Selfhood and the Search for an Identity: Explaining the Emergence of the Nineteenth-Century Holiness Movement and Early Church of the Nazarene

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Church of the Nazarene, which today is an international holiness denomination with almost 1.4 million members in over 12,600 congregations, had its origin in the Wesleyan stream of the nineteenth-century Holiness movement. Nazarenes trace their roots back to apostolic Christianity through the American Holiness movement, the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), and the Wesleyan revival of the eighteenth century, which was a part of the larger Evangelical Revival in Britain. Although officially organized as the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene through the merging of independent Holiness groups in 1907 and 1908, its earliest congregations were established in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. From their very beginning, these congregations (and the groups that developed around them) were determined to promote their understanding of John Wesley’s doctrine and practice of Christian perfection, which they more commonly referred to as entire sanctification. At the time of the first merger in 1907, the decision was made to employ a representative form of government overseen by a superintendency, which “avoids the extremes of episcopacy on the one hand and unlimited congregationalism on the other.”2 This form of polity had been a feature of the congregations and districts of the western Church of the Nazarene. In addition, the groups that merged to become the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene in 1907 and 1908 actively pursued international missionary efforts and the development of educational institutions. The importance of these pursuits is evidenced by the fact that

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2 Manual 2001-2005 Church of the Nazarene, 56.
the Church of the Nazarene currently ministers in 138 countries, while its leadership considers the goal of becoming “an ‘international community’ of faith” as unfinished business. The Church of the Nazarene currently operates 57 institutions of higher education around the world.4

The religious phenomenon which has become known as the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement began as an effort to renew the emphasis on John Wesley’s (1703-1791) doctrine and practice of Christian perfection within the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC). Prominent Methodist clergy and laity believed that the removal of Wesley’s Plain Account of Christian Perfection from the Discipline of the MEC in 1812 had resulted in a decline in the importance of holiness. Efforts to restore the prominence of Wesleyan doctrine and practice within the MEC originated in the Northeastern United States and was spearheaded by the publication of Timothy Merritt’s (1775-1845) The Christian’s Manual: A Treatise on Christian Perfection (1825), articles written by Aaron Lummus (1792-?) in the periodical Zion’s Herald, holiness revivals in the early 1830s, the establishment of Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness by Sarah Lankford (1806-1896) and Phoebe Palmer (1807-1874) in 1835, and the initiation of a monthly periodical, Guide to Christian Perfection, by Merritt in 1839. These promotional methods, along with the development of the Oberlin stream of the Holiness movement, also created an interdenominational interest in Christian perfection that culminated in the holiness revivals of 1858 – 1859. The contact and exchange between denominations created differing interpretations of holiness doctrine and variations in practice.

4 Appendix, Manual 2001-2005 Church of the Nazarene, 362-365. This figure includes eight liberal arts colleges/universities, a Bible college and a theological seminary in the United States.
Following the Civil War, advocates of holiness within the MEC organized the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness in 1867, which later became known as the National Holiness Association (NHA). Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, this organization sponsored holiness camp meetings leading to the establishment of holiness associations, holiness periodicals, and special holiness meetings patterned after the Tuesday Meetings of Palmer and Lankford. The proliferation of holiness camp meetings and associations created a ministry for evangelists specializing in the promotion of holiness. By 1880, the success of the NHA created tensions between its leadership and the hierarchy of the MEC. Radical holiness advocates exacerbated these tensions by organizing independent Holiness churches. In spite of the efforts to ensure loyalty to existing denominations by the leaders of the NHA at national conventions, opposition to the special promotion of holiness and, to some extent, disagreements within the NHA on national organization, resulted in the establishment of additional independent Holiness entities in the late 1880s through the 1890s.

Differences in doctrine and practice among these groups would prove to be a major difficulty in any effort to create a national Holiness church. Yet, through the agency of holiness periodicals and holiness evangelists, some of the leaders of these new organizations promoted the idea of a national Holiness church. Their efforts focused upon the essential doctrine and practice of entire sanctification through the baptism of the Holy Spirit while permitting compromises on nonessential issues. Ironically, the structure of the NHA, which attempted to promote holiness as a revitalization of existing denominations, provided the mechanisms for the emergence of new national Holiness
churches. However, defining holiness primarily as a second work of grace accomplished by Holy Spirit baptism also resulted in the continued debate over doctrine and practice and the emergence of the Pentecostal movement, which created additional divisions of holiness groups in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Independent churches had the choice of identifying with either the Holiness movement or the Pentecostal movement. It is therefore important to trace the increasing use of Pentecostal rhetoric within the Holiness movement since the association of the New Testament day of Pentecost with entire sanctification reinforced the idea of individual spiritual autonomy.

My interest in the emergence of the Church of the Nazarene as a national Holiness denomination dates back to my first reading of Timothy L. Smith’s history of its first twenty-five years, *Called Unto Holiness* (1962). Although only a teenager who had just joined the church, I was intrigued by Smith’s narrative of the mergers that created the denomination. Even with his expert explanation, I still remember wondering how these geographically dispersed groups could find the common ground required to become a national Holiness church and subsequently an international Holiness denomination. Years later, at Eastern Nazarene College, my interest in the history of the Holiness Movement was aroused when I attended a graduate level course instructed by Dr. Smith. I have read a tremendous amount of material on the history of the Holiness movement, researched the history of the Church of the Nazarene at its archives in Kansas City, Missouri, and wrestled with the development of my own explanation of the emergence of these religious institutions. The goal of this dissertation is to provide explanations for the emergence of the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement, its sectarian nature, the subsequent organization of a national holiness church (Pentecostal Church of the
Nazarene), and the role of the Holiness Movement in the origins of the Pentecostal Movement.

Previous Explanations of the Holiness Movement

The emergence of the Wesleyan stream of the Holiness movement has been explained as a revitalization of the quest for “Christian holiness within Methodism and, from that center,” the desire to spread that “spiritual quest to all of Christianity.”\(^5\) This interpretation is based upon the assumption that advocates of holiness believed an increasing affluence and institutionalization within the MEC was accompanied by, or was even the cause of, a theological shift away from the Wesleyan doctrine and practice of Christian perfection. In *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* (1956/1985), John L. Peters documents some of the primary sources that suggest this understanding was prominent within the MEC by the 1830s to 1840s. In response, a group of clergy and laity called for a revival which would bring the “fallen church back to primitive New Testament standards.” Melvin Dieter writes further that “The revival call to the church to experience again the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as received by the Apostles themselves on the day of Pentecost, was the focal point of this effort to restore the church to its pristine power and purposes.”\(^6\)

Those who called for this renewed, or special, emphasis on holiness viewed it as being consistent with the thought of John Wesley. Despite the perception of decline, the

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documented presence of a call for the “Special Promotion of Holiness”7 as early as 1821 led Timothy L. Smith to conclude that there had been a continuous effort to emphasize holiness within the MEC.8 William Kostlevy also argues that those who participated in this call “emphasized continuity with the past, even as they frequently introduced novel methods, and as the century progressed, novel terminology. As a result, by the late nineteenth century the debate over Christian perfection was largely a dispute concerning doctrinal continuity.”9 The sectarian nature of the Holiness movement has primarily been attributed to the issue of doctrinal continuity. Kostlevy states that “virtually all denominations active in the Holiness Movement argue that their particular churches are the direct doctrinal successors to ‘pure’ Wesleyanism.”10

Other scholars have suggested specific social causes for the emergence of the holiness revival. Following the lead of H. Richard Niebuhr’s Social Sources of Denominationalism (1929), Liston Pope’s Millhands and Preachers: A Study of Gastonia (1942) “interpreted the Holiness Movement as a protest of the socially dispossessed,”11 and Robert Mapes Anderson applied this theory to the emergence of Pentecostalism in Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism (1979). Although many of the socially dispossessed would clearly be attracted to the empowering message of holiness, this does not explain why so many of the middle class were participants in the holiness revival. C. S. Griffin’s The Ferment of Reform (1967) and Paul E. Johnson’s

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9 Kostlevy, Holiness Manuscripts, 2.
10 Ibid., 3.
A Shopkeeper’s Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837 (1978) are examples of the application of the theory of social control. These were followed by John L. Hammond’s The Politics of Benevolence: Revival Religion and American Voting Behavior (1979) which suggested that holiness revivalism was “committed to creating agreement on specific issues”\(^{12}\) rather than social harmony in general. In Islands of Holiness: Rural Religion in Upstate New York, 1790-1860 (1989), Curtis D. Johnson provides evidence of opposition to holiness revivalism by the same segment of society supposedly seeking to control social behavior.

While social theories may not provide a general explanation for the attractiveness of the holiness revival and emergence of the Holiness movement, it is clear that social issues were a motivating factor. The call for a renewed, or special, promotion of holiness was as much an expression of concern for “the social disintegration of the Western world”\(^ {13}\) as it was about declining spirituality. In his Revivalism and Social Reform, Timothy L. Smith argued that “the most avid proponents of revival measures regarded themselves as civilization’s most indispensable agents” believing that “American society must become the garden of the Lord.”\(^ {14}\) While some holiness advocates like Orange Scott adapted a “radical connection between holiness and reform”\(^ {15}\) which often led to the formation of new sects, others like Phoebe Palmer utilized more moderate measures within existing structures. The “disinterested benevolence”\(^ {16}\) doctrine of Charles G. Finney (1792-1875) motivated the Oberlin stream of the Holiness movement towards

\(^{12}\) Ibid., 14.
\(^{13}\) Ibid., 4.
\(^{15}\) Dieter, The 19th-Century Holiness Movement, 126.
\(^{16}\) Kostlevy, Holiness Manuscripts, 6.
direct action to change human institutions, while the pietism of the Wesleyan stream tended to compel a focus on changing the individual in order to impact social structures, although this seems to me to be a generalization that is difficult to prove given the synthesis of Oberlin and Wesleyan thought and practice by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Selfhood and Authority

While social issues and debate over theological continuity were certainly key ingredients in the emergence of the nineteenth-century Holiness movement, its sectarian nature, the organization of the Church of the Nazarene, and the subsequent rise of Pentecostalism, they are not the whole story. In this dissertation, I will argue that the emergence of the Holiness movement is part of the larger study of Methodism's response to the modern turn to the autonomous self. Thomas A. Langford points out that the "Wesleyan movement came into existence during the Enlightenment and therefore, from the beginning, has carried a modern sensibility."17 From its inception, Wesleyanism has emphasized a pietistic individualism, which John Wesley balanced with a paradoxical protest against it.18 The individual's capacity to choose (free will) and the affirmation of the "distinctive character of human reason, action, and responsibility"19 are characteristics of Wesleyanism and modernity. At the personal level of experience, the nature of the parallels between Wesleyan individualism and modernity's turn to the self was a vital contributor to the sectarian nature of the tradition. In emphasizing the

19 Langford, 35.
instantaneous aspect of John Wesley’s doctrine of Christian perfection, nineteenth-century advocates of holiness constructed a ritual form which supplanted communal consensus with the authority of the personal presence of the Spirit of God. In referring to the debate that this new ritual construction created, John L. Peters states that “a great part of the war of words was fought between individuals whose views, calmly considered, were not basically incompatible.”20 It seems to me, however, that there was a major difference in their ideas of spiritual authority. In a sense, instantaneous entire sanctification became symbolic of the crisis of authority between individual autonomy and the consensus of the community. The individualism of the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition made communal consensus increasingly more difficult, much like modernity’s turn to the self has made agreement in modern politics more difficult.

In The Self and the Sacred, Rodger M. Payne suggests that the paradoxical nature of the autobiographies of evangelical conversion experiences led evangelicals to “embrace and sacralize the concept of the autonomous self,” which “democratized religious authority.”21 Although Payne’s main focus is on conversion narratives in the early nineteenth century, he traces the roots of these narratives back to the seventeenth-century practice of requiring a public testimony of one’s conversion experience for church membership, which established a “mythic pattern” for subsequent generations of evangelicals.22 Payne also explains how these public testimonies/conversion narratives were paradoxical in nature because they actually re-asserted the individual selfhood that was supposedly negated, or overcome, in the conversion experience. The more the

22 Ibid., 22, 30.
individual “spoke the expected language, the more self-focused and even self-creative
their narratives became.”

In similar fashion, spoken and written accounts of the empowering ritual of
instantaneous entire sanctification in the nineteenth century were a continuation of this
democratization. These accounts promoted an individualism that paralleled the modern
sense of the autonomous self, often supplanting the importance of the social matrix of the
tradition. Correspondingly, Adam B. Seligman argues that the modern turn to an
autonomous self has led to the demise of morally authoritative sources external to the
individual because “ideas of authority and of self are inseparable, as certain
understandings of self imply certain understandings of authority.”
The emphasis on the
“individual-in-relation-to God” and salvation as an interior process has made the
appreciation of “the importance of the external, of the other-than-self in ritual acts as
consstituting and constitutive of self”
difficult for some Protestants to accept.

My thesis is that the emergence of the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement, its
sectarian nature, and the subsequent formation of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene
were the result of repeated reconstructions of the cultural-linguistic system of John
Wesley, which were at least partially spurred by the widespread acceptance of the
modern concept of the autonomous self. The rise of individualism in modern society and
religion created conflicts of authority between individual believers and ecclesiastical
hierarchies. I suggest that the history of the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition displays a
repeated cycle of the reconstruction and institutionalization of the holiness cultural-

23 Ibid., 33-34.
25 Ibid., 56.
26 Ibid., 68.
linguistic system. As individuals within the existing system interacted with the changing world, they discovered the anomalies generated by the new context requiring new concepts and practices for an efficacious reconstruction.\textsuperscript{27} The experiences then generated by the reconstructed system motivated its transmission, resulting in gradual institutionalization, which in turn required communal consensus.

In suggesting that religions may be viewed from a "cultural and/or linguistic framework or medium," George A. Lindbeck describes religions as "comprehensive interpretive schemes, usually embodied in myths or narratives and heavily ritualized, which structure human experience and understanding of self and world."\textsuperscript{28} Lindbeck's proposal that we approach the study of theology and religion from a cultural-linguistic framework is suggested as an alternative to the more familiar cognitive and experiential-expressive approaches. The cognitive approach emphasizes a study of how doctrine functions "as informational propositions or truth claims about objective realities," while the experiential-expressive approach "interprets doctrines as noninformative and nondiscursive symbols of inner feelings, attitudes, or existential orientations."\textsuperscript{29} The cultural-linguistic alternative emphasizes how religions "resemble languages together with their correlative forms of life and are thus similar to cultures." In this approach, doctrine functions as "communally authoritative rules of discourse, attitude, and action."\textsuperscript{30} The cultural-linguistic approach to the study of a religious tradition highlights the extent to which the "process of becoming religious" is "similar to that of acquiring a

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 33, 32.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 16.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 18.
culture or learning a language – that is, interiorizing outlooks that others have created, and mastering skills that others have honed."\textsuperscript{31}

There are similarities to Lindbeck in Harvey Whitehouse’s cognitive theory of modes of religiosity, which are “contrasting sets of politico-religious dynamics” (doctrinal and imagistic) constituting “tendencies towards particular patterns of codification, transmission, cognitive processing and political association.”\textsuperscript{32} My use of the term religiosity is based upon my reading of Whitehouse. There are important aspects of the imagistic mode of religiosity that relate to the special promotion of holiness in the nineteenth century. Instantaneous entire sanctification can be understood as an imagistic ritual “encoded in episodic memory…largely remembered as extremely intense, life-changing episodes, through which enduring and particularistic, social bonds are forged.”\textsuperscript{33} The psychological impact of imagistic rituals includes “a sense of undergoing something unusual and profoundly significant” and the expectation of immanent supernatural intervention.”\textsuperscript{34} In the imagistic mode, revelations are cognized through concrete metaphors “linked by thematic association rather than logical connections” and their lasting impact is through “emotional and sensual stimulation.”\textsuperscript{35} Religious authority in the imagistic mode is derived from the experience of the individual since inspiration comes directly from “the gods or ancestors, rather than being mediated by leaders or priests.”\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 22.
\textsuperscript{32} Harvey Whitehouse, \textit{Arguments and Icons: Divergent Modes of Religiosity} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 10, 12.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 219.
\textsuperscript{36} Harvey Whitehouse, \textit{Modes of Religiosity: A Cognitive Theory of Religious Transmission} (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004), 73.
In the doctrinal mode of religiosity revelations are “codified as a body of doctrines, transmitted through routinized forms of worship, memorized as part of one’s ‘general knowledge’, and [produces] large, anonymous communities.”\(^{37}\) The sociological features of the doctrinal mode are “centralization, hierarchy, and expansionism.”\(^{38}\) While the two modes of religiosity exist together in most religious traditions, imagistic practices provide the stimulation to stir up religious fervour and political activism “occasionally leading to intense sectarian conflict within and between established churches.”\(^{39}\) The Holiness movement is an example of the utilization of imagistic practices which focused on the individual’s spiritual authority creating conflict with the established hierarchy.

The pluralistic religious environment of America was fertile ground for the Protestant sectarianism that seemed to reach its zenith in the nineteenth century. The Protestant emphasis on faith versus law, internal states versus external action, and the individual versus the collective “as the locus of the salvation drama”\(^{40}\) created a selfhood that questioned the authority of institutions and enthroned individual conscious. The Holiness movement is an example of the “hierarchic edifice of the Christian commonwealth” becoming “atomized into one of individuals (‘saints’), each containing within his or her own conscience the terms of Christian universalism.”\(^{41}\)

John Wesley’s Reconstruction of the Anglican Cultural-Linguistic System

John Wesley’s reconstruction of the Anglican cultural-linguistic system took place in the context of the modern turn to the self. As the key prophetic figure of the


\(^{39}\) Whitehouse, *Arguments and Icons*, 126.

\(^{40}\) Seligman, 94.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., 117.
Wesleyan/Holiness tradition, his reconstruction of the Anglican tradition provided the
foundation for the emergence of the American Holiness Movement, independent holiness
churches, and Pentecostalism. Wesleyan individualism was realized within a disciplined,
communally focused soteriological system. In addition to spiritual liberation and
discipline, Methodism empowered its members for ministry "to both the material and
spiritual needs of the poor."\(^{42}\) Although Wesley believed that his theology and practice
were consistent with the Church of England and "repeatedly affirmed on an institutional
level that he had no desire for Methodism to leave"\(^{43}\) it, his reconstruction eventually
created a conflict that resulted in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church
(MEC). The pattern of empowering individuals who would create their own
reconstructions of the holiness cultural-linguistic system resulting in future conflicts of
authority was thus set.

John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection and ecclesiastical practices
emerged from a practical concern for individual religious experience which Wesley
described as holiness of heart and life.\(^{44}\) This experiential-expressive aspect of
Wesleyanism has historically received strong emphasis in the Holiness tradition because
Wesley was profoundly influenced by the moderate Arminianism inherited from his
parents and the tradition of the Church of England.\(^{45}\) The Arminian concept of free will
was the basis for Wesley's response to the doctrine of predestination of Calvinism. The
free gift of God's grace to humanity restored the divine/human relationship that enabled a

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Also see, Collins, *A Real Christian: The Life of John Wesley* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999) and
*The Scripture Way of Salvation: The Heart of John Wesley's Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press,
1997); Peters, 16, 21; Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville,
TN: Kingswood Books, 1994), 16-17; Lanford, 35.

\(^{43}\) Ibid., 235.

\(^{44}\) Ibid., 28.

personal, spiritual relationship between the individual and God. In Christ, through the Holy Spirit, “God addresses individuals in a manner that allows and solicits response.”

In describing the co-operative nature of this relationship, Randy L. Maddox uses the image of a “dance in which God always takes the first step but we must participate responsively, lest the dance stumble or end.” With Scripture his primary source, Wesley adopted the concepts and practices of the available Christian traditions in the awakening and nurturing of the spiritual senses of individuals. Wesleyan individualism, with its emphasis on personal conversion and sanctification, was the “basic ethos and substance” behind the employment of “suitable means” (the Methodist infrastructure) which became the central focus of the controversy with Anglicanism.

Although an individual’s experience of saving and sanctifying grace was the central focus of Wesley’s cultural-linguistic system, the institutional structure he developed as the means to holiness effectively controlled the emergence of radical individualism. Christian character was formed through the participation in the social and ecclesiastical structures implemented by Wesley. He believed that the nurturing of the spiritual senses and progressive empowering of the religious affections is accomplished through the means of grace provided by the Church. Wesleyan scholars, like Henry H. Knight III, argue that “the means of grace are essential to the Christian life because they give form to a distinctive, continuing relationship with God.” It is through the means of grace that religious affections are “rightly formed, shaped, and ordered according to the

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46 Langford, 35.
47 Maddox, Responsible Grace, 151.
48 Collins, John Wesley: A Theological Journey, 49.
49 Maddox, Responsible Grace, 192-3.
identity of God who is their object.”\textsuperscript{51} Wesley understood means of grace as “outward signs, words, or actions, ordained by God, and appointed for this end, to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men, preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace.”\textsuperscript{52}

Wesley’s goal of shaping and forming the character of believers, which is often expressed as \textit{making disciples}, resulted in the creation of an instructional system of interlocking groups: the class meeting, the band, the select band, the penitent band, and the society. These interlocking groups served as a “ladder of personal spiritual improvement.”\textsuperscript{53} In outlining these groups, D. Michael Henderson suggests that each group served a specific educational mode. The function of the \textit{society}, which was synonymous with congregation, was cognitive instruction. It was in the society meetings that the “tenets of Methodism were presented to the target population.”\textsuperscript{54} An interesting feature of the society meetings is that there was no provision for individual response. This response was reserved for the Class Meeting, which Henderson defines as “The Behavioral Mode.” He states that “[w]hereas the society was an instrument for cognitive acquisition, almost to the exclusion of any interpersonal dynamics; the class meeting was a tool for the alteration of behavior, to the virtual exclusion of any data-gathering function.”\textsuperscript{55} These small groups focused on the personal experience of each member. The class leader was responsible for ensuring the spiritual accountability of the members. In addition to personal spiritual accountability, the rules of the class included giving for

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 195.  
\textsuperscript{52} John Wesley, “Sermon XVI. The Means of Grace” \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. vol V, 187.  
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 84.  
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 96.
relief of the poor and enforcing the positive behavior of “doing good of every possible sort, giving food to the hungry, [and] visiting or helping them that are sick.” The class meeting was an open forum for people of all socio-economic classes and was the “first and probably the most powerful leveling agent which helped to break up the rigid British caste system and provide upward social mobility.” In this system, individual selfhood was shaped by interaction in a tightly-controlled community of believers.

John Wesley consistently maintained his loyalty to Anglicanism and society meetings featured congregational worship that was scheduled so that it did not conflict with the services of the Church of England. Nevertheless, his methods caused tension between Methodism and the Church of England. There were charges of fanaticism because Methodists claimed a possession of the Holy Spirit that Anglican bishops understood to be solely a feature of the apostolic age, and there was opposition to the Methodist practices of “field preaching, extemporary prayer, employing lay preachers, forming societies, and holding Conferences.”

Difficulties arose when some Methodist lay preachers decided to administer the Lord’s Supper, while society members began objecting to attendance requirements at Anglican services because they were too formal and the priest “did not preach the liberty of the gospel.”

Kenneth J. Collins suggests that there was an institutional and functional conjunction in Wesley’s ecclesiology that necessarily led to rivalry with the Anglican Church, especially when the issue involved the mission of spreading scriptural holiness, which included the conversion of the lost, the sanctification of believers, and righteous

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56 Ibid., 96-97.  
57 Ibid., 98.  
59 Ibid., 142.  
60 Collins, John Wesley: A Theological Journey, 179; A Real Christian, 141.
living.61 While Wesley respected the church as the institution through which God’s saving grace was experienced, his concern for the salvation of individuals and their pursuit of holiness of heart and life motivated him to adopt whatever practices he felt were efficacious and could be affirmed by Scripture. Following the 1780 refusal of the Bishop of London to ordain additional workers for American Methodism, Wesley exercised the role of bishop and, in 1784, ordained Thomas Coke (1747-1814), Richard Whatcoat (1736-1806), and Thomas Vasey.62 In making this extraordinary decision, Wesley acknowledged the difference in the British and American social context which ironically enabled these new leaders to assume authority and ultimately ignore his counsel. Francis Asbury (1745-1816) would soon maintain “that no person in Europe knows how to direct those in America.”63 The experiential-expressive emphasis in Wesleyanism is the root of the nineteenth-century belief that each individual possesses the inner presence of the Holy Spirit and is therefore empowered to exercise authority to interpret Scripture according to the dictates of their conscious.

From Methodism to Holiness

In America, Methodism established itself as a separate entity from the Church of England as one of many cultural-linguistic systems competing for a share of the American religious marketplace. Jon Butler argues that the enduring religious patterns of America were created as much as inherited and that “America’s religious identity

61 Collins, John Wesley: A Theological Journey, 164-165.
62 Collins, A Real Christian, 138-139.
63 Ibid., 140.
emerged out of choices made among many available religious forms.\textsuperscript{64} The pluralism of American religion and society developed hand in hand. Sydney E. Ahlstrom states that the making of the nation was the result of the surge of "individual and collective aspirations" created by "voluntaryism, freedom, and personal initiative."\textsuperscript{65} Utilizing a theme put forward by Nathan O. Hatch, it could be said that the democratization of American Christianity and society were simultaneous. He notes that "America's nonrestrictive environment permitted an unexpected and often explosive conjunction of evangelical fervor and popular sovereignty" and credits the "upsurge of democratic hope" for the rise of evangelical groups like Baptists, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, and "a host of other insurgent groups," which empowered "ordinary people" and created a "widespread crisis of authority."\textsuperscript{66} The empowering of ordinary people provided the impetus behind their claim of spiritual authority and is one of the reasons for the emergence of black churches, like the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church in the antebellum period and the Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church in the post-bellum period.

In \textit{Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform}, William G. McLoughlin suggests that by the time of the Second Great Awakening there was a new sense of social egalitarianism fueled in large part by "the transformation of Evangelical Calvinism into Evangelical Arminianism."\textsuperscript{67} Moreover, Tamar Frankiel appears to argue that revivalism's ritualization of passion was the source of this egalitarianism. The "pilgrimages to the

\begin{footnotesize}
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great preachers [that] implicitly challenged sacred community,” radically rejected
‘prevailing orientations of the self’ and “defined the participants in direct relationship to
God.” Revivalism “undermined traditional authority and gave far more scope to
individuals, sectarian groups, and churches that encouraged lay participation.” These
developments led the way towards the controversy over holiness within the newly created
MEC.

The Continued Cycle of Reconstruction and Institutionalization

The social and religious hyper-individualism that developed in the first decades of
the nineteenth century was a vital ingredient in the rise of the special promotion of
holiness. Conflicts over authority, doctrine, and ritual, and response to social issues were
expressions of the rising tide of hyper-individualism. Holiness advocates who felt that
the MEC should take a stronger position on specific social issues, like slavery, began to
participate in the Liberty Party and the “Radical Republican Movement.” The
“evangelical perfectionist worldview” of ecclesiastical abolitionists that “committed them
both to ethical purity and to political pragmatism” also led to the 1843 organization of
the Wesleyan Methodist Connection. Douglas M. Strong suggests that this worldview
was motivated by their understanding of holiness.

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History, Thomas A. Tweed, ed. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997), 66-
69.
69 Ibid., 69.
70 Douglas M. Strong, Perfectionist Politics: Abolitionism and the Religious Tensions of American
Democracy (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1999).
71 Victor B. Howard, Religion and the Radical Republican Movement 1860-1870 (Lexington, KY: The
72 Strong, 7.
73 Kostlevy, Holiness Manuscripts, 272-274.
It was the emerging debates over doctrinal continuity and the method of attaining entire sanctification, however, which were central to the emergence of the main Wesleyan stream of the Holiness movement. A major point of contention was the insistence of holiness advocates that instantaneous entire sanctification accomplished by the baptism of the Holy Spirit was consistent with the doctrine and practice of John Wesley. Kenneth J. Collins agrees with many Wesleyan scholars that "it was Wesley himself, and not the American holiness movement, who first championed this notion of a 'second' work of grace." Laurence W. Wood presents a compelling argument in support of the thesis that John William Fletcher (1729-1785) followed the lead of Wesley and associated this second work of grace with Pentecost and the baptism with the Holy Spirit. He documents the fact that many early American Methodist preachers read and quoted both Wesley and Fletcher. Phoebe Palmer's close association with some of these preachers, her own reading of Wesley and Fletcher, and her personal experience led to her synthesis of Christian perfection and revivalism, which included the altar as the ritual site of instantaneous entire sanctification.

The chapters that follow present a history of the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition, with an emphasis upon the stream of the tradition that led to the organization of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, which I believe supports the thesis that the individualism promoted by instantaneous entire sanctification led to multiple

74 Collins, John Wesley: A Theological Journey, 191.
reconstructions of the Wesleyan cultural-linguistic system and the subsequent institutionalization of these new systems. The next chapter reviews the history of Methodism in antebellum America with a focus on adaptations of Wesley’s doctrine and practice in the context of a religiously pluralistic environment. The success of its system of circuits and the innovative utilization of camp meeting revivalism resulted in the rapid expansion and institutionalization of the MEC which led to the perception of a decline in the doctrine and practice of Christian perfection. In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, advocates of the doctrine, convinced by their own experience, were determined to revive its emphasis by promoting it through publications, voluntary holiness meetings, and social reform efforts. Debate over holiness during this period appears to have become active with the development of Phoebe Palmer’s altar theology, which emphasized the instantaneous aspect of sanctification.

Chapter three reviews the post-Civil War organization of the National Holiness Association (NHA) and its promotion of holiness through camp meetings, independent associations, and periodicals. The success of these efforts, which were viewed by leaders of the MEC as “new measures” conducted outside of the official church, created a conflict of authority between NHA and MEC leadership. In addition, by the late 1870s, the debate over the doctrine and practice of Christian perfection was a war of words over whether entire sanctification was attained gradually or instantaneously, with both sides claiming continuity with Wesley. The last two decades of the nineteenth century became the pivotal point of the debate and I have chosen to devote a separate chapter (Chapter Four) to this period. During these two decades, the NHA attempted to prevent the rising clamor for separation from existing denominations and the establishment of a national
holiness church. The inability of its leadership to resolve the issue resulted in the organization of independent holiness churches across the country. Although always insisting that its goal was to revive and reform the existing denominations, the NHA ironically provided the organizational structure that ultimately led to a national holiness church. Independent holiness associations and churches utilized NHA methods (holiness evangelists, camp meetings, and periodicals) to promote the cause of organized holiness.

