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The Theological Significance of the Holiness Movement

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My task in this essay is to explain some of the theological issues that the Holiness Movement faces today and to discuss their theological significance. The first step is to get clear about what the Holiness Movement is. The Christian Holiness Partnership (formerly the Christian Holiness Association) is one of the main organizational forms that the Holiness Movement took. As such, it provides us with a way of seeing what comprised the movement. The Partnership includes twenty-one denominations[1] and associated colleges and seminaries, publishing houses, and camp meetings. Although individually comparatively small, put together, these denominations, with their associated educational and other institutions, are a considerable part of the American church landscape. Nonetheless, their small size and the fact that traditionally their membership has been drawn from those who are not a part of the cultural mainstream in the United States mean that Holiness churches have often failed to register in the chronicles of the country's religious history.

The next step is to understand what the movement was about. Briefly put, the movement stood for the doctrine and experience of holiness, also known (from its roots in John Wesley's theology) as "Christian perfection" and "entire sanctification." It also stood for practices related to holiness and regarded as essential to it. But it is not enough to state the matter this way. In some sense, every Christian church stands for the doctrine, experience, and practice of holiness. The Holiness Movement stood for a particular understanding, experience, and practice of holiness. The particular understanding and the theology in which it was embedded was the *raison d'être* of the Holiness Movement.

A Historical Prelude

On that premise, let us have a closer look at the defining doctrine, experience, and practices of the Holiness Movement. How did this doctrine and

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experience and these practices come to be and what was their relation to the Methodist tradition in America? The most effective way of obtaining this look is to rehearse the history of the Holiness Movement and to allow its distinctive emphases to emerge from that history.

The history of the Holiness Movement may be divided into four phases. The first phase began roughly in the 1830s, when some influential members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, notably Nathan Bangs, Timothy Merritt, and Phoebe Palmer, began promoting the doctrine of Christian perfection through publications, speaking, and organizational endeavors. They were responding to the fact that the emphasis of American Methodism in the early decades of nineteenth-century had necessarily been on securing conversions. Consequently, John Wesley's teaching about Christian perfection had become a matter to be pursued in the future, after the work of converting the nation was under way. By the 1830s, Methodists such as Palmer and Bangs were convinced that the time was right for a revival of interest in Christian perfection. Judging from the subsequent facts, their assessment was correct, for the Methodist church witnessed increasing interest in the doctrine of holiness; and those at the forefront of its revival saw their influence within the denomination increase.

It is worth noting that, although this resurgence of interest was regarded as a revival of John Wesley's teaching, there were some important alterations in the understanding of holiness, introduced mainly by Palmer. As is well known, Wesley taught that sanctification begins at conversion and continues by degrees until completed. For him, sanctification consists in the replacing of inward sin (evil thoughts and tempers) with perfect love. It is accomplished by disciplines such as self-denial, prayer, and other classical forms of Christian exertion, as well as the exercise of faith in God. With diligence, Wesley believed, one could come to a state in which perfect love had completely replaced inward sin. Moreover, he was convinced that many had arrived at this point and had testified to it. Palmer made an important contribution to the Holiness Movement by introducing an alternative way of obtaining Christian perfection—a way that she expressly called "the shorter way." Instead of a possibly quite long period of self-denial and other disciplines, the shorter way involved an act of consecration, whereby one devoted the sum-total of one's life to God. It was this act of consecration, argued Palmer, that brought entire sanctification. It was a shorter way because it was accomplished as an act of faith, that is, as a *decision*. Palmer added two other

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critical points. First, becoming entirely sanctified was regarded as a duty, so that failure to get there was a sin and due to an express lack of faith. Second, once one had become entirely sanctified, one was duty bound to testify to this fact to others. Failure to testify publicly was regarded as a grave fault. In spite of Palmer's departure from Wesley's understanding, proponents of holiness in this period were thought to be contributing something of great value to the Methodist cause and exerted considerable influence on the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Sam: Please provide a bibliographic reference to Palmer.

The second phase of the Holiness Movement began with the formation, in 1867, of the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness (NCMAPH). This event was a stroke of brilliance, for it combined two impulses deeply rooted in American religion—the perfectionist impulse and the revivalistic impulse. By hearkening back to the days of widespread awakenings, NCMAPH was identifying the cause of holiness with one of the most pervasive and influential features of American Christianity. By linking the revivalistic impulse to the doctrine and experience of holiness, the Association signaled a change in strategy for the Holiness Movement. In the days of Bangs and Palmer, the movement was propagated by literature, sermons, and personal influence, such as was exerted in Palmer's Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness. But NCMAPH had plotted a far more ambitious strategy. By utilizing the idea and fervor of the revival and camp meeting tradition, the Association intended to advance the cause of holiness at a popular level and to increase the numbers directly involved in the Holiness Movement.

