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## Methodists Disavowing the Holiness People.

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The religious movement which has resulted in the organization of the so-called Pentecostal churches, vulgarly known as "Holy Rollers," is very frequently connected with the Methodist Church. The connecting link is the Methodist teaching of the perfect sanctification of believers through the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, either as a distinct gift after justification and essentially different from justifying grace, or as an increased measure of the Holy Spirit after justification. The bestowal of this special gift of the Holy Spirit gave rise to the name "Second Blessing," which became a sort of shibboleth with that particular class of Methodists who insisted on this bestowal as the distinguishing mark of genuine believers. John C. Montgomery, writing in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* (April, 1924, pp. 374—9), admits that Methodist teaching is at least indirectly responsible for the rise of the Pentecostal churches. He asserts that he has made a thorough study of the modern Pentecostal movement and has arrived at the following conclusion: "It will be found that the Second Blessing movement, so strong about a quarter of a century ago, prepared the way for the Pentecostal movement. That Second Blessing movement is our own. Its promoters made much of the inchoate pronouncements of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M., on this subject. Our preachers were their prophets, and our church-buildings were their refuge. There was a time when it was practically impossible to secure a Methodist evangelist to assist in a meeting without having a Second Blessing meeting. Many of our general evangelists were once of this group." Further on he says: "A devout old Methodist lady, mother of a prominent Methodist minister, described for the writer a Pentecostal meeting she had been attending. 'Why, brother, it is just like the old-time Methodist meetings. They had "the power." It was just like being in the meetings we used to have.' The Pentecostal people, with a great deal of gusto and ability to make a good case in the eyes of some

people, say: 'We are the old-time Methodists.' And we might as well admit that some things which we permitted to be regarded as the very essence of Methodism, in some quarters at least, mark the Pentecostal endeavors. Even if we had two kinds of Methodism, one for the rustics and the other for the urbanites, we have certainly had Methodists move to the city or another community and find nothing so much like their own brush-arbor revival-meeting Methodism as the Pentecostal services. They were a little emphatic and extreme, just carrying to logical conclusion and practising with consistency some of the things we tolerated and fostered."

This statement will be much appreciated outside of the Methodist Church, we think, first, because of its candor and sincerity, secondly, because of the doctrinal, or dogmatic, roots of the Pentecostal movement which it lays bare.

Wesley's spiritual development was not along purely evangelical lines, spite of the fact that he was the acknowledged leader in the so-called evangelical movement in England in his day. His earliest religious impressions of some depth were derived from the *Imitatio Christi* and *The Rules for Holy Living and Dying*. He states in his *Journal* that he learned from these works that "true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's Law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions." (I, 466.) Especially the latter work taught him the importance of "purity of intention." "Instantly," he says, "I resolved to dedicate all my life to God: all my thoughts and words and actions." (Wesley's *Works*, XI, 366.) A great hunger seized him for something that lay beyond his present experience: he felt no peace in his heart, but for thirteen years, filled with tragic experiences, he struggled with prayer and tears for that consolation which the pure Gospel alone can bestow. When he came to read William Law's *Serious Call* and *Christian Perfection* he claims: "The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul that everything appeared in a new view." (*Journal*, I, 467.) Still, the coveted peace did not come to him, although in his activity in the Holy Club at Oxford and in his efforts to preach the message of grace to the prisoners at the Castle and the Bocardo he was in a "passionate and unceasing quest for a deeper experience." When he entered upon his ministry in Georgia, he states in his *Journal*: "My chief motive is to save my own soul. . . . I hope to learn the true sense of the Gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen." (*Works*, XII, 38.) On his way across he expressed surprise that the Moravian passengers in his ship were quite unalarmed during a storm and even went on

with their singing. He marveled when one of them told him that his people were not afraid to die. W. Bardsley Brash relates the following incident: "Wesley landed at Savannah on February 6, 1736. He soon met Spangenberg, who asked him, 'Do you know Jesus Christ?' 'I know He is the Savior of the world.' 'True, but do you know that He has saved you?' 'I hope He has died to save me.' Spangenberg then asked, 'Do you know yourself?' Wesley answered, 'I do,' but, in telling the story of this conversation, says, 'I fear they were vain words.'" (*ERE*, XII, 725.) His unrest did not leave him during his incessant activity in the American colony. In his *Journal*, summing up his experiences, he calls himself "a child of wrath, an heir of hell," and in later years he revised this statement to read: "I believe not. . . . I had even then the faith of a servant, though not of a son." (I, 421.) In this state of mind he left Georgia at the end of 1737. He was constantly prying into his inner self and measuring his spiritual condition, his faith, against the standard of perfection. Every true evangelical sees at a glance where Wesley's trouble lay: he wanted to believe in himself believing and leading the life of faith. Hence the sense of dissatisfaction and the yearning for more Spirit, for a more comprehensive grasp of divine grace, for greater ardor in Christian living. "Eager and hungry, on his return to England he met Peter Boehler, who told him, 'My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away.' 'Preach faith till you have it, and then, because you have it, you will preach faith.'" (*ERE*, *ibid.*) This advice, though well meant, was not wise, for now Wesley would preach faith *because he had it*.