Chapter five reviews the history of the mergers that created the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene and the initial years of its struggle to balance the individualism of instantaneous entire sanctification with its need for communal consensus. Utilizing articles published in its periodical, the Herald of Holiness, I review some of the issues that provide evidence of this struggle (including the decision to remove “Pentecostal” from its name). Although the organizational structure developed during this period has allowed the Church of the Nazarene to maintain a balance between individual and communal religiosity, the latest decades of growth outside the United States has created a multi-cultural constituency requiring a contemporary reconstruction of its cultural-linguistic system which is the topic of the concluding chapter.

Summary

One of the principal reasons for the emergence of the nineteenth-century Holiness movement and the Church of the Nazarene is the broad modern acceptance of the individual’s right to choose in social and religious matters. Applying the social theory of Max Weber, Adam B. Seligman characterizes this situation as the “dispersal of charisma” which leaves an “almost disembodied individual severed from any sense of social
constraint. Given this turn to a modern sense of the autonomous self, it is surprising that any consensus and institutionalization was possible within the sectarian Wesleyan/Holiness tradition. Yet, the ability and freedom to choose implies that individuals are also capable of reaching consensus on essential values, principles, or experiences that facilitate institutionalization. For those who agreed to become “Nazarenes” the essentials that facilitated organized holiness were the “doctrine and experience of entire sanctification as a second work of grace,” as vaguely defined by the consensus of the community.

77 Seligman, 120-121.
78 Manual, Church of the Nazarene, 26.
CHAPTER II

HOLINESS THEOLOGY, PRACTICE, AND SELFHOOD IN ANTEBELLUM AMERICA

Although it can be said that John Wesley’s theology and practice of Christian perfection was transplanted to America with the official establishment of Methodism at the Christmas Conference of 1784,1 the historical reality of its emergence is far more complex than Wesley’s appointment of Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury and the inclusion of Wesley’s Plain Account into the first Methodist Discipline.2 By this date, it was already clear that American Methodism was becoming a “distinctive entity,”3 related to English Methodism but independent from it. From the moment the first American societies were formed, individuals with an American sense of religiosity were reshaping Methodism. Although Wesley attempted to provide guidance, and even rebuke, to Asbury, Kenneth Collins states that Asbury “maintained that no person in Europe knew how to direct those in America.”4 In reviewing the history of American Methodism, and specifically the theology and practice of holiness, it is important to consider how Methodism’s contact with American culture impacted Wesley’s doctrine and practice. In doing this, I will be guided by the insights of Retelling U.S. Religious History, edited by Thomas A. Tweed. Tweed notes that the motifs in this volume are “contact, boundary, and exchange.”5 Of significant importance for my purposes is the article by Catherine L. Albanese, “Exchanging Selves, Exchanging Souls: Contact, Combination, and American

1 Collins, John Wesley: A Theological Journey, 232.
2 Peters, 88-90. Peters states that Wesley’s Plain Account was printed in its entirety in the first Discipline.
4 Collins, John Wesley: A Theological Journey, 234.
Religious History,” which reminds us that contact results in change and combination. In
the introduction, Tweed summarizes Albanese by saying that the story of U.S. religion is not
a tale of isolated and immutable traditions sharing geographical space and
national identity. Rather, there is contact from the start, and all traditions, and the
nation too, are made over and over again in encounters with others. From this
ongoing interaction and exchange, old religious movements change and new ones
form.6

In this chapter, the important question to answer is: How did contact with American
religiosity and culture change Wesley’s theology and practice of Christian perfection?

Religion in America Prior to the Arrival of Methodism

One of the important antecedents to the Holiness Movement was the development
of religious diversity and toleration in America. Although religious persecution and
harassment were a part of the American religious situation, Sydney Ahlstrom notes that
“ultimately all churches would flourish in a degree unknown elsewhere.”7 Religious
diversity and toleration developed despite the initial European religious heritage of the
establishment of official religion. Patricia Bonomi notes that, of the early colonies, only
Maryland failed to “reproduce the Old World model of a single, established church.”8
Despite the establishment of official religion, however, she notes that the early religious
situation was one of “strain and conflict, as religious expectations and practices at all
points on the social scale were being reshaped to fit colonial realities.”9 Jon Butler
affirms this stating that “state-sponsored Christianity found itself beset by reformers from

6 Ibid., 22.
7 Ahlstrom, 98.
8 Patricia U. Bonomi, Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America (New
9 Ibid., 15.

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Religious diversity and tolerance was furthered by the First Great Awakening, which started in the Presbyterian Church in the Middle Colonies as a dispute between ministers that by the late 1730's became a "showdown that would shatter ministerial unity, elevate discontent within congregations, and usher in a massive colonies-wide religious revival." This revival emphasized personal religious decisions and supported religious conversions that were "individualistic and egocentric." The Great Awakening split the Presbyterian Church and gave rise to an evangelical New Side led by William Tennent Sr. (1673-1746), who established the Log College. Those who trained there "emerged to become leaders of the revivalist movement." Another key figure in the Great Awakening was the Anglican George Whitefield (1714-1770), a contemporary of John Wesley who maintained Calvinistic views of salvation. It was Whitefield’s success in field preaching and revivalist methods that caused Wesley to adopt these practices in 1739.

Despite differences in opinion and the complexities of the Great Awakening, Patricia Bonomi sums up the impact of revivalist preaching:

The revivalists may not have been deliberate social levellers, but their words and actions had the effect of emphasizing individual values over hierarchical ones. Everything they did, from disrupting orderly processes and encouraging greater lay participation in church government, to promoting mass assemblies and the physical closeness that went with them, raised popular emotions. Most important, they insisted that there were choices, and that the individual himself was free to make them.

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10 Butler, 7.
11 Bonomi, 133-138.
12 Ibid., 159.
13 Ibid., 141.
14 Collins, John Wesley, A Theological Journey, 102-104.
15 Bonomi, 147.
Revivalist preaching appealed to the American mind in every region. Sydney E. Ahlstrom notes that in the South, revivalism “became the chief method of church extension, and its dynamic methods effected a radical transformation of the older religious groups in the area.” By the time of the arrival of Methodism, religious pluralism was predominant and this “striking pluralism of Christian expression soon supplemented the state churches of eighteenth-century America.” According to Nathan Hatch, “America’s nonrestrictive environment permitted an unexpected and often explosive conjunction of evangelical fervor and popular sovereignty.” Revivalists informed Americans that their religious experience was a personal choice that included which religious institution they should join.

Rodger Payne suggests that evangelicals created a “unique discursive form that sanctified personal choice and responsibility.” These conversion narratives and spiritual autobiographies embraced and sacralized the concept of the autonomous self and involved their authors in a paradox of the self that could not be avoided. Although a central theme of conversion narratives was self-negation, the more they used the expected language, “the more self-focused and even self-creative their narratives became.” The language of evangelical religious experience was “spoken, heard, printed, and read” all of which “served as catalysts for personal experience.” Conversion discourse thus created the reality of the event of conversion; that is, conversion language had a performative

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16 Ahlstrom, 315.
17 Butler, 174.
18 Hatch, 9.
19 Payne, 8.
20 Ibid., 33-34.
21 Ibid., 57.
function\textsuperscript{22} which resulted in the investment of the "experiencing self with the ultimate power to speak about conversion."\textsuperscript{23}

The Arrival and Impact of Methodism

Although George Whitefield preached in America during the First Great Awakening (arriving in 1739), the formation of the first Methodist societies was the work of lay leaders around 1760. John L. Peters states that the first society was started in New York City, by Philip Embury.\textsuperscript{24} Additionally, Robert Strawbridge organized meetings in Maryland and Virginia. Strawbridge began preaching on his own and "saw no reason to ask permission."\textsuperscript{25} He also administered the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Other laymen like William Walter and Freeborn Garrettson generally operated under the designation of local preacher. In 1769, lay people who wanted organized Methodist societies in America wrote to John Wesley requesting the appointment of official missionaries and Wesley appointed two gifted lay preachers, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmore. Two years later, Francis Asbury and Richard Wright were sent by Wesley.\textsuperscript{26} Asbury began the process of adapting Wesley's organizational structure to the American situation. This structure consisted of itinerant preachers assigned to circuits with small societies, which in turn conducted class meetings supervised by local leaders, clustered under presiding elders and, after 1784, lead by the first bishops (Asbury and

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 60.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 9.
\textsuperscript{24} Peters, 80. While Peters states Embury began preaching in 1760, Kenneth Collins states that the society in New York City was started in 1766, with the assistance of Embury's sister, Barbara Heck.
\textsuperscript{25} Norwood, 66-67.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 67-73; Collins, John Wesley: A Theological Journey, 213.
Thomas Coke. These two able men apparently took their leadership seriously, at times disregarding the counsel of Wesley who had appointed and ordained them.27

While part of the problem with the relationship between Wesley and the American leaders can be attributed to the events of the Revolutionary War, it seems that that was not the whole story. Wesley realized that the Church of England was tied to the British nation and that the change in status between Britain and the colonies also meant a change in the religious situation.28 The problem, however, appears to be more complex than the political issues. As early as the 1740's, tensions arose in Britain between Methodism and the Church of England. Many Anglican clergy were concerned that "Methodists disrupted church life and were creating a schism with their employment of lay preachers, their violation of parish boundaries through field preaching, and their establishment of a separate infrastructure to guide Methodist life and practice."29 Wesley consistently expressed his loyalty to the Church of England, but his address to the Methodists requesting the same loyalty was an admission that some were not attending Anglican services or participating in the Lord's Supper.30 By the time of the official establishment of Methodism in America, the tensions in England had only increased and it seems that there was little connection between American Methodism and the Anglican Church in America from the beginning.

The importance of this issue relates to the sacramental nature of Wesley’s theology and practice. In England, the societies were led by lay preachers who were not

27 Collins, *John Wesley: A Theological Journey*, 233-34. Collins notes that the relationship between Wesley and Asbury became “difficult” when Asbury ignored Wesley’s advice to appoint Richard Whatcoat as his assistant superintendent. Wesley became more upset, even angry, when Asbury took the title of Bishop.
28 Ibid., 231-32.
29 Ibid., 151.
30 Ibid., 152.
authorized to administer the Lord’s Supper, which meant that the Church of England was their source of this key sacrament which conveyed preventing, justifying and sanctifying grace. Wesley’s view of the value of this sacrament and the growing tensions between Anglican clergy and Methodist societies caused him to increasingly accept its celebration in society meetings.31 Even this would require ordained clergy, and if this was a problem in England, it was even a larger problem on the circuits in America. Although American Methodists accepted, and apparently utilized, Wesley’s Sunday Service crafted from The Book of Common Prayer,32 the lay leaders of the American societies could not legally administer the Lord’s Supper. Their only recourse was the visit of an ordained circuit rider, if there was one, or the Quarterly Conference. Even if Methodist societies were maintained in accordance with Wesley’s model, a major aspect of his developmental method of making disciples, the frequent participation in the Lord’s Supper, was lost.

The Quarterly Conference therefore became an important part of the religious life of the circuit. Ann Taves states that “everyone who could attended,” and the conferences lasted for “several days and typically included preaching, exhorting, a love-feast, and the Lord’s Supper.”33 Understanding the nature of the Quarterly meetings helps us to identify the link between the establishment of Methodism and the subsequent development of Camp Meetings in the early 1800’s as a vehicle of holiness. Quarterly conferences linked the societies and provided them with the services of ordained clergy not available on a weekly basis. It was this structure that enabled Methodism to deal

31 Maddox, Responsible Grace, 203.
efficiently with the dual mission of the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of believers.

In the process of adaptation to the American scene, Methodism experienced change. In his recent work, *Theology in America*, E. Brooks Holifield argues that American Methodists refined the practical theology of Wesley through *contact and exchange* with Universalists and Calvinists. In this process, they “largely ignored Wesley’s Anglican admiration for patristic sources, his sacramentalism, and his liturgical piety,” while appropriating “his anti-Calvinism, his revivalism, and his perfectionism.”

American Methodists preferred a “spontaneous style of worship” that was “not liturgically oriented” and included an emphasis on an individual’s response to an invitation to be saved or entirely sanctified. Although Wesley had encountered individual, enthusiastic responses to his preaching and was often ambiguous to them, his concern focused on the formation of Christian character within the context of the societies and Anglican liturgy. Individual decisions and individual testimonies about assurance of justification and sanctification were most often expressed in the context of the classes and bands. In the American context, however, these became a part of public worship.

Although it can be argued that the Wesleyan Methodism brought to America by the missionaries and superintendents Wesley appointed was the same theology and practice of England, its contact and exchange with the individualism of American religiosity changed the focus of Methodist practice. Long before William James would

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35 Wood, 365.
canonize the "individual approach to the problems of religion," America had become the locus of individual expression of religious experience. Because American circuits were separated from any connection with Anglican liturgy, the Lord's Supper was celebrated less frequently and perhaps in a lower liturgical style. Although class meetings were a vital aspect of American Methodism, these would soon begin to focus more on individual testimonies of attainment than on the accountability of the individual within the community. Laurence Wood suggests that the dilemma in early American Methodism was that revivalism, which included the camp meeting, "became a substitute for liturgy."  

Even as Methodism was being changed by its contact with the American religious environment, the American religious environment was also changed by the arrival of Methodism. Methodism became more experientially focused in America because of its contact with revivalism and pluralism and its emphasis on the individual's freedom to choose made a dramatic impact in the general religious attitude of America. The conversion and empowering of blacks is a dramatic example of this change. Based upon John Wesley's views on slavery, many early American Methodist societies were interracial. Will Gravely's research indicates that African Methodist participation was initially "both biracial and racially separate" with "racially distinct" congregations and

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37 Wood, 364.
38 Wesley opposed slavery as being inconsistent with God's mercy and justice. He stated that the "African is in no respect inferior to the European" and proclaimed that liberty was the "right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air; and no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature." See, John Wesley, "Thoughts Upon Slavery" (1774), *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. vol XI, 70-71, 74, 79. Wesley also encouraged and offered his support to those who opposed slavery. See his "Letter to Mr. Thomas Funnell" (November 24, 1787), *Works*, vol XII, 507 and "Letter to a Friend" (February 26, 1791), *Works*, vol XIII, 153.
societies becoming the pattern by 1800.\textsuperscript{39} As was normal for Wesley's structure, class meetings trained leaders who emerged in the African American societies and the MEC General Conference of 1800 authorized the ordination of black deacons.\textsuperscript{40} The emergence of black religious leadership and black churches\textsuperscript{41} was, at least in part, due to what Nathan O. Hatch classifies as a

\ldots fundamental paradox within evangelical Protestantism: its egalitarian character and its racism. The initial enthusiasm of Baptist and Methodist communions to welcome black church members and preachers was countered by increasing white discomfort with integrated worship and by mounting opposition to any hint that blacks would exercise authority in the church.\textsuperscript{42}

Once religious freedom had been granted it could not be taken away and many independent black churches were organized between 1790 and 1810. Hatch states that the "most striking evidence of the democratization of Christianity in the early republic was that black preachers successfully laid claim to 'the sacred desk.' Even slaves who

\textsuperscript{39} Will Gravely, "...many of the poor Affricans are obedient to the faith" Reassessing the African American Presence in Early Methodism in the United States, 1769-1809," in, Methodism and the Shaping of American Culture, Nathan O. Hatch and John H. Wigger, eds. (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 2001), 183.

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 186.

\textsuperscript{41} The first of these was Richard Allen's Bethel Church in Philadelphia which was the result of a walk-out by black members of St. George's Church following the removal of these members from their seats in the gallery. Allen and Absalom Smith had already organized the Free African Society for benevolent purposes and utilized its building to form St. Thomas' African Episcopal Church. Jones was ordained as the first black Protestant Episcopal priest. Allen was determined to remain a Methodist and convinced Bishop Francis Asbury to dedicate a building Allen had purchased as Bethel Church. Allen was ordained a deacon, by Asbury (1799) and later ordained an elder. In 1816, five congregations met at Bethel Church and officially organized the AME Church. Allen was elected the first bishop of the new denomination. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was established in New York City when a group of black members separated from the John Street MEC. Although originally welcoming African Americans, by 1793 tension developed when the church refused to fully ordain black preachers and allow them to join the conference as itinerants. Peter Williams and William Miller established a chapel in a cabinetmaker's shop in 1796 to conduct services until a new building could be constructed. Completed in 1800, the new church was incorporated in 1801. A separate conference was formed in 1820 and a total break with the MEC took place in 1824. James Varick was elected the first bishop in 1822. The AMEZ was known as "The Freedom Church" because of its commitment to social justice and participation in the Underground Railroad. Some of its abolitionist members were Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Rev. Jermain Louguen, Catherine Harris, Rev. Thomas James and Frederick Douglass. See, C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, The Black Church in the African American Experience (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990), 47-60.

\textsuperscript{42} Hatch, 106.
could not read became renowned for their ability to infuse ordinary existence with profound spiritual meaning.”\textsuperscript{43} Gravely suggests that “positive forms of self-assertion” among African Methodist emerged “in the context of racial exclusion and discrimination by white Americans against the people of color.”\textsuperscript{44} In \textit{The Black Church in the African American Experience}, C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya note that the “initial impetus for black spiritual and ecclesiastical independence was not grounded in religious doctrine or polity, but in the offensiveness of racial segregation in the churches and the alarming inconsistencies between the teachings and expressions of the faith.”\textsuperscript{45}

It is interesting that Gary Dorrien credits New England Arminians for the origin of liberal theology in America because of their “commitment to the authority of individual reason and experience” and their ability to blend Arminian and Enlightenment themes.\textsuperscript{46} It may be concluded that the same Congregationalist pastors, like Charles Chauncy (1705-87), Jonathan Mayhew (1720-66), and Ebenezer Gay (1696-1787), who laid the foundation for American liberal theology were also influential in impacting the nineteenth-century Oberlin stream of the Holiness movement. William Ellery Channing accepted the Unitarian label of his opponents and “taught and lived the ethic of disinterested benevolence”\textsuperscript{47} following Samuel Hopkins teaching that this was the essence of holiness.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 107, 112.
\textsuperscript{45} Lincoln and Mamiya, 47.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 17.
The Impact of Camp Meetings on Methodism (1790-1830)

According to Kenneth O. Brown, Methodist participation in camp meetings began prior to the famous camp meetings at Gasper River, Kentucky (1800) and Cane Ridge, Kentucky (1801). Brown provides evidence that camp meetings were conducted, and permanent encampments established, as early as 1786 at Cattle Creek in Branchville, South Carolina, and in Green County, Georgia. Brown’s documentation indicates that John McGee (1763-1836) and William McKendree (1757-1835) preached at the Grassy Branch, North Carolina camp meeting in 1794, and helped organize the Kentucky camp meetings while on a “preaching tour” of Tennessee and Kentucky.48 Ann Taves states that

Although references to “camp meetings” per se are rare before 1800, large outdoor gatherings of various sorts were common in a number of Protestant traditions during the eighteenth century. The three most important were the Presbyterian sacramental meetings, the Methodist quarterly conferences, and the Separate Baptists "big" or "great" meetings. The Red River meeting in Kentucky, sometimes designated as the first camp meeting, represented the confluence of Presbyterian and Methodist traditions and illustrates the interplay between bodily knowledge and interpretation in the construction of religious experience.49

The format of camp meeting was not a “wholly novel creation” but an adaptation and rearrangement of “several existing religious elements.”50 Exercising the “great frontier tradition of creativity,” the originators of camp meeting combined previously used techniques to develop a “new popular religious device of great power.”51 This same sense of individual creativity and willingness to combine elements of other traditions is evident throughout the development of the Holiness Movement.

49 Taves, 104.
51 Johnson, 40.
Two elements of the early camp meetings are vitally important to understanding the Holiness Movement. The first is the interdenominational and interracial nature of these meetings. For several years the early camp meetings included Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists. Ellen Eslinger notes that one of the innovations of these camp meetings was “a universal call to participate regardless of religious affiliation.”52 Charles Johnson provides special insight into the interdenominational nature of the early “union arrangement,”53 stating that the Methodists temporarily suspended their class meetings, love feasts, and the regular operating of the itinerant system during joint camp meetings. This tendency to adapt practices to the situation at hand reflects the extent to which the American religious environment leaned toward the experiential/expressive.

In her chapter entitled “Shouting Methodists,” Ann Taves discusses how African and European “performance styles” of worship “met in the context of the Virginia revivals” of the late eighteen century.54 Her analysis of the shout tradition enlightens the role African Americans played in creating a worship style emphasizing “manifestations of the power of God or the outpouring of the Spirit.”55 While this emerging style of worship became a point of contention,56 it is a point of commonality between early Methodist camp meetings and the “later interracial Holiness and Pentecostal movements.”57 Although early camp meetings were interracial, many maintained segregated worship areas with separate preachers and exhorters.58 When combined with

52 Eslinger, 212.
53 Johnson, 50.
54 Taves, 80.
55 Ibid., 86.
56 See Tave’s discussion of John Fanning Watson’s book Methodist Error (1814) in Chapter 3.
57 Taves, 77.
58 Dickson D. Bruce Jr. describes segregated worship at camp meetings as having blacks gathered at the back of the preaching stand with a black exhorter facing the black audience. See, And They All Sang Hallelujah: Plain-Folk Camp-Meeting Religion, 1800-1845 (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press,
the segregation already being experienced in Methodist societies and worship, this practice motivated African Americans to launch efforts to establish separate churches.

The second element of importance to understanding the Holiness Movement is the emotional fervor of camp meetings. The extent of the physical exercises at Cane Ridge and subsequent camp meetings, and the interpretation, or explanation, of them is still being debated. John Boles claims that the "more extreme revival exercises were probably restricted to a comparative few except in the very early years of the revival."59 Dickson D. Bruce Jr. states that "there is a legendary picture of the camp-meeting as an extended emotional orgy, a picture not without foundation in fact" and that the success of a meeting could be determined by how many people succumbed to the "falling exercise."

The emotionalism of camp meetings appears to be the major reason why the Presbyterians and Baptists abandoned the "practice as immoral and irreligious."60 Taves states that Methodists "embraced camp meeting as their own" by 1804 and had begun to utilize them for quarterly conferences. By 1805, camp meetings had spread throughout the "heartlands of Methodism from New York to Georgia."61

Lester Ruth also concludes that camp meetings evolved from early Methodist Quarterly Meetings and were "essentially quarterly meetings held on a larger scale."62 Ruth's description of public worship at these meetings indicates the emergence of a new pattern of public worship that focused on the experiential. This new pattern, which

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1973, 73-75. Ellen Eslinger states that segregation at Cane Ridge included the "blacks assembled approximately 150 yards south of the meetinghouse, listening to exhortations delivered mainly by their own people. See, Citizens of Zion, 232.
60 Bruce, 53-54.
61 Taves, 105.
would become the predominant style of evangelical worship, appears to have begun with the practice of gathering mourners in a designated place for prayer originating in the late-1790s and subsequently increasing “in prominence, importance, and ritualized nature.” Designated spaces for these prayers were a mourner’s bench (usually the front row of pews) or the altar (the railing and space at the front of the church or tent where the communion table was located). Public worship at Quarterly meetings “frequently included ‘professors’ seeking sanctification. Expectation of this more elevated state of grace was a fundamental part of early Methodist soteriology,” and the tendency was to emphasize “sanctification as a discernibly clear event at an identifiable point in time.” Accounts of Quarterly meetings included the number of people who were convicted of sin, justified, and sanctified.

Camp meeting worship created a significant shift in the understanding of a central religious symbol, the altar. This shift promoted the individual’s direct connection to God in the process of salvation. The traditional understanding of the altar as the locus of the dedication of the elements of the Eucharist and its communal celebration was changed to emphasizing the altar as the site of the individual’s response to the invitation to accept God’s gracious offer of salvation. In his critique of American revivalism, Iain H. Murray suggests that the adoption of the altar call as a means of conversion originated because of the experience-centered nature of Methodism and was a key element in popularizing their distinctive beliefs.

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63 Ibid., 53-54; also see Taves, 100-101.
64 Ibid., 72-73.
In contrast to Ellen Eslinger's interpretation of camp meeting as a "vehicle for creating social solidarity"\textsuperscript{66} in a fragmented society, Charles A. Johnson and Dickson D. Bruce Jr. place more emphasis on the intensely personal nature of the religious experience of the participants.\textsuperscript{67} While Eslinger stresses the belief that the primary feature of camp meeting was \textit{communitas} rather than unrestricted individualism, Johnson and Bruce emphasize the degree to which camp meeting provided the individual a new sense of their "unique place in God's plan,"\textsuperscript{68} which was a result of the Wesleyan-Arminian view that the individual was free to choose and be the master of their own fate. It was the empowering nature of the exposition of experiential religion that compelled those Bruce classifies as plain-folk of various occupations to become Methodist itinerants.\textsuperscript{69} Explaining the importance of camp meeting is not a matter of deciding which interpretation is more accurate, since these meetings "attracted all sorts of people for a variety of reasons."\textsuperscript{70} Camp meeting clearly created social solidarity in the fragmented society of the early nineteenth century but its style of worship also focused on the personal transformation of the individual.\textsuperscript{71}

The Rise of a Special Promotion of Holiness (1830 – 1860)

Early nineteenth-century camp meetings were influential in reinforcing the Enlightenment idea of the autonomous, self-determining ego. In addition to being expressed in the evangelical concept of conversion, this idea was evident in the

\textsuperscript{66} Eslinger, xix.
\textsuperscript{67} Johnson, 175; Bruce, 61.
\textsuperscript{68} Eslinger, xxi; Bruce, 125, 41.
\textsuperscript{69} Bruce, 43; Johnson, 20, 175.
\textsuperscript{70} Bruce, 4.
\textsuperscript{71} Eslinger, 197.
"acceptance of lay empowerment, the popularity of congregational polity, the influence of theological free will, and the possibility of spiritual progress,"...which included "stress on the attainability of holiness." While popular acceptance of these developments resulted in the rapid growth of Methodism in the first four decades of the nineteenth century, their influence also created an ongoing tension between ecclesiastical authority and individual sovereignty. This tension was responsible for the rise of a special promotion of holiness in the MEC. Exercising their right to decide, individuals committed to their own interpretation of John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection responded to changes in the rapidly growing church. Their response was motivated by a number of factors: (1) a perceived decline in emphasis on Christian perfection, (2) institutionalization, and (3) the social issues of their day. William Sims Bainbridge defines a religious movement as a "relatively organized attempt by a number of people to cause or prevent change in a religious organization or in religious aspects of life (emphasis mine). The organization and evolution of the American Holiness movement can be understood as an effort to block change. This attempt to prevent a perceived change in doctrine and practice is the root of the introduction of novel methods and novel terminology.

The Perception of a Decline in Emphasis on Christian Perfection

As indicated in Chapter I, in the same decades of the rapid growth of the MEC some advocates of holiness believed that the 1812 removal of Wesley's Plain Account of

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Christian Perfection from the MEC Discipline created a decline in emphasis on holiness. Although the decision was made to publish these tracts as a separate volume, they were not available until 1832. John L. Peters concludes that the doctrine lost its authoritative status and that two generations of Methodist ministers formed their doctrinal views during this timeframe. His review of the issues of The Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review from 1830 to 1840 indicates, to him, that the doctrine of Christian perfection was not “a vital ingredient in general Methodist thought and life during this period.” He notes that the bishops of the General Conference of 1840 felt compelled to deal with the issue of the decline of the emphasis of this doctrine.

My own research (concentrating on articles in the Zion’s Herald during the period of 1823-1828) indicates, however, that there was an emphasis on the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection within New England Methodism prior to the 1830s. These articles carried many reports from Methodist class meetings, quarterly meetings, camp meetings and circuit preachers about the preaching of Christian perfection and the testimonies of those who had attained the experience. An example is Timothy Merritt’s report, in the first issue, October 29, 1822, of his efforts to teach “the deeper things of Christian experience.” “[M]any here think favorably of the work of sanctification,” he wrote, “a

75 Timothy Merritt (1775-1845) became a MEC minister in 1796 and served in New England (Connecticut, Maine, and Massachusetts). In addition to writing The Christian’s Manual: A Treatise on Christian Perfection (1824), he served as an editor of Zion’s Herald (1831) and assistant editor of the Christian Advocate (1832) prior to starting publication of the holiness periodical Guide to Christian Perfection (1839). In addition to being one of the first advocates of the special promotion of holiness, Merritt was an abolitionist and served as an officer of the third general convention (1838) of the Methodist antislavery movement. See William C. Kostlevy, Historical Dictionary of the Holiness Movement: Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements, No. 36. (Lanham, MD and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 2001), 174-175.
goodly number seem to be sensible of its importance, while a few taste of its
excellence."\textsuperscript{76}

The articles in the \textit{Zion's Herald} seem to contradict Peter's theory that Christian
perfection was not a "dominant feature of the preaching of this period."\textsuperscript{77} Rather than
being a contradiction, though, it is possible that Peters is correct with regards to the
general condition found in the Methodist Church, and that Merritt and others in New
England were attempting to revitalize the church by restoring the importance of the
doctrine of Christian perfection. Peters notes that, at the very time that this doctrine was
in danger of becoming a novelty in the church, there were those who began the process
that led to the revival of holiness. He mentions the publication of Merritt's 1825 \textit{The
Christian's Manual, a Treatise on Christian Perfection}, and the efforts of Aaron
Lummus, Nathan Bangs (1778-1862), Adam Clarke (1760-1832) and Richard Watson
(1781-1833).

According to Melvin E. Dieter, Bishop J. T. Peck (1811-1883) also thought that
the doctrine of Christian perfection was in decline in the 1830s. Dieter states that if this
period
marks the nadir of the decline of the doctrine in Methodism, it necessarily
marked as well the starting point for holiness revival. In fact, from 1835 to
1858 the revival of the promotion of the doctrine and the number of those who
professed personal enjoyment of the experience appears to have expanded at
almost unbroken pace.\textsuperscript{78}

It is interesting that the 1832 revival at New York City's Allen Street MEC, which Oden
refers to as a "holiness revival" is reported to have lasted for two years and became

\textsuperscript{76} Timothy Merritt, "Circular Address," \textit{Zion's Herald} 1:1 (January 9, 1823): 2.
\textsuperscript{77} Peters, 97.
\textsuperscript{78} Dieter, \textit{The Holiness Revival}, 22.
"historic in American Methodism." Was the decline Bishop Peck referred to a general condition of the MEC, while some areas continued to emphasize Christian perfection? Or was the perception of a decline on the emphasis of the doctrine caused by different interpretations of the doctrine? The second could well have been the case, since Aaron Lummus had written a series of articles in *Zion's Herald*, in 1825, addressing errors in the understanding of the doctrine. He stated that some denied the instantaneous character of entire sanctification, some believed an individual could "grow toward it but never attain it," and others claimed sanctification happened at conversion.