At this point it is important to note an important feature of the Holiness Movement, namely, its ecumenical character. It is customary today to think of perfectionism as a Methodist preoccupation; but, in fact, in the nineteenth century the Holiness Movement was far from being the exclusive predilection of Methodists. Significant aspects the movement's theology were contributed by the Congregationalists Charles G. Finney and Asa Mahan.[2] Moreover, the movement had a strong bent toward social reform in such areas as the abolition of slavery and the temperance movement. In these endeavors the Holiness Movement found common cause with other reform-minded groups that were dissatisfied with the modest effect that Christians were having on society. They believed that a more elevated standard of Christian living would be the instrument of widespread social reform. In short, we should think of the Holiness Movement

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as a transdenominational phenomenon, even if Methodists were among its leading participants. It is important to keep the ecumenical character of the Holiness Movement in mind, because that character later helped give rise to tensions between some leaders of the movement and the leadership of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The National Camp Meeting Association enjoyed great success. Within a decade, it had spawned a host of regional and state camp meeting associations, all focused on the single goal of bringing about a nationwide revival of the experience of Christian perfection. The success of the various camp meetings encouraged those in the movement to believe that America was on the verge of a great revival. But the leaders of the Holiness Movement were interested in more than just the revival. Under the influence of Finney and Mahan, the doctrine of holiness had come to be linked to Pentecost and Holiness expositors routinely identified entire sanctification with the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Moreover, they thought of Pentecost not only as an event that had happened at the founding of the church in the first century but also as a promised eschatological event. That is, they believed that just before the return of Jesus God would again pour out the Spirit. Only this time the Spirit would be poured out literally on all humankind. This pouring out of the Spirit would be the eschatological event that would prepare the world for the return of Jesus. As a result of this interpretation, the leaders of the Holiness Movement believed that their movement, in which Christian perfection was identified with receiving the Spirit, was the eschatological event that was preparing the world for Jesus' return. The ecumenical character of the movement seemed to confirm this belief, for it suggested that the Holiness Movement was uniting Christians and overcoming denominational barriers. Since at least the 1830s there had been several movements in the United States that aimed at the union of Christians and the abolition of denominations. The Holiness Movement believed that it was the divinely appointed means for accomplishing this desirable goal.

However, the success of the camp meeting associations and the ecumenical character of the Holiness Movement did not prevent problems. The main problem was tension between the movement and the Methodist Church. It resulted from a combination of the movement's ecumenism and the fervor associated with its mission. The leadership of the National Camp Meeting Association consistently succeeded in maintaining good relations

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with the Methodist Church. Although it was not an officially sponsored ministry of the Methodist Church, the Association's leaders were all Methodists and they took great care to coordinate the Association's efforts with those of the church. The same was not true of the regional and state associations that sprang up in the 1870s. Generally speaking, they were less committed to coordination with the Methodist Church and more committed to spreading an increasingly ecumenical movement. One particular point of contention was the use of evangelists. At the national level, the Association always made sure that in its camp meetings it used evangelists who were members in good standing in the Methodist Church and that its meetings had the support of local Methodist clergy. However, the state and regional associations increasingly saw no great value in this policy and were inclined to use any evangelists that proved effective, regardless of denominational affiliation. They were also inclined to press ahead with holiness camp meetings and revivals even if local Methodist clergy were unenthusiastic. In increasing measure the state and regional associations loosened their bonds with the national Association and became autonomous entities, setting their own policies and creating their own schedules of camp meetings, with their own favored evangelists. Inevitably, this led to conflict, with local associations sponsoring camp meetings, urging local Methodists to attend, and then using evangelists whose preaching might at some points be at odds with Methodist doctrine and practice. Understandably, Methodist pastors were nervous about supporting such endeavors.

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The third phase of the Holiness Movement was the direct result of these tensions with the Methodist Church. From the perspective of the local associations, the Methodist hierarchy was setting institutional propriety over the needs of the revival. From the Methodist perspective, the associations were abandoning Methodist doctrine and discipline. If this were the extent of the dispute, a happy resolution might have been reached. In fact, other issues had begun to surface that ultimately led to schism.

