, you did it so you could get something back in return—not so in the early church. They said: "If you need something, I'm here to help. What's mine is yours, because you're a part of my family now!"

Jesus had said: "They will know that you are my disciples by the way you love one another." And that's exactly what they did! They loved each other as if they were family, because they were. They were all part of the family of God.

The Community of Faith

Jesus was very intentional to form the church, because he had a plan for the church. And there are a couple of reasons for that.

The first is found in the pre-Christian origins of the church. We need to go back 550 years before the time of Christ, to the 6th-Century BC, when the Babylonian Empire (modern day Iraq) invaded the small little land of Judea. They swept in with force and power and utterly destroyed the land, looted cities, burned homes, and razed to the ground the temple that Solomon had built.

They then took the finest Jewish men and women in the land as captives and slaves and transplanted them in Babylon. They did this because they knew that if they could transplant them into a new society they would intermarry with their people, they would adopt their religion, and become assimilated into a new culture, while at the same time the captured folk's culture would cease to exist.

And you know what? That was a formula that worked very well for the Babylonians . . . until it came to the Jews. The Jews could see what was happening and said: "Look at what's happened to all these other people. They've lost their families, they've lost their faith, and they've lost their culture. They've lost EVERYTHING because they intermingled and failed to stay together. Let's keep our community of faith alive by meeting together on a regular basis."

Well, they didn't have a temple to meet in. It had been destroyed. And so they decided to develop what they called the *synagoga* or synagogue. And the Jews began to meet every Sabbath day as the community of faith to remember who they were.

And as they would gather in small groups they would encourage one another by saying: "Do you remember the Psalms?" And they would reflect on the poetic prayers of the psalms and they would sing God's praise.

And then they would say: "Do you remember the stories of Moses? Do you remember how God delivered his people Israel? Maybe he'll deliver us to." And then they would pray for each other, and encourage one another. They would tell their children stories about their heritage and fan the flame of faith. And as they met together as a community, not only was their culture preserved, but also their faith. Because of the synagogue, the gathering of the community of faith, Judaism exists to this day.

Well, guess what? The earliest churches were based upon the synagogues. The early Christian churches were Jewish communities of faith who believed that Jesus was the Messiah. And those early Christians gathered together for the same exact reasons.

When the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church at Pentecost, they immediately began to gather together because they lived in a hostile environment. They were being attacked for their faith, and for their practices, and for their belief that Jesus Christ had been raised from the grave! In the Roman world they found themselves surrounded by people who believed in multiple gods, and had very different values than the values of those Christians. And so they were hungry to meet together as the community of faith.

There were no church buildings for 200 years. They met in people's homes, and as they met in their homes they would break bread and fellowship together and minister to each other. And they would focus on the apostles' teachings. They would say: "Do you remember when Jesus said this? And do you remember how he raised Lazarus from the grave? Do you remember the time he fed a huge crowd with one little boy's lunch? And do you remember how he calmed the storm?"

And as they told those stories, the Holy Spirit was present, and they would admonish and encourage each other to stay faithful and to follow Christ. They were nurturing their belief by meeting together as the community of faith. That was the heart of the church! For three hundred years they faced intense Roman persecution – they were being fed to lions and burned at the stake. And yet they insisted on meeting together . . . WHY? So they could hold fast to their faith!

The writer to the Hebrews said: "Whatever you do, don't stop meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, because if you stop meeting together, you're going to lose your faith. You're going to lose it all together."

Do you know why Jesus organized the church? Do you know why we are called the community of faith? Because he knew that Christians needed each other to survive. He said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of you in a way that I am NOT with you when it's just one of you trying to do it all by yourself." There is an incredible strength in coming together to pray for, and encourage, and bless one another.

Sometimes I hear people say: "You know the weekend is the only time I have for myself. I work like a dog all week long, and I just need a break. I can worship God at home just as well as I can at church."

I want to say: "How does that happen exactly? Tell me where it is that you are actually fulfilling what the Scriptures teach about encouraging other Christians? How are you doing that? Tell me what you are doing to be fed in your spirit? Where are you being challenged in your own ideas about what's right and wrong? Where do you go to have a group of people pray for you? Tell me, in what ways are you fulfilling what the New Testament Christians did in being bound together?"

Because I am persuaded that there is no way that you are going to stay strong in your faith, and experience the same level of the Spirit's power and presence in your life, if you're trying to do this all by yourself. It simply doesn't work! You need other people! That's what the New Testament teaches us. We are a community of faith.

[Editor's note: At this point in the sermon a short videotaped interview was conducted with Dr. Tom Noble, professor of theology at Nazarene Theological Seminary. In response to the question, What about those who think they can be a Christian on their own? Dr. Noble responded that being a Christian on your own is like entering heaven and trying to "sit in the corner."]

However, Jesus had more in mind than simply meeting our needs and keeping us strong. When he organized his disciples into a community of faith he knew that there was POWER when a group of people worked together.

I read a fascinating article not long ago. It was about a group of Amish in Kalona, Iowa, who worked together to carry the skeleton of a barn from one location to another. The barn was 160 feet long. They pulled out all the nails, broke it into four 80-foot long sections, and after a "1-2-3" they picked it up with hardly a grunt. They started about 9:30 in the morning, and 150 Amish males, young and old, carried it along a highway. They carried it one mile in four hours.

I wonder what the conversation was like before they decided to move this barn. It certainly shows what a lot of people can do when they pool their resources. If one of them had tried it they couldn't have budged it an inch. 10 of them might have moved it a foot. But with 150 working together, they accomplished the impossible.

Jesus looked at the church and said: "What could happen with a group of people who are absolutely committed and sold out to follow me? And what could happen if my Holy Spirit was working in them and they were all working in the same direction? What could happen?" I think he thought, If my followers would work together under the power of the Holy Spirit they could change the world.

And that's what excites me as your pastor. I look at you and I think if 150 Amish can carry a turkey barn one mile, what could 1,000 people, with gifts and talents like you have, with hearts of compassion and a deep desire to serve Christ, accomplish for the kingdom of God?

Jesus said the gates of hell are not strong enough to withstand what can happen when we are working together. He has given us a community of faith, because when believers work together amazing things begin to happen.

These are some of the images of the church found in the New Testament. We are the *ecclesia* (called out ones), the body of Christ, the family of God, and the community of faith.

Once in awhile some of you have come to me and asked, "What's the deal with all these different churches? I mean, if Jesus just wanted to form THE church and he prayed in John 17 that his believers might be one, why is it that there are so many different churches out there today? I mean there are thousands of different denominations and tens of thousands more non-denominational churches around the world. What's that about?"

That may bother some of you, but I'm not all that worried about different kinds of churches. There are some folks who think we just need to unite all those churches into one GIANT church. I'm not convinced of that. You see, some of you like Rocky Road and some of you like vanilla. Some of you like strawberry and some of you like chocolate. Some of you don't even like ice cream . . . you like frozen yogurt. Why? — Because all of us have different tastes.

When it comes to worship, some of us experience God's presence through candles and incense and icons. Some of us experience God's presence through stained-glass windows and pipe organs. Some of us experience God's presence with electric guitars and synthesizers.

Some of us like pastor-shepherds. Some of us like strong preachers. Some of us need a lot of black and white, and some of us have a high threshold for gray. You see, there's no one church that is going to meet every one of those needs.

And when I look around at our community at all the different churches, I don't get disturbed. Because I know that every one of those churches is going to meet a different group of people's needs. And if they're preaching Jesus Christ, that's a GOOD thing, not a bad thing! We're not in competition with them. We're not into turf wars! I pray for those churches to prosper and reach the people that we could never reach at Central Church of the Nazarene. God uses all kinds of churches!

But here's where I get hung up . . . and maybe you do too. I get so frustrated when I hear one of those churches say: "WE'VE GOT IT! We've got the truth! And the rest of you may have a part of the truth, but you really don't have the whole truth, because we've got a corner on the market. If you want to be a REAL Christian you have to do it OUR way. You have to worship like we do, act like we do, and believe like we believe, or else you are not a faithful Christian." And everyone who's outside of their denomination is a spiritual stepchild at best, and going to hell at worst.

That bugs me! Because that's not what Jesus came to create! Those early churches didn't have brand names or logos on the sides of their church buildings. They were just the church! Now the Corinthian church was a little different than the Roman church. And the Ephesus church was slightly different than the Philippian church. They may have even believed differently about some things. But they were still the church.