When Timothy Merritt wrote *The Christian's Manual, a Treatise on Christian Perfection* (1825) and Aaron Lummus wrote the *Zion's Herald* articles refuting what he believed were errors in the doctrine then prevalent in the MEC, they were concerned about the decline in the preaching, and experience, of the instantaneous, second work of grace – entire sanctification – accomplished by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. In July 1839, Merritt started the *Guide to Christian Perfection*, a monthly periodical for those "who were becoming involved in a renewed interest in the experience of Christian perfection within the Methodist Episcopal Church about that time." It is noteworthy that its treatment of the doctrine stressed the instantaneous experience of entire sanctification. That same year, Phoebe Palmer's Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness was opened to men. The evidence indicates that Merritt, Lummus, Palmer, and

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80 Peters, 102.
82 Phoebe Palmer (1807-1874) was an MEC holiness advocate, author, revivalist, practical theologian, and editor. Although the Tuesday Meeting was started by her sister Sarah Lankford (1806-1896), Palmer led the meeting from 1840 until her death in addition to speaking at holiness revivals/camp meetings in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. She served as editor of the *Guide to Holiness* for ten years (1864-1874). See Kostlevy, *Historical Dictionary*, 196-198.
those who followed their lead (e.g., John Inskip [1816-1884], William McDonald [1820-1901], John Wood [1828-1905]) in the formation of the Holiness movement didn’t perceive themselves to be sectarian. They were responding to what they perceived to be a change in the continuity of Wesleyan doctrine and practice. Although William C. Kostlevy suggests that this “dispute concerning doctrinal continuity” arose only in the late nineteenth century, the research of Wood and my review of documents indicating the presence of instantaneous language in the early 1800s, leads me to conclude that this dispute was well in progress by the mid-nineteenth century.

Institutionalization and Sectarianism of the MEC

The debate about doctrinal continuity with Wesley cannot be separated from the context of polity changes within the MEC. The rapid growth of the church created a requirement for institutional organization led by a more hierarchical polity. This change in polity meant that lay leaders of societies who had previously not been under direct, daily supervision of ordained clergy found themselves with a new boss. Frederick A. Norwood emphasizes the tensions created by the active participation of lay leaders in the rapid growth of the MEC. He states that

In short, without local preachers, exhorters, and class leaders, the circuit rider’s work would have been impossible. The two forces, for better or for worse, were destined to go together. The result was continued tension between authority and freedom, between centralization of leadership and democracy. It is the very genius of Methodism. Without this tension it would not have fulfilled its destiny. The price was conflict.

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83 Kostlevy, Holiness Manuscripts, 21. He also indicates that George A. Turner, The More Excellent Way: The Scripture Basis for the Wesleyan Message, Winona Lake, IN: Light and Life Press, 1952, argued that there was a direct continuity between Scripture, Wesley and the Holiness Movement.

84 Norwood, 127.
The seeds of sectarianism had been set early within the MEC when conflict over polity and theological emphasis broke out in 1790 resulting in the James O’Kelly (1735-1826) schism and the 1792 formation of the Republican Methodist Church in Virginia. This event was followed by the organization of a reform group which founded the Methodist Protestant Church (1828) in Baltimore. The tension between empowered lay leaders and the growing ecclesiastical hierarchy became a major factor in the rise of the special emphasis on holiness by the 1830s and 1840s when the MEC “was no longer staffed by local amateurs supervised by professional circuit riders – most of the circuit riders had dismounted and were now ‘settled’ pastors.” As MEC congregations increased in size and wealth, the demand for more formally educated clergy also increased. The growing institutionalization of the MEC caused many, including some bishops like Willard Mallalieu, to call for a return to Wesleyan enthusiasm and methods linked to revivalism and camp meetings.

Additionally, one cannot ignore the sectarianism created by differences of opinion on social issues. The schism within the MEC over slavery began to take institutional form when abolitionist Orange Scott organized the Wesleyan Methodist Connection in 1843. In 1834, Scott wrote “Advice to the People Called Wesleyans” in which he argued that John Wesley’s call to holiness of heart and life required active social reform. While many within the MEC were choosing more “moderate antislavery measures,” Melvin Dieter argues that the “dramatic break between Northern and Southern Methodism one year after the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection indicated that the issues

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85 Langford, 87-88.
87 Ibid., 155-163.
were more pressing than the moderates believed."88 The decision of Orange Scott and those who followed his lead is an example of the democratization of American Christianity, in which “recurring dissent blasted any semblance of organizational coherence...power, influence, and authority were radically dispersed,...[and] flexibility and innovation of religious organizations made it possible for an American to find an amenable group no matter what his or her preference in belief, practice, or institutional structure.”89

The Terminology of the Special Promotion of Holiness

One of the difficulties of understanding the Holiness movement which emerged during this period involves the issue of terminology. Especially in the Wesleyan stream of the movement, a number of terms were utilized to refer to the experience of holiness of heart and life. These terms were often used interchangeably making it difficult to know the intention of the speaker or writer. When referring to the need for a special emphasis on holiness, Wesleyans of the time usually meant instantaneous entire sanctification. An entry in the “Concepts and Identifying Terms” of the Great Holiness Classics volumes illustrates this difficulty:

Entire sanctification is also known as Christian perfection, perfect love, heart purity, the baptism with the Holy Spirit, being filled with the Spirit, the fullness of the blessing, full salvation, the deeper life, Christian holiness, scriptural holiness, the rest of faith, and the promise of the Father.90

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop suggests that “holiness” and “sanctification” were reduced from their “rich connotation, in Scripture, and in Wesley,”91 to being synonymous with entire

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89 Hatch, 64-65.
90 Ibid., 18.
sanctification. Although much broader in definition than can be dealt with here, Christian or scriptural holiness, in Wesleyan theology, is the individual’s response to the sanctifying work of God. Wynkoop describes holiness as “one unifying all the innerlife and outer norms for activity.”

Sanctification is God’s saving activity which makes the individual holy by setting them apart for His service. This process is begun by the reception of the Holy Spirit at conversion (initial sanctification), continued in the instantaneous cleansing of original sin (entire sanctification), and advanced by individual growth in grace throughout the life of the believer.

Additionally, a distinction must be made between John Wesley’s concept of Christian perfection and perfectionism since they have often been considered synonymous. Wesley described Christian perfection as pure motives or intentions and never equated it with performance or complete understanding of God’s will. Richard S. Taylor writes that Christian perfection “is a matter of the heart – the inner ‘works’ of the soul – not skill of the hands or judgment of the head. As Wesley always insisted, Christian perfection is loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and one’s neighbor as himself.”

Wynkoop on the other hand defines perfectionism as “perfection understood in an absolute sense – a point beyond which there can be no further

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92 Ibid., 273.
94 Taylor, 158.
development” accompanied by “methodic practices of discipline – involving rigid self-control.”

The ambiguous and practical nature of John Wesley’s doctrine of Christian perfection exacerbated the problem of terminology in the rise of a special emphasis on holiness. The eclectic nature of Wesley’s theology has fueled the debate about the gradual and instantaneous aspects of salvation/sanctification throughout the history of Methodism and the various streams of the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition. Wesley preached that “All experience, as well as Scripture, show this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual.”

He states that salvation begins in the moment of justification, gradually increases until there is another instant of heart cleansing, which is followed by continued growth in love to God and man. In another sermon, Wesley asks, and answers, the question of whether full salvation, the cleansing of the heart from all sin, is accomplished by God gradually or instantaneously. Wesley concludes that 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…that it should be done instantaneously.”

A few sentences later, Wesley states that sanctification is to be sought by faith and, if sought by faith, could be expected now. This is the very language that Phoebe Palmer would use in her Altar Theology of the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement. In his sermon “On Patience,” Wesley notes that there are disputes about the gradual or instantaneous nature of entire sanctification and exhorts: “Be the change instantaneous or gradual, see that you never rest till it is wrought in your own soul, if you

95 Wynkoop, 274-276.

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desire to dwell with God in glory."\(^9\) Although Wesley allows for the possibility that entire sanctification may be gradual in some, he goes on to state that anyone he had met who claimed the experience described it as being instantaneous.\(^9\)

An additional aspect of the debate over the gradual and instantaneous nature of entire sanctification, which is important to understanding the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement, is Wesley’s view of classifying this work of God as the reception of the Holy Ghost. In a letter to Joseph Benson, Wesley classifies entire sanctification as “being perfected in love, filled with love”; as “entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength”; “and as a second change, whereby they shall be saved from all sin, and perfected in love.” He goes on to state that if “they like to call this ‘receiving the Holy Ghost,’ they may: Only the phrase, in that sense, is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all received the Holy Ghost when justified.”\(^10\) Wesley’s doctrine of holiness can be considered as ambiguous in the sense that it was open to the individual’s interpretation of how God’s sanctifying grace was experienced. For Wesley, being entirely sanctified and living a holiness lifestyle was much more important than the exact process of entire sanctification. This openness to individual experience would become a vital aspect of the sectarianism of holiness advocates in nineteenth-century America. Rhetoric that described entire sanctification as a reception or fullness of the Holy Spirit resulted in the use of the day of Pentecost (Acts, Chapter 2) as a scriptural paradigm and the development of an imagistic ritual for its accomplishment.

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\(^9\) Ibid., 491.
The Three Streams of the Holiness Movement

Individual decisions about the theology and practice of holiness were the impetus for the emergence of the Oberlin and Wesleyan streams of the Holiness movement during the period of 1830 to 1860. By the end of this time, a third stream was developing, the Keswickian, which would come to fruition in England during the early 1870s. While these three streams developed different understandings of holiness, specifically what happened in entire sanctification, they all agreed that there was an instantaneous moment when an individual was entirely sanctified by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It was this commonality that enabled cooperation in camp meetings and protracted revival meetings resulting in a cross-fertilization of ideas and practices.

The Oberlin Stream

Wesleyan Methodists were not the sole proprietors of the doctrine and practice of Christian perfection in antebellum America. In the late 1830s, Charles G. Finney, a Presbyterian and Congregational evangelist, pastor, educator, and author, was teaching and writing about this doctrine at Oberlin (Ohio) College. Finney had become popular due to his use of new measures in revivals of the Burned-Over District of western New York. These new measures included “protracted meetings, the use of a separate ‘anxious bench’ to seat sinners on the verge of conversion, and prayer for the sinful by name.” Finney became a professor of theology at Oberlin College in 1835 and served as its

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101 The Keswickian stream was the result of individual decisions about entire sanctification, dispensational premillennialism, and faith healing. Its origins stem from the publication of The Higher Christian Life (1858) by William Boardman (1810-1886) and the higher life conferences conducted by Boardman and Robert P. and Hannah Whitall Smith. This stream of the Holiness movement was officially established in England, in 1875, and its concepts were introduced into North America by D. L. Moody. See Kostlevy, Holiness Dictionary, 150-151 and Dieter, The Holiness Revival, 253.
102 Holifield, 361.
president from 1851 to 1866. Assisted by John Morgan (1802-1884), Henry Cowles (1803-1881), and Asa Mahan (1799-1889), Finney published articles in the *Oberlin Evangelist* from 1838 to 1840. He also published *Views on Sanctification* (1840). In Finney’s first year at Oberlin, he and then President Asa Mahan began to investigate the issue of the scriptural veracity of entire sanctification. In 1836, both professed to having experienced a “second spiritual crisis.”¹⁰³ As one of the primary defenders of Oberlin perfectionism, Mahan wrote its first book-length defense, *The Scriptural Doctrine of Christian Perfection* (1839).¹⁰⁴

According to William Kostlevy, Finney integrated “such popular emphases of the Edwardsian theological heritage as freedom of the will, disinterested benevolence, the moral government of God, and the simplicity of moral action with a modified Wesleyan understanding of Christian perfection.”¹⁰⁵ Finney emphasized the natural ability of humanity to choose to obey the moral law of God. Conversion, and subsequently entire sanctification, was “a willed effort to bring one’s life into conformity with the laws of God.”¹⁰⁶ Complete obedience to the moral law required a state of entire consecration of life to God, which required a constant reliance upon the grace of Christ. This higher form of the Christian life was accomplished by the baptism of the Spirit. In contrast to Wesley, Finney’s understanding of sanctification was based upon active obedience to the law rather than “a supernatural infusion of divine virtue.”¹⁰⁷ Finney’s interest in

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¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 247-50.
disinterested benevolence made Oberlin a center for social reform movements such as abolitionism, women’s rights and social transformation.\textsuperscript{108}

Timothy Smith argued that the holiness revival at Oberlin was related to “wider strivings of the transcendental age”\textsuperscript{109} that led to the awakening of 1858, which was the “climax of...long trends and the result of united efforts by urban churchmen of many denominations.”\textsuperscript{110} Smith outlines some of the commonalities in the quest for personal and social holiness from the late 1840s to 1858. He notes that Congregational minister Edward Beecher (1803-1895) called for an elevation of personal holiness throughout the universal church in an 1835 article in \textit{The American National Preacher}. Sarah Lankford and Phoebe Palmer started their Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness that same year. Catherine Beecher corresponded with Finney about the revival at Oberlin. Thomas Upham (1799-1872), a Congregationalist and professor at Bowdoin College, experienced entire sanctification at Palmer’s Tuesday Meeting, in 1839, and began writing philosophical treatises on perfectionism.\textsuperscript{111} Congregationalist Horace Bushnell (1802-1876) began his search for “a deeper Christian experience” after the death of his son in 1842, the same year that William Boardman (1810-1886) began seeking sanctification after reading the biography of James Brainerd Taylor.\textsuperscript{112} All of these examples, and more, are evidence of the cross-fertilization of concepts of holiness in the mid-1800s.

\begin{thebibliography}{11}
\bibitem{108} Holifield, 367; Kostlevy, \textit{Historical Dictionary}, 189.
\bibitem{109} Smith, \textit{Revivalism and Social Reform}, 105.
\bibitem{110} Ibid., 62.
\bibitem{111} Ibid., 105.
\bibitem{112} Ibid., 106.
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The Wesleyan Stream

Melvin Dieter suggests that there were no "radical differences" between original Wesleyanism and the theology of American Wesleyans. The differences were subtle changes in emphasis due to the American context. A synthesizing of revivalism and Christian perfection resulted in a concern for "experience over theology and a call to individual commitment."\(^\text{113}\) The Wesleyan stream of the Holiness movement had its beginnings in the Northeast and was led by "an extensive network of influential Methodist clergy who either openly espoused its goals or encouraged it wherever they could as silent partners."\(^\text{114}\) Yet, it was Methodist lay leader Phoebe Palmer who set the pattern for the theology and practice of the Wesleyan stream of the American Holiness movement. Dieter states that her "life and ministry served as the dynamic shaping, organizing, energizing, and promoting center of the movement from its beginning in the mid-1830s until the post-Civil War period.\(^\text{115}\)

Phoebe Palmer's contribution to the Wesleyan tradition was innovative and uniquely American. Although drawing from the tradition, she did more than simply transmit these ideas to others; she "shaped and added to it in important ways."\(^\text{116}\) Melvin Dieter states that the "special promotion of holiness," which had its beginnings in the ministry of Timothy Merritt and Phoebe Palmer, "marked the meeting of the American mind, prevailing revivalism, and Wesleyan perfectionism in as widespread a popular quest for the beatific vision as the world had known."\(^\text{117}\) Palmer heightened certain characteristics of the Wesleyan tradition and "made some creative additions to it in

\(^{113}\) Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century, 17.
\(^{114}\) Dieter, The 19th-Century Holiness Movement, 108.
\(^{115}\) Ibid., 130.
\(^{116}\) Raser, 230, 257.
\(^{117}\) Dieter, The Holiness Revival, 3.
keeping with her own individual religious journey and the larger 'American experience' of which she was a part.\textsuperscript{118} She "was the master craftsperson who merged the pervasive American attributes of utility, simplicity, and speed in the pursuit of happiness with the distinctive Wesleyan theology of the second blessing."\textsuperscript{119}

It is interesting that Harold E. Raser utilizes the term \textit{new measures} in addressing Palmer's adaptations of revivalist techniques to entire sanctification.\textsuperscript{120} According to him, these three new measures were: (1) the holiness altar invitation, (2) the believing meeting, and (3) the altar testimony.\textsuperscript{121} Palmer's theology and practice of entire sanctification were focused around a religious symbol already made popular by American revivalism, the altar. I would argue that these new measures were aspects of the establishment of a ritual of entire sanctification, the efficacy of which could be experienced at a camp meeting, in a class meeting, or in the privacy of a home. Believing that these were vital to the attainment of entire sanctification, Palmer promoted them in every meeting, in her books, and in religious periodicals. Palmer's stress upon the "centrality of the altar as physical object and as spiritual symbol"\textsuperscript{122} appealed to Methodist worshippers familiar with kneeling for prayer and communion, a practice inherited from Anglicanism. The altar was not just the site of the instantaneous experience of entire sanctification but was also the symbol of a continuing, daily

\textsuperscript{118} Raser, 254.
\textsuperscript{119} Turley, 58. In his chapter, "The Cauldron of the American Holiness Movement," Turley indicates that Palmer was following the common sense approach of predecessors like Stephen Olin who believed that salvation was a rational decision that did not require long periods of reflection. Olin was a Methodist minister who followed Wilbur Fisk as president of Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. It is interesting that Palmer and her sister conducted holiness meetings at Wesleyan University. Turley states that he was fascinated with the themes of utility, speed and simplicity and became one of Palmer's "converts."
\textsuperscript{120} Raser, 110.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., 110-113.
\textsuperscript{122} Jones, "Inverted Shadow," 122-124.
consecration of all of life to God. Consistent with her understanding of the role of the altar as the locus of a faith-based decision, Palmer provided those “frustrated by lack of emotional confirmation, a formula for assurance of entire sanctification and a means of renewing continually the consecration signified thereby.”

Phoebe Palmer’s theology was formulated in the context of her participation in the means of grace incorporated into Wesleyan class meetings, Quarterly and Annual conferences, and the worship practices of the MEC. Her understanding of the experience of entire sanctification appears to be vitally connected to her idea of being in covenant with God, based upon the habit of attending the New Year’s Eve watch-night service. For Palmer, the altar became the site of the ultimate consecration that results in the experience of holiness. She instructed those wanting to enter into the “Enjoyment of Holiness” to lay their “all upon the altar” and their offering (self) would be accepted by Christ. According to Palmer, entire sanctification was an instantaneous work of grace that was accomplished the moment an individual made a deliberate decision to commit all of life to God. The specific steps in its attainment were “ENTIRE CONSECRATION, FAITH, and CONFESSION.” She rejected the idea that intense feelings were a necessary proof of the experience of entire sanctification. She writes that “it is by strong faith, not feeling, that we glorify God.” Although intense feelings could be an aspect of the experience, a person should not expect them but simply believe the promise of God. Faith was also a necessity for retaining the experience of entire sanctification. The

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123 Wheatley, 526-527.
127 Ibid., 132-133.
sanctified believer must continue to rely on the grace of Christ and maintain the level of
communication required to attain entire sanctification.128

Nathan Bangs voiced the concern of some leaders of the fledgling movement that
Palmer’s theology dismissed the “direct witness of the Holy Spirit”129 reducing entire
sanctification to the mere acknowledgment of the promise of Scripture and eliminating
Wesley’s doctrine of assurance. Melvin Dieter notes that many in the MEC “feared that
her ‘altar theology’ placed too much emphasis on the momentary experience and
neglected the processes of growth in grace that preceded and followed the crisis.”130

Randolph S. Foster (1820-1903) expressed this same objection in his Nature and
Blessedness of Christian Purity (1851) which resulted in the publication of articles in
Palmer’s defense. The General Conference of 1852 responded to the controversy by
advising the avoidance of “new theories, new expressions, and new measures” on the
subject of entire sanctification. Pastors were to “adhere closely to the ancient
landmarks.”131 In doing so, the conference failed to identify which interpretation was
new and which was ancient. According to Dale Simmons’ article on this controversy,
Palmer’s shorter way provided an objective witness of the Spirit (entire sanctification was
to be claimed and confessed), while Foster maintained the need for subjective assurance
provided by the Holy Spirit. In spite of this controversy, Palmer’s approach was
attractive because of its pragmatic nature which met the quest for a “practical” theology
and “evidential Christianity” for common people.132

128 Palmer, Entire Devotion, 71.
129 Langford, 93-94.
130 Dieter, The 19th-Century Holiness Movement, 133.
131 Dale H. Simmons, “Storm Clouds Over Beulah Land” Methodist History 30:1 (October 1991): 35, 37,
38, 40, 41.
132 Holifield, 257.
When, in 1835, the Palmers and Lankfords "dedicated their home to the holy life, and pledged to begin a weekly conversation on the 'promotion of holiness,'" they were following a pattern established by John Wesley. This special meeting became known as the Tuesday Meeting and appears to have been organized as a select society of Methodism. Although the Tuesday Meeting was initially organized as a prayer meeting for women, by 1839 its focus had become the promotion of holiness and Palmer had taken over its leadership. By the time of her writing *The Promise of the Father* (1859), Palmer had received numerous inquiries about the meetings and decided to include "an account of these highly favored meetings," which had been previously published in the *Guide to Holiness*. In the pages that followed, she outlined the structure and focus of the meeting. In her description, Palmer mentioned the interdenominational nature of the meeting, its focus on holiness, the opening exercises of Scripture reading, singing and prayer lead by a minister, and the individual testimonies that were a vital part of the meeting. She also stated that the Tuesday Meeting was often the scene of individuals actually receiving the full baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The Tuesday Meeting and its practice of testimony became the pattern for subsequent holiness meetings inside and outside of the churches. Accounts of individual testimonies were published in the *Guide to Holiness* and later in the religious periodicals of holiness associations. Palmer (and those who followed her lead) was being consistent with the practice of John Wesley. The parallel is found in Melvin Dieter's

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133 Oden, 98.
135 Palmer was using Pentecostal terminology as early as her writing of *Entire Devotion to God* (1845) and example of its use in camp meetings may be found in Wheatley.
136 George Hughes, *Fragrant Memories: Phoebe Palmer and Sarah Lankford* (New York: Palmer and Hughes, 1886; reprint, Salem, OH: Schmul Publishing Co., Inc., 1988), 61-62. The decision to begin publication of this periodical for the purpose of recording these testimonies was the result of a conversation between Sarah Lankford and Timothy Merritt in 1838.
statement that Wesley’s “whole system of discipline in the band and class meetings was dependent, in a great part, upon the individual’s subjective, public evaluation of his own state of grace and Christian experience.” The popularity of the Tuesday Meeting may also be attributed to the endorsement it received by many of the leaders of the MEC. E. Dale Dunlap states that:


The wife of Bishop Hamline started a holiness meeting at Evanston, Illinois in 1865. Two hundred and thirty-eight holiness meetings were being conducted by 1886, “including 15 in Philadelphia, 14 in Boston, 12 in Baltimore, 7 in Toronto, and others in every major city in the United States and half-dozen foreign countries.”

The influence of these meetings is evidenced by the numerous personal testimonies published in the *Guide to Holiness* and other publications. A review of these testimonies reveals that they focus on the individual’s experience of entire sanctification as the source of purity and power required to live a holy life. Phoebe Palmer included examples of these in *Entire Devotion to God*. A Congregational minister from the East emphasized the individual’s privilege of the inward presence of God in writing:

Most surely Christians are called to exhibit before the world an indwelling God; for the Triune Deity takes up His *abode* with His disciple who loves Him and *keeps His words*....My desire, my all-absorbing desire, is to be *literally one with God*. No desire, no aim, apart from the will of God. *All*-body, soul, and spirit-at the service of God. This is my idea of *Scriptural Sanctification*.

140 Palmer, *Entire Devotion to God*, 76.
In a similar testimony, the author writes “I now desired to have Him an indwelling Savior, having full possession of my soul, and making it His fit habitation, by a thorough cleansing and an entire subjection of every thought and desire to Himself.” Another account, “Power of Faith: Voice from the South,” recalls the influence of reading Palmer’s *Holiness, with Notes by the Way* in 1846 and speaks of his experience of entire sanctification in covenantal language.

Next the Holy Spirit brought to my mind the duty of believing that God would keep by His power that which I had committed to Him, on condition that I would continue by faith to keep the offering in His hands.

The exercise of this glorious faith, through the stupendous mercy of God, became a conscious reality. The solemn engagement was then made, and ratified between God and my soul, that His Spirit would lead, and that I, assisted by His grace, should follow on till time with me should be no more.

His testimony indicates a consciousness of God’s personal leadership reinforcing the idea that entire sanctification provided a sense of spiritual authority not dependent upon the community of believers.

In an account taken from the *Western Christian Advocate*, an anonymous minister reports that his experience of entire sanctification was the result of having read an extract of a letter on holiness written by Palmer and printed in the same periodical. Upon reading this article and praying in the privacy of his home, he testifies that “in one moment, perfect love filled his soul! The paper dropped on the carpet, where it lay till morning, and he clapped his hands and cried, ‘Glory to God!’ This was all done in an instant.” Although weekly holiness meetings, camp meetings, and regular church services are often the locus of entire sanctification, this account and others like it indicate

141 Ibid., 83.
142 Ibid., 79.
143 Ibid., 81.
that the sanctifying power of the Spirit of God was not confined to these communal events. These private experiences of spiritual accomplishment would certainly provide a sense of individual spiritual authority.

Consistent with the imagistic mode of religiosity, the personal experience of instantaneous entire sanctification was encoded in episodic memory providing a moment to be recalled throughout their life. In *Fragrant Memories*, George Hughes records the proceedings of the commemorative service celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the original Tuesday Meeting. Many of those attending this service testified that instantaneous entire sanctification was the source of their power to live a life of holiness and service. The experience of Dr. E. H. Stokes speaks to the lasting impact (twenty-seven years) of instantaneous entire sanctification, he writes

> I remember when I came into it, and shall never forget it. How wondrously my soul came up from the wilderness-how I came up into this land of freedom and love and joy-how long God was kept out, and it was my selfhood that was the barrier to the incoming of Divine grace. When my *self* went down to nothing, God came in, O, with what majesty and with what power, and overwhelming grandeur! My physical nature felt it for days and weeks and months, and almost for years.144

The testimony of Rev. A. C. Morehouse affirms the belief that instantaneous entire sanctification was the source of power for holy living and service, he writes

> Over thirty years ago, when Mrs. Palmer was having a controversy on this subject, I was having a controversy between myself and God, and I prayed that God would help her. I praise God for what I have lived to see in the extension of this mighty work. My struggle was that I felt I was called to preach, but I did not dare to do it until I had the baptismal fire. All my success in the ministry and in the work of God I attribute to Christ through the power of this blessed Spirit.145

144 Hughes, 118.
145 Ibid., 109.
Others testified to the fact that it was only through their experience of entire sanctification that they were able to submit themselves to what they believed God was calling them to do. Sister Tichenor testified that she had attended a Tuesday Meeting in 1870 and responded to Phoebe Palmer’s invitation to pray for entire sanctification. Having been reluctant to speak in public, her submission to the will of God included the willingness to do so. She stated that

> I had been fifteen years in the Church and very seldom my voice was heard. No one now believes that I ever took a back seat in the church, but I did. When the Lord said to me, ‘Will you give me your voice?’ I shrank, and then I dreaded too, to be called one of ‘the sanctified ones.’ Just the very moment I came to the point, when my will was yielded to God, and I was ready to use my voice, and to be called one of ‘the sanctified ones,’ Jesus came and filled by soul.146

Sister Tichenor's experience was similar to Palmer’s struggle over the inner sense of a call to ministry.

Once Phoebe Palmer overcame her reluctance to speak in public, she utilized every opportunity to teach the necessity of holiness as a present reality in the Christian’s life, whether at a class meeting, holiness meeting or camp meeting. Wheatley states that Palmer began her evangelistic expeditions in 1840 and continued these until the last year of her life. In these years she spoke at revival services at churches and camp meetings throughout the Northeast, in Canada, and Nova Scotia. She traveled throughout England, Ireland, Wales and Scotland from 1859 to 1862. Upon her return from overseas, in addition to traveling throughout the Northeast, her evangelistic labors took her to Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio (1866); to Missouri, Kansas, and Louisiana (1867); to Minnesota and California (1870); and to Florida (1874).147 Within a few years of the official organization of the National Holiness Association (1867), itinerant holiness

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146 Ibid., 101.
147 Wheatley, 258-478.
evangelists would travel across the country to promote the doctrine of holiness. It is clear that Phoebe Palmer set the example for their ministry.

For Palmer, holiness was not simply an inner, personal religious experience. It had a definitive impact upon all of life. According to Richard Wheatley, Palmer viewed holiness as "an inherent operative energy, to be divinely guided in seeking to glorify God, and to meliorate society in the mass, and also as to the individuals which compose it."\(^{148}\) Wheatley summarizes her philanthropic activities under seven headings: (1) the distribution of religious tracts, (2) visitation of the poor and sick, (3) ministration to prisoners, (4) association with beneficent societies, (5) the establishment of domestic missions, (6) the projection of a mission to the Jews, and (7) an interest in foreign missions. E. Dale Dunlap notes that Palmer "stood firmly in the Wesleyan tradition that holiness makes one a servant to one's fellows," a commitment she displayed in 1854 by changing her membership to a mission church where her contribution was "more needed."

Timothy Smith states that her most significant achievement was the founding of the Five Points Mission (1850), which marked the "beginnings of Protestant institutional work in the slums."\(^{150}\) A group of Palmer's associates helped to organize the Ladies Christian Association of the City of New York (1858), which was later renamed the Ladies Christian Union.

Thomas C. Oden documents the fact that Phoebe Palmer's "interest in social transformation developed earlier than her religious thought. As early as age twenty-three, she was actively involved in sanctificationist social reform movements...",\(^{151}\) which

\(^{148}\) Wheatley, 205.  
\(^{149}\) Dunlap, 89.  
\(^{150}\) Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform, 170-171.  
\(^{151}\) Oden, 83.
included a poem (1831) calling for the emancipation of slaves. Although convinced slavery was wrong, it appears that Palmer was never an active abolitionist. Timothy L. Smith notes that “[h]er fast friends, Bishops Edmund Janes and Leonidas Hamline, were the architects of the policy of silence which later became the regret of Northern Methodism.”

Her friendship with these key leaders was vital to her leadership of the holiness revival within the MEC. Even though Palmer’s choice was to leave the issue (slavery) “in the hands of Providence,” her Tuesday Meeting was not only interdenominational but also interracial. This meeting was apparently influential in Amanda Berry Smith’s decision to embark on a career as a holiness evangelist, after her conversion and sanctification under the ministry of John S. Inskip. In addition to Smith, other African American women (Jarena Lee, Julia Foote, Zilpha Elaw) “…found in Methodism a formula to help them steer through a journey to salvation, self-actualization, and liberation.” Estrelda Alexander suggests that Methodism’s egalitarian nature and emphasis on the religious experience of the individual in direct relationship to God provided a “new sense of personhood and identity.”