What happened to him on May 24, 1738, he has recorded in his *Journal*: "I think it was about five this morning that I opened my Testament on those words: 'There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.'" (Just before leaving his room his eyes fell on the text: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." In the afternoon he visited St. Paul's, where the anthem was "Out of the Deep have I Called unto Thee, O Lord.") "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans*. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death. I began to pray with all my might for those who had in

a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there what I now felt in my heart." (I, 475.) Was Wesley on this occasion made a Lutheran? He had indeed come under the influence of one of the finest instruments for a genuine evangelical conversion. He had learned the paramount lesson, that the faith which brings peace to the heart is the faith that personally appropriates the work of Christ. An excellent beginning in the right direction had been made. But even in this momentous hour we note that Wesley keeps his hand on his spiritual pulse: he knows the exact minute almost of his inward change; he records it as a sensation of which he was distinctly conscious, and last, not least, he notes that the change came to him immediately attended by works of sanctification which he performed. Is there anything wrong in this? Cannot the consciousness of the fact: Jesus saved me, just me, be flashed into a heart with such force, so vividly, that a person never forgets it all his life? That surely is possible and does not detract anything from the genuine spiritual quality of the event. Nor is justifying faith ever without good works, not even in the first moment. It must work by love at once, or it is not true faith. But it is a precarious situation which the justified sinner creates for himself when, reviewing the change that has been effected in him, he beholds both in one glance, the works which Jesus did for him and the works which he did the moment he grasped the reconciliation effected for him by the Lord. When remembering how he became God's child, the believer had better put altogether out of his mind how he behaved as God's child and rivet his attention exclusively on the vicarious works of his great Substitute; otherwise a pharisaical conceit, even of the faintest kind, will creep into his musings right at this point and spoil his whole evangelicalism. Only when the believer must prove to *men* that his faith is genuine, he may and must remember and appeal to his works of love. Peace with God such as the stricken conscience craves is obtained only on the basis declared in Rom. 5, 1. 2. Christ alone is our Peace, Eph. 2, 14; comp. John 16, 33. Only because He "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant," God is the God of peace. Heb. 13, 20; 1 Thess. 5, 23; 2 Thess. 3, 16. The peace established on Golgotha and laid as a benediction on the disciples in the Easter-greeting of the Lord is the *εἰρήνη τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοῦν*, which "guards our hearts," Phil. 4, 7, like a sentinel at a door. That is the meaning of *φρουρεῖν*. This sen-

tincl does not suffer any other to share picket duty with him. If we appoint a sentinel of our own to secure God's sentinel, we shall always be looking for reports from our sentinel and trust our security to him.

The experience of Wesley at the meeting in Aldersgate Street did not effect a change in a theory of Christian perfection which he claims to have held uninterruptedly from 1725 to 1777. (*Works*, XI, 351—428.) One of the leading Methodist dogmaticians, William Burt Pope, of Didsbury College, Manchester, has exhaustively treated this belief of Wesley and his followers in his *Compendium of Christian Theology* (2d ed., New York, 1881, Vol. III, pp. 28—130); especially pp. 88—99 are important. It would lengthen this article far beyond the space at our disposal if we were to quote even a moiety of the interesting material contained in Pope's account. Perhaps we can take up this theory later in a special article. Meanwhile we must content ourselves with having referred the reader to the main source of information. In this connection we should also like to call attention to the criticism of Wesley's theory in C. Hodge's *Systematic Theology* and to Frederic Platt's article on "Perfection" in *ERE*, IX, 728—737. Wesley claims that the theory of perfection is "the grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists, and for the sake of propagating this chiefly He appeared to have raised us up." (*Letters*, Sept. 15 and Nov. 26, 1790.) Dr. J. A. Faulkner, of Drew Theological Seminary, claims that "the Methodists were the first Christians who officially, and as a united body, without deviation, and with the power of a Church behind them to make it effective, taught the New Testament doctrine of perfection." (O. A. Curtis, *The Christian Faith*, p. 525.)

In developing the theory of Christian perfection, which is "preeminently the distinction doctrine" of the Methodist Church, some of its advocates came to regard Christian perfection as "consisting in a new and distinct dispensation of the Spirit." (Platt.) They held that in order that the regenerate may become perfect in sanctification and in the service of love, not only a richer degree of divine grace than that previously bestowed is necessary, but there must be an entirely new gift of the Spirit, which can be distinguished in kind from the first gift received at regeneration and is superadded to the former. Some called this "the baptism of the Holy Ghost"; others, the "second blessing." (See A. Mahan, *The Baptism of the Holy Ghost*, and the literature of the Pentecostal League.)