When Jesus founded the church, he did not found the Roman Catholic Church. He did not found the Greek Orthodox Church. He didn't found the Baptist church. And he certainly didn't found the Church of the Nazarene. He just started the church.

We tend to highlight all of the differences in the church. You do baptism that way and we do baptism THIS way. We take the Lord's Supper this way and you do the Lord's Supper THAT way. But if you were to take a view from about 20,000 feet and look at all the Christian churches, do you know what you'd find? That we all look pretty much the same.

We all believe in one God, we all believe in Jesus Christ the Son, we all believe in the Holy Spirit, we all believe in the Bible, and we all believe in the church. 95% of what all Christian churches believe is held in common. It's the 5% that trip us up. We share so much in common . . . and yet we focus on our differences!

You know, I'm proud to be a Nazarene. I really am! I am a Nazarene by birth and by choice. I am proud because we are a church that can hold the balance between head knowledge faith and heart knowledge faith . . . I like that!

I am proud of our church because no matter where you go in the Church of the Nazarene you will find a vitality in worship and a warmth in the fellowship . . . I like that!

I am proud of our church because we believe in holiness of heart and life. We believe that by the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit we can be pure in word, thought, and deed . . . I like that!

But as much as I love the Church of the Nazarene, I'm not sure that I would die for our denomination. But I would hope I'd have the courage to die for Jesus Christ. You see, I've committed my life to him. HE is my Lord!

I'm proud to be Nazarene. But I believe in the church with a capital "C." That means I am connected to all believers everywhere and to the power of God at work in Christian communities to change the world.

I believe in the church. There is a genuine love between believers.

How does that happen? We're all so different. Different ages, careers, backgrounds. I'll tell you how I think it happens. We have worshipped together, prayed together, sat in hospital rooms together, served together. We are bound together in Jesus Christ. And that's what it means to be the church.

Here's my invitation . . . if you're here today and you don't have a church—you're not a part of any church family—we want to invite you to be a part of this one.

And if you're a member of this church and all you ever do is come to worship, I want you to know that you're missing out on what it means to BE the church. You see, you can enjoy great worship, hear great preaching, experience the Holy Spirit's power and presence, but what you can't experience is the bond that happens between believers when they live life together.

[Note: The service closed with the congregation sharing communion.]

Lesson 13: The Doctrine of the Church, Part 2

Due This Lesson

Read Resource 12-6
Two- to three-page essay on the Church
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- study the traditional four marks of the church
- appreciate how one's doctrine of the church impacts many other parts of one's theological thinking, especially ethics, theology of the Incarnation, preaching, worship, sacraments, and theology of the ministry, and topics connected with the sociology of religion
- ask about the uniqueness of the church, when compared with other social and communitarian institutions

Homework Assignments

How is the Church of the Nazarene to be evaluated in light of the four marks of the Church presented in this lesson?

- Write a three-page essay answering this question.
- Refer to the Nazarene *Manual* statements about the church.

Write in your journal. Reflect on the hymn "The Church's One Foundation."
What other hymn(s) has come to mind during this study of the Church?

The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord.
She is His new creation
By water and the Word.
From heav'n He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her
And for her life He died.

The Church Is One—Unity

Three main ways unity has been understood:

- doctrinal cohesiveness and agreement as foundational to any other sort of unity
- sharing Christian charity and compassion with the world (“Doctrine divides, but service unites” would summarize this point of view)
- a unified pattern of organization where all parts of the church are related to one another, often governed by a hierarchical structure—best example being the Roman Catholic church

“It is the indwelling Spirit who produces the marks of the Church. They come from within and are not imposed from without. They are not the result of organization or administration but are the creation of the Spirit.”

H. Ray Dunning¹¹⁸

Unity “points to Jesus Christ as the One in whom all human cultural and racial barriers are overcome.”

Michael Lodahl¹¹⁹

The Church Is Holy

'Tis a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb.
'Tis a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb.¹²⁰

Jürgen Moltmann writes, "The church is holy in its unity and in all its members, not in itself but in Christ."¹²¹

- 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; 6:11; 1:2
- Philippians 1:1
- Colossians 3:12

The holiness of the church is "a sanctity the Church does not have in itself but only by virtue of its relationship to the holy God."

Michael Lodahl¹²²

The Church Is Catholic

“The universality of the Church is rooted in the work of Christ as inclusive of all persons. It is not a geographical concept but refers to the all-embracing extent of the Atonement.”

H. Ray Dunning¹²³

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

People and realms of ev'ry tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.¹²⁴

Prevenient grace is universal grace, which for Nazarenes is an important way to understand the universal quality of the church. Wherever grace is accepted and not rejected, there is the church universal.

The Church Is Apostolic

The church's foundation on apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ as the Chief Cornerstone, is one scriptural witness to the apostolic mark of the church (Eph 2:20).

To carry out the apostolic office involves bearing witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as in Acts 1:21-22; 10:41.

For Protestants, the church's true apostolicity is best demonstrated under the preaching of the Word and the redemptive exercise of the sacraments.

Lesson 14: Theology of the Sacraments, Part 1

Due This Lesson

Three-page essay
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- appreciate the meaning of “sacrament” and the overall place sacramental theology has within Christian theology
- encourage students to be both appreciative and evaluative toward their sacramental heritage in the Church of the Nazarene
- focus on the sacrament of baptism

Homework Assignments

Rob Staples wisely suggests that the art of preaching sermons about baptism is nearly defunct in today’s evangelical churches. Accordingly, the assignment for this lesson is to write a sermon about baptism.

- First of all, identify five or six relevant New Testament scriptures relevant to baptism. Locating Old Testament antecedents that point ahead to baptism might also be wise.
- After the scriptures have been found, studied, and meditated upon, write a six- to eight-page sermon exploring the devotional, theological, spiritual, and ethical relevance of Christian baptism.
- If you have an opportunity to preach the sermon, you might consider incorporating a Renewal of Baptismal Vows (Resource 14-9) as part of the service.

Write in your journal. What I most remember about my own baptism is _____.
What I would most like to say to someone contemplating baptism is _____.
(What you would say to someone may depend on that person’s chronological age.) Recall the baptismal service in which you most felt the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

Quotes

"The highest cannot be spoken; it can only be acted."

Goethe

"Teach me, my God and King, in all things thee to see."

George Herbert

"Christianity is the most avowedly materialistic of all the great religions."

William Temple

Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees takes off his shoes,
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Defining Sacrament

John Wesley viewed a sacrament as “an outward sign of inward grace, and a means whereby we receive the same.”

Prior to that Augustine had offered a short and almost perfect definition, namely, “visible words.”

Staples elaborates, “Preaching and teaching are audible words that convey a message through the hearing of the ear. But a visible word is any sign or action that conveys a message by being *done* and *seen*.”¹²⁵

The Latin word *sacramentum* is the source of our English word “sacrament.” This word was used to translate the Greek word for “mystery” in the Latin New Testament, which suggests of course that a sacrament is imbued with mystery. See Colossians 1:26; Ephesians 3:4, 9; 6:19.

Staples highlights two meanings of the Latin *sacramentum* that together clarify our understanding of what a sacrament is and how it works.

- One meaning involved “a sum of money that both parties to a lawsuit deposited with a third party,” something like the escrow system of today. This reinforces our view that a sacrament utilizes some physical element—water, bread, juice—to convey a spiritual meaning.
- *Sacramentum* also meant an oath of allegiance taken by a Roman soldier in pledge of his honor to defend the Roman Empire. This meaning points to “the word of promise that accompanies the sign and without which the sign would not have its sacramental character.”¹²⁶

Symbols and Sacraments

“The fundamental mystery is the Incarnation of Christ, and, depending on that, the Church, His Body, through which He communicates Himself to mankind. This communication is accompanied through certain symbolic acts (e.g. the washing of Baptism, the meal of the Eucharist) interpreted by the Gospel and the response of faith.”¹²⁷

“Symbols, like sacraments, are visible acts that aid faith. In both symbols and sacraments, a tangibility of gesture means something more than itself, other than itself. But the New Testament symbols and the two sacraments are also different, in several ways. The symbols are less obligatory than the sacraments are. . . . the obligation to receive the two sacraments is highly intensified. It is like the obligation to save a friend’s life, although it might involve some risk to one’s own well-being or even to one’s own life. It is like the obligation to maintain one’s marriage vows.”¹²⁸

Examining the Sacramental Mystery

Each pair should make a list of six or eight specific ways in which the human body is used in the course of worship, or the administration of the church's mission.