Phoebe Palmer became a maker of religious experience; that is, her altar theology became the pattern for the Wesleyan stream of the American Holiness Movement. In her chapter “Making Experience,” Ann Taves argues that the “sacralization of experience…involves cultivating and maintaining those practices through which a

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152 Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, 211.
153 Ibid., 212.
155 Alexander, 98.
community understands, locates, and experiences the sacred.”156 The purpose of Palmer’s shorter way was to provide an experience of the sacred that had the power to transform the life of an individual believer and subsequently, through these individuals, to transform society. For many who found Palmer’s theology and practice the answer to their own struggles, she was a prophetic figure (in Lindbeck’s sense) who discovered the anomalies of her religious tradition in its historical context. Given her heritage of Wesleyanism and American revivalism, the concepts Palmer discovered in her own spiritual journey became ritualized in an instantaneous act of faith, a decision to consecrate all of one’s life to God, at a particular ritual site (the altar).

The Antebellum Ritualization of Entire Sanctification

The antebellum ritualization of entire sanctification can be viewed as an adaptation of the embodied performance of earlier American Methodism, specifically camp meeting worship. According to Ann Taves, “early American Methodist narratives of experience drew upon bodily knowledges and biblical narratives, which they both acquired and assumed in practice.”157 She suggests that the interactive performance of the shout tradition connected to the camp meetings of the early nineteenth century continued to exist in the holiness (and Pentecostal) churches of the early twentieth century. The embodied performance of the shout tradition was “linked with the felt power and presence of God” and “camp-meeting ground was the new public place of

156 Taves, 47.
157 Taves, 76, 79.
worship wherein the very presence of the deity was to be expected and where Methodists gathered to glorify God with shouts of praise.”158

Palmer’s adaptation of the embodied performance of camp meeting worship was an attempt to “reconcile middle-class respectability with intense religious commitment.”159 Since entire consecration was the first step in the attainment of the experience of entire sanctification, this personal decision was an act of the will that did not require the emotional outward expressions of the shout tradition. The embodied performance of the ritual of entire sanctification is depicted in the process of kneeling at the altar and consecrating both body and soul to the service of God. In his section entitled “Holiness in Action,” Harold Raser’s first definition of Palmer’s activism is “Body and Soul Ceaselessly Presented.” One of the sources of her activism is that the entirely sanctified have “given up every claim of control over their lives and have placed it at God’s disposal.” A second source is the possession of divine power. This possession of power is directly connected to the concept of the body of the believer as “a temple of the Holy Ghost.” All of life, including what one does with and to the body, is to be decided based upon the idea that the sanctified believer’s body is a “hallowed temple.”160

The empowering nature of holiness theology for individual selfhood has its roots in the theology and practice of John Wesley and is most evident in the history of the participation of women in leadership positions and as ordained ministers in the Holiness Movement and early Church of the Nazarene. At the same time that American

158 Ibid., 107, 115.
160 Raser, 211-222.
Methodism was discouraging the participation of women (1830s to 1840s), their participation in leadership became a feature of the American Holiness Movement, beginning especially in the Oberlin stream of the movement. The emphasis on the ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the late-nineteenth century holiness associations resulted in the increased participation of women in leadership and the ordained ministry. Several studies have helped recover the history of women’s participation in Methodism and the Holiness Movement and these serve as examples of the empowering nature of holiness theology and practice.  

Conclusion

Using the cultural-linguistic approach to religion and theology of George Lindbeck, Palmer’s reminting of the stated doctrine and the practice of entire sanctification provided a new “comprehensive interpretive scheme” with the power to “structure human experience and understanding of self and world.” However, as Lindbeck also suggests, religion is a “communal phenomenon that shapes the subjectivities of individuals rather than being primarily a manifestation of those subjectivities.” Thus the emphasis placed upon the individual as the locus of the Divine in the American Holiness movement both reflected and contributed to the modern

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162 Lindbeck, 32-33.
turn to the self, which tends to view authority as “located in the self and inner life.”\textsuperscript{163} Since the spirituality that is shaped by the modern concept of the self is more individualized and questions all external forms of authority, including that of the past, the clerical elite, established institutions (and practices); institutionalization of this spirituality is inherently problematic. Thus, the turn to the self as religiously authoritative would contribute to the strikingly sectarian nature of the Holiness movement as it emerged after the Civil War. It is to that history that we turn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE NATIONAL HOLINESS ASSOCIATION:
POSTBELLUM DEVELOPMENTS

While four years of war had "dampened the revival interest which had been fanned into a blaze so shortly before the start of the conflict,"¹ advocates of holiness responded quickly to the moral depression² that set in after the end of hostilities. Melvin Dieter credits the Palmers and James Caughey³ with providing the impetus for the renewal of holiness revival efforts by their publication of the results of their revival activities in England in the newspaper, Guide to Holiness. Their enthusiasm and belief that the entire sanctification of individuals was the only solution to the problems of the church and world resulted in the "rapid expansion of organized meetings for the promotion of holiness...in the larger urban centers" (New York, Philadelphia, and Boston) of the Northeast.⁴ These activities coincided with the call for revival in the MEC at the 1864 General Conference. By early 1865, revivals were being conducted in the North, West (Indiana), and even in the South with many of these being specifically aimed at the promotion of holiness.⁵

Efforts to promote holiness doctrine and practice begun in the antebellum period blossomed into a more fully organized movement in post-bellum America. In 1866,

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¹ Dieter, The Holiness Revival, 81.
³ James Caughey (1811-1891) was born in Ireland, emigrated to the United States, and became an ordained elder in the MEC (1836). Passionate about entire sanctification, Caughey preached in the northeastern United States, Canada, and Europe. He conducted several preaching tours to Britain (1841-1847, 1857-1859, 1860-1862, and 1864-1866). His ministry had a profound impact on William Booth. See Kostlevy, Historical Dictionary, 44-45.
⁴ Dieter, The Holiness Revival, 81.
⁵ Ibid., 81; Synan, 23.
bishops of the MEC, South, “called for a return to Wesleyan principles as an answer to the postwar moral crisis.”6 The holiness meetings and revivals of 1865 and 1866 led to the 1867 establishment of the National Camp-Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness (subsequently called the National Holiness Association and abbreviated NHA). The association’s primary leaders were MEC clergy from Northeastern urban centers. The fact that the impetus for the organization of the NHA came primarily from the larger urban centers “raises serious doubts about the common generalization that this movement attracted chiefly the poorer and uneducated classes.”7 In support of this, Charles Jones notes that camps were established in suburban areas, were supported by those who had migrated to the cities, and were often viewed in the sense of a “beulah land” (a refuge from the “congestion, heat and sin of the city”).8 Many of these camps became vacation resorts, with permanent buildings, and many still exist in denominations like the Church of the Nazarene.

The NHA utilized holiness camp meetings, holiness associations, weekly holiness meetings, holiness evangelists, and holiness periodicals as methods to advance their cause. These methods, when combined with opposition from denominational leaders, created a religiosity with a primary focus on instantaneous entire sanctification. While many of the leaders of the National Holiness Association attempted to keep the movement from being sectarian and refused to respond to calls for a national holiness church, the movement’s emphasis on the individual’s possession of the Holy Spirit created the rise of charismatic leaders committed to the cause of spreading their

6 Synan, 23.
7 Dieter, The Holiness Revival, 81-82.
understanding of Scriptural holiness. When confronted with denominational opposition, these leaders, and their followers, were determined to follow their vision of a pure Church rather than submit to what they considered the "ecclesiasticism" of a worldly Church that seemed to be ignoring the "sources of spiritual power."9

The early national camp meetings were successful due to the support of a number of Methodist presiding elders. The search for a location for the first national camp meeting ended when Aaron E. Ballard, presiding elder of the Bridgeton District in southern New Jersey, offered to hold the meeting in his district. Ballard also arranged the use of army tents, offered financial support and made welcoming comments at the first service. As plans progressed for a second national camp meeting (1868), presiding elder W. L. Gray was instrumental in the selection of the location (Manheim, Pennsylvania). Kenneth Brown makes the observation that the "local Methodist Presiding Elder had official charge of the meeting, but most people knew the National Association would run the encampment."10 Six of the eight new bishops elected in the 1872 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church were "friendly with the holiness cause."11 One of the reasons for the acceptance of, and participation in, these camp meetings seems to be that the leaders of the National Association were able to implement controls that helped to "avoid many of the extreme physical and emotional demonstrations which had always been played up by critics of the camp meeting movement."12 These controls apparently also extended to all activities on the grounds.13

10 Kenneth O. Brown, Inskip, McDonald, Fowler: "Wholly and Forever Thine" Early Leadership in the Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness, (Hazleton, PA: Holiness Archives, 1999), 77-86.
12 Ibid., 105.
13 Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion, 27.
Another interesting aspect of these camp meetings was their interdenominational and interracial nature, a tendency inherited from antebellum camp meetings. Although predominantly Methodist, holiness camp meetings were also popular with ministers and laymen from non-Methodist churches. Melvin Dieter suggests that Baptists “likely contributed more non-Wesleyan supporters to the Holiness revival than anyone else”\(^\text{14}\) and notes that Baptist pastors Edgar M. Levy and Absalom B. Earle are examples of that support. Levy was active in promoting the holiness cause in Philadelphia and Earle launched his evangelistic activities from Boston where he also taught at the Faith Training School of Charles Cullis.\(^\text{15}\) Camp meetings were organized and conducted away from the organized churches and there was less of a “sectarian emphasis.”\(^\text{16}\) In the following years, this interdenominational tendency was to have both positive and negative consequences. It allowed a more dynamic impact on social issues, and ministers and laity from various denominations were among those who joined holiness churches when they organized. However, it also contributed to the tensions between the developing holiness associations and organized denominations.

Although the exact nature of African American participation is difficult to assess, it seems that the majority who did participate in NHA camp meetings remained in black churches like the AME or AMEZ or chose to organize separate black holiness churches.\(^\text{17}\) Amanda Berry Smith is an example of an AME evangelist who preached at holiness

\(^{17}\) Charles Edwin Jones briefly discusses this issue and provides a list of these churches. See, *Black Holiness: A Guide to the Study of Black Participation in Wesleyan Perfectionist and Glossolalic Pentecostal Movements* (Metuchen, NJ and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1987). An interesting research project would be to investigate the exact participation of African Americans in the NHA, which would involve locating available demographics on their participation in the independent holiness churches organized as a result of NHA revivals/camp meetings.
revivals across the United States. In their histories of Phineas F. Bresee, Carl Bangs and E. A. Girvin mention the fact that Smith spoke in a holiness revival at Asbury MEC, Los Angeles, California during the conference year of 1890 to 1891. Carl Bangs states that Bresee, the pastor of the church, was “captivated” by her preaching even though he had previously heard her preach. Bresee’s comment gives the impression that African American participation in holiness revivals was not unusual.  

The Postbellum Holiness Revival – 1867 to 1877

In many ways, Phoebe and Walter Palmer were responsible for the institutional structure of the NHA. Although the Palmers “played no direct role” in their establishment, they had direct connections with the primary organizers. John Inskip, one of the primary organizers, had attended Palmer’s Tuesday Meeting and credited her with his experience of entire sanctification. George Hughes was one of the sponsors of the first national holiness camp meeting and also a partner with the Palmers in religious publishing. The official announcement for the first national holiness camp meeting was carried by the Guide to Holiness, which regularly featured news of the NHA. Some of the bishops of the MEC who supported the NHA were members, or frequent attendees, of Palmer’s Tuesday Meeting. The Palmers never joined a holiness association, even though they attended, and worked at, some of the camp meetings sponsored by the NHA.

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19 Raser, 279.

20 George Hughes (1823-1904) entered the MEC ministry in New Jersey (1844) eventually becoming a presiding elder. He was one of the founders of the NHA and served as its first secretary. Hughes was editor of the Methodist Home Journal and the New Jersey Methodist in the 1870s and the Guide to Holiness (1880-1902). He was chairman of the 1885 and 1902 General Holiness Assemblies and used his position to promote loyalty to the MEC. See Kostlevy, Historical Dictionary, 135.
This was most likely due to their loyalty to the MEC and their “sensitivity to the often repeated charge that promotion of holiness as a ‘speciality’ leads to schism.” Delbert Rose suggests that the Palmers chose to continue to work within the regular channels of the MEC because they believed that it alone had been organized to “spread scriptural holiness over the land.”

The initial meeting to organize “the first camp meeting ever held for the specific purpose of promoting the work of entire sanctification” was held in Philadelphia, in June 1867. William McDonald lists John A. Wood, W. B. Osborn, John S. Inskip and Dr. George M. C. Roberts as the initiators of this meeting. Anthony Atwood made the motion to start camp meetings “for the special promotion of Christian holiness” and the group supported Alfred Cookman’s proposal that it be called The National Camp Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness. The first such camp meeting was opened on July 17, 1867, at Vineland, New Jersey. This camp meeting marked the “beginning of the

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21 Raser, 277-282.
23 Peters, 134.
24 William McDonald (1820-1901) was an MEC minister who served as a pastor in Maine, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Massachucetts and New York. He served the NHA as vice president (1868-1884), president (1884-1893), and holiness evangelist. McDonald also was the editor for the Advocate of Bible Holiness, later Christian Witness (1870-1894) and operated a holiness publishing company during the 1880s and 1890s. See Kostlevy, Historical Dictionary, 170-171. John A. Wood (1828-1905) served as an MEC pastor in Vermont, New York and Pennsylvania. Starting in 1867 he served as an itinerant holiness evangelist for the NHA. Wood was the author of several books on holiness including Perfect Love (1860), Purity and Maturity (1876) and Christian Perfection as Taught by John Wesley (1885). See Kostlevy, Holiness Dictionary, 285-286. William Bramwell Osborn (1832-1902) served the MEC as a pastor and presiding elder in New Jersey, missionary (India and Australia) and evangelist. In addition to helping organize the NHA, he was the founder several campgrounds: Ocean Grove, New Jersey; Lanowli Camp in India, Australian Ocean Grove, Ocean Park, near Portland, Oregon, and Wesley Park, at Niagara Falls, New York. See Kostlevy, Historical Dictionary, 193-194. John S. Inskip (1816-1884) served as a pastor in the MEC in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York. He served as president of the NHA (1867 until his death), a full-time holiness evangelist, and agent for the National Holiness Publishing Association. See Kostlevy, Holiness Dictionary, 137-138. For more detailed information on their involvement in the NHA see Kenneth O. Brown, Inskip, McDonald, Fowler: “Wholly and Forever Thine” Early Leadership in the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness (Hazelton, PA: Holiness Archives, 1999).
modern holiness crusade" and the "beginning of the modern holiness movement in the United States."\(^{26}\) While many date the beginning of the holiness movement much earlier, the adoption of the use of camp meetings for the specific purpose of promoting holiness was indeed a paradigm shift. Dieter notes that the devotion of an entire ten-day camp meeting to the doctrine of entire sanctification was a new concept. Methodist ministers had previously set aside special services during camp meetings for this purpose, "but never had it been the central goal of the entire meeting."\(^{27}\)

In his book reviewing the national camp meetings conducted from 1867 to 1872, George Hughes reprinted the initial call for the first holiness camp meeting. It states that the conversion of sinners would be included but the special object would be holiness and the realization of a "Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost."\(^{28}\) The wording of this call indicates that the baptism called for was not limited to those who had not yet experienced entire sanctification. A review of the contents of this work reveals that Hughes’ title, *Days of Power in the Forest Temple*, was apt. His main concern was to describe the various ways in which the power of the Holy Spirit operated in all aspects of the spiritual life of the individual and the Church. When referring to “these modern Pentecosts,"\(^{29}\) he seems to be implying the entire event and not simply entire sanctification. His theology emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit but is also christological. In referring to the first sermon preached at the Round Lake, NY meeting in 1869, Hughes states that the speaker

\(^{26}\) Synan, 26.
\(^{27}\) Dieter, *The Holiness Revival*, 86.
\(^{29}\) Ibid., 90.
made it clear that the remedy for sin was the atoning blood of Christ, which was applied by the Holy Ghost.\textsuperscript{30}

When Alfred Cookman preached at Manheim, he preached on the "work of the Holy Ghost, the definite work of entire sanctification" and indicates that a "Pentecostal effusion" was requested and experienced.\textsuperscript{31} At Oaks Corners, the "Almighty Spirit was present," the people were exhorted to "seek the baptism now" and the "altar work had the power-signals. The baptism was realized." In this instance, it is not clear if this baptism was for salvation, entire sanctification or both.\textsuperscript{32} In chapter seven, "Sanctifying Power in the Forest Temple," Hughes affirms that the work of the Holy Spirit at the national camp meetings is "leading...justified believers into the enjoyment of entire holiness." On the very next page, Hughes indicates that efforts were undertaken to ensure that individuals who had "forfeited their justification by unfaithfulness, and who need to do their first works over again" did not mistake "restored justification for entire sanctification."\textsuperscript{33}

Chapter eight, "Converting Power at Forest Altars," links Bishop Simpson's ministry seeking the justification of sinners at Manheim and Round Lake as "linked in golden and deathless bonds to this Pentecostal advance."\textsuperscript{34} Testimony and song seemed to display "increased power," which was attributed to "effusions of the Holy Ghost." The tent that served as a Tabernacle was dedicated to the work, with a "consciousness that the Holy Spirit had accepted the offering. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were gloriously present, and filled the place." In chapter thirteen, "Evangelistic Power Flowing From the Forest Temple," Hughes indicates that women are "resources of the church," basing it on the

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 91.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 112-113.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 116.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 144-145.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 169.
fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy. All of these references indicate that Hughes, a major representative of the Holiness Movement, considered Pentecost, and therefore the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, as the receiving of power for all aspects of salvation, and for the life of the individual believer and the entire church.

Starting in the early 1870s, significant efforts to spread Scriptural holiness began in the South. C. B. Jernigan documents the fact that the holiness movement in Texas began with the efforts of Mrs. Martha McWhirter, a Methodist Sunday School teacher in Belton, Texas, in 1872. She professed and taught the doctrine of entire sanctification. Through the agency of James A. Graves, of Calvert, Texas, Illinois evangelist Hardin Wallace was invited to conduct revival services in the Methodist Church pastored by Rev. R. H. H. Burnett. Meetings began in February 1877 and were conducted in Bremond, Marlin, Denton, Gainesville and possibly Dallas. Throughout 1877, organized bands started Tuesday night holiness prayer meetings and took subscriptions for the Illinois periodical *The Banner of Holiness*. On October 10, 1878, the Texas Holiness Association was established at Rake Straw for the purpose of organizing and holding camp meetings. James A. Graves was elected president and John A. McKinney was elected vice president of the association. A nondenominational camp meeting held in Corsicana in 1879 was the precursor to numerous holiness camp meetings in the South in the 1880s.

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35 Ibid., 211, 243, 268, 286.
36 (Charles) B(rougher) Jernigan (1863-1930) and his wife, Johnny Hill, were ordained by Seth Rees of the International Apostolic Holiness Union in 1902, after which he cofounded the Holiness Association of Texas and Independent Holiness Church. Jernigan was instrumental in the 1904 merger of the Independent Holiness Church and the New Testament Church of Christ creating the Holiness Church of Christ. He was founding editor of the *Holiness Evangel* and after advocating that the Holiness Church of Christ unite with the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene he became superintendent of its Oklahoma District. Jernigan later served as superintendent of districts in New York, Florida, and Tennessee. See Kostlevy, *Historical Dictionary*, 143.
The research of Charles Edwin Jones indicates that NHA camp meetings in the 1870s and 1880s in Knoxville, Baltimore, Washington, and Augusta introduced Wesleyan perfectionism to many African Americans of Baptist background. A number of Missionary Baptists became leaders in the Holiness movement, including C. P. Jones, C. H. Mason, John A. Jeter, William Christian, and John Christian. Jones organized the Church of Christ (Holiness) in 1894 and conducted a series of holiness convocations with Mason and Jeter in 1897.\(^{37}\)

The success and popularity of the first three years of national camp meetings for the promotion of holiness set the stage for the adoption of other methods of promoting holiness across the nation. Inskip and McDonald were the first to commit themselves to the work of full-time holiness evangelists. Although Phoebe Palmer could be classified as a holiness evangelist long before this, they were the first to have the backing of an official organization for the special promotion of holiness. Encouraged by the success of the first national camp meetings, ministers and laity began organizing local and regional holiness associations to support holiness camp grounds and sponsor holiness revivals. Holiness revivals conducted at churches and camp grounds created a full-time ministry for holiness evangelists. These same associations also began sponsoring holiness meetings and holiness periodicals.

\(^{37}\) Jones, *Black Holiness*, 38. Jones also documents the fact that C. H. Mason, one of the participants in the 1897 holiness convocations, attended the 1906 Azusa St revival in Los Angeles, California that marks the emergence of the Pentecostal movement (page 45). William J. Seymour, an African American Holiness preacher was the leader of this revival. Seymour had studied at the Apostolic Faith school of Charles F. Parham in Houston. This indicates that some of the “black Pentecostal groups existing today actually began as Holiness groups, subsequently adopting the characteristics of Pentecostalism.” See, Lincoln and Mamiya, 76-79; Jones, *Black Holiness*, 83. An excellent source for the details leading to the Azusa St revival is James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalsim* (Fayetteville, London: The University of Arkansas Press, 1988).
In the first three years of its existence, the NHA sponsored one camp meeting each year. In the 1870s, multiple meetings were conducted in a variety of cities across numerous states. By the end of the decade, the NHA had sponsored forty-two camp meetings in fourteen states and nine tabernacle meetings in major cities. The success of these meetings resulted in the proliferation of holiness associations sponsoring holiness meetings, holiness camps and holiness periodicals. It appears that some of these holiness associations were organized to support a scheduled NHA camp meeting, others were organized immediately after a scheduled NHA meeting and still others were organized as a result of the efforts of holiness evangelists continuing the effort to spread Scriptural holiness. Many of them were organized to establish and maintain holiness camp grounds where annual meetings could be conducted. These associations were organized following the pattern that the NHA had inherited from Phoebe Palmer. The structure of regional and local holiness associations were a duplication of the structure of the NHA. Wallace Thornton points out that these “new holiness organizations were very loosely associated bands which cooperated around the common interest in promoting entire sanctification.” Their organizational structure allowed them to cooperate with existing denominations, at least for a short time, and each other with regards to camp meetings promoting entire sanctification, while at the same time emphasizing various aspects of

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38 McDonald, *Double Cure*, 8. Camp meetings were conducted in Massachusetts (4), Maryland (2), Illinois (3), New York (6), Ohio (5), Maine (4), Tennessee (2), Iowa (4), Pennsylvania (6), West Virginia (1), Nebraska (2), Wisconsin (1), New Hampshire (1) and Kansas (1). In some states these meetings were conducted in the same location, in different years (i.e., four of the five meetings in Ohio were held at Urbana, three of the four meetings in Maine were held at Old Orchard, both meetings in Tennessee were held in Knoxville, two of the four meetings in Iowa were held at Cedar Rapids and the other two at Clear Lake, two of the six meetings in Pennsylvania were held at New Castle, and both meetings in Nebraska were held at Bennett). In the other states the locations were different each year and at a different location in the same year. McDonald records that five tabernacle meetings were conducted in California, Salt Lake City and Indianapolis in 1871. Tabernacle meetings were also conducted in Baltimore (1873 and 1874) and Washington (1874 and 1875).

the doctrine at the local or regional level. While this flexibility was one of the strengths of the movement, it also would become one of the main reasons that prohibited the early organization of a national holiness church.

The proliferation of national camp meetings across the country and the increase in holiness revivals conducted by ministerial members of the NHA “directly influenced the founding of strictly independent holiness camp meetings all over the country.”40 The Wesleyan Holiness Association was organized by John P. Brooks and Milton Haney in 1871. The formation of the Ohio State Camp Meeting Association and founding of Camp Sychar at Mount Vernon, Ohio, is an example of the results of NHA holiness evangelism. In November 1867, Barlow W. Gorham visited Canton, Ohio, intending to take a short vacation. The local Methodist pastor, Rev. W. Sinsabaugh, asked Gorham to hold services in his church. The services lasted three weeks and resulted in the sanctification of Ephraim Ball, a leading farm equipment manufacturer. The first Ohio State Camp Meeting was organized and held in August, 1870 and the Ohio State Camp Meeting Association was organized at the end of this camp meeting. Ball was elected president and Gorham was elected secretary. In the years that followed, camp meetings were conducted at various locations until permanently established at Mount Vernon in 1887. Many of the leading preachers of the NHA conducted services at Camp Sychar during its first two decades. One of these, Edward F. Walker, became a general superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene.41 The interdenominational aspect of the holiness camp meeting associations is reflected in the fact that Walker was a Presbyterian. Brown also mentions other leaders of different denominations, including

40 Brown, Inskip, McDonald, Fowler, 101.
Adventist John W. Goodwin who also became a general superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene.42

The Impact of Weekly Holiness Meetings

The holiness meeting, which was one of the methods adopted by the holiness associations, is vital to an understanding of changing religiosity within the Holiness movement. These meetings were patterned after Phoebe Palmer’s Tuesday Meeting and initiated by those who had attended Palmer’s meeting or had read about the meeting in the Guide to Holiness. As discussed in the previous chapter, Palmer utilized the methods of a select band meeting prescribed by the Methodist Discipline in her Tuesday Meeting. Briane Turley agrees with this and states that the Tuesday Meeting was “open only to those persons who were in the experience of the second blessing or who earnestly sought to receive it.”43 In contrast to this view, A. Gregory Schneider argues that the holiness meeting was a “new version of the class meeting” in which the “old ritual economy of testimony in Methodism had taken on a new incarnation.”44 According to Schneider, these meetings were the “holiness version of the class meeting, without the disciplinary function that the class meeting had once served and, significantly, without the class meeting’s official status in church structure.”45

If these meetings were based upon Wesley’s select societies, they would necessarily differ from class meetings. Those selected to attend had already been members of a class meeting and would have been considered by church leaders as living

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42 Brown, Inskip, McDonald, Fowler, 104.
43 Turley, 51-52.
in full compliance with the Discipline. Palmer's real innovation was the desegregation (gender and marital status) of the meeting and allowing access to believers from other denominations who were also seeking the second blessing. Perhaps Palmer was able to conduct these meetings because of her loyalty to the MEC and the attendance of key pastors and bishops. While patterned after an accepted practice, in the hands of holiness advocates under the auspices of independent holiness associations these meetings were increasingly described as one of the new measures in the promotion of instantaneous entire sanctification.

Holiness advocates who sponsored holiness meetings also followed the pattern established in the antebellum period of using holiness periodicals to advertise their organizations and promote instantaneous entire sanctification with its tendency towards an imagistic mode of religiosity. Rev. D. D. Lore's article on the "Baptism of Power," printed in the Advocate of Christian Holiness, is an example of the increasing popularity of equating entire sanctification with the day of Pentecost (Acts, Chapter 2). Lore argues that the chief characteristic of the "descent of the Holy Ghost" was power and that this power is a privilege of all Christians. He writes, "Truth and freedom are power: the reception of the Holy Ghost brings truth and freedom to our spiritual natures; and, in proportion as we are filled with the Holy Ghost, we are true and free and powerful. The natural effect of such a blessing would be moral strength, certainty, and courage."46

Personal testimonies of the realization of this power continued to be a feature of the periodicals of holiness associations. Reports of the "Boston Monday Meeting" are an example of these testimonies. In sharing her experience of entire sanctification, Sister C. wrote about her "consciousness that all was on the altar" and God's response of cleansing

her heart from all sin. She writes, “I believe in the Holy Ghost and fire. Now the power of the Spirit is like fire shut up in my bones.”

During the November 28th meeting, William McDonald spoke on the analogy of Pentecost and entire sanctification concluding that “When God comes into us by the baptism of fire, then we are just prepared for his work, and we are not fully prepared till then. Without this, we accomplish little.”

Biographies and autobiographies of individuals involved in Holiness associations also provide insight into the nature of the experience of instantaneous entire sanctification these associations promoted. John T. Hatfield’s undated account of his life provides details of his conversion in 1872 and personal struggle for entire sanctification eight years later. Both events involved a spiritual struggle of which Hatfield describes himself as being “intensely conscious” of his lost state and then experiencing an “intense hungering and thirsting for a clean heart.” His experience of entire sanctification took place during a revival service at his home church. Called upon to pray for those gathered at the altar, Hatfield recalls

I began to pray for them, but soon my prayers were turned to praying for myself. How often had I prayed for a clean heart, and how often had I been blessed in praying for it, but the ‘old man’ still remained; but this time, by the aid of the Spirit, I was given the key to the situation. Heretofore I had been praying myself up into blessings without exercising any faith, but when I reached the place where I said, ‘Lord, I do believe,’ instantly the fire fell, and I knew the work was done. The ‘old man’ was killed, and I have never seen him since, and that has been more than thirty years ago.

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48 Ibid., 27.
50 Ibid., 16-17.
In a separate chapter, "What My Consecration Involved," Hatfield describes his experience of entire sanctification as a dedication of his entire self to the Lord and goes on to describe the practical results of that decision as power (1) to give up his tobacco habit and his lodge membership, (2) change his political party, (3) stop wearing jewelry, and (4) answer a "deeply conscious" call to "do the work of an evangelist."  

In her biography of her husband, Samuel Ashton Keen, Mary P. Keen shares the remarks he recorded about his baptism with the Holy Ghost in 1869. Samuel Keen expressed his disappointment in the lack of results from his preaching on Sunday evening, January 3. Struggling with this situation he became aware of the inner voice of the Spirit making him aware of his own need of sanctification, having several years before read a copy of the Guide to Holiness. The next Sunday while praying in preparation for preaching, Keen experienced the witness of the Spirit cleansing and filling his heart. According to Keen, the results were a "great number" of sinners turning to God that day. He remarks that "within a few weeks, over one hundred and sixty had been converted. From that day to this, summer nor winter, has the Lord left me without blessed and pervasive revivals of religion."  

The Influence of Holiness Periodicals

The effective utilization of the religious press was to become a vital element in the rise of a national holiness movement.  