Prominent among these other issues was the question of "worldliness." From the time of John Wesley, Methodism had stood for a well-defined stance toward wealth and physical pleasures. Briefly put, Methodists were an abstemious people. They were careful about their dress and manner of living, abstained from alcohol and frivolous pursuits, and were devout and disciplined. But in the course of the nineteenth century, American

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Methodism (at least in the eastern part of the country) joined the social mainstream. This was attested by, among other things, the founding of universities and the building of costly church buildings. Whether this assimilation to American social standards was a good or a bad thing may be debated. But in the opinion of the Holiness Movement, it was definitely a bad thing. It is no exaggeration to say that, by the 1870s, the Holiness Movement saw itself as upholding the behavioral standards that had always characterized Methodism and that, in its opinion, the Methodist Church had now largely abandoned. This view had antecedents in the formation (in 1860) of the Free Methodist Church, whose origin lay in a protest over pew-rents and its effect on the poor who wished to worship in a Methodist Church.[3] The Holiness Movement of the 1870s simply extended this sort of critique. As far as Holiness people were concerned, the Methodist Church was a victim of growing worldliness, as evidenced by extravagant living, costly clothing, lavish buildings, and so on. One effect of this critique was the tendency to define holiness in reaction to behaviors that were taken to embody worldliness. Theater attendance, dancing, gambling, and many other behaviors thus gave concrete form to the image of worldliness, to which the holy life was opposed.

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The other main point of contention between the Holiness Movement and the Methodist Church concerned the nature and centrality of Christian perfection. By the 1870s, the movement had an elaborated doctrine of holiness that was an amalgamation of the thought of John Wesley, Charles Finney, and Phoebe Palmer. In particular, it emphasized Palmer's teaching that the way to entire sanctification lay in an act of faith and consecration, that this act was a duty upon everyone, and that testimony about one's having made this act was likewise a duty. The first of these points—the way to entire sanctification lay in an act of faith and consecration—meant that Christian perfection is received in an instant and that it is not the result of a process of growth. The more this point was emphasized, the more it made nervous those theologians and pastors who were convinced that perfection is attained gradually. Moreover, the Holiness Movement increasingly argued that, far from being the *culmination* of a process of growth, entire sanctification is the *basis* of spiritual growth. In other words, it tended to present sanctification as the moment in one's life before which there was no significant spiritual development. The time between conversion and sanctification was regarded as a tempo-

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rary (and, it was hoped, short) period, marked by frustration and spiritual defeat. Entire sanctification represented the solution to this frustration and defeat.[4] One result of this teaching was that the importance of Christian perfection was magnified. It was no longer just a desideratum of the spiritual life—a goal to be striven after—but an obtainable obligation and the vital center of Christian life and doctrine.

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In other words, the Holiness Movement was a single-issue movement. Admittedly, that issue had several facets, including the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification, the eschatological and ecumenical understanding of the significance of that doctrine, and the social reforming tendencies deduced from the doctrine. Nonetheless, the movement poured all its energy into promulgating that single issue. In contrast, by the 1870s, the Methodist Church was a full-service church, with missionary endeavors, educational programs, concerns for theological precision and comprehensiveness, growing concerns about liturgical worship, and so on. There was indeed an important place for holiness within the denomination, but with its multiple commitments, the church could never—and did not wish to—emphasize holiness to the extent the Holiness Movement thought necessary. The question was whether holiness was to be *one* important concern amidst other important concerns or instead *the one* dominating concern around which all else should revolve.

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The collision course established by these issues assumed concrete form in the so-called "church question" of the 1880s and 1890s.[5] From the perspective of the Holiness Movement, the movement was under attack by the hierarchy of the Methodist Church. In particular, they complained that those who had obtained holiness in camp meetings and revivals were ill advised to join a Methodist congregation if, as was often the case, the pastor was opposed to holiness as the Holiness Movement understood it. Yet leaders of the movement recognized the necessity of church membership, lest the fruit of revival be lost. Until the 1880s the movement's policy had been to encourage people to join a congregation even if its pastor was inhospitable to Christian perfection. Suggestions that Holiness people should leave the Methodist Church were denounced. It is true that there were some "come-outers," such as Daniel Warner (founder of the Church of God [Anderson]), who believed that denominationalism was contrary to God's will and who encouraged people to leave churches.[6] But this was a rare case and denominational loyalty prevailed through the 1870s.

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However, by the 1880s the points of contention had increased in number and intensity. Increasingly, local camp-meeting associations began functioning as quasi-churches, with some practicing ordination. There were also frequent calls for the formation of a national Holiness church that would preserve the work of the camp meetings. Denominational loyalists within the movement managed to frustrate the formation of such a church; but the fact that there was interest in a national church at all was an index of the tension between the Holiness Movement and the Methodist Church.