As missionaries, my wife and I were fascinated by the diverse means different Asian and Pacific cultures chose to greet one another, for example—

- deep bows from the waist, hands behind the back, meaning "I give you my head," used by Japanese and Korean people
- a subtle raising of the eyebrows, to acknowledge the presence of the other, used by Filipinos

Be prepared to demonstrate or act out some of the gestures and body movements.

Sacramental Renewal

Encouraging signs:

- Greater frequency in the serving of the Lord's Supper, to more than once per three months.
- Integration of the time of Holy Communion with the remainder of the worship service, thus avoiding the impression that the Communion observation was only an afterthought that was "tacked on."
- Greater awareness of the church year.
- Integration of both baptism and the Lord's Supper with the seasons of the church year.
- Making the option of infant baptism a *real* option to couples inquiring about how best to integrate their infants and small children into the life of the local church.

Sacramental Update

John Macquarrie, a theologian of the Church of England, believes we need to hold the inward grace of the sacraments together with the outward sign. If we fail to do this, we disrupt the unity of the sacrament as divine invitation and human response.

If we believe in the unity of inward grace and outward sign, then we may resoundingly answer “yes” to John Macquarrie’s question, “Is God active in the whole sacrament, both outward and inward, as we seem to claim when we say that Christ is the true minister of every sacrament?”¹²⁹

Macquarrie writes, “I think we must resist all attempts to separate outward and inward in the sacraments. God has placed us as embodied creatures in a material universe in which things are not *mere* things but bearers of meaning, and, for some poetic souls, every common bush is ‘afire with God.’ It is a universe which, in the traditional language, God so loved that his very own Son became incarnate in the world.”¹³⁰

The Sacrament of Baptism

Rob Staples:

Baptism marks the Christian as belonging to God. God has always marked His people. Under the old covenant, God ordained the sign of circumcision by which to mark His chosen people (Gen 17:11). Likewise, baptism is the mark of initiation into the new covenant. In Colosians 2:11-12, Paul brings the old and the new sacramental symbols together and links them with the death and resurrection of Christ. Paul declares that baptism, having replaced circumcision, is now the new *outward sign* of the *inward grace* by which the Colossian Christians had been buried and raised with Christ.¹³¹

Five Meanings of Baptism

Bearing the Mark of Christ

Parallels between God's marking of Cain (Gen 4: 15) and baptism are instructive.

Baptism also bears some resemblance to circumcision under the old covenant.

Baptism is a powerful reminder that God is a God who makes and keeps covenants.

To bear the mark of Christ is at the same time to bear His name.

Dying the Death of Christ

We often neglect to link baptism with the cross of Jesus Christ.

The general baptism of Jesus Christ is an indicator of prevenient grace made available for everyone.

Jesus Christ underwent a baptism of blood through His crucifixion.

Living the Life of Christ

The normal New Testament pattern is that one will first come to faith in the Resurrected Christ, and then in testimony to this faith will be baptized.

Baptism in the New Testament is *not* discretionary or an optional extra.

Receiving the Spirit of Christ

Through the sacrament of baptism, the presence of the Holy Spirit is offered to us in a permanent and abiding way.

Baptism gives two inseparable gifts:

- the forgiveness of sins
- the presence of the Holy Spirit

Becoming the Body of Christ

When the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost, He might have come to each one individually, but He came as they were knit together in common unity and a common obedience. In this unity was this bestowal truly efficacious and fruitful.

Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Part 1: The Affirmation of Faith

Our spiritual ancestors in the Early Church were immersed in or poured with water three times in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They were then to give a triple affirmation of faith in the Holy Trinity. Let us follow their example, responding with the words of the Nicene Creed.

Minister: Do you believe in God the Father?

Renewing Believers: I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

Minister: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

Renewing Believers: I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnated by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

Minister: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

Renewing Believers: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

Part 2: The Renewal Vows

Minister: On behalf of Christ and the Church, I ask you: Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Response: I renounce them.

Minister: Do you renounce sinful desires that draw you away from the love of God?

Response: I renounce them.

Minister: Have you repented of your sins, turned to Christ, and accepted Him as your Savior?

Response: I have.

Minister: Have you put your whole trust in His grace alone for your redemption?

Response: I have.

Minister: Do you promise to follow and obey Him as your redeeming Lord?

Response: I do.

Minister: Will you earnestly seek to purify yourself from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for Christ?

Response: I will, with God's help.

Minister: Will you serve the present age, fulfilling in your life and ministry the call of Christ to make disciples of all nations?

Response: I will, with God's help.

Lesson 15: Theology of the Sacraments, Part 2

Due This Lesson

Baptism sermon
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- investigate the theological questions posed by infant baptism
- survey the theology of the Lord's Supper, including different historical views and theological interpretations
- have a more reflective approach to the sacraments, including especially the thoughtful integration into worship

Homework Assignments

Meet with your local Nazarene pastor, and discuss with him or her an upcoming worship service where the sacraments will be celebrated. Ask permission to assist in the planning and the enactment of this service. Try to incorporate some of the ideas gleaned in the small-group activity. Write a one-page report of the meeting.

Read the *Manual* Article of Faith XIII, "The Lord's Supper." How does our statement respond to the historical approaches to the Eucharist? How does our typical Lord's Supper ritual address the five understandings of the theological substance of the Eucharist? Write a three-page paper.

Write in your journal. Think about the time when the Lord's Supper was the most meaningful for you. What were the circumstances? What made it so memorable? What can you do to place yourself in an attitude of celebrating the Lord's Supper each time you partake?

Sacraments

“To ask if baptism does the baby any good is to ask the wrong question. The right question is ‘How is the Church proclaiming the gospel?’ Baptism is not primarily an act of the parent or of the child, but of the Church, and of Christ in the Church. The Church contradicts herself when she preaches the gospel of grace and then withholds baptism from her own children. Infant baptism is the visible proclamation of the gospel.”

Rob Staples¹³²

“The Eucharist . . . is a time for celebration, for praise, and for thanksgiving to God for His works in creation and in redemption. In the Eucharist, the Church speaks on behalf of the whole creation, for the world that God has created is represented at every Supper—in the bread and the fruit of the vine, products of the earth and of human labor; and in the people of the faithful, who make intercession for all humanity. The Eucharist thus signifies what God desires the whole world to become—an offering of praise to God the Creator, a universal communion in the Body of Christ, and a kingdom of justice, love, and peace in the Holy Spirit.”

Rob Staples¹³³

In Opposition to Infant Baptism

- It is true that four entire households were baptized in the New Testament (Acts 16:15, 33; 18:8; 1 Cor 1:16), but there can be no guarantee that any children or infants were baptized.
- Scripture seems to argue that repentance and believing are required of those to be baptized, and infants are not capable of this.
- The Great Commission calls for being made disciples *prior* to being baptized, and this is not possible for children.
- Those infants who have been baptized might assume no further works of repentance and belief await them in the Christian life. They would sense no urgency to being born again.
- Infant baptism contradicts the missionary thrust of the Church. In non-Christian cultures the declaration of faith during baptism cannot be expressed in infant baptism.

In Favor of Infant Baptism

- A return to what John Wesley believed, even at the expense of contradicting the typical practice of most Holiness churches.
- A more certain appreciation that in any sacramental activity, the actions of God are of far greater moment and consequence than our human responses.
- Has implications for Christian education. If we believe our children are under the umbrella of prevenient grace, then why at some point in their religious instruction is there a dramatic shift to reckon them as sinners?
- Staples supports infant baptism because he believes it is in keeping with the principles of grace that lead to the saved life. P. T. Forsyth states:

the New Testament Church *practice* . . . is that of a missionary Church. But its *principles* are those of a universal, settled, and triumphant Church. And when, early in its history, the practice of the Church changed to infant Baptism, it was not departing from New Testament principles. It was applying them in a changed way to changed conditions—especially such a principle as the sanctity of the children of the saved (1 Cor 7:14).¹³⁴

- Prevenient grace is God's offering of His very self in Jesus Christ, an offer humans may embrace or spurn. This must mean that all baptism, including especially that of infants, is first and foremost an act of God.