51 Ibid., 19-21.
53 Martin E. Marty states that the press is an "efficient instrument" for those who seek to change denominations or form "transdenominational movements." See "The Religious Press" Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience: Studies of Traditions and Movements, Volume III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 1697-1698. According to Marty, the Protestant press was "discovered or invented"
of other holiness periodicals, the National Holiness Association started publishing the *Advocate of Christian Holiness* in 1870.\(^{54}\) William McDonald served as editor from its inception through 1890, except for a six month period of 1876 when he resigned to alleviate financial problems of the National Publishing Association. During this time, John Inskip served as the editor of the periodical and the *Christian Standard*, which the National Association continued to publish after purchasing it in 1874 from Adam Wallace. The workload became too much for Inskip and McDonald resumed his duties as editor of the *Advocate of Christian Holiness*. Brown indicates that the *Advocate of Christian Holiness* was initially published privately in Boston until the formation of the National Publishing Association for the Promotion of Holiness in 1874. At that time, a building was purchased in Philadelphia and the paper moved there along with the *Christian Standard*. In 1882, McDonald purchased the periodical from the National Association, moved it back to Boston, entered a business partnership with Joshua Gill, and renamed the periodical the *Advocate of Bible Holiness*. The name was changed again, in 1883, to *Christian Witness and Advocate of Bible Holiness* when McDonald and Gill purchased the *New England Methodist*.\(^{55}\) From 1883 to 1951, it was published as the *Christian Witness and Advocate of Bible Holiness*, with George A. McLaughlin serving in the early nineteenth century by churches engaged in the "competition for the loyalties of people." See "The Religious Press" *Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience: Studies of Traditions and Movements, Volume III* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 1699. Marty also notes that the proliferation of competitive groups led to the radical increase in the number of religious periodicals." See Martin E. Marty, John G. Deedy Jr., David Wolf Silverman, Robert Lekachman, *The Religious Press in America* (New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), 40. Kathryn Long states that there were over 100 religious weeklies, with over 400,000 subscribers by 1860. America had become "a newspaper-reading nation." See Kathryn Teresa Long, *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 27.

\(^{54}\) Brown, Inskip, McDonald, Fowler, 98. Brown states that Phoebe Palmer was concerned that another holiness periodical would "divide and weaken the holiness market." Even though one of the existing periodicals, the *Christian Standard*, was subsequently sold to the NHA (1874), the proliferation of holiness periodicals in the following years indicates that there was a market for both national and regional holiness periodicals.

\(^{55}\) Ibid., 98-100.
as its editor from 1891 to 1933 and Charles W. Butler from 1933 to 1947. James A. DeWeerd took over as editor in 1947 and the periodical was published as the *Christian Witness* starting in 1952. Publication ceased after 1959.\(^5\)

The first issue carried the sub-heading of "A monthly exclusively devoted to the spread of Primitive holiness."\(^5\)\(^7\) A review of the first four issues reveals that the periodical focused on providing articles on the doctrine of holiness, reports from national camp meetings, information on future camp meetings, and advertisements for holiness periodicals and books.\(^5\)\(^8\) It would seem that the great success of the first years of the holiness camp meetings, combined with the efforts of the early periodicals created a national audience for the *Advocate of Christian Holiness*. It is not difficult to imagine that both clergy and lay holiness advocates attending the national camp meetings of 1870 subscribed to the new periodical of the National Association. It would not take long for copies of this periodical to appear in homes and churches across the nation. In his report from the 1901 General Holiness Assembly, W. E. Shepard reported that "Opportunities were given to represent different holiness periodicals, and I embraced the opportunity of speaking for our *Nazarene Messenger*."\(^5\)\(^9\)

\(^{55}\) Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Archives, MicroFilm 158.  
\(^{57}\) *Advocate of Christian Holiness* 1:1 (July 1870): 1.  
\(^{58}\) The July 1870 issue also included articles such as "Baptism of Power" by Rev. D. D. Lore, "The Spiritual Life Demanded of the Church" by Rev. W. H. Boole, "Holiness and Methodism: Historical Facts" by Rev. C. Munger. The August 1870 issue (Vol. 1, No. 2) contains an editorial titled "The Effects of One Sin: Original", an article by Rev. W. H. Boole, "The Power of Faith: OR, Emancipation From All Sin The Christian's Prerogative", a day-to-day report of the Fourth National Camp Meeting at Hamilton (pages 22 through 30) and advertisements for the *Guide to Holiness* by W. C. Palmer and the *Living Epistle*, Orwig's periodical from Cleveland. The September 1870 issue (Vol. 1, No. 3) contained an editorial on "The Holy Ghost, Not Science, The Need of the Ministry", an article titled "Perfectionists and Christian Perfection" by Asa Mahan and an extensive day-by-day report of the Fifth National Camp Meeting at Oakington (Maryland). One of the interesting activities was on day 6, called "Roll of States", containing brief comments on the progress of the promotion of holiness from each state represented at the meeting. Twenty-eight states reported ranging from California in the West, Maine in the North, and Florida in the South.  
The Advocate of Christian Holiness is a vital source of information for determining the religiosity expressed by leaders of the Holiness movement and an emerging point of contention within the movement. A review of the issues of the first years of the periodical reveal some articles that equate the Day of Pentecost and Baptism of the Holy Spirit specifically with entire sanctification. There are many more articles that refer to entire sanctification in Christological terms or as accomplished by the power of the Holy Ghost, without specifically connecting the event with Pentecost. When dealing with the issue of entire sanctification, numerous articles utilize the language of an instantaneous, second work of grace and/or full salvation. They stress that full salvation is “receivable now by faith” and the importance of consecration. In an article in the first issue, J. A. Wood complains that too many members of the MEC were ignoring, rejecting or opposing “any special or distinct work of instantaneous purification after regeneration.” He does not use Pentecostal language in the article. An article entitled “The Christian’s Privilege,” apparently written by the editor, utilizes the language of cleansing, purity and perfection in referring to believers who are “sanctified wholly” and “full of the Holy Ghost.” The October 1870 issue carried a reprint of the closing appeal of a sermon preached by Rev. S. V. Leech at Bunker Hill Camp-Meeting, Virginia, on July 31, 1870. In this appeal, Leech exhorted the audience to “complete consecration” and “faith in God’s power, willingness, and readiness to cleanse the soul from all impurity.” A report on “Pentecost at Eutaw Street, Baltimore” states that, after the

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announcement of a “celebration of the feast of Pentecost,” the desired “mighty baptism was soon manifest, and almost immediately realized.”  

Although the report uses Pentecostal language, there is no direct association of Pentecost and entire sanctification. The article states that the “work of our Almighty Lord” is to “awaken, convert, and sanctify.” In another issue, Samuel Dunn listed twelve points of comparison between justification and sanctification, but does not mention the baptism of the Holy Ghost. His last point states that “[s]anctification is the work of God, meritoriously by the atonement of Christ, efficiently by the operations of the Holy Spirit, but experimentally by faith, and is the privilege of all Christian believers.”

During the same period, some articles appear that do make a direct connection between entire sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. William McDonald declared that Scripture affirms that the disciples “were Christians before the day of Pentecost” and that the “baptism of Pentecost included” the purification of their hearts, or entire sanctification. He firmly declares that this “must settle the controversy.” His remark indicates that debate about the proper interpretation of the baptism of the Holy Ghost was already in full swing. At the seventeenth National Camp-Meeting, held in Moundsville, West Virginia (August 1873), John Inskip delivered a message based upon the Acts account of the Day of Pentecost and described the event as a “holiness meeting; the special object of which was the sanctification of believers.” In 1874, the periodical began to feature a series of articles written by Daniel Steele. His article in the May 1874

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64 “Pentecost at Eutaw Street, Baltimore” Advocate of Christian Holiness 1:5 (November 1870): 73.
issue refers to John Fletcher's use of the baptism of the Holy Ghost as the moment of entire sanctification and states that this baptism:

...includes the extinction of sin in the believer's soul as its negative and minor part, and the fullness of love shed abroad in the heart as its positive and greater part; in other words, it includes entire sanctification and Christian perfection.68

In a subsequent article, Steele argues that "Catechism No. 2" of the MEC supports the belief in an instantaneous act of entire sanctification accomplished by the baptism of the Holy Ghost.69

My review of the issues published during the first years of the Advocate of Christian Holiness also reveals a number of articles that include Pentecostal rhetoric that could be interpreted as referring to entire sanctification or could be interpreted as a reference to the work of the Spirit in all aspects of salvation. Some are reports of National Camp-Meetings that indicate an invitation to "unite in asking for the baptism of the Holy Ghost." While some also make reference to "holiness," there is no specific reference to sanctification.70 A report from "The Cincinnati Meeting" illustrates the difficulty of interpreting the viewpoint of the author.

Nearly every church of the denomination in the city has felt the blessed presence and influence of the Holy Spirit. Souls have been saved, believers have been sanctified, and scores of God's children have renewed their consecration, and are seeking the blessing of heart purity...Faithful hearts in Cincinnati, emptied of self, consecrated to the Master, are waiting for the descent of the Holy Ghost in Pentecostal power.71

At least in the early years of the Holiness movement, Pentecostal rhetoric did not necessarily mean the author specifically meant entire sanctification. It would seem that while some in the NHA were convinced about the connection of instantaneous entire sanctification with Pentecost others were not and the independent nature of the associations within the NHA made the existence of a variety of opinions possible.

Although Christological language continues to be found in a significant number of articles in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, there does appear to be an increase of Pentecostal rhetoric that specifically equates the baptism of the Holy Ghost with entire sanctification. In “Our Holiness Prayers,” J. Gill states that the baptism of the Holy Ghost “means holiness.” He specifically equates it with cleansing the heart from “all” sin and declares that Methodists should “cease asking God” for it, unless they “are ready for all it implies.”

In a later article, Gill states that the “baptism of the Holy Ghost is a definite Christian experience conferred subsequent to conversion upon those who definitely seek it.” Quoting Bishop Whedon, he concludes that the disciples were justified prior to the Day of Pentecost. In two articles in successive issues, J. W. Hill equates the baptism of the Holy Ghost with “entire holiness” and the “endowment of power from on high.”

The increase in articles specifically dealing with the issue of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and Pentecostal rhetoric, coincides with an increase in the publication of books dedicated to the theme, during the 1880s and 1890s. The use of holiness periodicals to promote specific understandings of holiness contributed to the increasing opposition to its special promotion.

Growing Opposition to the Special Promotion of Holiness

While the leadership of holiness associations expressed their desire to remain a part of the popular churches during the 1870s their emphasis on the ritual of entire sanctification and their independent organizational structure combined to create the conflict between holiness associations and denominations (specifically the MEC). By the mid-seventies, the MEC considered holiness associations and their periodicals as irregular agencies.75 The holiness associations opposed the hierarchical authority of the MEC believing, according to Schneider, that “order, unity, and spiritual power were the spontaneous products of the Holy Spirit’s work in the hearts of believers.”76 Although based upon doctrine, specifically the Methodist doctrine of Christian perfection, the emphasis of the Holiness Movement in the 1870s was clearly placed upon the ritual of entire sanctification. Conversion of sinners was not ignored but leaders of NHA camp meetings were primarily concerned with encouraging believers to seek entire sanctification.

MEC opposition towards the NHA was not simply opposition to the theology, but was also opposition to revivalistic methods. In 1878, this opposition was expressed by Dr. Daniel D. Whedon, editor of the *Methodist Quarterly Review*. He classified the special methods (the holiness association, the holiness periodical, the holiness prayer meeting and the holiness preacher) utilized by holiness advocates as modern novelties that Wesley would not have allowed. Whedon was commenting on a tract by George D. Watson opposing Dr. J. O. A. Clark’s position on holiness. In his article, Whedon was not only critical of Watson, but he also included Inskip and McDonald. McDonald’s

76 Schneider, “A Conflict of Associations,” 276.
response in the Advocate of Christian Holiness replied that Whedon was not the "chief umpire in Methodism, he is a greatly mistaken man." Both accused the other of un-Wesleyan heresy. The acrimonious spirit of these exchanges was "prophetic of the extreme polarization which was taking place both in the National Association and the institutional churches. There was a developing breakdown of communication between the growing movement and the church structures." In spite of these tensions, the NHA continued to express their resolve that they were not a separatist movement.

Between 1875 and 1880, the tensions between the leadership of the MEC and the NHA became more pronounced with the independent character of the Association becoming increasingly "repugnant to the traditionally well-organized and tightly knit polity of the Methodist church." Other factors affecting the NHA during this period were: (1) the increased wealth of the nation caused by rapid expansion of the economy and industrialization; (2) the Methodist Episcopal Church was becoming a middle-class church; (3) urbanization caused by migration from Europe and rural America; (4) training in newly founded seminaries of the church were not teaching Wesley’s theology and practice; (5) the influx of an unusually large number of new men into the total ministerial force because of the dynamic growth of the church; (6) the membership growth of the Methodist Church helped create a crisis of discipline [gradual relaxation of rules]; and (7) the alienation of significant portions of the population from the established patterns of orthodox Christian religion. Recognizing many of these factors, leaders of the NHA increased the tempo of their revivalism and, subsequently, the potential for confrontation

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78 Synan, 35.
79 Dieter, The Holiness Revival, 171-175.
between the Movement and the Church. This resulted in both sides predicting schism because of the actions of the other.

During this time of mounting tensions between the NHA and the MEC, other holiness associations were being organized around the country. The lack of discipline in some of these organizations resulted in the extremism the NHA had sought to avoid. These “indiscriminate groups of holiness zealots provided ample ammunition for those who wanted to drive their fears concerning extremism within the movement to their ‘logical’ ends.”80 The growing tensions created the call for a general holiness convention of all associations, with the purpose of national unity and order. The desired convention became two conferences, one held at Cincinnati, Ohio, beginning November 26, 1877, and the other held at New York City, beginning December 17, 1877. Although these meetings (and similar ones in 1880 at Jacksonville, in 1882 at Round Lake, and at Chicago in 1885 and 1901) failed to create the unity and order many of the leaders desired, Melvin Dieter notes that these conventions “undoubtedly played a vital informal rule in providing a continuing fellowship and a channel of direct communication between leaders of the movement which no other instrument could provide at that time.”81 These conventions may have been the instrument of establishing the relationships and contacts required for the national merger of independent holiness churches and groups from diverse regions of the country, since many ministers and laypersons were expressing their desire to be free from the control of the hierarchical authority of the MEC. By the end of the century, this feeling would be expressed by F. E. Hill:

The holiness movement has now reached its zenith under the iron-clad government of ecclesiasticism in the popular churches. The tide is receding;

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80 Ibid., 179-180.
81 Ibid., 188.
something must be done to save the fruit of years of labor. God will do it if we let Him. We make a deplorable mistake when we call any ecclesiastical machinery the church of God, or body of Christ. The church of God should be free under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, to carry the glad tidings over land and sea, proclaiming a full salvation from all sin, clothed and equipped with a church policy in harmony with her mission.82

Hill expresses the type of selfhood being created by holiness associations focusing on instantaneous entire sanctification throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Utilizing Phoebe Palmer’s altar theology and Pentecostal rhetoric, holiness became almost synonymous with this imagistic ritual which its advocates believed would create a “holy Church” and “converted world.”83 The sense of authority and power associated with this episodic event provided the motivation individuals needed to break from established churches and start holiness churches.

Conflicting Concepts of Self

A. Gregory Schneider suggests that the late-nineteenth century conflict between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Holiness Movement was the result of the conflicting concepts of the self promoted by the two organizations. He states that the “differing responses” to the spiritual state of the MEC was “grounded in differing experiences of the self, experiences which arose as believers’ selfhood was constructed in and through differing patterns of association.”84 He labels the two different concepts of the self: (1) the objective self and (2) the empowered self. The first finds its “validation in and through the public offices and benevolent activities”85 of the institution. The second finds its power through a direct experience with the supernatural. By the closing

83 “Pentecost at Eutaw Street, Baltimore” Advocate of Christian Holiness 1:5 (November 1870): 73.
85 Ibid., 241.
decades of the nineteenth century, the MEC "had ceded the shaping of the inner self to institutions that superintended the self in the gradual processes of its natural development, processes that, with the rise of psychology, would eventually themselves become subject to 'objective' description and analysis." In contrast, the "reinvigorated rituals of testimony" of holiness advocates "elevated the individual soul and its definite experience of full salvation."

In his article addressing the differing understandings of the nature and role of Christian experience between the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) and the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, Byron C. Lambert proposes that the blending of Wesleyanism and American revivalism resulted in the establishment of a "new non-sacramental, evangelical, and individualistic Christianity at the heart of the new nation," with the test of genuine Christianity becoming "one's experience of the Holy Spirit." Holiness groups "dissatisfied with the turn the Methodist Episcopal Church was taking, went off on their own...leaving behind ecclesiastical forms of the church that Wesley had bequeathed to the new land." He concludes that both churches have a history of being "anti-creedal, anti-hierarchical, and anti-liturgical."

Both of these articles indicate that one's concept of self impacts acceptance or rejection of institutional forms and practices. A conception of the self as possessing the power and authority of the Spirit of God leads to more radical expressions resulting in almost total separation from institutional forms and practices. Melvin Dieter states that

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86 Ibid., 248.
87 Ibid., 249.
89 Ibid., 145.
90 Ibid., 153.

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the Holiness Movement was torn between the “two polarities of restitutionism and reform,” with the “larger portion” remaining “committed to its historical roots” and creating

holiness churches, disclaiming any charges of ‘come-outism.’ But it was a primitivist model of Pentecost, a Church of the Spirit, often explicated in the natural, ecclesiastical and spiritual freedom of the holiness camp meeting which shaped their doctrine, worship, and mission.\(^9\)

Dieter concludes that the Pentecostal dimension has diminished in these churches and more historic inclinations have emerged. The explanation for this change may be found in the balancing of individual authority with communal authority that resulted from the process of institutionalization.

The creation of conflicting concepts of selfhood appears to be the concern of Joseph Smith, when in 1916 he expressed the concern about the “development” of holiness among those who professed entire sanctification. After praising what he viewed as positive contributions of the Holiness Movement, the “tangible trophies” of holiness songs, papers, books, colleges, missionaries and the “flying squadron” of evangelists; Smith remarks that many holiness advocates have not progressed beyond an “emotional type of Christian experience” requiring “excitement, even if it has to be mechanically produced!”\(^9\)\(^2\) It is noteworthy that Joseph Smith was one of the of holiness evangelists, yet he states that one of the deficiencies of the movement was the absence of any institutional means for Church discipline. He states that “the grace of entire sanctification has not suspended the need of discipline. Self-control, divine chastening


and church government are all still requisite for holiness people. Smith addresses a concern that had been voiced by others in the MEC and Holiness movement. Other writers had expressed their concern that one of the vital means of discipline and development, the class meeting, had been lost.

Although some thought that the weekly holiness meeting was a substitute for the class meeting, others seemed to realize that this meeting lacked the disciplinary and accountability factor of the older Methodist class meeting. "The Editor’s Portfolio" of the Advocate of Christian Holiness had expressed the concern that the modification of the rule requiring class meeting attendance for MEC membership would mean that "any common sinner might become a member without changing his life." In spite of the recognition by many that some institutional form of discipline and discipleship was required, the holiness churches emerging from the Holiness Movement lacked this type of institutional mechanism. The Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene is an example of a holiness denomination in which the tension between the individual's religious experience, as authoritative, and the institutional forms and practices was evident from its beginning.

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93 Ibid., 14-15.
CHAPTER IV

THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Growing denominational opposition to holiness associations, and the failure of the NHA to adequately address the differing opinions on the formation of a national holiness church, culminated in the establishment of independent holiness churches during the 1880s and 1890s by ministers and laity whose relationships with their denominations had been severed either by their own choice or by a decision of their denominations. In the early 1880s, the organization of independent groups in Missouri, Kansas and California added to the conflict over holiness within the MEC and internal tensions within the NHA. These groups adopted written doctrinal statements, permitted discussion on the topics of faith healing and the millennium, and created local bands, auxiliaries, and Bible training academies.¹ In the face of charges of being the “seedbed and sponsors”² of come-outism, some of the holiness associations attempted to discourage these activities and separate themselves from those who insisted on secession. In spite of the efforts of the leaders of the associations, separations such as Daniel Warner's organization of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) in 1880 and the Holiness church in California added to the come-outism controversy and paved the way for the emergence of independent holiness churches.

The proliferation of holiness bands, associations, and independent churches created a controversy within the NHA. A national assembly was held May 20-26, 1885 in Chicago. Attempting to be a mediator between loyalists and come-outers, this meeting

¹ Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion, 57-58.
² Peters, 140.
had been suggested by S. B. Shaw (1854-1941) in his publication, *Michigan Holiness Record*, in 1884. Shaw was the president of the Michigan Holiness Association and editor of its periodical (1883-1890). He later organized the Primitive Holiness Mission in Dutton, Michigan (1890) and served as convener and editor of the proceedings of the 1901 General Holiness Assembly.³

**Tensions within the National Holiness Association and Continued Opposition**

The national assembly of 1885 was dominated by conservative leaders, led by Chairman George Hughes of New York City. Hughes, who had succeeded Phoebe Palmer as editor of the *Guide to Holiness*, was the secretary and historian of the organization. The assembly adopted a “Declaration of Principles” which rejected any separation from the denominations and declared that holiness was “not a disintegrating but a conserving force.”⁴ The Chairman of the Assembly refused to allow the reading of a letter from James F. Washburn of California which recommended the formation of a national independent holiness church. The declaration of the assembly failed to stem the tide of organizing independent associations and churches. The debate continued between those “who believed that separate holiness denominations were necessary and those who relied upon associations to carry on the work.”⁵

Kenneth Brown points out that theological tensions within the NHA were the result of “differing views on eschatology and divine healing.”⁶ C. J. Fowler (1845-1919) had succeeded William McDonald as president of the NHA upon McDonald’s retirement

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⁴ Smith, *Called Unto Holiness*, 34.
⁵ Ibid., 35.
in 1894 and was faced with dealing with this theological controversy. Many holiness evangelists had adopted a premillennial view of the return of Christ and accepted divine healing as a proof of the presence of the Spirit. Fowler warned the association about these issues in 1897 and resolutions were adopted at the annual meeting. These resolutions did not obligate anyone to accept a specific view but did state that personal views on these issues should not be prominent at national camp meetings. The adopted resolutions affirmed that the central purpose of the association was to promote the spread of Scriptural holiness and prohibit issues that would side-track that purpose. According to Brown, C. W. Ruth, vice-president of the NHA, supported the resolutions, although he was an advocate of premillennialism and divine healing.

The same ideal of focusing on the central issue of holiness was to become a prominent part of the organization of the Church of the Nazarene. Several of the holiness associations established in the last two decades of the nineteenth century were composed of independent churches seeking the support of other holiness advocates. As opposition to these independent churches and associations grew, so did the desire for organized holiness. As smaller groups began to merge and grow, the foundation was formed for the establishment of a national holiness church in spite of NHA efforts aimed at maintaining the interdenominational nature of the movement.8

7 C(hristian) W(isner) Ruth (1865-1941) was a pastor and presiding elder of the Holiness Christian Church. In 1896, he began traveling as a full-time evangelist for the NHA. Ruth was associate pastor (1901-1903) and assistant general superintendent (1901-1907) of Phineas F. Bresee's Los Angeles Church of the Nazarene. He served as a vice president of the NHA from 1908 to 1918, organized the National Holiness Missionary Society, a NHA auxiliary, in 1910 and served as its president from 1925-1941. See Kostlevy, Historical Dictionary, 223-224.

8 Kenneth Brown provides a list of the national holiness camp meetings conducted from 1867 through 1942 and a summary of the presidents of the National Association. The last of the national holiness camp meetings was conducted at University Park, Iowa in June 1942 (see Inskip, McDonald, Fowler, 267-275). The association continued to exist changing its name to the Christian Holiness Association in 1971 and again in 1998 to Christian Holiness Partnership. The CHP currently publishes Camp Meeting Challenge.
During the last decade of the nineteenth century, many leaders and members of the NHA separated from their denominations and established independent holiness churches. The Church of the Nazarene and the Pentecostal Churches of America, which will be discussed later in this chapter, are examples. It is interesting that both of these were organized around the time of the statement of the 1894 General Conference of the MEC, South on the holiness problem. This statement affirmed that the doctrine of entire sanctification was still a central aspect of the doctrine of Methodism. Preachers were urged to proclaim it and those who had experienced entire sanctification were urged to testify about their experience. However, these statements were followed by criticisms of those who belong to a “party” which “has sprung up...with ‘holiness’ as a watchword.”

Those belonging to holiness associations were said to be concerned only with the two instantaneous works of grace without regard to the process of growth. While the “sincerity and zeal” of those belonging to this party was applauded, the statement concluded “we do deplore their teaching and methods in so far as they claim a monopoly of the experience, practice, and advocacy of holiness and separate themselves from the body of ministers and disciples.”

In addition to its opposition to the emphasis on the instantaneous aspect of entire sanctification, the Methodist hierarchy believed that the theology and practice of the holiness associations were a “form of exclusivism.” E. Dale Dunlap suggests that the increasing move towards separation from the MEC was due to “a major shift from the

and The Holiness Digest. The first publication is an annual listing of holiness camp meetings and the second is the association's periodical published four times a year.


10 Ibid., 100.

11 Turley, 23.
holiness of perfection toward Pentecostalism" within the Holiness Movement. He states that this shift was "symbolized in 1897 with the Guide to Holiness dropping the subtitle 'and Revival Miscellany' in favor of 'and Pentecostal Life.'" While NHA leadership was attempting to maintain loyalty to existing denominations, especially the MEC, holiness periodicals continued to focus on instantaneous entire sanctification and its vesting of the individual with spiritual authority and power. Some examples from the periodical of the Church of the Nazarene indicate that independent holiness churches were promoting a very different religiosity than suggested by the NHA.

Reports from holiness meetings continued to emphasize the autonomy of the individual through the personal testimonies of participants. On the same page as F. E. Hills' article, "The Holiness Movement and Its Opposition," mentioned in the previous chapter, the Tuesday Holiness Meeting report indicated that "Sister Tudor" had given a message on Bible symbols which equated the always burning light in the Jewish Temple with the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the entirely sanctified. She proclaimed that "The light in the temple was never to go out, but kept burning continuously; in like manner the light kindled in the human heart by the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost is to be kept burning with undimmed glory."

One of the testimonies, by Sister Bresee, reinforced the idea of the direct, inward leadership of the Holy Spirit of God: "I have learned something of this second work of grace. The Spirit led me by degrees until I saw it was my privilege to enter in: I now rejoice in the liberty of the children of God." In another issue of the periodical, Rev. J. A. Dean testified that he was "in touch with the

\[12\] Dunlap, 98.
\[14\] Ibid.
supernatural...God does reveal Himself to me.” A “sister” remarked that “The Master has come and abides. My life is filled with gladness because of His presence.”15

The theme of Pentecostal power appears in other holiness meeting testimonies. In a message on Acts 1:8, W. E. Shepard spoke about the power Jesus promised the disciples: “This power would enable them to reach men, to live holy lives, to keep humble, sweet, gentle and long-suffering. They would be guarded in their words, unwavering in their faith, steadfast under persecution, and faithful witnesses to the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost.” The individual testimonies which followed included: (1) “A Bro. When the Holy Ghost came in He destroyed carnality. To be filled with the Spirit is to have power with God and man.”; (2) “A Bro. This power is something that fills, and thrills, and satisfies. God can use a soul that is utterly given up to him.”; and (3) “Sister Clarry. I have been in touch with this power for many years. I know something of the indwelling comforter. I have got beyond the forty year experience. It keeps today, at home, in the church, everywhere.”16 In another holiness meeting, a Sister Harrison remarked “…I feel the thing to do is to stand on my feet, open my lips and speak for myself—of my knowledge of God and Christ and the indwelling Holy Ghost in my own heart.”17

With both sides of the debate claiming consistency with Wesleyan theology and practice, an examination of the controversy from another perspective may be enlightening. A. Gregory Schneider suggests that organizational structure, and the authority associated with it, was a key element in the conflict between the MEC and holiness associations. The process of institutionalization within the MEC had created a

“large and complex organization” requiring a change in its “style of leadership.” For example, what had originally been voluntary benevolent and reform associations controlled by the laity with communication ties to the church structure became “incorporated into the ecclesiastical structure” managed by Bishops, and perhaps even pastors. Schneider argues that committee meetings took the place of testimony meetings and the sign of spirituality became involvement in benevolence. In this trend towards incorporation, proponents of holiness perceived a decline in spirituality and a relaxation of the “moral boundary between the community of believers and ‘the world.’” In reacting against this perceived decline in spirituality and morality, they challenged the hierarchical authority structure of incorporation. Church officials defended their “functional boundaries” at the expense of the moral boundaries. Schneider concludes that the NHA offended MEC officials because the organization had originated outside of and challenged its connectional system. In contrast, advocates of holiness believed that they were empowered, and given the authority of God, by the Holy Spirit and refused to compromise their moral and spiritual tenets. Given the increasing use of Pentecostal rhetoric to express the empowering nature of entire sanctification, it is understandable that some independent holiness churches would include it in their name.

The emergence of independent holiness congregations and denominations in the last two decades of the nineteenth century created a dilemma within the NHA. By the

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19 Ibid., 273.
20 Ibid., 274.
21 Ibid., 276.
22 South Eastern Kansas Fire Baptized Holiness Association (1890), Association of Pentecostal Churches of America (1895), Fire Baptized Holiness Church (1895), Church of God, Apostolic (1896), Pentecostal Alliance (1897), Pentecostal Holiness Church (1900). When the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America and Church of the Nazarene merged in 1907, they selected the name Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene.
turn of the century, many of these organizations were using the promotional techniques of the NHA to recruit individuals and congregations. The resulting tensions within the NHA are reflected in the comments of S. B. Shaw in his account of the preparation for the 1901 General Holiness Assembly conducted in Chicago, Illinois. He had been responsible for publishing the Official Call of this assembly and organizing the preparatory revival services. Shaw stated his concern that the “last few years [had] witnessed a sad scattering of the holiness people.” According to him, the promise of holiness to unite Christians had not been realized; rather, divisions had increased and the work of holiness was suffering. He was obviously referring to the emergence of numerous holiness congregations in the 1880s and 1890s. In his remarks about the preparatory revival services, Shaw noted that the holiness movement had been hindered by a lack of sympathy and co-operation. He stated that “many of the holiness people allow their differences on non-essentials to result in prejudice and lack of Christian charity.”

Additionally, there is evidence that some holiness leaders had become disillusioned with the prospects of any successful unity within the NHA. It took several months to complete the work of publishing the call for the assembly because of the need to fill vacancies in the original committee. Shaw also stated that there had been “great opposition” from some who he had expected sympathy. We can perhaps identify some of the opposition by comparing the lists of those who supported, and attended, the previous NHA conventions against the 1901 convention. A cursory review indicates that

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24 Ibid., 14-15.
25 Ibid., 4.