The Lutheran Church knows of Christian perfection only in the sense of perfection by imputation. It is the Redeemer's vicarious righteousness, acquired for men and written down to men's credit when God raised His Son for our justification, Rom. 4, 25, proclaimed by Christ's ambassadors as God's reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5, 19. 20, and accepted, appropriated, by faith, and thus turned into faith-righteousness, Rom. 4, 5. It is this righteousness which is without flaw; every other kind is, at best, a pressing forward to the mark of perfection. Methodists have ever failed to understand the Scriptural distinction between the believer's righteousness by justification, the *justitia imputata*, which is always 100 per cent., and his righteousness by sanctification, the *justitia acquisita seu inchoata*, which never is 100 per cent. That is why they have misunderstood and misjudged Lutherans so grossly as to pronounce and treat them as "unconverted," "dead-faith people," etc. But neither the plain assertions of Scripture nor the hard facts of the believer's life are changed by fervid, enthusiastic assertions of a plenitude of Spirit-force, Spirit-fire, Spirit-baptism such as Methodism has made and brought to a consistent conclusion in the Pentecostal movement.

The Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, Dr. Carroll tells us, is a body formed 1907—08 by the union of several organizations of churches holding to the doctrine of entire sanctification as a work of grace distinct from, and subsequent to, justification. Independent holiness churches in New England associated themselves together as early as 1890. Subsequently a similar association was formed in New York, and these were united in 1897 under the name of "Association of Pentecostal Churches of America." In 1895 a body called "The Church of the Nazarene" was organized in Los Angeles, Cal. This, with similar congregations, resulted in an association. In 1906 a delegation from the Eastern body attended a general assembly of the Church of the Nazarene in Los Angeles to propose a union of the two bodies. The general assembly, finding that the Church of the Nazarene and the Pentecostal churches were "at one in doctrine, basis of church-membership, general superintendency, basis of ownership of church property," and as to "Scriptural holiness," adopted resolutions in favor of the union of the two bodies. The merging was accomplished at Chicago in October, 1907, and a manual was adopted. There was a further union, in October, 1908, at Pilot Point, Tex., with the Holiness Church of Christ, a Southern body composed of churches in various Southwestern States, some of which were

organized as early as 1888. At the time of union this organization had about 100 churches, the other having about 130.

The manual contains a statement of belief in eight items, assent to which is required as a basis of church-membership: the Trinity, the divinely inspired Bible, the fall of man, the eternal loss of the finally impenitent, the atonement of Christ, the entire sanctification of believers by faith subsequent to justification, the witness of the Spirit to justification and sanctification, the return of the Lord, and the resurrection and final Judgment. General rules, similar to those formulated by John Wesley, are set forth for the conduct of members. A chapter on special advices declares against the use of spirituous and fermented drinks and tobacco and membership in secret societies.

The polity provides for a general assembly and district assemblies. The general assembly elects general superintendents to hold office in the interim. They are to preside over the general assembly and over district assemblies, arrange the assembly districts, ordain elders, appoint evangelists and have general charge of the work of the Church. Licensed preachers, after having served as pastors, may be elected to elder's orders by district assemblies. Church boards arrange with ministers directly for the pastoral relation.

The Church has foreign missions in India, Japan, Cape Verde Islands, and Mexico, and home missions in various parts of the United States. It has a collegiate institute at North Scituate, R. I., doing preparatory work and giving theological training, the Deets Pacific Bible College at Los Angeles, Cal., for Bible-training, and a Bible Institute and Training-school, at Pilot Point, Tex. It recommends to the patronage of its people the Texas Holiness University, Peniel, Tex., and the Arkansas Holiness College, Vilonia, Ark. As official organs of the Church the *Nazarene Messenger*, Los Angeles, Cal., the *Beulah Christian*, Providence, R. I., and the *Holiness Evangel*, Pilot Point, Tex., are recognized. There were reported, at the close of 1908, 575 ministers, 230 churches, and 12,000 members. (*Schaff-Herzog Encycl.*, VIII, 453.)

It is this body from which soberer Methodists are moving away and endeavoring to induce other Methodists to disavow them. The writer in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* to whom we referred, "after a fair-minded and prolonged study" pronounces the Pentecostal movement "an unmixed evil." He has found its devotees "emphatic, noisy, and obtrusive believers. One cannot be, it seems, a lukewarm member. You cease to be one of them when your temperature drops below the boiling point." Subsidence of the

“Spirit-power” is responsible for a considerable “turnover” that constantly takes place among the Pentecostal people, “backsliding being so prevalent that it requires large additions to membership to offset the loss. But at any given time the number of adherents is considerable. There are not so many as their noise indicates, but a great many of them nevertheless.”