Discussion

“It is important that we understand that it is God’s prevenient grace that saves us. Long before a child can understand or believe—even before the child exists—God initiated that child’s salvation. But isn’t this true of adults also? Certainly it is. And in a sense, *all* baptisms are really ‘infant’ baptisms . . . baptism is a sign of our repentance and faith, but this is not its primary significance. Primarily, it is a sign of divine grace—not a sign of anything *we do* at all. It is a covenant sign, and therefore a sign of the work of God on our behalf that precedes and makes possible our own response. When infants are baptized, it is right and necessary that when they come to maturity, they make their own confession of faith. But they do so with the clear witness that it is not their confession alone that saves them, but the work of God already done for them long before they ever believed.”¹³⁵

Staples favors infant baptism over infant dedication, and believes much is lost when dedication takes the place of baptism. Among his reasons:

- Focus is removed from God’s gracious initiative to human activity and volition.
- It relates faith to an intellectual activity based on age.
- It negates trust in God’s promise and power over the helpless.
- It fails to understand God’s love for the child in sending His Son so this child might become one with the body of Christ.

The Eucharist

The term "Eucharist" comes from the Greek word meaning "to be thankful" and is being used more and more widely today. Some evangelicals might prefer other designations, of which there are many:

- Communion
- Holy Communion
- The Lord's Supper
- The Table of the Lord
- The Breaking of the Bread

In Roman Catholicism it is called The Mass and Eastern Orthodoxy knows it as The Divine Liturgy.

Pelikan mentions four broad areas of agreement regarding eucharistic practice:

1. This sacrament is "a memorial action in which, by eating and drinking, the church calls to remembrance what Jesus Christ was, said, and did."
2. "Participation in the Eucharist enhances and deepens the communion of believers not only with Christ but also with one another."
3. Sharing in the Eucharist brings to mind the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross.
4. "Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist in some special way," although there continues to be disagreement regarding how, when, where, and why Jesus is present.¹³⁶

Five Approaches to the Eucharist

Transubstantiation

This is the Roman Catholic position, wherein “the elements of the bread and wine are ‘transubstantiated’ in the body and blood of Christ; that is, their whole substance is converted into the whole substance of the body and blood, although the outward appearances of the elements, their ‘accidents,’ remain.”¹³⁷

Consubstantiation

This is the view associated with Martin Luther and Lutheranism, which “unequivocally affirmed the real presence of the body and blood of Christ ‘in, with, and under’ the bread and wine in the Eucharist.”¹³⁸

The Memorialist View

This view is chiefly associated with Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531). He viewed the Eucharist “from the standpoint of the worshipping believer who in the sacrament commemorates Christ’s death and its benefits and openly gives expression to personal faith.”¹³⁹

Spiritual Presence

Calvin believed when believers receive the Lord’s Supper there is a genuine partaking of the Lord’s body and blood, and yet it is a *spiritual* and not a *physical* eating.

What Wesley Believed

Wesley held to the “real presence” of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, and yet went beyond the mere “memorialist” position. Following Calvin, this real presence is not a physical one that can be understood in a corporeal, bodily, or physical way. It is therefore a living spiritual presence.

Five Meanings of the Eucharist

Thanksgiving to the Father

- The Lord's Supper's true meaning is *fiesta*, not *funeral*.
- Thanksgiving for what God has accomplished in the history of salvation, including works of creation and redemption.
- Thanksgiving points ahead to our thanks at the future coming in fullness of the kingdom of God.
- The first recorded eucharistic prayers are prayers of thanksgiving.
- The Eucharist is emblematic of what God desires to happen to the entire world.

Commemoration of Christ

- The sacrament of memory.
- Jesus told us to remember Him by doing what we do thrice daily, namely, eating and drinking.
- Not only remember backward, but forward to the promise of Jesus' coming again.
- We also implore God the Father to remember the work that Jesus Christ wrought for the world's redemption.

Sacrifice of Ourselves

- The sacrifice we bring is of ourselves, a spiritual sacrifice.
- Through our worship of God we offer up to Him a sacrifice of praise.

Fellowship of the Faithful

- Eucharist is for *koinonia*, meaning fellowship, sharing, communion, participation.
- Genuine table fellowship assumes a common pulling together and cohering that necessarily excludes all evil.

Foretaste of the Kingdom

- William Barclay has written, "There is nothing in Christian worship which so looks to the past, the present and the future, as the sacrament of the Lord's Supper does."
- In early Christian liturgy, Eucharist is linked with the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the eating and drinking with Him in the kingdom of heaven.
- Older and more traditional meanings of the Eucharist have stressed the past, whereas newer ones look more to the future.

Small Groups

In your group prepare a Eucharist service.

Use relevant scriptures when preparing the service, as well as appropriate hymns, as found in *Sing to the Lord*.

In addition, a resource such as *The United Methodist Hymnal* may be used. In the front of the 1989 version—the most recent—there are several sample Communion services, as well as resources for a baptismal service.

At the outset come to a rough consensus on what sort of service to aim for: more traditional and liturgical, more contemporary, or something borrowing from both traditional and contemporary.

The whole worship service should reinforce the sacramental theme. This will avoid the impression commonly given that the observance of the sacraments is a mere appendage to the rest of the service.

Be prepared to share your plan with the class.

Lesson 16: Eschatology

Due This Lesson

One-page report of meeting with pastor
Three-page paper on Article XIII
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- know what particular topics are addressed under the general heading of "eschatology"
- be familiar with representative Nazarene opinion on "the last things"

Homework Assignments

Using an Internet search engine, look up such words as "hell," "heaven," and "the afterlife." Obviously, doing that will result in thousands of responses. Refine the search so more definite results are yielded. After examining the results for 90 to 100 minutes, write a short essay of two to three pages describing what you found and what this says about current thoughts regarding heaven, hell, and the afterlife in the United States.

Read Resource 16-11, "A Devotional Thought: An Eastern Perspective on the Bible."

Be prepared to show your journal to the instructor during the next class time. The specific entries will not be checked. The instructor will be looking at the overall organization and faithfulness to the journaling assignments.

Write in your journal. Reflect on how much the hymns have influenced your thinking about eschatology. How much has popular literature influenced you? Do you think most people know more about popular literature than what the Bible says concerning eschatology? What can you do as a pastor to help your congregation?

Quotes

“Eschatology is not simply about what we are waiting for God to do; eschatology is about His vision of *shalom* for all creation, a vision He shares with us and, at least to some extent, entrusts to us. If eschatological reflection should ever encourage us to sit on our hands and wait for deliverance, it is counterproductive to God’s commitment to covenantal partnership with us.”

Michael Lodahl¹⁴⁰

“Millenarianism cannot be said to be the ‘touch-stone’ of orthodoxy as is truthfully said regarding the deity of Christ and of spiritual regeneration.”

J. B. Chapman¹⁴¹

“All these things [regarding the future], we believe, shall come to pass; but how, or in what order, human understanding cannot perfectly teach us, but only the experience of the events themselves.”

Augustine¹⁴²

“The end which brings the individual, man and the world in general to a close is precisely the completion of the beginning which came about with (the risen) Christ, and it is no more than this. This final consummation, as the end of all history, does not derive from another event which is still to come: the beginning, which is Christ, is the sole and adequate law of the end, and hence the fulfillment bears in all things the traits of this beginning.”

Karl Rahner¹⁴³

Fire and Ice

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I’ve tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To know that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

Robert Frost (1923)

Eschatology

“Eschatology” comes from the Greek *eschaton*, meaning “last” or “end.” When we think of the last things we obviously think of the “end” of all things . . . The most common meaning of end is simply “the temporal conclusion of some process.” . . . The second, and related, meaning of “end” is “the goal or purpose of some action.”