In any event, the call for a national church went unheeded. Instead, local associations (some of which by now were functioning as churches and denominations) began uniting in federations. This development marks the beginning of the fourth phase of the Holiness Movement—the development of Holiness denominations. Over time, unions of Holiness groups took place, resulting in the formation of some Holiness denominations (such as the Church of the Nazarene) and the augmenting of others (such as the joining of the Pilgrim Holiness Church to the Wesleyan Methodist Church). Today, there are numerous Holiness denominations and the movement exists largely in this denominational form. Predictably, the formation of Holiness denominations has required the development of full-service churches, so that Holiness denominations today find themselves in the same situation as the Methodist Church of the nineteenth century, with the need to elaborate theology, social reform, meaningful worship, and more.

The Doctrine of Holiness Today

How is holiness understood in Holiness denominations today? One thing to note is that there is far more acknowledged diversity of opinion in Holiness circles than ever before. Holiness theologians exhibit much less agreement on the understanding of the doctrine than did previous generations. There are several reasons for this.

First, the generation of theologians and scholars that received its theological education in the 1950s and 1960s imbibed the leading ideas of the Biblical Theology movement. While these ideas are not above correction, they encouraged Holiness scholars to ask whether the doctrine of holiness, in its by-now traditional formulation (the amalgamation of Wesley, Palmer, and Finney) had a sound biblical basis. A perusal of articles in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* during the 1960s shows that this was a hotly debated subject. Generally speaking, scholars managed to find ways of justifying the

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doctrine biblically, but not without considerable effort. On two points, however, the traditional understanding of the doctrine was found wanting when weighed in biblical scales: the use of the aorist tense in Greek to interpret certain biblical passages and the identification of entire sanctification with the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

endnote 7 Sam: Please provide a sampling of representative literature -- Greider, Taylor, etc.

For generations Holiness scholars had appealed to the fact that some New Testament passages bearing on holiness employed verbs in the aorist tense. From their understanding of this Greek tense, these scholars concluded that these passages supported the understanding of holiness as an instantaneous event.[7] Today, it seems odd that anyone could ever have placed so much doctrinal weight on what turned out to be an utterly mistaken understanding of the Greek language. Yet, a review of Holiness literature in the 1960s and 1970s shows that this understanding died a hard but inevitable death as a new generation of scholars arose with better linguistic tools and fewer aberrant presuppositions.

The identification of entire sanctification with Pentecost was a more serious issue, for (as noted above) it not only defined holiness but also provided the Holiness Movement with the conviction that the movement was an eschatological act of God for the unification of all Christians in preparation for the return of Jesus. Toward the end of the 1970s debate took place (mainly within the Wesleyan Theological Society) as to the exegetical propriety of understanding holiness in terms of Spirit baptism. The sad news delivered by the scholars was that there was little warrant for this identification. For a generation that had striven to maintain impeccable evangelical credentials, the revelation that the most popular exposition of the movement's central doctrine had shaky biblical foundations was shocking.

A second reason for today's diversity of opinion is a large increase in historical knowledge. Specifically, Holiness theologians participated in the "back to Wesley" movement launched by Albert Outler in the 1960s. Once serious historical study of John Wesley's theology began to bear fruit, it became obvious that Wesley's understanding of holiness differed in significant respects from that of the Holiness Movement, shaped as it had been by Finney and Palmer. Neither did Wesley link entire sanctification with Pentecost nor would he have agreed with Palmer's "shorter way" into holiness. He put no special emphasis on consecration or on the duty of testifying to one's experience of holiness. In general, he had a more balanced view of holiness as an obtainable state in relation to holiness as a pursuit.

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It was a difficult matter in those days to explain to denominational officials and pastors the fact that the Holiness Movement's doctrine was at variance from that of John Wesley. This variance put people in the awkward position of having to choose one stream of the Holiness tradition over another. What made this sort of thing emotionally and bureaucratically troubling was that the movement's understanding of the doctrine had come to be enshrined in denominational articles of faith. In other words, the Finney–Palmer view of holiness had official sanction. It was represented as *the* biblical doctrine of holiness. Pastors and theologians were expected to believe it and teach it. Now that the traditional understanding of holiness had been exposed as but one interpretation alongside others, it exhibited a degree of historical relativity that was, to put it mildly, uncomfortable. To add insult to injury, the next generation of theologians, having by now learned Wesley's theology comprehensively, collectively judged the bard's version of holiness to be far superior to traditional Holiness theology.