As regards the moral influence which they exert, “the writer has failed to find an instance of increased community morality because these people gained a foothold in any community. If anything is noticeable in this respect, it is that moral standards are lowered when they invade. They seem incapable of inculcating unselfishness. Most of the additions to their ranks are people who have been alienated from other Churches, being, in this, quite like the Russellites. Of a congregation of them in a near-by city [Mr. Montgomery writes from St. Clair, Mo.] it was learned that about sixty per cent. had been Methodists. They make much of this as evidence of the fact that Methodism has lost its revival warmth, and that these people have been starving for the spirituality offered by the Pentecostal Church. As a matter of fact, . . . they are more likely to be alienated from a Church having a great amount of what is commonly called Methodist revival warmth than from churches accused of being colder. It would make no difference to the Pentecostal Church how much of this revival fire it found in a Methodist (or other) church. Such church would not be immune from its insidious attacks any more than the Church reputed to be cold. The Pentecostal movement might be called high-voltage slander. He who has hoped to help them and work with them will be disillusioned by their treacherous attacks. Woe unto that unsuspecting preacher who tries to work with them in a revival meeting! When they are influential, it is only to widen the chasm between the churches and the groups who have cultivated their own pride by talking of the pride of the churches. In spite of this Ishmael-like disposition, they have been past masters in the art of posing as friendly and brotherly to all until they won the privilege of occupying a country chapel for a revival meeting. After the smoke and confusion passed away, he hunted in vain who would seek to find a Methodist church there. The larger number of their recruits are held for only a little while. But the effect upon them is usually to make them incurably hostile toward the Church. They afford a fine opportunity for curious onlookers to have confirmed their opinion that religion is nothing more than a joke.”



With dismay the writer calls the attention of his Methodist brethren to "the fact that we are, in some considerable measure, responsible for the modern Pentecostal movement. It is never pleasant to make confession. It is never pleasant to recognize as our own that which we condemn in others. Hence the usual inability to see such. But there are some things in Methodism as strange to look upon as the naïve practise of the Baptists, who can, in the same breath, condemn the Roman Catholics for saying that no marriage is valid unless solemnized by a popish priest, and then declare that no baptism is true, Scriptural baptism unless administered by a Baptist and according to Baptist mode. Some of the things in which the modern Pentecostal movement specializes, things we deplore, were borrowed from the Methodists." The writer relates how he probed the quality of Pentecostal spirituality, the Pentecostal "capitalization of noise, jazz, and confusion" and was made to hang his head in shame when he heard people say of the Pentecostal doing, "Just like Methodism."

He advocates for the future that Methodism should be "intellectual, social, and dignified." By "intellectual" he understands not a "scholarly" religion, one that satisfies the brain while it leaves the heart cold, but one that presents "beliefs from which best intelligence need not dissent," what we ordinarily call rationalism of the subtile kind. By "social" he understands a religion that would teach "Trinitarians something of the great Christian faith that the Unitarian Arthur Nash has shown," that puts the Golden Rule into business, adores the great faith of the Quaker Seebom Rowntree, recognizes humanity as a great brotherhood, and is eager to rally men to a fight against gambling and horse-racing rather than against evolution. "Dignified" is not to mean "dignimonious." "We are not thinking of stiffness and chill. But to think the great thoughts of religion, to be won by the great plan of Christianity, and to desire to act seemly in the presence of the God of love and might will surely argue for dignity of life, thought, and worship. The extemporaneous may be dignified. A reception for Charlie Chaplin would likely be more dignified than some of our religious (?) services. Jazz songs, flippant prayers, and uncouth sermons quite naturally introduce levity and disorder into our congregations and often give religion an appearance that is far removed from what we would naturally associate with the sublime. It is common to hear people berated because, while they are noisy at the ball game, they are so quiet and lacking in 'spontaneity' in the church. It is devoutly to be hoped that our people

will be, when in the church, unlike what they prefer to be when at the ball game. One referred to the church attendance of a certain religious group as 'paying their respects to the Almighty.' It was spoken rather scornfully. We have seen a great deal of religion, so called, that showed no respect for God. And the character of our people reveals the curse this has wrought."

Our writer, we fear, will not get very far on his triple basis of intellectuality, sociality, and dignity. If Methodism could be made to go back to the Aldersgate Street meeting and take up once more the study of Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, then proceed to the study of Luther's Exposition of Galatians, then to Luther's *Wider die Schwaermer, Wider die Rottengeister* (XX, 762 ff. 1678 ff., etc.), — that would help. As to the Pentecostal movement, that is simply a part of the "great falling away" which was predicted before the return of the Lord. On the power of the Spirit in believers the Lutheran Church, and Luther above all, has expressed sound and sane Scriptural views that can serve as the antidote for many modern vagaries in which the Holy Spirit is presumed to be implicated.

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