Synergism and Monergism

Synergism is a concept with which every student of Wesleyan theology must be familiar. It is implied in prevenient grace, for synergism “is a peculiar interpretation of the divine-human relation” in the words of Dunning. Synergism simply teaches that our knowing of God is initiated by Him through His gracious extension of love and mercy in Jesus Christ. As the Holy Spirit enables us, we respond to this offer of grace. *Monergism* is the contrasting position, which “self-consciously preserves both the priority and exclusivity of grace. God’s regenerating power acts upon the human person, whose state of being is much like a stone, totally unresponsive until livened by regeneration.”¹⁴⁴

Authentic Wesleyan theology holds to a significantly different interpretation of the historical process. “While God is still sovereign over the total process of history, He guides the process within the context of human freedom—this is synergism. Human choices are real and actually influence the course of history. Human beings are not mere pawns being moved about the chessboard by a master chessman and having no input into the gambits in which they participate.”¹⁴⁵

Synergistic View

“The Wesleyan presupposition of a synergistic view of history does not invalidate predictive prophecy. It does give it a dynamic character that precludes the possibility of writing history in advance in specific detail. The history of prophecy reflects this truth, since claimed fulfillments usually do not correlate literally with the ‘prediction’ in question.”¹⁴⁶

All eschatology, and indeed all theology, must necessarily have a Christological focus. “One can say,” Dunning confesses, “that in Jesus the eschaton has already occurred, or perhaps more properly, has begun to occur. His resurrection is the firstfruits of the final resurrection. The Spirit He bestows upon His disciples is a foretaste of the glory that shall follow. The salvation He provides is only the beginning of a final reversal of the consequences of the Fall, and the peace (shalom) He places in the hearts of His people foreshadows the universal shalom He intends to establish at the final consummation of the Kingdom.”¹⁴⁷

Millennium Theories

Three major theories address how this thousand-year reign relates chronologically to the Second Coming:

- Premillennialism (the Second Coming will precede the thousand-year reign of Christ)
- Postmillennialism (the Second Coming will follow the thousand-year reign)
- Amillennialism (there will be no literal, earthly thousand-year reign)

In each theory are variations and subtheories.

Realized millennialism

"This views the millennium as the whole Church-Age time between Christ's two advents, during which Christ truly reigns over the dead in Christ now in the intermediate state and especially over the martyred dead (see Rev. 20:1-7), and more or less over the whole world, because Satan is only a limping sovereign due to Christ's resurrection and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The word 'realized' is used with 'millennium' to affirm that we are in a real millennium, a real reign of Christ over a kingdom."¹⁴⁸

Support for Realized Millennialism

1. Affirms that Jesus Christ is *presently* reigning over a kingdom.
2. Historical precedent. From Augustine in the 5th century until the 16th-century Protestant Reformation, this view was nearly universally held.
3. Agrees with the plain meaning of Revelation 20: 1-7.
4. Encourages Christian social action and ministries of compassion.
5. Allows for the belief that the second coming of Christ can occur at any time.
6. The Church is now viewed as the true Israel.
7. This view strongly presses for the universal proclamation of the gospel.
8. Allows for a tribulation.
9. The time of probation is ended when the Second Coming occurs.
10. The important events that will happen at the end of the world are ranged together closely. These are the Second Coming, the defeat of all alien and demonic powers, the Last Judgment, the assigning of humans to either heaven or hell.
11. This view agrees with the Apostles' Creed. Jesus Christ "will come to judge the quick and the dead."
12. The customary teachings of John Wesley and the Holiness Movement can be accommodated to this perspective.

Wesleyan Belief in Hell

“For many people, both Christian and otherwise, the idea of eternal damnation is distasteful and, according to some, contrary to the biblical emphasis upon God’s love. But if in fact love is about mutual relationship, then one could argue that *universalism*, or the idea that all people will somehow finally be saved, is in fact the perspective that is truly contrary to divine love. It is because the Arminian-Wesleyan position is so thoroughly insistent upon the importance of human *response* to divine grace that it cannot embrace universalism, as inviting as it might be. The doctrine of eternal damnation, or hell, is in fact the logical outcome of the biblical affirmation of human responsibility before God.”

Michael Lodahl¹⁴⁹

Heaven

“Among the persistent aspirations of the human race is the vision of a time of peace and blessedness when the suffering and agony of human history will be overcome. In the language of worship and piety, the most common term for this expectation is ‘heaven.’ Heaven is beyond our human ability to fully comprehend. At the least, it will be the final, fulfilling relationship between God and His creation that has been realized in Christ and remains to be realized in the rest of humanity. Heaven is that which Jesus went to prepare for us when He returned to the Father (Jn 14:3). Heaven, then, is the consequence of His resurrection and ascension.”

Rob Staples¹⁵⁰

God's Criteria for Judging Humankind

- God is a just judge.
- God has given the responsibility of final judgment to Jesus Christ.
- Each person will be judged according to the light he or she received from God the Holy Spirit, and his or her understanding of the will of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.¹⁵¹

Small Groups

Selections 278-289 in *Sing to the Lord* deal thematically with many of the issues of this lesson. Identify eight to ten important teachings that are relevant to eschatology.

How do the hymns relate to the *Manual* Articles of Faith XV and XVI?

XV. Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again; that we who are alive at His coming shall not precede them that are asleep in Christ Jesus; but that, if we are abiding in Him, we shall be caught up with the risen saints to meet the Lord in the air, so that we shall ever be with the Lord.

XVI. Resurrection, Judgment, and Destiny

We believe in the resurrection of the dead, that the bodies both of the just and of the unjust shall be raised to life and united with their spirits—"they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

We believe in future judgment in which every person shall appear before God to be judged according to his or her deeds in this life.

We believe that glorious and everlasting life is assured to all who savingly believe in, and obediently follow, Jesus Christ our Lord; and that the finally impenitent shall suffer eternally in hell.

Be prepared to report to the class.

A Devotional Thought: An Eastern Perspective on the Bible¹⁵²

Mark 9: 10-27

By Paul Fukue,
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A Devotional Thought: An Eastern Perspective on the Bible

Scripture: Mark 9:20-27

This Global Theological Conference in Guatemala has been incredibly profitable and satisfying to me personally. I am glad that a genuine candid dialogue has been taking place and I sense the spirit of love and inclusiveness in the worldwide Church of the Nazarene. This is not to be taken for granted in the world where exclusiveness and lack of genuine dialogue is rampant everywhere.

At one of the dinner tables, a person who happened to sit beside me asked me the following question. "What are the characteristics of Asian theologies?" Recognizing the difficulty of generalization of any theology, I attempted to answer the question in the following manner. I answered by saying, "If I can oversimplify the matter, perhaps I could say this. Theology as developed in the Western societies has often emphasized the *Christus Victor* motif of Christology. Christ is the victor over sin and death and the powers of darkness. Thus Christ is often depicted as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. And Christians are invited to live a victorious life imaged after this Christ. As a result, martyrs of faith in the face of persecution are conceived as heroic and highly praised. In other words, the important issues in the western understanding are perhaps sin, guilt, powers of darkness and the victory over these by the redeeming power of the Christ crucified and risen. If you look at Asian Christians and theologians in general, it is perhaps safe to say that *Christus Victor* motif is not so strongly stressed. Rather the *Suffering Servant* motif of Christ is more often brought up, and the Spirit of Christ as Comforter and *Paracletos* who walks alongside of us in our life's suffering and joy, grief and happiness. The risen Christ who began to walk alongside the two disciples on the road to Emmaus strikes the heart chords of many Asian Christians. The homiletical invitation is not so much to victorious Christian life over sin and death and powers of darkness, nor to perfect love and purity of heart and intention, but rather to the One who walks alongside of you, to the One who knows fully your weakness, your imperfection, your failures, your lack of faith, your impurity of heart and intention, your bitterness, your anger, your dilemma, and most of all your suffering. The Holy Spirit is above all the Spirit of Christ who joins in to help us in our weakness; who intercedes on our behalf with sighs too deep for words, for oftentimes we do not know what and how we should pray. Thus the dominant issue for Asian theologians is suffering rather than sin and guilt."

I think I answered to this person in such a manner. And as you can sense immediately, both motifs are found in the Bible in diverse metaphors and stories. We are richly blessed to have the Scripture that speaks to us in many different life situations and contexts in which we find ourselves from time to time. Naturally I am not propagating which motif is more biblical or true, but rather, as Wesley teaches us,

we need to teach and preach the whole council of God as conveyed through diverse cultural experiences of biblical writers.

The scripture found in Mark 9:23 and 24 is especially appealing to Asian mind. It says; (Jesus said to him, "If You can! All things are possible to him who believes!" Immediately the boy's father cried out and began saying, "I do believe; help me in my unbelief.") The last phrase, "Help me in my unbelief" strikes our heart's chord especially because it expresses our human weakness, our lack of faith, our dilemma, our doubts, and even our suffering. And the fact that Christ responded to such a plea and healed the boy helps us to understand the nature of Christ in a profound way. This empathy and identification of Christ with our weakness and suffering, liberates us, heals us, fills us, and empowers us to trust in Him and hope in Him in the midst of our helplessness.