Today, Holiness theologians are far more adjusted to theological diversity than were previous generations (although we should keep in mind that the amount of diversity in Holiness circles is pretty limited in comparison with the diversity found in some denominations). The widespread conviction that theological language uses models and metaphors has helped to blunt the trauma caused by theological diversity. Nonetheless, Holiness theology is in the strange situation of recognizing a plurality of understandings of holiness while Holiness denominations continue to espouse and sanction the doctrine in very traditional language.

Oddly, a second noteworthy factor stands in tension with this diversity. While theologians and scholars were fighting over the meaning and biblical status of the doctrine, Holiness denominations were diverting institutional energy in another direction. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, these denominations strove mightily to identify themselves with the burgeoning Evangelical movement. By the 1980s, Evangelicalism had embraced (or perhaps had been embraced by) the church-growth movement. Perceiving that the holiness message had not achieved hoped-for gains in membership, Holiness denominations decided to join their evangelical comrades in the church-growth movement. The theory was that church-growth methods would stand alongside holiness doctrine. The problem was that Holiness denominations, having begun as a movement, still portrayed themselves as a movement. That is, in spite of necessary concessions made in becoming

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full-service churches, they retained (or wished to retain) the urgency and energy associated with single-issue movements. With this heritage and mentality and with the perceived need to join the church-growth movement, it has become evident that the single issue that currently drives Holiness denominations is numerical increase and not the doctrine of holiness. This result is unexpected, because of the fact that churches in the Holiness movement still officially regard the promulgation of holiness to be their *raison d'être*.

There have been several developments in the doctrine of holiness. One has been underway for several decades, namely, the discussion regarding the question of what entire sanctification does and does not accomplish. In the enthusiastic early years of denominational formation, Holiness writers made some fairly extravagant claims about what entire sanctification could do. Not only was holiness thought to be the basis for solving social problems and energizing social reform, it was also thought to be the solution to virtually every spiritual and psychological problem. Sometime in the 1950s Holiness writers began moderating their claims, understanding that, while holiness may mean the cessation of a worldly attitude and worldly behaviors, it was not a panacea for every sort of disorder into which the human psyche may fall. In some ways this understanding was simply a reversion to John Wesley's observation that those who had obtained Christian perfection were still subject to a host of human weaknesses and limitations that are not matters of sin. But in other ways this new understanding was the product of a more sophisticated knowledge of developments in psychology. While Holiness denominations were busy spreading the message of holiness, they also devoted themselves to creating liberal-arts colleges. As these institutions began to mature and to measure themselves according to the standards of the academic world, departments in those institutions began to assimilate and appreciate theories that were accepted outside the world of Holiness denominations. As a result, writers informed by developments in psychology and other disciplines soon saw that the extensive claims made for holiness in earlier generations needed softening. Accordingly, in recent decades, Holiness theology has developed considerable sensitivity to the limitations of entire sanctification. There is a much greater recognition of the extent to which deeply ingrained habits and prejudices are not susceptible to the instantaneous character of entire sanctification.[8] Likewise, theologians have come to acknowledge that, in general, holiness

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does not change the contours of one's personality, however much we may wish for it. However, it should be noted that this moderating of earlier claims for holiness has not achieved universal support among Holiness proponents. There is some anxiety in Holiness circles that the qualifications introduced by two generations of psychologists and theologians have emaciated the doctrine of holiness to the point that the idea of entire sanctification is vaporous and undefined.

Another important development in holiness began in the 1970s and concerns the language and conceptual framework with which holiness is expounded. Until the 1970s there was a consensus on these matters. Entire sanctification was identified with the baptism with the Holy Spirit. It meant the eradication of "depravity" (the term that holiness writers used for original sin), the cleansing of the heart, and complete devotion to God. Above all, sanctification was represented as taking place in a single instant. Consequently, the term *progressive sanctification* had no meaning. Justification brought one into a saving relationship to God but sanctification was a distinct and instantaneous work of God's grace subsequent to justification.

In the 1970s a group of theologians, notably Mildred Wynkoop, proposed an alternative understanding of holiness.[9] Drawing upon the philosophy of Martin Buber, Wynkoop and others argued two points. First, they argued that the traditional and popular modes of expounding holiness, with their metaphors of eradication and cleansing, wrongly implied that depravity is some *thing* that holiness removes. This argument rested on the assertion that these modes of exposition reflected an outmoded metaphysics that saw reality primarily in terms of "substances" or "things." Second, they proposed a different metaphysics for explicating holiness—one that would see reality primarily in terms of relationships. In this rendering, holiness was represented as a change in our relationship to God. In particular, it was portrayed as our coming to love God and neighbor in a complete (though not flawless) way.