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the name of John P. Brooks,\textsuperscript{26} author of *Scriptural Sanctification: An Attempted Solution to the Holiness Problem* (1899), was absent from the list of leaders who supported the convention and also absent from the Assembly Roll. Another name absent from these lists was that of James F. Washburn. Washburn’s letter to the 1885 General Holiness Assembly recommending the formation of a national holiness church was never read. Although Phineas F. Bresee,\textsuperscript{27} pastor of First Church of the Nazarene, Los Angeles, California and general superintendent of the California-based Church, is listed on the Committee on Preparation for the Assembly, his name does not appear on either the list of holiness leaders endorsing the call or the Assembly Roll.\textsuperscript{28} In his book on Bresee, Carl Bangs mentions the 1885 General Holiness Assembly, and the fact that Bresee attended nine weeks of eastern and Midwestern NHA camp meetings during the 1890-1891 MEC conference year and NHA camp meetings in Illinois and Indiana in July 1895, but makes no mention of the 1901 Assembly.\textsuperscript{29} Like Bangs, E. A. Girvin makes no mention of the 1901 General Holiness Assembly but does state that the 1904 General Holiness Assembly was held at Bresee’s Los Angeles First Church of the Nazarene. Although there is no

\textsuperscript{26} John P. Brooks (1826-1915) was ordained an elder in the MEC in 1856. He was editor of the *Banner of Holiness*, periodical for the Western Holiness Association, from 1872 to 1883. Brooks left the MEC and became a leader in the Church of God (Holiness) and first editor of the *Good Way*. He published his controversial views on the church in the book *Divine Church* (1891). See Kostlevy, *Historical Dictionary*, 32-33.

\textsuperscript{27} Phineas F. Bresee (1838-1915) was born, raised, and educated (Delaware Literary Institute in Franklin) in New York. After his conversion in 1856, he moved to Iowa and was assigned as a circuit rider in the MEC. He subsequently was a presiding elder, a pastor of churches (Des Moines, Council Bluffs, Creston, and Red Oaks), served on the board of Simpson College, and was a delegate to the 1872 General Conference of the MEC. After a failed stock investment in 1883, he relocated to Los Angeles, California. Bresee was pastor of MEC congregations in Los Angeles and Pasadena, served a term as a presiding elder, was on the board of the University of Southern California, and was a delegate to the 1892 General Conference of the MEC. After his withdrawal from the MEC (1894), he affiliated with the independent Peniel Mission and then cofounded the first congregation of the Church of the Nazarene, Los Angeles. See Kostlevy, *Historical Dictionary*, 28-29.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 19-27.

\textsuperscript{29} Carl Bangs, *Phineas F. Bresee: His Life in Methodism, the Holiness Movement and the Church of the Nazarene* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 1995), 169, 190-191, 251.
direct evidence of any conflict between Bresee and NHA leadership, the growing conflict over national organization and his own busy schedule as general superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene are likely reasons for his absence from the 1901 Assembly.30

Although the stated goal of the 1901 assembly was the unity of holiness proponents and cooperation with all existing denominations, the published articles on Church Fellowship and Co-Operation failed to provide any basis for its accomplishment. Those who professed holiness were not to “voluntarily surrender their church privileges for trivial causes,” while they could sever relationships due to the “oppressive hands” of church authority.31 Unfortunately, the assembly did not define what this meant. Certainly many who had already departed from their denominations did not think that their reasons for such action were trivial because they believed that denominational authorities had been oppressive to the holiness cause. In spite of the efforts of the NHA to support strong relationships between denominations (such as the MEC) and holiness groups, many of the independent holiness groups continued to add new congregations in the first years of the twentieth century. Paradoxically, much of the credit for the establishment of these new congregations can be given to holiness evangelists who maintained their affiliation with the NHA and the organizational structure provided by local and regional holiness associations.

The Rise of Local Independent Holiness Churches

According to one contemporary critic of the establishment of independent holiness groups at the end of the nineteenth century, E. Dale Dunlap, the Holiness

31 Ibid., 31.
Movement viewed entire sanctification "as an end in itself, with anything coming before or after it as soteriologically incidental or irrelevant." He interprets the theology and practice of holiness associations as inconsistent with John Wesley because of their focus on the instantaneous aspects and claims that they had eliminated any emphasis on the gradual aspects. While it is true that, by the end of the century, the central focus of the Holiness Movement was on instantaneous entire sanctification as the only cure for a worldly church, it is an exaggeration to claim that other aspects of salvation were incidental, irrelevant, or ruled out altogether. A study of the manuals of the independent holiness churches established during the 1880s and 1890s reveals "Articles of Faith" that proclaim a Wesleyan soteriology. The very first "Statement of Faith" of Bresee's Church of the Nazarene, dated November 26, 1895, begins with a statement that refutes Dunlap's conclusion. It reads:

Feeling clearly called of God to the carrying on of His work in the conversion of sinners, the sanctification of believers and the building up in holiness of those who may be committed to our care, we associate ourselves together as a Church of God under the Name of the Church of the Nazarene.

In addition to this statement, the "Articles of Faith" imply that conversion is a necessary prerequisite to entire sanctification and the "General Rules" indicate that converted persons were recognized as members of the Church. It is also interesting that Dunlap states that the position of John Miley, a Methodist theologian, on entire sanctification is "instructive" and consistent with the "Wesleyan position." Issues of the Herald of Holiness carried advertisements from the Publishing House of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene for the books in the Course of Study for Preachers and Deaconesses.

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32 Dunlap, 103.
33 Articles of Faith and General Rules of the Church of the Nazarene, November 26, 1895 (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Archives).
34 Dunlap, 104.
Miley’s *Systematic Theology* was a requirement (volume 1 in the second year and volume 2 in the third year).\(^{35}\)

Moreover, a review of some of the works published by holiness writers during the 1880s and 1890s refutes Dunlap’s assertion that there was little concern for the gradual aspect of sanctification (most commonly referred to as “growth in grace”). The contents of John Inskip’s *Holiness Miscellany* (1882) include essays by Adam Clarke, “Entire Sanctification,” and Richard Watson, “Perfected Holiness of Believers,” along with the “experiences” of George Peck, Alfred Cookman, J. A. Wood, Bishop Foster, E. M. Levy and Daniel Steele. This collection would seem to indicate a Wesleyan understanding of holiness. In his essay on entire sanctification, Clarke writes that “the soul is purified from all sin that it can properly grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”\(^{36}\) In 1890, Beverly Carradine wrote that growth in grace is “man’s work, but sanctification is the work of Almighty God. Men consecrate gradually, and grow in grace gradually; but when God regenerates or sanctifies the soul he does it instantaneously.”\(^{37}\) In the “Preface” of his *Pentecostal Papers* (1895), Samuel A. Keen advises his readers that his emphasis on the Holy Ghost should not be considered as “unduly” exalting the Spirit over the Son. He states that the work of the “indwelling of the Holy Spirit is that the Son may be glorified in the heart and lives of believers.” In reference to the “gift of the Holy Ghost, Keen advises that this gift of God is “the ultimate spiritual bestowment adequate to all the liabilities of Christian life. It is the

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37 Beverly Carradine, *Pentecostal Sanctification* (Columbia, SC: L. L. Pickett, 1890; reprint, Wesleyan Heritage Publishers, 1997, 1998.), 19-20, 32. Although there is no publisher or date of publication listed, L. L. Picket wrote an Introduction, dated June 26, 1890, that indicates he was glad to “publish and circulate the book.” (p. 4).
perfection of endowment, not the perfection of development. This perfection of endowment will work out a perfection of development.” Consistent with other holiness writers, Keen holds the view that real “advancement of Christian life demands the fullness of the Spirit...There can be no large growth and constant enrichment in grace without it.”

In one of the most significant works, *Scriptural Sanctification*, published in the closing year of the nineteenth century, John R. Brooks specifically states that he was attempting to provide a solution to the holiness problem. In his 1987 introduction to the digital edition, Duane V. Maxey stresses that there are numerous remarks by the author that reflect the mounting hostility among many in the Methodist church against the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification, and a mounting frustration among those Methodists who experienced and advocated “second blessing holiness” with the anti-holiness environment they encountered in both the northern and southern portions of the M. E. Church.

Like many of the other holiness writers of the period, Brooks quoted many of the same Methodist leaders and theologians popular on both sides of the debate. Contrary to Dunlap’s view that holiness advocates diminished the importance of regeneration and practically eliminated gradualness and/or growth, Brooks specifically stated that entire sanctification should not be magnified in a way that diminished regeneration. He also claimed entire sanctification is accomplished by the baptism of the Spirit but does not eliminate the “ever-growing and expanding life of practical holiness that should proceed

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from this baptism."40 Brooks stated that the controversy of his day was focused on two aspects of the doctrine of entire sanctification; (1) whether it was “at or subsequent to regeneration” and (2) whether, “as a subjective purification, it is gradual or instantaneous in its development.”41 In the pages following his delineation of the problem, Brooks argued that the proper Wesleyan understanding is that (1) growth “may and ordinarily, if not invariably, does precede this purifying, health-giving, and invigorating baptism;” (2) though “gradually brought to the point” of entire sanctification, the “cleansing or healing process – the subjective work – is instantaneously wrought by a baptism;” and (3) the “life of holiness proceeding there from grows and improves as knowledge and skill increase.”42

Timothy L. Smith suggests that there were four factors which determined whether holiness advocates remained in their churches or left them during the period from 1880 to 1900:

(1) the persistent opposition of ecclesiastical officials to independent holiness associations and publishing agencies; (2) the recurrent outbursts of fanaticism among persons who were members of associations but not of the churches; (3) the outbreak in the 1890’s of strenuous attacks upon the doctrine of sanctification itself; and (4) the increasing activity of urban holiness preachers in city mission and social work.43

He also notes that holiness congregations were organized in response to local situations and then “coalesced slowly and rather haphazardly into organized denominations.”44

These congregations and denominations did not merge with the previously established Wesleyan Methodist Connection (1843) or Free Methodist Church (1860) mainly because

41 Ibid., 17.
42 Ibid., 28, 56, 72.
43 Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 27.
44 Ibid., 28.
of the individualistic leadership of the new groups, geographical location, and the “rigid patterns of faith and order”45 of the two Wesleyan groups. Smith suggests that the fact that many of the leaders of the new groups came from non-Methodist backgrounds made it difficult for them to accept any ecclesiastical structure based on Methodism.

The organization of holiness congregations during the last two decades of the nineteenth century began with the establishment of two small congregations of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) in 1881. These congregations (Beaver Dam, Indiana and Carson City, Michigan), “coalesced around the Gospel Trumpet, a holiness journal edited by Daniel S. Warner.”46 These churches were committed to the belief in entire sanctification as a second work of grace and the view that denominations were sinful divisions of the body of Christ. These convictions were also the impetus of the subsequent organization of the Church of God (Holiness). Its first congregation was formed in 1883 at Centralia, Missouri, primarily due to the holiness evangelism of John P. Brooks in the Southwestern Holiness Association. Brooks would subsequently write The Divine Church (1891), which became the “textbook of ‘come-outism.’”47

In 1882, five people began to conduct revivals in the Philadelphia area under the name of Heavenly Recruits. From this humble beginning, the Holiness Christian Association was formed with a conference in Indiana (1883) and one in Eastern Pennsylvania (1884). The available records indicate that C. W. Ruth was the first presiding elder of the Holiness Christian Association. The name was changed to Holiness Christian Church in 1897. In the next few years, Ruth’s role as an evangelist for

The California Church of the Nazarene

The first congregation of the Church of the Nazarene was organized in Los Angeles, California under the leadership of Methodists Phineas F. Bresee and J. P. Widney on October 6, 1895. The initial idea to establish this new holiness church actually came from laity who were loyal to Bresee. They organized the church and asked Bresee to be their pastor. Bresee had been a circuit rider, pastor, presiding elder and college organizer. His break with the MEC came in 1894, when he asked for assignment to Peniel Mission at the annual conference. The mission had been started by T. P. Ferguson, and his wife Mannie, in 1891. Girvin, Smith and Bangs all emphasize that the mission was a chance for Bresee to fulfill his vision to preach to the urban poor. When his request was denied, he requested location (stepping outside the traveling ministry and membership of the conference, but not surrendering credentials or leaving the church). Bresee became one of four superintendents of Peniel Mission. In 1895, while attending NHA camp meetings in Indiana and Illinois, his position at the mission was terminated.

Bresee had maintained active participation in the NHA which stemmed from a late 1884 revival while pastor of First Methodist Church, Los Angeles. The three week meeting was conducted by William McDonald and George D. Watson, NHA holiness

48 Horace G. Trumbauer, Personal Diary 1871-1929 (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Archives), Microfilm; Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 77, 230.
49 Bangs, 195.
50 Bangs, 185-192; Girven, 101-103; Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 106-109.
evangelists, and marked the start of a holiness revival in Southern California that continued until the early 1890s. Another NHA evangelist, J. A. Wood, preached in the special holiness meeting held in the afternoon of the first Sunday services of the Church of the Nazarene. The notice about the first services invited anyone interested in joining in carrying on “Christian work, especially evangelistic and city mission work, and the spreading of the doctrine and experience of Christian holiness.”

A second church was organized in Berkeley, with Ernest A. Girvin appointed as pastor. This required a meeting in February to address the issues of having more than one church. The Church of the Nazarene was on its way to becoming a denomination. Within two years there were three congregations in Los Angeles, one in Pasadena, one in Berkeley and one in Oakland. In January, 1898, a church paper, The Nazarene, was started with Bresee and Widney the editors. As the denomination grew, the circulation of the paper also grew and it became The Nazarene Messenger in 1900.

Eastern Developments

In Providence, Rhode Island, holiness advocates of St. Paul’s MEC withdrew their membership and organized the People’s Evangelical Church on July 21, 1887. Fred A. Hillery, who had been the president of the South Providence Holiness Association since its establishment on May 12, 1886, became the pastor and subsequently began publishing the Beulah Items, a holiness periodical, in 1888. Relationships with other

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51 Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 96-98.
52 Girvin, 103; Bangs, 196.
53 Bangs, 200-207.
54 Girvin, 125.
independent holiness congregations developed in regional holiness camp meetings led to the organization of the Central Evangelical Holiness Association (CEHA) in March, 1890. The annual meeting minutes of 1891 indicate that the CEHA consisted of six churches and three holiness associations. Hillery's *Beulah Items* merged with the *Bible Christian* in 1892, becoming the *Beulah Christian*. Delegates of the sixth annual meeting in 1896 voted to appoint a committee to write a "fraternal letter to the Pentecostal Churches of America inviting them to co-operate with the Association in pressing the work of holiness." The majority of the churches of the CEHA joined the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America (APCA) in April, 1897, with the *Beulah Christian* becoming the official "organ of unity and propaganda" of that association.

The APCA had been organized in 1896 by three mission churches started by William Howard Hoople, Charles BeVier, and Alexander McLean in Brooklyn, New York. According to the Constitution, dated November 12, 1896, these churches organized as an independent body to "give special emphasis to the experience of entire sanctification" because they were unable to find "congenial denominational relations." Hoople had begun this mission work in 1894 and H. F. Reynolds, who would become a...
General Superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene, left the Methodist ministry and joined Hoople's group in October 1895. Reynolds and Hoople were the primary motivators of fifteen churches of the Central Evangelical Holiness Association joining the APCA. The statistical report for the year ending April 1, 1898 lists twenty-six churches in the APCA. These congregations were spread throughout eight states: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont and Maine. Of the thirteen congregations in New York State, six were in Brooklyn. The union of the CEHA and the APCA “crystallized sentiment for a distinctly ‘second blessing’ denomination among some Methodist loyalist who had until then held back.” H. N. Brown became pastor of the Bedford Avenue Tabernacle in May 1897 and A. B. Riggs joined the APCA in the fall of 1897. Reynolds, Brown and Riggs determined to continue to encourage independent groups to join the association.

Southern Developments

The history of the holiness movement in the Old Southwest was different from other regions of the country because of the MEC, South’s lack of commitment to the doctrine of entire sanctification. Opposition to holiness associations had resulted in the 1894 General Conference adoption of a rule against independent meetings within the bounds of “another’s charge against the local pastor’s will.” The establishment of

1897 to 1907. After the APCA merger with the Church of the Nazarene, Reynolds was elected a general superintendent of the PCN. He became the senior general superintendent of the PCN in 1915 and served in that role until his retirement in 1932.

62 Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 68-70.
63 Minutes of the Second Annual Meeting, Association of Pentecostal Churches of America, April 1897; Minutes of the Third Annual Meeting, Association of Pentecostal Churches of America, April 1898, MicroFilm 211, Nazarene Archives, Kansas City: MO.
64 Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 71.
65 Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 152.
independent congregations was the only solution for holiness advocates. The year prior to the General Conference ruling, evangelist Robert Lee Harris conducted meetings in west Tennessee. When the West Tennessee Conference, MEC, South, declared these types of meetings unauthorized in November 1893, Harris withdrew from the church. In 1894, Harris held a three month tent meeting at Milan, Tennessee, with the help of his wife, Mary Lee, and R. B. Mitchum, and his wife. Harris was suffering from tuberculosis and encouraged his wife and Mrs. Mitchum to preach when he was ill. The New Testament Church of Christ (NTCC) was organized on July 9, 1894 in Milan. After the death of Harris on November 26, 1894, Mrs. Harris and Mrs. Mitchum became the primary leaders of the church, with the help of Mrs. E. H. Sheeks. The group held revival meetings throughout west Tennessee, Arkansas, northern Alabama and parts of Texas establishing churches whenever the opportunity presented itself. J. A. Murphree, of Waco, Texas, joined the Milan congregation in 1898. His periodical, the Evangelist, came with him, along with his missionary training school and a rescue mission.

Mary Lee (Harris) Cagle, J. A. Murphree, and William E. Fisher, pastors of congregations in the NTCC, led the effort that resulted in the merger of this group with the Independent Holiness Church (IHC), which had been started in June 1901 when C. B. Jernigan organized its first congregation at Van Alstyne, Texas. Shortly after this, congregations at Red Oak, near Blossom, and at Lawson were added to the IHC. After

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66 Mary Lee (Harris) Cagle (1864-1955) was a schoolteacher who married Robert Lee Harris in 1891. After the first congregation of the NTCC was established, Robert Lee Harris died and Mary Lee assumed the primary responsibility for the continuation of the NTCC. She was ordained in 1899 and married Henry Cagle in 1900. After the Holiness Church of Christ merged with the PCN, Mary Lee served as a district evangelist in the PCN and organized nearly 30 congregations. See Kostlevy, Holiness Dictionary, 37-38.

its first council meeting at Paris, Texas in October 1902, James B. Chapman, secretary of
the annual council, conducted meetings in eastern Texas and in Oklahoma and
congregations at Bivins, Texas and Vivian, Louisiana were established.68 The IHC was
comprised of twelve churches by the time of its November 1903 annual council held at
Greenville, Texas, and twenty-seven churches at the October 1904 annual council held at
Blossom, Texas. Jernigan indicates that much of the work was done by himself,
Dennis Rogers through the work of holiness bands.69

The holiness bands that were instrumental in the planting of congregations within
the IHC were small bands of workers organized with the purpose of preaching holiness.
These bands were made up of preachers, singers and general workers. The band would
buy a gospel tent which they would erect for preaching services and camp tents to live in.
Some of their meetings lasted six weeks. Bands specifically mentioned by Jernigan were
the Hudson Band, the Roberts Boys, the Brown Boys, the Jeffries-Hartline Band, the
Irck Boys, the DeJernett-Jernigan Band, Katy Gospel Crew and the Cluck-Farmer Band.
Jernigan gives reports of these bands holding meetings from 1897 through 1902.70 The
decision to start a church paper was made at a camp meeting on the Sunset camp grounds
in the summer of 1904 by Rev. J. P. Roberts, Rev. B. M. Kilgore and Jernigan.71

The Holiness Church of Christ was formed by a union of the Independent
Holiness Church and the New Testament Church of Christ at Rising Star, Texas on
November 22, 1904. Its first manual states that the union included “over seventy-five

68 Charles B. Jernigan, Pioneer Days of the Holiness Movement (Kansas City, MO: Pentecostal Nazarene
69 Ibid., 95.
70 Ibid., 32-48.
71 Ibid., 48-9.
local congregations and more than one hundred preachers, and covers a territory from St. Louis, Mo., to the Mexican border of Texas.”

One of the interesting rules of the combined organization is found as Article XII, “Women May Preach.” It states: “We believe that the Bible recognizes the rights of women to preach as well as men. Acts 21:8-9, Phil 4:3.” In the 1905 *Year Book*, six women are identified as pastors of nine congregations of the denomination: Mary Holden (Dekalb, Texas), Mrs. E. J. Sheeks (Beebe, Ark. and Memphis, Tenn.), Mary Cagle (Buffalo Gap, Tex. and Glen Cove, Tex.), Mrs. Emma Phillips (Comanche, Texas), Mrs. Maggie Secrest (Fort Worth, Texas) and Mrs. R. B. Mitchum (Gadsden, Tenn. and Milan, Tenn.).

J. O. McClurkan started an evangelistic tour in 1895 only to be forced to settle in Nashville, Tennessee because of ill health. He began holding revivals in churches and gospel tents. The minutes of the Pentecostal Mission indicate that a group chaired by Arthur S. Ransom started proceedings on May 14, 1898 to take control of Old Tulip Street Methodist Church. In addition to Ransom, members of the committee were John T. Benson, Ed W. Thompson, F. M. Atchison, Robert Jackson and E. H. Welburn (secretary). At a meeting on June 1st, Benson recommended they select a superintendent for the holiness work in Nashville and Ransom was instructed to write to McClurkan. At the next meeting on June 8th, McClurkan was present and elected superintendent. A convention was scheduled and conducted on July 18th and 19th and the organization was named the Pentecostal Alliance. The Pentecostal Alliance bought B. F. Haynes’ *Zion’s Manual, Holiness Church of Christ*, 1904 (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Archives Microfilm), 1-3.

73 *Holiness Church of Christ Year Book*, 1905 (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Archives Microfilm), 49-55.
74 James O(ctavius) McClurkan (1861-1914) began his ministry in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1879) and served as a pastor in Texas (1886-1888) and California (1888-1897). Beginning in 1897, in Tennessee, he began working closely with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. See Kostlevy, *Historical Dictionary*, 169.
Outlook on May 15, 1900, and named McClurkan the editor of the periodical.\textsuperscript{77} Having initially established relationships with A. B. Simpson's Christian and Missionary Alliance in New York City because of its strong missions emphasis and training school, by 1901 the leaders of the Nashville group had become discontented with this affiliation, changed their name to Pentecostal Mission, severed the relationship with Simpson's group, and established its own local board of twenty-five members. McClurkan recognized the need for a training institute for home and foreign mission workers and began plans for a Bible institute. The school was started in May 1901. Twenty-three congregations, or bands, had been organized by 1903. Relationships with leaders from other holiness groups were established over the next years of the Pentecostal Mission, including McClurkan's friendship with B. W. Huckabee, after McClurkan served as an evangelist at the Waco, Texas camp meeting in 1901. C. B. Jernigan and R. M. Guy sent frequent reports to Zion's Outlook and A. M. Hills wrote articles for the paper.\textsuperscript{78}

Other Developments

In 1887, the Christian Alliance and Evangelical Missionary Alliance were founded by A. B. Simpson as nondenominational missionary agencies. Although not formally active in the institutional holiness movement, Simpson had been influenced and assisted by holiness leaders W. E. Boardman, Charles Cullis, R. Kelso Carter, John E. Cookman, and J. Gregory Mantle.\textsuperscript{79} Simpson rejected aspects of both the Wesleyan and Keswick teachings on entire sanctification. The two agencies merged in 1897 to become

\textsuperscript{77} Minutes, Pentecostal Mission, Nashville, Tennessee (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Archives Microfilm); Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 182.
\textsuperscript{78} Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 185-190.
\textsuperscript{79} Kostlevy, Historical Dictionary, 47-48.
the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The Church of God in Christ was organized in 1897 among black Baptists in Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, and Arkansas. The denomination was the result of holiness conventions conducted by C. P. Jones and C. H. Mason. Its commitment to education resulted in the early establishment of Christ’s Holiness School (1897). When most of the denomination followed Mason into Pentecostalism in 1907, Jones reorganized the remnant into the Church of Christ (Holiness) maintaining a traditional Wesleyan view of salvation.80

Although the Pilgrim Holiness Church was the result of a series of mergers between 1919 and 1922, its roots stem from the 1897 organization of the International Holiness Union and Prayer League of Cincinnati, Ohio, by Martin Wells Knapp, Seth Cook Rees and C. W. Ruth. Knapp had already founded God’s Bible School and the holiness periodical, God’s Revivalist. Melvin Dieter states that the “doctrines and practices this group eventually established reveal the eclectic nature of its origins.”81 Its Articles of Religion originate from Methodism, its emphasis on spirit baptism originated in Quaker and Salvation Army sources, its affirmation of divine healing and premillennialism originated from the fourfold gospel of A. B. Simpson, and its support of the ordination of women originated from John Wesley, George Fox, and Charles Finney.

Dieter’s comment about the eclectic nature of the doctrine and practice of the Pilgrim Holiness Church could be applied to the entire Holiness Movement at the end of the nineteenth century. Independent holiness churches were evolving into holiness denominations in various regions of the United States. Differences in church polity, various nuances in the doctrine of holiness, differences in standards of conduct, and the

80 Kostlevy, Historical Dictionary, 50-51.
individualism and charisma of the various leaders made the likelihood of a national holiness denomination an unlikely possibility. In spite of this, some of the independently formed holiness churches listed above would begin the process of forming a national organization in the new century. The clarion call for organized holiness across the nation, and the world, would require a realization that “holiness people could achieve unity only by determining to exercise charity in incidentals” while agreeing not to compromise on the “issue of entire sanctification as a second definite work of grace, wrought by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” Even though the NHA had failed to unite the various streams of holiness doctrine and practice, it provided the framework which would enable the Wesleyan stream to establish a national holiness denomination in the first decade of the twentieth century.

The Emergence of Pentecostalism

In addition to the numerous independent holiness churches established in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the continued debate about the relationship of instantaneous entire sanctification with the baptism of the Holy Spirit led to the emergence of the Pentecostal Movement. This movement’s emphasis on charismatic evidence (specifically speaking in tongues) of a Pentecostal experience and the repeatability of that experience in communal, and personal, worship would lead to controversy with the Nazarenes in the second decade of the twentieth century. Although the earliest stage of the official organization of specifically Pentecostal churches began in the 1890s with the founding of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), the Church of

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82 Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 89.
God in Christ, and the Pentecostal Holiness Church, its roots may be traced to what James R. Goff Jr. has called a “Pneumatic, or Spirit, age” which began around 1875.

Several scholars hold the opinion that the origin of Pentecostalism stems from the turn to Pentecostal terminology in the American Holiness movement starting in the 1850s with the publication of William Arthur’s *The Tongue of Fire* (1856) and Phoebe Palmer’s *The Promise of the Father* (1859). Donald W. Dayton argues that these works completed the shift to Pentecostal themes begun by John Fletcher and Joseph Benson, which John Wesley had resisted. Laurence W. Wood has subsequently argued that there was no theological difference between Wesley and Fletcher and that there was a consistent use of Pentecostal terminology which flowed from them to holiness advocates of American Methodism. His research indicates that Francis Asbury “endorsed Fletcher as the proper interpreter of Wesley’s theology and that he is the one who was largely responsible for transporting Fletcher’s theology of Pentecost to America…. Consequently, the baptism with the Spirit and Pentecostal perfection were themes of early American Methodism from the very beginning.”

It is clear that the post-bellum Holiness revival’s emphasis on instantaneous entire sanctification contributed to the popularity of the association of this event with the baptism of the Holy Spirit and use of Pentecostal terminology. Both James R. Goff, Jr. and Donald W. Dayton suggest that the first stage of the development of the Pentecostal movement began in the 1890s as “radical holiness denominations” were separating from

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85 Wood, 293.
the MEC over the issue of entire sanctification. During this sectarian period, Pentecostalism became “a weapon in the struggle for power...a means by which [some] could assert or legitimize their authority.” A radical holiness denomination, the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, was founded by Benjamin Hardin Irwin, a member of the Iowa Holiness Association, in 1895. Following the lead of Canadian holiness evangelist R. C. Horner, Irwin taught that there was a “baptism of fire” subsequent to entire sanctification, although without speaking in tongues as the evidence of its reception. Vinson Synan suggests that Charles F. Parham, who “initiated the Pentecostal revival in Topeka, Kansas, in 1901,” developed his ideas from his association with Irwin. It was the combination of Irwin’s “third blessing” and Parham’s evidence of speaking in tongues that would be the distinctive aspect of the developing Pentecostal movement.

The National Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene

In spite of the tremendous diversity of holiness denominations in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and first decade of the twentieth century, a number of independent holiness churches managed to find common ground that enabled the establishment of a national Holiness church, the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene (PCN). Two promotional methods of the NHA were vital in this process: (1) the connections made by holiness evangelists and, (2) the communications capability of holiness periodicals. Holiness evangelists, like W. E. Shepherd, C. W. Ruth, and L. B.

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86 Goff, 6; Dayton, 87.
88 Synan, 51-58.
89 Ibid., 59.
90 Ibid., 67.
Kent, promoted the vision of a national holiness church in camp meetings and revivals across the country. Shortly after the 1901 General Holiness Assembly, C. W. Ruth was invited to conduct revival services at Bresee's Church of the Nazarene, Los Angeles. He became Bresee's assistant pastor and assistant general superintendent.

The March 26, 1903 issue of the *Nazarene Messenger* announced that Ruth was resigning as assistant pastor to return to evangelistic work. On the urging of Bresee, he maintained his position as assistant general superintendent with the mandate of "organizing the work of the Church of the Nazarene in such places as it [would] seem providential to do so, and to help care for the general work."¹ If the Church of the Nazarene did not have a specific plan for a national church prior to this announcement, its intentions were now obvious. Ruth's previous ministry in the East and status as an evangelist in the NHA, provided important connections for the effort of organized holiness. Ruth wrote about his acquaintances with the leaders of the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America (East) and Holiness Churches of Christ (South) and how these provided him the "happy privilege to offer the first suggestions for a union of the three units."² He wrote the first letters, helped select the committees, and arranged for the meetings that resulted in the union of the three bodies.

Additionally, the historical evidence also points to the involvement of holiness evangelist L. B. Kent in the Nazarene effort to establish a national church. Kent conducted a revival meeting at Bresee's church in February 1900. He was President of the Illinois Holiness Association and an officer of the NHA. His comments about Bresee's Church of the Nazarene, in an article for the *Christian Witness* and reprinted in

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¹ *Nazarene Messenger* 7:38 (March 26, 1903): 8.
² C.W. Ruth, "Reminiscent," November 20, 1939, C.W. Ruth Collection, Nazarene Archives, Kansas City, MO.

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the Nazarene, reveal his proclivity to encourage independent holiness churches, or associations, to merge with the Nazarenes. A provisional program for the October 10, 1907 General Assembly of the PCN, printed in the *Nazarene Messenger*, lists Kent as one of the Nazarene members of the Joint Legislative Commission scheduled to meet prior to the assembly (October 8, 1907). This indicates that he was a member of the Church of the Nazarene by this date and supporting the effort to unite holiness groups. Another member of this committee was fellow holiness evangelist, C. W. Ruth.