Let me give you my perspective on why in Asia the religion of Buddhism has dominated vast areas of the region for so many centuries. I believe it is because it has been especially Buddhism that dealt with the meaning of and liberation from existential suffering of humanity, such as suffering to live, suffering to grow old, suffering to become sick, and suffering to die. These sufferings encompass entire human predicament of suffering of any kind. So for the majority of Asians, the deepest yearning is to find the meaning of and liberation from suffering. How we respond to the needs of these people is the task of Christian pastors, evangelists, missionaries and theologians.

I would like to introduce to you one example to illustrate my theme. This is about a Japanese lady who suffered from schizophrenia for many years. When she was still small, her father used to come home late at night heavily drunk, and he would often quarrel with her mother and usually end up beating her mother terribly. The child was trembling in her bed for fear of losing her mother. As far as she could remember, there was not a single night when she changed her clothes into pajamas and slept inside the bed. She would always wear her daytime clothes carrying her school bag so that as soon as her mother leaves home because of her father's violence, the child could quickly follow her mother in the dark of the night. When she was seven or eight years old, she was sent to an orphanage and she spent her young years there. After she became an adult girl, married and had a baby, she began to suffer a terrible case of schizophrenia. She visited many psychiatrists including the most famous one in the country. She could not receive a crucial help, on the contrary, she was deserted from doctors because she was told her case was just beyond normal phenomena of the illness.

Then one day she met a Christian pastor in her town who gave her a special concern and Christian counseling. To make a long story short, the pastor taught her that Jesus Christ suffered the terrible suffering on that cross, so that she can express her anger at Christ who is the only person who can take her incredible anger and absorb it. The lady was full of anger caused by her childhood experiences at home. And she was expressing that anger toward her husband to ease her pain inside. But no one could take her anger to the point that she no longer had to show it except Christ who is the Son of God who suffered that terrible pain on the cross for all of us and for her. The lady, after knowing about who Christ is, began to express her anger toward Christ over and over until she no longer had need to do so. It goes without saying that the pastor patiently showed Christ-like love and genuine concern for her all along the way. Through her understanding that Christ suffered and shed blood, she understood the incredible love of God toward her because many times she had attempted suicide and

shed blood from her body. Knowing that the suffering of Christ is for her healing, she began to be healed. After one year she was completely healed from her schizophrenia. Suffering was the point of contact between her and God. She then later understood that her sin was also forgiven. She is now working as a Christian counselor and many people including medical doctors and psychiatrists are benefiting from her counseling.

God in Christ meets us in our suffering. We are helplessly weak and unbelieving. We are like Peter who says, "Lord, I am ready to go to prison and to death for You," and yet the next moment we run away from Christ when danger seems to fall upon us. So we need to pray to God, "Lord, help me in my unbelief." This, I believe, is not Asian nor western. This is a Christian prayer, for our Lord knows all our weaknesses, our sins, our lack of love, our impurity of heart, our imperfection, even our frustration and anger. And it is the same Lord who by identifying Himself with our infirmities can heal us, fill us, cleanse us, empower us, and use us. Christ is the Savior for the westerners, for the Asians, for Africans, and for the entire humanity. Amen.

Lesson 17: Now and Future Shapes of Nazarene Theology

Due This Lesson

Essay on Internet search
Reading of Resource 16-11
Journals
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- think about the theological future of the Church of the Nazarene
- know the reality that Christian theology is a dialectical enterprise; that is, it must be rooted in the past, focused on the present, and pointed toward the future

Homework Assignments

Read Resource 17-10, "The Study of Christian Theology." You read this essay for the first lesson of Christian Theology 1. It is now time to revisit its message.

Write in your journal. Am I now a theologian? Why or why not?

Evangelical

The theological future of the Church of the Nazarene must remain solidly evangelical; within the broad contours of evangelicalism as a whole, Nazarenes should work to continue the holiness identity. It is what we do best.

Two related tasks

- promote theological unity within the evangelical world
- present a solid evangelical front as a witness to the secular world

Experiential

Nazarenes have perhaps made more of one plank of the Wesleyan quadrilateral—experience—than Wesley would have approved.

Nazarenes should never quench the Spirit, and should exercise caution even in attempting to channel the Holy Spirit into desired ends.

The 20th and the 21st centuries may come to be known as the centuries of the Holy Spirit; new uprisings of the Christian movement are very much in evidence in Asia, Africa, and South America, changing the complexion of Christianity.

As the Nazarene movement grows, Nazarene theology will necessarily draw from a wider palette of Spirit-validated experiences of God. North American experience may continue to be normative to one degree or another, but will no longer dominate as it has in the past.

Nazarene theology and doctrine will be influenced by the continued globalization of the Church. Papers, responses, and summaries of the proceedings from the First Global Theology Conference can be found online at <http://wesley.nnu.edu/2002-GNTC/>. The conference dialogue was organized around four themes: Memory, Mission, Holiness, and Hope. The endnote from each theme will be of particular interest.

Engaging

Nazarenes have a great deal, to contribute to the ongoing conversation of Christian theology; “Engaging” here means Nazarene theologians should become, to a greater extent than they already are, “theologians of culture.”

Nazarenes must continue to be vigilant toward the attractions of the world, inasmuch as they align themselves against the purposes of God to redeem the world.

It is difficult if not impossible to work to transform a world one is more or less ignoring. To work toward a theological engagement with culture does not mean accepting the world’s deprivations, but it does mean taking seriously the hopes and aspirations of all people, including those who are indifferent and even hostile to Jesus Christ.

Entire sanctification: in presenting this doctrine to secular people, the disciplines of philosophy, sociology, and psychology cannot be ignored, because they offer competing and often discrepant views about salvation and holiness.

Ecumenical

Nazarene theologians can and should dip their toes into more ecumenical waters without fear of being carried away on a tide of liberalism.

Phineas Bresee's dictum of "in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity" need not be a forsaking of Nazarene distinctives. To find the theme of Christian perfection and entire sanctification present in *every* Christian tradition to one degree or another is no invitation for Nazarene theologians to crow "I told you so" to their theological colleagues in other denominations. But it is an opportunity to search for deeper unity among Christians.

Wesley did sometimes distinguish between mere "opinion" and essential doctrines that could not be negotiated away. He once wrote, "As to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think."

Nazarene theologians should remain on Wesley's side in this equation, on the side of those essential truths that are the root of Christianity. It is a delicate balancing act—agreeing to broad ecumenical consensus while articulating Nazarene distinctives—but one well worth undertaking.

Ecclesiological

Nazarene practice has often contradicted the wisdom of this article. The article insists on the communitarian and covenantal reality of the Church, something not sufficiently appreciated by many Nazarenes. The awareness that the Church lives *both* as local congregation and universal body is also highly significant, and may reinforce the section on the ecumenical. "Universal body" surely means more than the aggregate total of all Nazarenes around the world. It must refer to the "invisible" Church and the Church universal, meaning all Christians everywhere.

It is to our great loss if we continue to ignore and sell short the biblical push for true community and covenant. Too many Nazarenes—equally true of too many Christians as a whole—seem concerned with only their own salvation.

Theology and the Kerygma

The New Testament word *kerygma* means “that which is cried by the herald.”

The herald—*kerux*—was the public servant of the king. He summoned the assembly and declared the king’s message. The early Christians saw in this servant who proclaimed the message of the king the role of the Christian preacher. The verb *kerusso* means to preach, to proclaim, to discharge the duties of the herald’s office.¹⁵³

Millard Erickson said, “Theology is not simply to be learned, understood and appreciated . . . There is the additional issue of communication of the message.”¹⁵⁴

Kerygma Passages

Romans 1:2-6, 16-17 (NLT)

This Good News was promised long ago by God through his prophets in the holy Scriptures. It is the Good News about his Son, Jesus, who came as a man, born into King David's royal family line. And Jesus Christ our Lord was shown to be the Son of God when God powerfully raised him from the dead by means of the Holy Spirit. Through Christ, God has given us the privilege and authority to tell Gentiles everywhere what God has done for them, so that they will believe and obey him, bringing glory to his name.

You are among those who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ.

For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes . . . This is accomplished from start to finish by faith.

1 Corinthians 15:1-11 (NLT)

Now let me remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before. You welcomed it then and still do now, for your faith is built on this wonderful message. And it is this Good News that saves you if you firmly believe it

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me—that Christ died for your sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the twelve apostles. After that, he was seen by more than five hundred of his followers at one time . . . Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. Last of all, I saw him, too, long after the others . . . For I am the least of all the apostles, and I am not worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted the church of God.

But whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favor on me . . . yet it was not I but God who was working through me by his grace . . . The important thing is that you believed what we preached to you.