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Sam, Provide bibliographic info for Wynkoop, et. al.

This proposal gained some adherents in Holiness theological circles but did not convince everyone. The chief problem for objectors was that this approach made it difficult to sustain the chief tenets of the Holiness movement: entire sanctification as a second, distinct work of grace following justification is instantaneous. In Wynkoop's scheme, it made much more sense to represent holiness as a process occurring over time as one's relationship to God advanced by degrees. But this sort of talk induced much anxiety, for

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the Holiness movement had always been grounded in the fear that if holiness were a process and were attained gradually, then it would be easy to argue (as most Christian churches did) that it had no termination in this earthly life. In other words, if holiness were progressive, then it would be difficult to sustain the conviction that there is a second, definite, and instantaneous work of God by which we are made completely holy.

Today, there is residual but decreasing support for the traditional understanding of holiness among Holiness theologians and scholars. Variations on Wynkoop's proposal are popular but not universally accepted. In other words, Holiness theology is today in a state of flux (if it is even accurate to speak of Holiness theology as something fixed and definable). The days are probably gone when theologians within the Holiness Movement are driven by a clear-sighted vision of the central importance of holiness. Over the past thirty years many of these theologians have come to regard the traditional understanding of holiness doctrine as a quaint and at points incomprehensible set of convictions espoused by a movement that lost sight of its origin in John Wesley's theology and other vital contributors to the Christian tradition. At the same time, the growing sophistication of biblical scholars and church historians in Holiness colleges has added great depth to the movement's understanding of holiness. Gone are the days of embarrassingly bad exegesis and facile assumptions about the biblical character of popular expositions of holiness. Gone as well is ignorance about the historical development of the doctrine of holiness and the diverse and incompatible streams flowing into it. Likewise, Holiness theologians today have a far greater acquaintance with developments in the larger theological world, so that nowadays it is common to see Holiness theologians engaging Liberation Theology, feminist theologies, Radical Orthodoxy, and so on.

Conclusion

What will be the enduring contribution of the Holiness Movement? It cannot be denied that the Holiness Movement has in its history exhibited all the virtues and vices of single-issue movements. On the side of vice, at times it has been too inwardly focused, manifesting an intolerant and unsympathetic attitude toward other branches on the Christian tree. It has fostered and celebrated eccentric behavior and then used that behavior as a yardstick to measure and then pummel those outside the movement who failed to measure up. On the side of virtue, the Holiness Movement has

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stood resolutely for the idea that the human heart can be cleansed of sin and selfishness. Additionally, it has promulgated the conviction that this idea is not merely an ideal but is capable of realization. It upheld an almost unbridled optimism about the capacity of God's grace to redeem us from sin and transform us into the image of Jesus Christ. The movement has also kept alive the memory of social activism that both anticipated the Social Gospel and provided an evangelically-oriented variation on the Social Gospel. Finally, it has continuously witnessed to the importance of resisting sin by a close attention to behavior.

In many ways, the Holiness Movement has been a modern version of early Christians like Tertullian. He was a moral rigorist and perfectionist and more than a bit censorious, impatient, and intolerant. It is difficult to imagine wanting someone like Tertullian as your pastor or next-door neighbor. Yet it must be said that Tertullian was driven by a passion for the church's well-being and for the Christian's separation from the world. We may judge that the Tertullians of the world go too far in their demands on ordinary Christians and that they concede too little to the enduring power of sin. But it will surely always be important for the church to have among its members people who with single-minded concentration call attention to the power of God's grace and to the church's need to separate from the world.

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Endnotes

1. American Rescue Workers; The Association of Evangelical Churches; The Association of Independent Methodists; Bible Holiness Movement; Brethren in Christ Church; Churches of Christ in Christian Union; The Church of God (Anderson); The Congregational Methodist Church; Evangelical Christian Church; Evangelical Church of North America; Evangelical Friends Alliance (Eastern Region); Evangelical Methodist Church; Free Methodist Church of North America; Japan Immanuel General Mission; Missionary Church (North Central District); The Church of the Nazarene; Primitive Methodist Church; The Salvation Army (USA); The Salvation Army of Canada & Bermuda; and The Wesleyan Church.

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