Shepard, Ruth and Kent were not alone in their efforts. Herbert Buffum reported the results of his efforts to the *Nazarene Messenger*. During eight weeks of meetings, one hundred and twenty-five people had professed pardon or purity. At a meeting in Jefferson, Oklahoma, several individuals were converted and expressed the desire to organize a church. Buffum writes that he “explained the Nazarene work, and ballots were taken and it was decided to organize a class of the Church of the Nazarene,” with eighteen people joining. The “Correspondence” section of an April issue reported that Rev. W. M. Allison had moved from Kansas City, Kansas to San Antonio, Texas to “give himself fully to mission and evangelistic work.” Along with Rev. G. L. Shepardson, a minister of the Church of the Nazarene, Allison had opened a Nazarene Mission.

R. Stanley Ingersol states that the NHA “promoted a network of regional and state holiness associations across the nation” and it was this network that provided the organizational structure which made the Wesleyan wing of the broader holiness movement the more durable steam of the Holiness movement. Part of this network was

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93 *Nazarene Messenger* 12:12 (September 19, 1907): 2.
95 “Correspondence” *Nazarene Messenger* 5:42 (April 1901): 3.
the proliferation of regional and local holiness periodicals that were started between 1870 and the first decade of the twentieth century. Many of the editors of these periodicals attended NHA camp meetings and conventions, and were members of the association or closely connected with members. Timothy L. Smith believed that the “effort to unite the [Holiness] movement in a national church would have failed without the help”\(^{97}\) of the holiness periodicals. In the following review of the mergers creating the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, I have sought to include references to the role of periodicals in the process.

Independent holiness churches experienced rapid growth in the first years of the twentieth century. The groups that were soon to merge into a national holiness church all participated in that growth. The annual meeting minutes of the APCA indicate that six new churches were added in 1904: two in Pennsylvania, and one each in Massachusetts, Vermont, Ohio and Maryland. The 1905 report indicates that five new churches were added: two in Vermont, two in New York and one in Massachusetts. The association now consisted of forty-five congregations, with 2,407 members. The Church of the Nazarene, in the West, had organized twenty-six congregations by 1905.\(^{98}\) The minutes for 1906 report forty-five congregations with a membership of 3,385. Congregations in ten states (California, Texas, Oregon, Idaho, Washington, Utah, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan and Indiana) were organized into four districts (Southern California, San Francisco, Northwest, and Chicago Central).\(^{99}\)

\(^{97}\) Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 137.
\(^{98}\) Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 122.

\(^{99}\) Reports, Eleventh General Assembly (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Archives), Microfilm.
By 1905, efforts to affect a union of holiness groups across the nation were in full swing. Letters from Rev. McClurkan of Nashville, Tennessee, and Dr. Bresee of Los Angeles, California, were read to the members of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the APCA. These letters were responses to invitations to attend the association's annual meeting. Further correspondence and attendance at meetings of these organizations were arranged. Coordinating efforts on union with the Church of the Nazarene continued until 1907. At the annual meeting of that year, A. B. Riggs gave a report of the visit of association members to the General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene in October 1906. J. N. Short introduced Dr. Bresee who attended the annual meeting, along with Rev. E. A. Girvin of Berkeley, California and Rev. C. W. Ruth of Indianapolis, Indiana. A committee to consider the union of the two organizations was appointed. Members were J. N. Short, W. H. Hoople, H. N. Brown, H. B. Hosley, E. E. Angell, F. A. Hillery, H. F. Reynolds, John Norberry and A. B. Riggs. The individuals who served on the committees responsible for establishing a basis for union were all key leaders in holiness associations. Hoople was the vice president of the New York State Holiness Association. Hillery was president of the South Providence Holiness Association. Reynolds was president of the Vermont Holiness Association. Brown, Hillery, Reynolds and Sprague were all members of the General Holiness League.

At the first general council of the Holiness Church of Christ in the fall of 1905, a letter from C. W. Ruth was read informing the council of the proposed union of the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America and the Church of the Nazarene. The

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100 Minutes of the Ninth Annual Meeting of Pentecostal Churches of America, April 1904; Minutes of the Tenth Annual Meeting of Pentecostal Churches of America, April 1905; Minutes of the Twelfth Annual Meeting of Pentecostal Churches of America, April 1907 (Kansas City: MO: Nazarene Archives Microfilm), MF 211.
letter invited the council to send delegates to the April, 1906 meeting at Brooklyn, New York. Although the council elected three delegates to attend the meeting, they were unable to attend because of the distance and expense of the journey. Ruth and Jernigan continued to correspond, making preparations for delegates to attend the First General Assembly of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene at Chicago, in October 1907.

In the East, the Beulah Christian kept subscribers informed of the ongoing efforts and provided a forum for the discussion of the advantages and problems of union. On October 11, 1906, H. N. Brown wrote from Los Angeles that the committees of the two groups had recommended “a union of the two bodies in one organic and organized force, to better glorify God and more effectively spread and conserve the doctrine and expression of Holiness and extend the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.” He notes that a committee had been appointed to attend the next annual meeting “ready to co-operate with us in bringing the desired union to a blessed consummation.” 101 The November 10, 1906 issue published a reprint of a Nazarene Messenger article “Church Union,” which included the Report of Special Committee on Church Union. The committee had unanimously agreed that the two churches were the same “in doctrine, basis of church membership, general superintendency, basis of ownership of church property, and especially in the all embracing purpose to spread scriptural holiness over the land,” and that union would benefit the work of holiness. 102 These articles were followed by a special notice from the “Missionary Committee of the Pentecostal Association” (J. N. Short, A. B. Riggs and H. N. Brown) instructing congregations to take the necessary

actions at their annual meeting, or a special meeting, and to “instruct their delegates how to vote”\textsuperscript{103} at the April 19, 1907 annual meeting of the APCA.

As positive sounding as these events were, agreement on merger did not happen without significant debate. On January 26, 1907, the Beulah Christian published an article written by Short that indicates he was receiving inquiries questioning the proposed union. Their concern was summarized as being “swallowed up wholly by the Nazarenes.”\textsuperscript{104} Short’s article was several pages long seeking to answer the objections he had received. He emphasized the need for a united church and that the APCA should consider the future of holiness rather than simply pleasing themselves. On February 2, 1907, Short’s article was followed by an article by H. N. Brown that dealt with issue of government. A writer had complained that the governments of the two groups were radically different. Brown replied that a careful comparison by the committees of the groups had “failed to find this ‘radical difference.’”\textsuperscript{105} Two weeks later, Brown wrote an article dealing with a question about church property. Brown responded that the committees of both groups had agreed that property held by “individual incorporated churches in the Pentecostal Association can so remain if desired by these churches.”\textsuperscript{106} He also stated that a review of the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene indicated that church property only came under the control of the General Assembly if the local church became entirely disorganized.

H. B. Hosley and Wm. Howard Hoople responded to the previous articles in the February 23, 1907 issue. Both were concerned about the differences in government of

\textsuperscript{103} Beulah Christian 16:1 (January 5, 1907): 6-7.
\textsuperscript{105} Beulah Christian 16:5 (February 2, 1907): 4-5.
\textsuperscript{106} Beulah Christian 16:7 (February 16, 1907): 1, 4.
the two groups. Hosley complained that the government of the merged group would be solely based on the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene. He further complained that the Missionary Committee had exceeded their authority and that three members had informed him of their opposition to the union. Hosley concluded that he would welcome a union “upon the basis of scriptural holiness and independency of the individual church, which we believe to be essential to conserving the same.” 107 Hoople was concerned that the proposed union would change the APCA polity. Despite his sharp words, he further wrote that he would be in favor of union if the Church of the Nazarene would adopt a congregational form of government.

The debate about church government was continued with the publication of an article written by E. E. Angell, Principal of the Pentecostal Collegiate Institute. He wrote that he had studied the polity of the Church of the Nazarene and did not find the “objectional features of Episcopacy” and did “discover the most essential principles of Congregationalism.” 108 Angell expressed his belief that the polity of the APCA was more detrimental to the holiness effort than that of the Church of the Nazarene. Brown gave his assent to Angell’s opinion in a subsequent article noting that the Nazarenes provided for more lay delegates at assemblies than the APCA. In the same issue, Short responded with the comment that representing “Dr. Bresee as being a ‘bishop’ is an utter misrepresentation.” 109 He stated that C. W. Ruth had explained the polity of the Nazarenes and objected to the accusation that the Missionary Committee had overstepped their authority. A small notice in this issue indicated that all but one church had already voted in favor of the union. In the next issue, Howard Eckel expressed his surprise that

there was so much “ink wasted” on the subject and that the “union of these forces should be hailed with delight by all lovers of holiness.” D. Rand Pierce provided “A Word of Exhortation” which expressed an appreciation for the prolific discussion over the proposed union and then stated that “God’s opportunity for setting this unification in motion has fallen into our hands. Others will rally to the standard, if we unfurl it to the breeze.”

After all the dialogue in the association’s press, the Twelfth Annual Meeting convened, April 9-14, with J. H. Norris (Pittsburgh, PA) as moderator. A committee was appointed to work with Nazarene representatives on the union. Included in the committee were some who had opposed each other in the press (Short, Brown, Hoople, and Angell) and were to now work together to determine the question of union. The Church of the Nazarene assembly had already voted for the union. On Wednesday evening, Short announced that an agreement had been reached. Hosley read the agreement to the assembly and stated that he and Brown “had had to gulp a good deal down in order to make the union possible.” With the issues settled, the Beulah Christian noted that secondary matters had been set aside in order to concentrate on the spread of holiness. A general assembly of the joint body was scheduled to meet in Chicago on October 10, 1907.

Once the question of union had been determined, the two groups began the process of working as one. The June 29, 1907 issue of the Beulah Christian contained a half page advertisement with the bold headline, “Every One Should Read The Church Union Number Of The Nazarene Messenger.” The advertisement stated that the July 4th
issue would be an Anniversary Number, marking the twelfth year of the Church of the Nazarene. The issue would provide information on the APCA and Church of the Nazarene, as well as the events leading to the union. An interesting indication of the belief in the value of the holiness periodical is seen in the last paragraph of the advertisement, which stated: “If you want to do Mission work for the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, loan, give away and sell copies of this special paper.”

The July 4, 1907 special edition of the Nazarene Messenger featured editorials on “Church Union,” written by representatives of the APCA and Church of the Nazarene, and a “Symposium on Organized Holiness.” One article written by Wm. Howard Hoople indicated “Some of the Advantages of Union.” In another, A. B. Riggs recounted the moment C. W. Ruth suggested the union at a camp meeting, during the previous summer, at Haverhill, Massachusetts. The symposium printed answers to the question: “What are the needs, blessings and results of organized holiness?” Responses printed were from eight states (Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Indiana, California, Illinois, Oregon, New York and Kansas) and Washington, DC. The comment of C. P. Lanpher is an important indication of the view of many: the union would provide a “permanency and conserving” of holiness work “which a looser system cannot carry.” Others had expressed the view that holiness associations failed to provide leadership for small groups of holiness advocates unable to find church homes in existing denominations. Perhaps supporters of the mergers recognized the potential in the organizational structure of Bresee’s Church of the Nazarene. As indicated earlier, the congregations of the church, in eight states, had already been organized into four districts. At the time of the 1907 merger, this district

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structure was established in the East. The churches of the APCA were organized into four districts, supervised by District Superintendents: New England, A. B. Riggs; New York, Wm. H. Hoople; Washington, H. B. Hosley and Pittsburgh, J. H. Norris.  

Seven representatives from the Holiness Church of Christ attended the 1907 General Assembly of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. The Beulah Christian reported that C. W. Ruth introduced J. D. Trumbauer, of the Pennsylvania Conference of the Holiness Christian Church, and a delegation from the South. Given opportunities to speak, Trumbauer voiced his decision to do everything he could to “have his people join forces” with the Nazarenes, and Jernigan practically declared that his denomination “had already joined” the united movement. Rev. C. E. Cornell, pastor of the Chicago congregation of the Church of the Nazarene, wrote that there was “marked unanimity of spirit, largeness of vision, and mighty faith for the uniting of the holiness forces of America.” The Holiness Church of Christ merged with the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene at Pilot Point, Texas on October 8, 1908. Nazarene Archive records indicate that there were ninety-two churches, with 2,307 members in the Holiness Church of Christ at the time of the merger. These churches reached from Tennessee and Mississippi to Texas and Oklahoma.

Timothy Smith reviews the history of the later union of the Pentecostal Mission with the PCN. Like many of the other independent groups that organized in the last decade of the nineteenth century and first decade of the twentieth century, McClurkan had insisted that the Pentecostal Mission was not formed as a new church. It was an

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117 Ibid., 103.
118 Merging Religious Bodies (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Archives Microfilm).
119 Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 190-199.
organization designed to promote scriptural (Pentecostal) holiness, with special emphasis on home and foreign missions. People from all denominations were invited to support the work of the group. With rising opposition to these independent organizations and finding it difficult to ignore the organizing new denominations, McClurkan began to correspond with Phineas Bresee of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. The minutes of Executive Committee meetings and conventions of the Pentecostal Mission indicate the reading of letters and discussions about union with the Nazarenes throughout 1907 to 1910. On October 2, 1907, McClurkan explained the purpose of the meeting of the Nazarenes and the APCA taking place that month, in Chicago, and recommended a delegate attend the meeting. At the Pentecostal Mission Convention the next day, McClurkan read a copy of his letter to that meeting and appointed a committee to attend. There were high expectations of union at Pilot Point, Texas the next year.

On September 30, 1908, an Executive Committee meeting discussed the pending convention at Pilot Point on October 8 and delegates were elected to attend. The representatives who attended this meeting were concerned about differences in the groups (especially premillennialism and the ordination of women) that had not been identified earlier. It seems the Nazarenes were not committed to the premillennial return of the Lord and too committed to the ordination of women. John T. Benson, Jr. writes that the Pentecostal Mission supported the preaching ministry of women (in fact McClurkan's wife was one of several women who preached), but McClurkan did not agree with the ordination of women. Interestingly, six years after his death, his wife was ordained in the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. Union was delayed but discussions continued.

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On February 10, 1909, McClurkan read a letter prepared for the Nazarenes in regards to a closer relationship. Smith notes that this annual convention seemed prepared to vote for union but McClurkan presented a motion urging them to defer action. A convention held on October, 1910 continued the discussion of union and a committee was appointed to meet with representatives of the Nazarenes who had been invited and were attending this convention, including Bresee. Although doctrinal difficulties were discussed, McClurkan declined to say whether he would commit to the union. The minutes of the convention indicate that a vote for union was taken during McClurkan's absence to teach a class, with John T. Benson in charge. When McClurkan was informed about the vote, his disapproval was obvious and Benson subsequently refused to sign the articles of agreement out of loyalty to McClurkan. In addition to the issue of the ordination of women, Benson lists four possible reasons for McClurkan's disagreement with the union: (1) concern over the Pentecostal Mission's Foreign Missionary Program; (2) the influence of the Keswick and Eleventh Hour Movement; (3) a lurking distaste for denominationalism and (4) his own desire to maintain leadership. At the Sixth Annual Convention, McClurkan had stated that the “Holiness movement is not a church, it is a fellowship.”

A few weeks after the convention, McClurkan wrote a letter to Nazarene General Superintendent E. P. Ellyson inviting him to Nashville separate from any convention. After a delay by the general superintendents of the Nazarenes, McClurkan urged H. F. Reynolds to travel to Nashville for negotiations. During his visit, with McClurkan's approval, Reynolds organized the Clarksville District of the Church of the Nazarene in Western Tennessee. Even though Bresee was reluctant, Reynolds and Ellyson decided to

121 Ibid., 117, 135-141.
hold General Assembly in Nashville despite the Pentecostal Mission's refusal to promise to unite with the Nazarenes. Benson notes that J. J. Rye left the Pentecostal Mission at this time (1911) to become the superintendent of the Clarksville, Tennessee District of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. This move was apparently taken with the approval of McClurkan.122 Again, no union happened and the records are silent until 1914. As McClurkan was dying in September of the same year, his wife asked him what should be done with the Pentecostal Mission. He advised her to unite with the Nazarenes. The next month the annual convention appointed a committee that included John T. Benson, Tim Moore and C. E. Hardy to arrange the details of union. Articles of Agreement were written and the Pentecostal Mission united with the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene on April 15, 1915.123

Conclusion

The historical evidence leads to the conclusion that the NHA provided the network, the rationale, and the organizing principle for the establishment of the PCN. Its network of holiness associations with their periodicals, evangelists, and camp meetings was the mechanism for the contacts between independent holiness churches in the East, West, and South which resulted in mergers creating a national holiness church. Although the leadership of the NHA recommended loyalty to denominations, they also supported those who had been forced out of their leadership positions (specifically clergy) in these same denominations. When combined with the continued promotion of instantaneous entire sanctification, this support encouraged charismatic leaders of independent holiness

122 Ibid., 151.
123 Minutes, Pentecostal Mission; Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 199.
churches to promote organized holiness on a national basis. In suggesting that its membership focus on the central issue of spreading Scriptural holiness while allowing diversity on other issues, the NHA provided an ideal which became the guiding principle that made the institutionalization of holiness possible. Chapter five discusses the topic of the institutionalization of holiness in the early years of the PCN.
CHAPTER V

THE PROCESS OF THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF HOLINESS IN THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

While the process of the institutionalization of holiness may be said to have begun in the closing two decades of the nineteenth century with the organization of independent holiness churches like the California-based Church of the Nazarene and the eastern Association of Pentecostal Churches of America, it took on a national, and subsequently global, outlook with the mergers of the first decade of the twentieth century which formed the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. The institutionalization of holiness within this organization was influenced by at least three factors: (1) the desire for a less hierarchical structure than the MEC, (2) the necessity of defining itself versus the emerging Pentecostal movement, and (3) the tension between individual and communal religiosity inherent in holiness theology and practice.

As evidenced by the debate over polity, the leaders of the groups merging to become the PCN wanted to ensure that their organizational structure would promote the spiritual liberty of the entirely sanctified. This desire became a central issue of the early years of the PCN, as evidenced in a Herald of Holiness article listing eleven reasons for holiness church organization. The very first of H. D. Brown’s reasons was that the “old established churches are arrayed against the doctrine and experience of holiness. They do not encourage the testimony and do not sustain those who teach the doctrine and get others into the experience.”¹ The spiritual liberty of those who possessed the indwelling Spirit of God was a vital part of an organizational structure that protected the right of

individual participation in local church decisions and representation in district and general government.

Doctrinally, holiness was vaguely defined in the effort to preserve the spiritual autonomy of the entirely sanctified, with the exception being that the personal possession of the Spirit of God was attained through a “prescriptive method.”2 The emergence of Pentecostalism with its evidentiary sign of speaking in tongues forced the PCN to clarify its doctrine and practice of holiness. This redefinition required the approval of the General Assembly of the PCN – the highest decision making body of its representative polity. While the majority approved the change, those who disagreed were left with the choice of accepting or rejecting the consensus of the community. From its inception, the institutionalization of holiness included an inherent tension between the spiritual autonomy of the individual and the consensus of the community.

Creation of a Representative Polity

While the NHA had provided holiness advocates with an existing network from which to organize, the task of establishing an institution capable of uniting independent holiness churches would be dependent upon the willingness of their leaders to “put aside, or in its proper place, anything not essential to holiness, for the sake of the greater usefulness of united co-operation.”3 While holiness evangelists associated with the California Church of the Nazarene were key players in bringing about the possibility of mergers that created the PCN, it is evident that its primary leader, Phineas F. Bresee, was

responsible for directing the actual mergers and the resulting organizational structure and doctrine of the national body. Although initially a subject of debate in the periodical of the APCA, as discussed in the previous chapter, the institutional structure of the national PCN was the superintendency, already a feature of the California Church of the Nazarene.

At the very first General Assembly of the PCN, Bresee spoke about the importance of this structure, stating that covering the country with Districts would enable the establishment of "center[s] of fire" in every city across the country and also lead to more efficient support of missionary efforts in foreign fields. Five years later, Bresee noted that the church had in fact adopted a structure that was limited in power yet efficient in unifying the efforts of the general body. He writes:

It seems to me a matter of thanksgiving that we have been able to so well guarantee the liberty of the individual church, the church board, and other boards, the local District Assembly, and at the same time preserve the autonomy of the whole church, in its General Assembly, and its agencies as not to lose unity of purpose and administration...  

Districts were overseen by a superintendent and advisory board elected by an annual assembly comprised of clergy and lay delegates from the local churches. At the time of the mergers, this structure already existed in the California Church of the Nazarene and was extended to the merging religious bodies.

In the East, H. F. Reynolds was elected the second general superintendent of the PCN. Reynolds had served as the home and foreign missions secretary (1897-1907) of the APCA and was a member of the committee arranging the merger of the two groups. William H. Hoople, the founder of Pentecostal churches in Brooklyn, New York, and the

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4 Ibid.
key leader of the APCA, became the District Superintendent of the New York District of the PCN. In the South, Edgar P. Ellyson, president of Peniel University, was elected as the third general superintendent of the PCN. C. B. Jernigan became the District Superintendent of the Oklahoma District and later served as the District Superintendent of districts in New York, Florida and Tennessee. J. B. Chapman, a leader in the Holiness Church of Christ, was eventually elected a general superintendent in 1928. Henry Cagle served as the superintendent of the New Mexico District (1918-20), Arizona District (1921-22) and the Hamlin District in West Texas (1926-31). Mary Lee Cagle served as a district evangelist.

According to Bresee’s June 5, 1912 article on the polity of the church, General Superintendents were to be elected by the General Assembly to have “general charge of the work of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, subject to its rules and regulations.”6 These rules and regulations were to be determined by the General Assembly comprised of clergy and lay delegates elected by the District Assemblies. Changing or amending the rules and regulations of the church required three-fourths vote of the General Assembly. Again, this procedure was an extension of the policy of the California Church of the Nazarene, which required a three-fourths vote of its elders and members to change or amend any of the original “Articles of Faith and General Rules.”7 Bresee’s introductory remarks in the 1903 Manual of the Church of the Nazarene indicate his awareness that future growth would require change and that the General Assembly was the locus of the change.8

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6 Ibid., 6.
8 Phineas F. Bresse, “To The Church,” Manual Church of the Nazarene (Los Angeles, CA; Nazarene Publishing House, 1903), 1.

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An example of this future change is found in the 1912 establishment of a general Board of Publications for the centralization of publishing efforts, which included a central publishing house located in Kansas City, Missouri, and the printing of the *Herald of Holiness* as the official organ of the church. A full page announcement in this periodical from the General Superintendents indicates that this change was recommended by a number of District Assemblies and approved by the previous General Assembly. In addition to listing the members of the board, the new location of the central publishing house, and the purposes of these changes, the announcement states that “All loyal members of our church are true friends of this house and these publications. All are in love with and duty bound to support them in every possible way.”9 This announcement serves as an example of both the process of change through communal consensus and the national church’s need to promote this consensus over against individual liberty.

The organizational structure of the PCN was implemented to allow for diversity while concentrating on the promotion of holiness of heart and life. It was designed to “organize on the basis of Gospel essentials, and with perfect love grant freedom and liberty in those things which do not pertain to or hinder the salvation of the soul.”10 In order to allow liberty of individual conscience “controverted questions, such as pre or post millennial, divine healing, baptism, matters of dress, secret societies, etc.,”11 would be addressed in the *Manual* by providing appropriate advice rather than a specific statement requiring agreement by prospective members. Agreement with the communal consensus on the “main essentials to salvation, such as the Trinity, the Word of God, the

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11 Ibid.
new birth, entire sanctification, the baptism with the Holy Ghost, the Holy Life, and future rewards and punishments,"\(^{12}\) was required for Church membership.

While other doctrines were important and vital parts of the Articles of Faith, the central purpose of the PCN was the institutionalization of the understanding of entire sanctification promoted by the American Holiness movement. Just prior to the first merger, the issue of the *Nazarene Messenger* which focused on the history of both the California Church of the Nazarene and the APCA, noted that both groups believed that instantaneous entire sanctification was accomplished by baptism with the Holy Spirit resulting in cleansing the heart of the believer from "all sin."\(^{13}\) From the beginnings of both these groups, the expression of this doctrine most often contained Pentecostal terminology.

Clarifying the Pentecostal Nature of Entire Sanctification

In spite of, or perhaps because of, the fact that holiness defined as a second, definite work of grace was the core idea around which the PCN was organized, what constituted a correct experience of entire sanctification was still being debated a decade after the first mergers. One of the major points of the debate is indicated by the title of an article written by Rev. J. H. Vance, "Pray Through, or Take It by Faith, Which?"\(^{14}\) Interestingly, this debate in the second decade of the twentieth century about how one was to obtain entire sanctification was essentially the same as the debate in the 1850s and 1860s over Phoebe Palmer's altar theology. One again finds articles from spokespersons on both sides of the issue explaining the steps to obtaining the experience and claim to be

\(^{12}\) Ibid.

\(^{13}\) *Nazarene Messenger*, July 4, 1907: 5.

the correct Wesleyan version. Some within the holiness movement were convinced that many of those who claimed to have obtained the experience of entire sanctification had not. H. L. Goodell believed that the root of the problem was that the instruction and practice at the altar was “premature and abortive.”\textsuperscript{15} He voiced his disapproval of altar workers and evangelists telling seekers that all they needed to do was believe and testify. Goodell suggested that seekers needed to be advised that they should keep praying until there was a conscious awareness of being baptized with the Holy Ghost. In another article, on the same page, Rev. W. R. Cain calls this “Praying Through” and warns his readers not to confuse this with “animalism” (emotionalism, ecstasy or feeling good), “contagion” (thinking that the blessing has been received because of the actions of others who are also praying), or simply because the seeker wants to believe they have received what they wanted. Real “praying through” is accompanied by an “inner consciousness or divine assurance, which is obtained conditionally.”\textsuperscript{16} J. H. Vance’s answer to the question of whether entire sanctification is obtained by “praying through” or faith was that both were required. He concluded that “a soul seeking to be sanctified must couple together prayer and faith, and by so doing will have no trouble in finding the blessing of holiness of heart.”\textsuperscript{17}

In addition to the dialogue within the PCN over the proper method of obtaining the experience of entire sanctification, often referred to as a Pentecostal experience, another debate was prominent in the official church media. This debate focused on the proper evidence for having obtained the experience. Charles Jones states that it was “tongues-speaking more than any other characteristic which appeared to set converts to

\textsuperscript{17} Vance, 6.
Pentecostalism apart from onetime Holiness brethren.”  

He asserts that the impasse between the two groups was caused by a difference in typology which resulted in differing reenactments of the Scriptural text of Pentecost. While Holiness proponents “reclaimed the text by means of metaphor,” the Pentecostals “sought to reenact the text literally.” This difference resulted in different expectations, or evidences, for the experience, yet both were interpreted as the true Pentecostal experience. Jones notes that for Holiness proponents this experience was expressed in terms of the Exodus experience of the Children of Israel as a metaphor for the “journey from sin to full salvation.” Each stage of the Exodus symbolized an aspect of salvation, with crossing the Jordan symbolizing entire sanctification and conquest of the land of Canaan symbolizing the life of holiness. He wrote that “the Land of Beulah, a lookout from which Bunyan’s pilgrim can see over into heaven, represented the rest of faith which characterized the sanctified.” In contrast, Pentecostals expected a literal reenactment of the Upper Room experience of the Disciples of Jesus. They described it in terms of “former” and “latter” rain “signaled by tongues.” In every service, they expected to experience the literal reenactment of the Day of Pentecost, which included speaking in tongues, being slain by the Spirit, and miraculous healing.

In spite of these differences in the understanding and practice of the experience, both groups were utilizing the Pentecostal label. Articles published in the Herald of Holiness indicate that this was creating confusion and trouble in areas where both groups were vying for members. In October, 1918, Rev. N. B. Herrell reported that the United

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19 Ibid., 251-252.
20 Ibid., 255-256.
21 Ibid., 257.

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Pentecostal Church, which he classified as a “cult, growing out of the various factions of the tongues movement,”\(^2\) had placed their name on a banner over their tent located at Boise, Idaho. Although Herrell does not identify the specific trouble this created, he does assert that the presence of the word “Pentecostal” in both church names was causing trouble there and in other parts of the country. In recommending the removal of “Pentecostal” from the Nazarene name, he states that this “would shorten our church name and save us much trouble with being classified with the tongues movement, and the numerous other Pentecost and Pentecostal movements.”\(^3\) In January, 1919, Rev. C. H. Alger wrote that there was “considerable talk and some writing”\(^4\) on the issue of changing the church name at the General Assembly, which would be held in October. Although he believed that it would be better to shorten the name, he adds that the “Pentecostal” portion of the name represented the eastern brethren and should only be changed at their request. Rev. Charles A. Gibson wrote that the issue of the church name was simply a matter of the length, which was causing unnecessary work and confusion. After recommending the name be shortened to eliminate the extra work and avoid the confusion, he proceeded to complain that the Pentecostal movement was “sort of a parasite, a movement of free-love, third-blessing, intellect-destroyers; teaching such heresies as that of a lazy ministry, which has nothing to do but open its mouth and have it filled with a message direct from God.”\(^5\) Others, including some who had belonged to the eastern APCA, wrote articles supporting the various reasons for changing the name.

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\(^3\) Ibid., 5.
\(^5\) Charles A. Gibson, “The Question of Our Church Name” *Herald of Holiness* 7:45 (February 12, 1919): 8.
Although some supported the name change because of its length, nearly every article mentions the problem of identification with the Pentecostal movement.\(^{26}\)

Obviously, not everyone agreed with the necessity, or even appropriateness of changing the name of the PCN. Some believed that the removal of “Pentecostal” would significantly change the church. They expressed the belief that Nazarenes should not let fanatics or those with “new-fangled” doctrines “cheat” the church out of its name.\(^{27}\)

Attempting to refute the reasons for a change in the church name, Rev. John Norberry wrote an article in which he referred to Nazarenes as the “real Pentecostal people” who would “swallow up” all the other sects claiming to be Pentecostal. He expressed the belief that the Pentecostal movement was already “dying out” in some areas and would eventually “go into oblivion altogether.”\(^{28}\) In a subsequent article just prior to the General Assembly, Norberry suggested that the reasons for changing the name of the church were “flimsy excuses” that should not even be allowed to be addressed at the assembly. In response to the complaint that the word “Pentecostal” had brought reproach upon the church, he noted that the baptism with the Holy Ghost (Pentecostal experience) had always, and would continue, to bring some reproach upon those professing its possession.\(^{29}\)

Given the articles written in advance of the General Assembly of 1919, the editorial report of the assembly is intriguing, since it states that the change in the name approved by this assembly, removal of “Pentecostal,” was “merely for the sake of

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\(^{27}\) Etna Goodlett, “The Question of Our Church Name” *Herald of Holiness* 7:48 (March 5, 1919): 5-6.


abbreviating the name." Jones suggests that the removal of "Pentecostal" from the names of Holiness churches was "regarded by Holiness people as a necessary defense against a false definition of Pentecost and was accompanied by a sense of deprivation and loss." The removal only added to the impasse between the Holiness and Pentecostal movements. While Holiness churches interpreted the action as a positive move against false doctrine, Pentecostals interpreted it as a rejection of true Pentecostal doctrine and practice.