Ministry Mission Statement

For the next two minutes you are to write a Pastoral Mission Statement. Consider the reading from Resource 16-11, the comments about the *kerygma*, and the scriptures just read.

6. Do you avoid preaching on any of the theological topics listed above? If so, why?

7. How well-informed do you find Nazarene laypeople regarding Nazarene theology and ethics?

8. Is it a significant part of your pastoral position to seek to educate the Nazarene laity about their own theological heritage and identity? If yes, how do you strive to accomplish this goal?

9. How would you explain to Nazarene laity the differences between (and commonalities of) "evangelical" and "fundamentalism"? Can you explain these differences to yourself?

10. Which of the following factors do you think will shape and mold the future of Nazarene theology in the next 30 to 40 years? To what degree will these factors be influential?
 - Desire of women to assume greater leadership roles
 - Compassion for the poor
 - Multiculturalism
 - Defending the Christian faith against the incursions of secularism and materialism
 - Need to reword/define some of the Nazarene doctrines

11. To what extent will the following influence the future of Nazarene theology?

- The Internet and other telecommunications
- Nazarene missionary expansion
- The shrinking of the "global village"
- Postmodernity

12. Which of these older or classic Nazarene theologians influenced your theological thinking?

- Paul Bassett
- William Greathouse
- W. T. Purkiser
- Richard Taylor
- H. Orton Wiley
- H. Ray Dunning
- J. Kenneth Grider
- Rob Staples
- Al Truesdale
- Mildred Bangs Wynkoop

Which other Christian theologians have influenced your theological outlook?

The Study of Christian Theology

by
Al Truesdale

In the apostle Paul's instructions to Timothy he urges him to be a diligent steward of the Christian faith. Paul tells this young minister—his student and son in the Lord—how to conduct himself in “the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth” (1 Tim 3: 15, RSV). As a minister of the gospel, Timothy must faithfully and comprehensively proclaim and teach the whole Christian faith as it was authored by the Lord and taught by the apostles. Timothy must jealously guard “the mystery of our religion . . . God in Christ was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory” (1 Tim 3: 16, RSV).

If Timothy will diligently fulfill his charge, then Paul says, he “will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the words of the faith and of the good doctrine which [God in Christ] he has followed” (1 Tim 4: 6, RSV).

After 2000 years of Church history, and after perhaps millions of ministers have proclaimed the gospel, Paul's charge to Timothy remains as urgent and as much in effect today as ever before. A person who enters upon the ordained Christian ministry absolutely forfeits control over his or her own agenda and ideas, and lives only to proclaim “in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph 1: 9-10, RSV). All of this for “the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph 1: 6-7, RSV). And a person who wants to enter the ordained Christian ministry will demonstrate his or her commitment to the “mystery of God” by a “manner of life” that is “worthy of the gospel” (Phil 1: 27, RSV).

But even though one is deeply committed to fulfilling the charge given to Timothy, and now to us, he or she must patiently and prayerfully, in a spirit of humble and obedient worship, carefully study the whole content of the “mystery of God in Christ Jesus.” One's personal faith in Christ is of course absolutely foundational for the Christian ministry. Only after one in obedient faith first partakes of the grace of God in Christ Jesus can he or she even hope to proclaim and teach the gospel to others. But the Christian minister is called to more. He or she must drink deeply from, be immersed in, “the faith” about which Paul spoke to Timothy. Upon the Christian minister is placed a responsibility for the faith that is unique to the office of the ordained ministry. Anyone who is unwilling diligently and humbly to walk the pathway that leads to becoming a good steward of “the faith” should honestly avoid the Christian ministry. Following the path that leads to becoming a good steward of “the faith” will last a lifetime.

For almost 2000 years, entry into the pathway has involved a faithful and worshipful study of theology. The word is composed of two Greek words, “Theos,” or “God,” and “logos,” or “word.” Theology is an attempt to give the most complete and faithful expression possible to God's self-disclosure in Christ. It is an effort to understand the relationship between Christ and “the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth” (1 Tim 3: 15, RSV). The study of

theology is an attempt, under the Spirit's guidance, to understand how the Church of the living God can best bear witness to the riches of God's grace both in the Church and in the world. Because of the inexhaustible riches of "Christ the mystery of God" (Col 1:24-29), and because of changing circumstances in the world in which the Church bears witness, the study of theology and its expression is never finished. The foundations of "the faith" never change, but as the apostle Paul demonstrated by his preaching to diverse cultures, the Church must always seek the most insightful means possible for declaring Christ, the wisdom and power of God (1 Cor 1:10-30).

The Church "does" theology in order to enrich its understanding of God, to reaffirm the scandal of the Cross (1 Cor 1), to bolster its faith in Christ, to enlarge its grasp of holy living, to instruct in righteousness, to help accomplish the Great Commission and to give an account of its faith in the world. "Doing" and "studying" theology should be a joyous form of worship because it is a sustained effort better to understand the Christ who is our life and peace. All efforts to separate the study of theology from spontaneous worship and vibrant discipleship will end in a desert of frustration. It will lead to sterility and disappointment.

So for one who wants to enter the ordained Christian ministry and who sets out to study theology, he or she should do so with the greatest of joy, diligence, humility, and hope. As the history of the Church has proceeded from century to century, it has been adorned with the names of persons, many of them pastors of congregations or leaders of groups of pastors and congregations, who have joyously and faithfully done the work of theology for us. They have done so not because they wanted to waste time in fruitless speculation, but because they wanted to advance the gospel of their Lord, to protect "the faith" against subversion, and to amplify the faith of Christ's sisters and brothers.

He or she who sets out to embrace and fulfill Paul's charge to Timothy follows in the footsteps of the early apologists, the Church Fathers such as Athanasius and Augustine, and reformers such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, and Karl Barth. All of them were lovers of "the faith," and all of them sought only to "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior" (Titus 2:10, RSV). So as we proceed through this module, this part of the pathway that will eventually lead to ordination by God in the Christian ministry, let us do so with happy anticipation, believing firmly that the Holy Spirit will be our chief teacher.

While Christian theology is a whole that deals with "the faith," it has numerous branches, all of which serve the common good of the Church, and each of which plays a particular role. The branches follow a natural order, with each building upon the next. But there is also an important interdependence within the various branches. They are: biblical theology, historical theology (church history and the history of Christian thought); systematic theology; missiology; moral theology (Christian ethics); the practice of Christian ministry (leading in worship, preaching, counseling, administration, and so forth). There are numerous fields of study that are related to theology, but that derive their primary identity from other sources. Some of these are philosophy of religion, the study of world religions, psychology of religion, sociology of religion, and so forth.

The subject of this module is Christian theology, or systematic theology. It is directly reliant upon biblical and historical theology. Systematic theology is the Church's effort to provide a comprehensive statement of, or account of, its faith in the Christ in whom the eternal God became incarnate and redeemer. It seeks to systematically voice the

nature and content of the Christian faith. Systematic theology occurs within the Church and for the Church's faith. Systematic theology is "faith seeking understanding." To achieve its goal, systematic theology uses many tools, one of which is reflective and analytic thought. In the strict sense, systematic theology is neither the proclamation of the gospel of God nor is it "faith" in the sense of one's saving relationship with Christ. It is neither the presence of Christ in the sacraments or in preaching, nor is it the Church's shout of "Hallelujah!" in worship, testimony, and praise. Instead, it is faithful and comprehensive reflection upon the God who is the author of our faith.

It is possible to dismiss systematic theology as irrelevant to the Church's life only if one misunderstands the responsibility placed upon the Church when it confesses, "Christ is Lord." Systematic theology serves to augment the content and meaning of this the Church's constituting affirmation. In fact, if a Christian minister, and if the Church, treats "the faith" with the care and importance it deserves, all dimensions of ministry and Christian life ought to occur under the guidance of theological reflection.

If a minister acts, plans, and speaks under instruction from worldly values and goals rather than being formed by theological principles, commitments, and insights, then to that extent he or she will depart from the gospel of God. The gospel alone is a minister's warrant for existence.

To prepare for proclamation of the gospel, we joyfully undertake the study of Christian theology.

Endnotes

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- ¹ *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*, Vol. 1 (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982, 1978), 127-28.
- ² "Incarnation," in *A New Handbook of Christian Theology*, eds. Donald W. Musser and Joseph L. Price (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 251.
- ³ Quoted in Donald G. Bloesch, *Jesus Christ: Savior and Lord* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 53.
- ⁴ Elizabeth Johnson, *Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology* (New York: Crossroads, 1990), 50-51.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 51.
- ⁶ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus: God and Man* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), 33-35.
- ⁷ John Deschner, *Wesley's Christology: An Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988).
- ⁸ Thomas C. Oden, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, *The Word of Life* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989), 44-46.
- ⁹ Quoted in Part II of Geoffrey Wainwright, *For Our Salvation: Two Approaches to the Work of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 101.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 102.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 105-06.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 107.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 108.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 110-11.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 111.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 112.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 113.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 144.
- ¹⁹ John Henry Newman, 19th-century Church of England figure who later became Roman Catholic; see Wainwright, *For Our Salvation*, 117.
- ²⁰ Quoted in Wainwright, *For Our Salvation*, 117.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 118.
- ²² H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology*, Vol. 2 (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1940), 213-15.
- ²³ Wainwright, *For Our Salvation*, 118.
- ²⁴ Wiley, *Christian Theology*, 2:76-77.
- ²⁵ Bloesch, *Jesus Christ*, 57.
- ²⁶ Gustav Aulen, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement*, trans. A. G. Hebert (London: SPCK, 1950; American edition: Macmillan Co., 1961), 29.
- ²⁷ Rob L. Staples, *Words of Faith: An Easy Reference to Theological Terms* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2001), 47.
- ²⁸ Michael Winters, *The Atonement* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1995), 2.
- ²⁹ *Sing to the Lord*, ed. Ken Bible (Kansas City: Lillenas Publishing Co., 1993), 30.
- ³⁰ Aulen, *Christus Victor*, 20.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 20-21.
- ³² *Sing to the Lord*, 432.
- ³³ Michael Lodahl, *The Story of God: Wesleyan Theology and Biblical Narrative* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1994), 159.
- ³⁴ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Melody of Theology: A Philosophical Dictionary* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 13.
- ³⁵ J. Kenneth Grider, *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1994), 324-25.

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- ³⁶ Ibid., 325.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 329.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 330.
- ³⁹ Ibid., 323.
- ⁴⁰ Aulen, *Christus Victor*, 18.
- ⁴¹ Quoted in Ibid., 98.
- ⁴² Pelikan, "Atonement," in *Melody of Theology*, 13.
- ⁴³ Aulen, *Christus Victor*, 98.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 102.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., 20.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., 22.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., 47.
- ⁴⁹ Quoted in Ibid., 62.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., 162-63.
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- ⁵² Aulen, *Christus Victor*, 163-64.
- ⁵³ Quoted in Ibid., 65.
- ⁵⁴ Pelikan, "Grace" in *Melody of Theology*, 106-07.
- ⁵⁵ Wiley, *Christian Theology*, 2:345.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid., 2:345-346.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ⁵⁸ *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 1, *Sermons I: 1-33*, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 57.
- ⁵⁹ Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 44-45.
- ⁶⁰ Section I: 1.
- ⁶¹ Thomas C. Oden, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 3, *Life in the Spirit*, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 79-83.
- ⁶² Quoted in Ibid., 83-84.
- ⁶³ *Works*, 1:80-81.
- ⁶⁴ Wiley, *Christian Theology*, 2:416.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid., 2:417-18.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid., 2:421-24.
- ⁶⁷ Staples, *Words of Faith*, 59-62.
- ⁶⁸ Pelikan, *Melody of Theology*, 144.
- ⁶⁹ H. Ray Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1988), 347.
- ⁷⁰ Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 189.
- ⁷¹ Staples, *Words of Faith*, 49.
- ⁷² Grider, *Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, 338.
- ⁷³ Ibid., 348-49.
- ⁷⁴ Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1972), 338.
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- ⁷⁶ Ibid., 158.
- ⁷⁷ Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 192.
- ⁷⁸ Grider, *Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, 459.
- ⁷⁹ Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, ch 15.
- ⁸⁰ Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love*, chs. 14-16.
- ⁸¹ Denominations within the Holiness Movement include the Church of the Nazarene, the Salvation Army, the Free Methodist Church, The Wesleyan Church, the Church of God (Anderson, Ind.), and others.

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- ⁸² John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1966), 60, 45, 84.
- ⁸³ Lodahl, *The Story of God*, ch. 24.
- ⁸⁴ Staples, *Words of Faith*, 67-8.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 69-70.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 71-72.
- ⁸⁷ Pelikan, *Melody of Theology*, 128.
- ⁸⁸ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 128-29.
- ⁸⁹ Clark Pinnock, *Flame of Love* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 15-17, quotation from 17.
- ⁹⁰ Quoted in Oden, *Life in the Spirit*, 15-16.
- ⁹¹ Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, 398.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*, 399.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*, 415.
- ⁹⁴ William M. Greathouse, *Wholeness in Christ: Toward a Biblical Theology of Holiness* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1998), 72.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 73.
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 76.
- ⁹⁷ *A Man in Christ: The Vital Elements of St. Paul's Religion*, quoted in *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 77.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 79.
- ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 80.
- ¹⁰³ Quoted in *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁴ Friedrich Schleiermacher, quoted in *Ibid.*, 73.
- ¹⁰⁵ Lora Gross, "Holy Spirit," in *A New Handbook of Christian Theology*, ed. Donald W. Musser and Joseph L. Price (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 232.
- ¹⁰⁶ Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, 415.
- ¹⁰⁷ Pope John XXIII, quoted by Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 5.
- ¹⁰⁸ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, I/1:5f. quoted in Michael Welker, "The Holy Spirit," in *Constructive Christian Theology in the Worldwide Church*, ed. William R. Barr (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 169.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 168-83.
- ¹¹⁰ Quoted in Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 310.
- ¹¹¹ Staples, *Words of Faith*, 80.
- ¹¹² Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 166.
- ¹¹³ Grider, *Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, 476-79.
- ¹¹⁴ Church of the Nazarene, *The Manual 2001-2005* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 2001), 32.
- ¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.
- ¹¹⁶ This list is from Grider, *Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, 479-83.
- ¹¹⁷ Pastor David Busic delivered this sermon in May 2003 at Central Church of the Nazarene, Lenexa, Kansas USA. It was part of a series called "Christianity for Dummies." The series contained five sermons on theological foundations of Christianity. The series title is a parody on the popular "how-to" books with similar titles.
- ¹¹⁸ Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, 529.
- ¹¹⁹ Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 172-73.
- ¹²⁰ "A Glorious Church," *Sing to the Lord*, 672.

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- ¹²¹ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 353.
- ¹²² Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 175.
- ¹²³ Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, 532.
- ¹²⁴ "Jesus Shall Reign," *Sing to the Lord*, 271.
- ¹²⁵ Staples, *Words of Faith*, 85.
- ¹²⁶ Ibid.
- ¹²⁷ "Sacrament," in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- ¹²⁸ Grider, *Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, 495.
- ¹²⁹ John Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments* (New York: Continuum, 1997), 72.
- ¹³⁰ Ibid.
- ¹³¹ Staples, *Words of Faith*, 87.
- ¹³² Ibid., 90.
- ¹³³ Ibid., 92.
- ¹³⁴ Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The Place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1991), 175.
- ¹³⁵ Ibid., 181-82.
- ¹³⁶ Pelikan, *Melody of Theology*, 78.
- ¹³⁷ Ibid.
- ¹³⁸ Ibid., 80.
- ¹³⁹ Staples, *Outward Sign*, 221.
- ¹⁴⁰ Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 219.
- ¹⁴¹ Quoted in Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, 584.
- ¹⁴² Quoted in Ibid., 572.
- ¹⁴³ Quoted in Ibid., 576.
- ¹⁴⁴ H. Ray Dunning, "Presuppositions of a Wesleyan Eschatology," in *The Second Coming: A Wesleyan Approach to the Doctrine of Last Things*, ed. H. Ray Dunning (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1995), 190.
- ¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 196.
- ¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 197.
- ¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 201-02.
- ¹⁴⁸ Grider, *Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, 535.
- ¹⁴⁹ Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 235.
- ¹⁵⁰ Staples, *Words of Faith*, 117-18.
- ¹⁵¹ See Lodahl, *The Story of God*, 227-33.
- ¹⁵² Dr. Fukue originally presented this paper as a devotional for the Faculty Development Workshop held following the Global Nazarene Theology Conference in Guatemala, 2002. Used by permission.
- ¹⁵³ *Beacon Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Richard S. Taylor, (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1983), 299.
- ¹⁵⁴ Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), 1246.