Institutional Promotion of a Balanced Religiosity

The institutionalization of holiness in a national church impacted religiosity. Holiness religiosity in the associations of the 1870s through the early 1880s emphasized the ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification, with its central locus being camp meetings and revivals sponsored by holiness associations. While these camp meetings and revivals continued to be conducted in the last decades of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, the establishment of independent holiness churches, which began coalescing into denominations, required the incorporation of the ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification into the worship practices of local congregations. The future of the independent churches depended upon the balancing of the individualism of instantaneous entire sanctification with a sense of communal responsibility.

The organizational structure originally initiated by Bresee in his Los Angeles Church of the Nazarene provided the ecclesiastical framework for the accomplishment of administrative functions and the continued development and transmission of doctrine. At

31 Jones, "Beulah Land and the Upper Room," 251.
the same time, this organizational structure allowed for the continued existence of annual camp meetings, which had become the primary locus of instantaneous entire sanctification, under the control of district leadership. Many of these district camps continue to exist and sponsor annual camp meetings. The national church had to define its doctrine and practice in a manner that satisfied the majority of its constituents. It did so without losing its emphasis on entire sanctification. The polity of the PCN allowed for a tremendous amount of liberty in local congregations. This liberty was celebrated by the church but would prove to be a problem in the creation and dissemination of institutional doctrine, practices, and behavioral standards, or what I choose to call communal religiosity—a religiosity established by a consensus of the community through a two-thirds vote of the General Assemblies of the church.

A number of problems encountered by the denomination are evident in a review of the first years of the *Herald of Holiness*. While the periodical did an excellent job of sharing news from around the country and the world, its success in helping to actualize a communal religiosity may be questioned. Its promotional capability could only be as good as the willingness of individual members and leaders to support the published consensus of the community. The statistical report of the Fifth General Assembly reflects a gain of 207 churches and 3,441 members between 1915 and 1919. It also provides a report on the total number of issues of the *Herald of Holiness* published between 1916 through the first six months of 1919. These figures indicate that approximately 9,000 copies of the periodical were being published each week for 35,000 members or one copy for every 3.88 members. Considering that there were most likely multiple church

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32 E. J. Fleming, ed., *Proceedings of the Fifth General Assembly of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene (Subsequently, “Church of the Nazarene”) Held at Kansas City, Missouri September 25 to October 6, 1919* (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 1919), 133, 80.
members in many families, it seems that the periodical was reaching a good portion of the church membership. It is interesting that the Committee on Publication recommended in 1915 that each church "make it a rule that every person or family" receive the periodical, as a "right of church membership," and that the cost be a part of the annual local church budget. It was also recommended that every district adopt, support and attempt to secure the adoption of the recommendation in every church. One has to wonder if this is evidence of the committee's belief in the importance of the periodical or its belief that not every member or family was purchasing, and reading, the periodical. Certainly, the *Herald of Holiness* had the potential to help create a communal religiosity, if it was being read and its advice followed.

The financial support of the institutional structure was one of the problems addressed in the *Herald of Holiness*. In addition to promoting the support of the publishing effort through purchasing the periodical and books, and encouraging the support of the financial needs of missionaries, support of the General and District Superintendents was encouraged. In a "Special Notice to Pastors," the treasurer of the denominational headquarters requested the support of local church pastors in submitting funds to the General Superintendent's Fund (which paid their expenses) that had been established by the *Manual*. Each church was to submit an amount equal to four percent of their pastor's salary. His plea was repeated again in 1914, with the statement that the "money has not come in sufficient amounts to meet the needs."

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33 C. Howard Davis, "Committee on Publication" *Proceedings of the Fourth General Assembly of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene Held at Kansas City, Missouri September 30 to October 11, 1915*, Fred H. Mendell, ed. (Kansas City, MO: Pentecostal Nazarene Publishing House, 1915), 60.
The District Steward of the Abilene District asked the churches of the district to remember their obligation to their superintendent, stressing that he had been forced to borrow "$90.00 to keep going."\(^{36}\) One part of the editorial page of the August 14, 1912 issue dealt with the "obligation" of supporting the pastor of the local church. The editor states that support of the pastor did not depend upon liking him, or his methods, but on that basis that as a "Nazarene" one was "under a vow to support that particular man as your pastor."\(^{37}\) Every member's obligation to give liberally and systematically were addressed in articles written by B. F. Haynes in July, 1914. In the first article, he used the Scriptural admonition that giving should be: (1) Systematic, (2) Unanimous (everyone) and (3) Proportionate.\(^{38}\) In the second article, Haynes recommends that every individual and every church institute a "system" for their finances.\(^{39}\) These articles support the recommendations of the Committee on Ministerial Support reported in the proceedings of the General Assembly. This committee recommended that Pastors should consider it an obligation to "raise the amount apportioned for the support" of the General and District Superintendents. The District Assembly was to establish a means by which the churches could raise the support required by the District Superintendent and to ensure that "fifteen cents per member annually" was raised for the support of the General Superintendents.\(^{40}\) Giving was an aspect of communal religiosity that needed to be created and reinforced. The consensus of the community was that every member was responsible and accountable for the financial support of the organization.


The encouragement to support the denomination was not limited to the financial arena. Administrative functions were also a consideration. An announcement in the May 8, 1912 issue of the *Herald of Holiness* notified districts and local churches that “Statistical Report Blanks” were being sent to each district. The administrative requirements and, specifically, the need for accurate records of the growing denomination are evident in recommendation that District Assembly minutes be “recorded with pen and ink, or typewritten, in well bound book and presented to the next General Assembly for inspection.” The administrative requirements were obviously a challenge for those who had been involved in the loosely organized holiness associations of the late-nineteenth century. One District Superintendent apologized for not sending his Assembly reports due to his busy evangelistic schedule at “summer tent and campmeetings.” One of the meetings he was scheduled to attend was the Bentleyville, PA camp (August 17-25), an independent camp affiliated with the NHA. Associations with these camps that had been established prior to the mergers that created the PCN were obviously maintained after those mergers. Imhoff expressed his feeling of obligation to keep these engagements, which had been planned prior to the Assembly. The article seems to express tension between the requirements of evangelistic work and the tasks of the District Superintendency.

The uniting of national efforts to spread Scriptural holiness required the institutionalization of both doctrine and practice. The *Herald of Holiness* reveals the promotion of a communal religiosiosity of doctrine and practice. This religiosiosity allowed

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for the continued emphasis on the ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification promoted through camp meetings and the regular worship of the church while also permitting the organization to delineate its doctrine and promote its polity. The first years of the *Herald of Holiness* contain numerous examples of the promotion of a communal religiososity in the PCN. The periodical repeatedly published articles that spoke directly to issues other than the ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification.

T. E. Mangum expressed the importance of an understanding of doctrine at the local church level when he reminded readers that the *Manual of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene* contained sixteen pages dedicated to doctrine. He urged "line upon line, precept upon precept, in indoctrination, especially with our new churches, and lambs in the fold. Nothing else can be so real a protection and safeguard against doubt or fanaticism." Interestingly, Mangum goes on to state that this indoctrination should be accomplished from the pulpit. As with other articles in the periodical, his recommendation is one that apparently had the endorsement of the editor but was only a recommendation which local pastors are at liberty to follow or ignore.

Two years prior to Mangum’s article, the editor wrote a series of articles on the “Articles of Faith” appearing in the church manual. The series began, in the June 24, 1914, issue with an article entitled “Doctrinal Statement” featuring a defense of “an elaboration of doctrinal tenets” in the manual and a discussion of the first article of faith on God. The series continued through September 16, 1914 with a review of each of the articles of faith. In his final review, Haynes concludes that the articles of faith “do not

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burden the mind or the conscience of man by attempting to do all his thinking for him."^46

His statement reflects the effort the leaders made to outline what they believed to be the essentials of Christian faith while allowing liberty in nonessentials. These leaders trusted the conscience of the individual enlightened and empowered by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

The intended relationship between the various interests of the denomination is reflected by the inclusion of a series of “Chapel Talks” by H. Orton Wiley. At the time of their publication, Wiley was President of Nazarene University in Pasadena, California. A preface to these talks noted that they had originally be given by Wiley near the close of the first semester of the 1915-1916 academic year and “were designed to give the students, in as brief and concise a manner as possible, some knowledge of the fundamental tenets of Arminianism and Wesleyanism.”^47 Seventeen different “Chapel Talks” were printed from April 12 to September 6, 1916, dealing with a number of theological topics. ^48 H. Orton Wiley was later commissioned to write the first

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comprehensive theology of the Church of the Nazarene. The concern for proper theological understanding was addressed through articles like the one written by C. J. Kinne, a member of the General Assembly Committee on Publication, in which he objected to one District's adoption of Strong's Systematic Theology as an "equivalent to [John] Miley." Kinne outlines some of his objections and questions any use of it as an official theology in the training of ministers for the PCN. This concern for proper theology and proper training in the doctrine of holiness was one of the reasons for the promotion of the Sunday School literature published by the church publishing house. The Committee on Publication consistently recommended that every church purchase and use this material. With Sunday School being increasingly recognized for its "educational role," especially for children and young people, there was an increasing concern that it reflect holiness doctrine.

At the same time, and often in the same issues, that the Herald of Holiness published articles and information that promoted a communal religiosity, the periodical also published articles, announcements and advertisements that promoted the ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification. Evangelist C. W. Ruth wrote an article that addressed the "Helps and Hindrances to Successful Revivals." One of the helps he listed was "The Baptism with the Holy Ghost," which Ruth believed was the "short cut to a revival." Revivals and camp meetings continued to be a vital element of the religiosity of the PCN. These did not neglect the conversion of sinners but the emphasis was definitely on the

instantaneous, second work of grace and Pentecostal language was a part of that emphasis. As indicated previously, Districts became sponsors of annual camp meetings, with many of these conducted jointly with the District Assembly. Some were even conducted on the grounds of holiness colleges, such as the Chicago Central District Camp Meeting at Olivet, Illinois. In a subsequent report on this meeting, the District Superintendent stated that attendees were given an opportunity to become members of the PCN. He indicates that forty-five people responded and further states that the “advantage of a district camp” is that “you can string your fish as you catch them.”

In the July 15, 1914 issue of the *Herald of Holiness*, C. E. Cornell authored an extensive report from “The Great Pasadena Campmeeting.” He claimed that it had been the largest camp meeting at Pasadena, with three thousand attending on the last Sunday. This district camp meeting featured the preaching of Bresee, Seth C. Rees and R. T. Williams and saw “over five hundred at the mourner’s bench.”

Some of the impetus towards District control and sponsorship of camp meetings is reflected in “Campmeeting Suggestions,” written by Mary Woodbury. She urged that these camps include the use of more local preachers and evangelists who would have a more “intense and personal interest in the success of the meeting.” She also thought that there should be fewer services with more time allowed for rest, meditation and prayer and that some services should be dedicated to prayer and testimony.

In addition to advertising camp meetings sponsored by Districts of the denomination, advertisement of independent camp meetings called for the support of

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52 “Announcements” *Herald of Holiness* 1:10 (June 19, 1912): 12.
Nazarenes. The June 24, 1914, issue carried a large advertisement for the “Fortieth Anniversary Douglas Campmeeting.” The camp at Douglas, Massachusetts, was an independent holiness camp ground and the person to contact “For Free Tents, Rooms, Time Tables, Circulars, or Other Information” was Rev. H. N. Brown, a PCN pastor who had served on the merger committee from the East in 1907. It is obvious that the desire to spread Scriptural holiness still extended beyond the confines of denominational boundaries. An advertisement for the “Great Interdenominational Holiness Convention” to be conducted at Cincinnati, Ohio (October 27 to November 1, 1914) was published in the September 16, 1914 issue of the Herald of Holiness. The advertisement invited all holiness churches and associations to “send as many delegates as they desire.” Along with C. J. Fowler and H. C. Morrison, C. W. Ruth was listed as a member of the Executive Committee.

While support for the continued interdenominational effort to spread Scriptural holiness is evident, there were also articles expressing a concern about some holiness evangelists and papers that continued to oppose the idea of holiness churches. C. G. Curry wrote that, in his area (Farmington, Iowa), there were some evangelists who claimed to be working along “strictly interdenominational lines” but were actually trying to “poison the minds of the people against holiness churches.” He also made note of his belief that some periodicals were promoting “strictly interdenominational work.” Curry urged pastors and members to be alert about this issue, encouraged them to be loyal to the denomination and suggested that every Nazarene subscribe to the Herald of Holiness.

The periodical consistently featured articles focusing on a variety of doctrinal issues. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit was one of the important doctrines featured; some would say that it was the most important one. An issue in June, 1916, dedicated several pages to articles about this doctrine. A. M. Hills contributed an article entitled “The Holy Ghost and the Church,” Seth C. Rees contributed one entitled “The Holy Ghost Experienced,” and C. W. Ruth’s contribution was “The Baptism With the Holy Ghost a Cleansing.”

The effort to maintain a balance between the communal and individual religiosity of the PCN is expressed in the instructions of its first General Superintendent, P. F. Bresee, on the procedures for a District Assembly. Bresee emphasizes both the administrative tasks, which promoted the organization and doctrine of the denomination, and worship that emphasized the Spirit-filled individual. The assembly was to include an emphasis on the missionary work, educational work and publishing interests of the denomination. He recommended a preparatory meeting and evening evangelistic services at each assembly. District business was to be handled but the assembly was also intended to be a time of “great outpourings of the Spirit,” which would “impart renewed strength and give added unction for the work. New Pentecosts not only fill the rivers, but start fresh streams to flow through the deserts.” The “way of holiness” was to be made clear and the people were to be lead into “the richer, fuller, transforming power of the Holy Ghost.” District Assemblies were supposed to “kindle and fan to a mighty flame” a “divine enthusiasm” for the work of the church.

59 A. M. Hills, “The Holy Ghost and the Church” Herald of Holiness 5:9 (June 7, 1916): 6; Seth C. Rees, “The Holy Ghost Experienced” (pp. 6-7); C. W. Ruth “The Baptism with the Holy Ghost a Cleansing” (pp. 8-9). Other articles included “Ye Shall Receive the Holy Ghost,” by J. E. L. Moore (pp. 5-6); “The Place of the Holy Ghost in This Dispensation,” by Joseph N. Speakes (pp. 5-6); “Seven Effects of the Spirit’s Coming,” by John Matthews (pp. 7-8) and “Evidences of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost,” by J. W. Goodwin (p. 9).

An article apparently written by the editor, "Method versus Spirit," expressed the felt tension between organization around doctrine and practice and an individual religious experience, which provides the motivation and empowerment required for obedient Christian living. While declaring an appreciation for the fact that "organization" helps to "economize time and strength," the author declares that it is not "efficacious." Organization, or method, must not be allowed to "trammel the heart and mind of man as to cramp his individuality in mechanical molds and make him simply one little machine of use only as directed by the guiding genius and skill of some noted 'expert'." 61

Addressing this tension between the necessity of organization and the liberty of an empowered selfhood, through the individual experience of the indwelling presence of the Divine, was the challenge of the early leaders of the PCN.

The early leaders of this national holiness church provided a structure in its general and district assemblies that enabled both ministerial and lay delegates to participate in the communal celebration of the experience of entire sanctification while at the same time accomplishing the administrative functions necessary to promote its doctrine and polity. While it is true that not everyone could participate in a General Assembly, many more could participate in a District Assembly and the attendance of representatives of the General Headquarters at these District Assemblies helped to promote the unity of the church. Delegates to both types of assemblies could return to their local church to spread the news of the work of the church and the excitement experienced in communal celebration. The scheduling of District Assembly and District Camp Meeting consecutively and at the same location helped to encourage attendance at these crucial events.

In addition to the assemblies and camp meetings sponsored by the church, the publication of a periodical promoting every aspect of the work of the church and its promotion by General Superintendents, District Superintendents, evangelists and local church pastors facilitated the sense of belonging to a much wider community than the local or district organization. My review of the *Herald of Holiness* convinces me that the PCN of the early twentieth century promoted a communal religiosity on a larger scale than possible locally or regionally. It also possessed the potential to promote an individualistic religiosity that places the autonomy of the individual in tension with the consensus of the community.

Conclusion

The manner in which nineteenth-century advocates of holiness reconstructed the Wesleyan/holiness cultural-linguistic system emphasized an imagistic religiosity which heightened individual awareness of spiritual autonomy. This created conflict with existing ecclesiastical authority and also created sectarianism within the Holiness movement. The dispersion of charisma resulting from the focus on individual, instantaneous entire sanctification made agreement on doctrine and practice problematic, virtually establishing multiple holiness cultural-linguistic systems by the end of the century. The ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification promoted an individualistic concept of the self with localized social bonds. The individual self is empowered and individual decisions are viewed as authoritative. For the person whose religious identity is primarily informed by this ritual, accountability to the larger community is a secondary
concern. The local holiness community, in which one’s life-changing episode was experienced, typically marked the boundary of the individual’s accountability.

The tendency to equate holiness with the imagistic ritual of entire sanctification granting the individual personal possession of spiritual authority emboldened those who had been expelled from their denominations. They considered opposition from ecclesiastical authorities as a sign of a spiritually compromised church refusing to hear the prophetic word of God and a confirmation of their calling to promote their specific understanding of holiness. A consequence of the experiential-expressive focus of nineteenth-century holiness advocates was the creation of a hyper-individualism which led to sectarianism. Individuals were empowered to define their own boundaries of belief and practice.

In the process of institutionalization, the PCN followed the NHA principle of focusing on the core issue of holiness while allowing diversity on nonessentials. Its leadership recognized the need to define itself versus the MEC on one hand and Pentecostalism on the other. In defining its doctrine and practice, the PCN focused on promoting the American Holiness movement’s understanding of instantaneous entire sanctification and the administrative structures required to support a uniform national church. Although there was a concern for orthodoxy and orthopraxy from the very beginning, these were primarily defined in general terms providing outer boundaries while allowing certain specifics to individual choice. While there was a prescriptive methodology for attainment of entire sanctification, the experiential results of this empowering ritual were vague or dependent on individual convictions.
In a paper submitted for the 2002 Global Nazarene Theology Conference, Clair MacMillan includes individualistic moral decision making as one of the characteristics of the early PCN.

The nature and quality of the encounter with God, which was normative for early Nazarenes, was so compelling that they were willing to claim the freedom to define their morality individually rather than collectively. Many opted for stricter mores than had been expected in their former denominational connections, but just as many opted for relaxed demands. Their point of agreement was that every person, after a 'sanctifying experience,' had the right and the responsibility to make their own moral choices in negotiation with God.62

In his response to MacMillan’s paper, Floyd T. Cunningham adds that the “first generation [of Nazarenes] handled diversity well. People committed themselves to the essentials, and had charity for those who disagreed on theological non-essentials. They could be totally committed to building a denomination with holiness as its center, and remain diverse.”63

It may be concluded that the early leadership left orthodoxy and orthopraxy imprecisely defined in order to build unity for a national holiness denomination. They fully expected that individuals who claimed to have experienced the transforming ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification would submit their personal convictions and their claim to personal spiritual authority to the community of faith, the larger body of Christ. Perhaps they understood that orthodoxy and orthopraxy are never etched in concrete but are dynamic and would be more precisely defined by the communal consensus of the General Assembly of the PCN. Even though the success of the PCN indicates that many did submit their individual religiosity to communal religiosity, it must be admitted that

63 Floyd T. Cunningham, “Response – Characteristics of the Early Church of the Nazarene” Global Nazarene Conference (Guatemala, 2002).
the experiential-expressive focus of the early Nazarene understanding of holiness
included the potential of the same type of sectarianism evident in the nineteenth-century
Holiness movement.

Since Pentecostalism emerged as a result of the sectarian nature of the nineteenth-
century Holiness movement and is characterized by the same experiential-expressive
focus of the Church of the Nazarene, a comparative study of the process of their
institutionalization would be an interesting project that could provide additional insights
about the ongoing tension between individualistic and communal religiosity, as well as
ideas contributing to the future success of these types of religious institutions.
CHAPTER VI

CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

The late nineteenth-century institutionalization of holiness was achieved through a process of pragmatic compromise, leaving several unresolved issues that the contemporary Church of the Nazarene continues to confront. Recent developments, such as the globalization of the Church, have exacerbated tensions over some of these issues, especially that concerning the doctrine and practice of entire sanctification. In this chapter, I will highlight these issues and discuss some of the ways contemporary scholars from within the Church have sought to resolve them.

In his article, “Nazarene Identity: Past and Present,” Robert Doyle Smith makes an important point about the history of the Church of the Nazarene; the primary focus of its institutionalization of holiness was the doctrine and practice of entire sanctification. Smith states that from the “earliest statements of the 1907 merger until the recent General Assembly [2001], the Church in formal statements has linked its identity and mission to the doctrine of entire sanctification.”¹ For almost one hundred years, Nazarene leaders and members have claimed this doctrine as the feature of the Church of the Nazarene which differentiates it from other denominations. In spite of the consensus about its importance and the specific nature of the Article of Faith on entire sanctification, the expressed understanding, experience, and actions of some of the members of the Church of the Nazarene differs from stated doctrine and practice. Consistent with the tension between individual and communal religiosity, some of these members are committed to

holiness and the church although their experience of entire sanctification was not like the prescribed method of attainment.

While many members of the church have equated entire sanctification with holiness, the 2001 Quadrennial Address of the General Superintendents “identified the Church’s ‘Core Values’ as being a Christian Church, a holiness church and a missional church. Moreover, it spoke of the need to maintain the Church’s formal position on entire sanctification.”\(^2\) Thus, entire sanctification is classified as an element of the broader doctrine of holiness. In as much as the organizational structure allows for a diversity of opinions on issues such as baptism, divine healing, and the millennium, it also allows a diversity of opinion on the doctrine and practice of holiness and promotes a continuing dialogue on all these issues.

Theologically, the tension between individualistic and communal religiosity is reflected in the continued “debate between Wesleyan and American Holiness constructions of the doctrine of holiness,” which Roger L. Hahn indicates has been a characteristic of “Nazarene and Holiness-tradition scholarship since the mid-1970s.”\(^3\) Putting it rather simplistically, the Wesleyan construction emphasizes the process aspect of holiness and its social matrix, whereas the American Holiness construction emphasizes the crisis aspect of holiness. The debate over these two constructions of holiness has tended to be polemical but can be said to be constructive in the sense that it has emphasized the importance of both the process and crisis aspects of holiness. I agree with Carl M. Leth’s claim that entire sanctification, the crisis aspect, “needs to be placed within the broader biblical understanding of holiness.” Leth believes that doing this

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Roger L. Hahn, “Re-Appropriating the Biblical Language of Purity and Cleansing for Holiness” Global Nazarene Theology Conference (Guatemala, 2002), np.
would “avoid the selective particularization or excessive individualization that has sometimes troubled us.”

In recent decades, the dialogue about the doctrine and practice of holiness within the Church of the Nazarene has included a third voice; a voice that cannot be described as Wesleyan or American Holiness in nature. This third voice is actually a combination of culturally diverse voices demanding to be heard in the now global Church of the Nazarene. The success of one hundred years of foreign missions has created a contemporary membership that is culturally diverse and sends representatives to the General Assembly to voice their own views of orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Gordon Thomas suggests that the church must “seek biblically-faithful but culturally-relevant new ways of expressing” holiness if it hopes to “impact a multicultural worldwide church in the 21st century.” Considering the cultural diversity of its contemporary membership, the conundrum for the Church of the Nazarene is to find a way to maintain a balanced religiosity that respects the individual’s experience of the sanctifying grace of God within the continually changing consensus of the community. A religiosity that is hyper-individualistic tends to fragment the institution and lead to sectarianism.

The focus of this dissertation may reflect my own experience of Nazarene religiosity during eleven years as a pastor. The best illustration from that experience is the varying attitudes toward support of the initiatives of the general church compared to the support of the initiatives of the local church. The majority of members who committed themselves to local church membership fully supported its activities and

financial well-being while many of these same people expressed difficulty with, or simply refused to support, the activities and financial well being of the District, regional College/University, and General levels of the Church of the Nazarene. Even though membership classes, preaching, and individual dialogue stressing communal religiosity were helpful in changing attitudes that focused primarily on individual and local religiosity, the process was often slow, frustrating and painstaking. Personal participation in activities at other than local levels often created a greater sense of communal religiosity but it was difficult to get individuals to commit their time and money to these events.

In spite of its efforts to provide a structure that calls its membership to loyalty to the consensus of the community, many within the contemporary Church of the Nazarene “still think of discipleship as mostly a personal and even a private matter.”6 Steven Hoskins suggests that Nazarene worship has become “crassly individualistic”7 and Jeren Rowell argues that understanding holiness primarily in terms of personal piety combined with an absence of “self-disclosure and accountability has made the idea of church discipline repulsive and the practice virtually nonexistent.”8 Stanley Hauerwas’ suggestion that American Methodists have failed to “embody Wesley’s peculiar understanding of the church as a disciplined community”9 may be applied to the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition in general and to the Church of the Nazarene. He argues for a recovery of the discipline of the body as an “alternative to the endemic individualism

6 Jeren Rowell, “A Holy Church” Global Nazarene Theology Conference (Guatemala, 2002), np.
7 Steven Hoskins, “Response – Does Holiness Theology Have a Future” Global Nazarene Theology Conference (Guatemala, 2002), np.
8 Rowell.

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and rationalism of modernity” and states that “holiness is not a matter of individual will but a result of being made part of a body,”¹⁰ which is the Church as symbolic of the Body of Christ.

The current dialogue within the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition exhibits a move toward the correction of the reification of Christian perfection to personal experience. Henry W. Spaulding II argues that “Christian perfection is engendered, not by carefully delineating a place which secures its meaningfulness and truthfulness, but by establishing practices and habits which help us go on.”¹¹ He suggests a reconstructing of the Wesleyan understanding of Christian perfection through a grammatical investigation that recovers the social matrix in which holiness selfhood is constructed and argues that the term *Christian polity* may be an adequate replacement for Christian perfection, since it respects both the personal and social dimensions of grace. In making this suggestion, Spaulding writes:

> Christian polity is dependent upon the socially constructed self and is engendered in community through worship. It is clear that such an understanding includes the way we name God and call a world into existence by our habits and practices in worship, a world not of our personal creation, but of the symbiosis of a community of intentionality in response to the gracious movement of God toward humankind. Here we see the importance of ritual. Attention to worship is a key to engendering the Christian polity which lies at the heart of Wesleyanism.¹²

Given the centrality in the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition of entire sanctification as a second work of grace with its emphasis on the individual’s direct access to the Holy Spirit, the question remains as to how this ritual might be reconstructed to emphasize the social matrix.

¹⁰ Ibid., 80, 84.
¹² Ibid., 169.
Partly because of its rapid growth in areas outside of the United States, scholars within the Church of the Nazarene have recognized the importance of a re-narration or re-minting of holiness which addresses a multi-cultural church. In my view, this re-minted cultural-linguistic system should maintain an appreciation for the experiential/expressive while recovering the communal aspect of holiness which was a vital part of John Wesley’s Methodism. This sense of Christian polity, to borrow Spaulding’s terminology, would include a renewed appreciation for liturgy, the need for accountability to the community of believers, and a recovery of Wesley’s tendency to be non-prescriptive in the attainment of holiness.

One of the problems in the contemporary Church of the Nazarene has been the frustration of those who believe in and support holiness yet proclaim that their own experience does not coincide with the traditional terminology. Eric Severson argues for the necessity of a loosening of the “prescriptive method” within the tradition. His concern is that when

we prescribe the way in which God can work in a person’s life, we have potentially road-blocked the creativity of God, perhaps preventing a person from experiencing God in a new and surprising way. In essence, this denies the possibility that we might actually learn from the holiness and sanctification of the “other.” When religious experience is prescribed in rigid fashion, the “other” is automatically encompassed and neutralized by the church. Our openness to God’s future must include an openness to God’s presence and voice in the “other.”

A vital part of becoming less prescriptive is paying careful attention to terminology. Jan Lanham has made the suggestion that Nazarenes “must find the language to articulate clearly the complexity of the depth and the hope of holiness. Each word we choose to


\[\text{Severson, np.}\]
link with the experience of holiness must be carefully defined and connected with the reality of everyday experience. The cost of miscommunication is too great.”

In discussing the idea of a re-narration of holiness, Henry W. Spaulding II suggests that there should be “sustained reflection on the importance of ‘holiness liturgy’” and the provision of resources for it. I agree with those who have recommended a renewed emphasis on more frequent participation in the Lord’s Supper, along with a concerted effort to emphasize its meaning, and a rediscovery of the communal participation in the story of redemption through the events of the Church year to include “the appropriateness and importance of corporate confession.” This renewed emphasis on liturgy must include consideration of the locus of the celebration of the individual’s experience of holiness. It seems to me that the inclusion of some type of rite of confirmation would provide a “liturgy of the Holy Spirit” recommended by John Fletcher. Laurence W. Wood’s suggestion that John Wesley’s baptismal liturgy could be expanded to “include the imposition of hands as a blessing and a promise of sanctifying grace through the Holy Spirit” may be a starting point in developing a locus of the experience of entire sanctification which honors the participation of the community in the process and crisis aspects of sanctification.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that a re-narration of holiness capable of balancing individualistic and communal religiosity must address the issue of selfhood. For the Church of the Nazarene to have a future as a holiness denomination and avoid the sectarianism of the nineteenth century, the construction of selfhood within this cultural-

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16 Spaulding, “Does Holiness Theology Have a Future”
17 Hauerwas, 90; Rowell, “A Holy Church.”
linguistic system is an essential issue. The self which is individually experienced and expressed within a specific cultural-linguistic system is a construction of that system. Autonomy is not, and should not be, a characteristic of the selfhood constructed by a holiness cultural-linguistic system. John Wesley insisted that holiness is social – that is, it is a relationship with God and other humans. All of our experience takes place within a social matrix. Scholars and ecclesiastical leaders of the Church of the Nazarene must find a way to stress the "degree to which human experience is shaped, molded, and in a sense constituted by cultural and linguistic forms,"¹⁹ while continuing to value and celebrate the experiential-expressive dimension of its tradition.

¹⁹ Lindbeck, 34.
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