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The Integral Nature of Worship and Evangelism: Insights from the Wesleyan Tradition
The Wallace Chappell Lecture on Evangelism

This essay explores the fundamental relationship between worship and evangelism through the lens of the hymns and writings of Charles Wesley. After laying a biblical foundation for the integral nature of worship and evangelism based upon Acts 2:46-47 and examining the image of paideia (instruction through action) in Heb. 12:9-10 as a concept implying their integration, the author describes the liturgy of the worshiping community as the primary matrix of evangelistic ministry. The call of the prophet Isaiah (6:2-8) reveals a paradigm related to worship that instructs our understanding of evangelism as well. All true worship and faithful evangelism begins with the acknowledgement of God. The experience of repentance and forgiveness liberate God’s people and enables them to be ambassadors of reconciliation and restoration. Charles Wesley’s hymns illustrate each of these critical themes. Worship shapes the people of God and forms them into an evangel-bearing community for the life of the world as they proclaim and embody the Good News of God’s love through Christ.

Keywords: worship, evangelism, Charles Wesley

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When my family and I first arrived in Mutare in August 1992, the entire southern region of Africa was experiencing one of the worst droughts of the century. In spite of the fact that our formal work was at Africa University and the Old Mutare Centre, Janet and I both felt called to do something to help the many hungry people that surrounded us. It did not take us long to discover that widows and children were starving within ten miles of the university. Through our contacts with the church we met Rev. Elisha Kabungaidze, pastor of the Mundenda Circuit, with responsibility for some seven churches in one of the hard hit areas. With the help of Elisha and a devoted circle of lay leaders within his congregations, we began to identify the “poorest of the poor” within the bounds of his wide-ranging parish. Some were members of his churches; most were not. We traveled throughout the area with Elisha, delivering food and other items basic to life. It was a humbling experience, but through it all I rejoiced in the holistic vision of evangelism and its integral connection with worship, embodied in this hardworking servant of God.

Each morning of worship/evangelism/mission began with our group standing together in a circle. We greeted one another with the name of Christ. We prayed. One of our members read the Word for the day. We sang. We prayed some more, and then we set out. We had the privilege of walking from hut to hut with Elisha and his parishioners, repeating the same, basic sign-act of love with him. Every day was truly sacramental. As we approached a homestead, Elisha would call out the names of the family in his deep, resonant voice and exchange the traditional greetings. “Marara ere?” “Did you sleep well through the night?” “Tarara marara o.” “Yes. I slept well if you slept well.” Elisha would explain to the families why we had come, for they were usually unaware of our plans to visit. He would tell them we knew that they had no food and that the love of Jesus had moved us to do whatever we could to help them in their need. Often the women would fall to the ground and weep, and then spring to their feet, dancing and singing the praises of God. The Shona of Zimbabwe have a saying: “If you can talk, you can sing. If you can walk, you can dance.” And we had many opportunities to witness and to practice both. We always prayed together, and we almost always sang a song as we departed. It was a joyful song, a song of hope within the midst of suffering. More often
Elisha lived out a model of evangelism — a way of being in mission in the world — that struck me very deeply. His participation in God’s mission reflects with integrity, I believe, what Albert Outler once described as the trio of dominical imperatives regarding evangelism, namely, heralding, martyrdom, and servanthood. Before Elisha did anything, he acknowledged God’s presence and adored the Triune One. Wherever he went, he announced the gospel, the good news. He boldly proclaimed the love of God for all people and pointed to the Creator, Savior, and Sustainer he had come to know through Jesus Christ. He provided witness in the sense of living out his life in solidarity with God’s people. He lived the life of a servant, a life characterized by the ungrudging outpouring of himself. When I asked him on one occasion where he had learned this winsome way of life, he responded by saying, “I think it is simply in my Methodist blood.”

Far from a partisan cry (hardly something I intend here), I think Elisha was directing us to an essential principle, for surely, as the Wesleys argued repeatedly, their effort was simply to rediscover “primitive Christianity.” While never using the language of “evangelism,” their primary project was to emulate a pattern of life in community that reflected the presence of a living Lord and a liberating/healing Spirit. Implicit in my narration of life in the shadow of Elisha is the integral nature of worship and evangelism in the community of faith. I don’t know if Elisha could have distinguished worship from evangelism in any sophisticated or nuanced manner. In fact, I would submit to you that the fullest possible integration of doxology and disciple-making was the key to his contagious faith. He lived what many are beginning to rediscover in post-Christian, Western cultures at this very time. In the past decade or so, a growing number of church leaders and scholars have begun to address the connection between evangelism and worship, that perennial question in all ages of renewal in the life of the church. In such times as these, spiritual fruit has always been abundant.

In relation to these monumental questions, therefore, my proposal is rather modest. I simply desire to explore the fundamental relationship between worship and evangelism, using the hymns and writings of Charles Wesley (the neglected brother) as a vehicle for discovery.

I.

The terms “worship” and “evangelism” suffer from a common malady. They both defy simple definition. Both can be defined so narrowly that the profound nature of their significance is lost; they can be defined so broadly that they come to mean nothing. In common discourse within the life of
the church today, “worship” can mean anything from the entirety of the Christian life to a set of praise music in the context of the Christian assembly. Likewise, “evangelism” can range in meaning from the specific act of preaching the gospel to a group of unchurched, homeless men in an inner city soup kitchen to the entirety of the Christian faith. Despite the importance of precision, I am actually quite happy, at this point, to leave us in a state of “happy ambiguity” with regard to definition, because a part of this exercise is to discern the interface of these practices in the life of the church. Defining these terms in too narrow a fashion may blind us to their broad ranging application; applying only broad strokes may obliterate the fascinating detail that actually constitutes real life. While it will be important for me to establish some basic parameters shortly – which I hope to do more descriptively than prescriptively – I think we do well to start where Charles Wesley would have begun, namely, in scripture.

There are many biblical texts that leap immediately to mind as we contemplate the meaning of worship or the meaning of evangelism, but one text jumps out at me as I reflect upon the integral dynamic that links the two: Acts 2:46-47

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

However brief this description might be, it is a fairly definitive portrait of life in Christ – a life that directly linked worship and evangelism. True spiritual worship, as St. Paul made so abundantly clear in Romans 12, has to do, in fact, with every aspect of life. There can be no separation of worship or liturgy from the totality of life as we really know it. Worship, in this broad sense then, is the grateful surrender of all we are and all we have, a “living sacrifice” of praise and thanksgiving to the God of love who has created all things and bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. It is living in and for God and God’s way in human history in all things. The ministry of evangelism in this earliest Christian community, the consequence of which was “the Lord adding to their number day by day,” consisted of spending time in the communal worship and praise of God, sharing together the sacred gift of food, and offering kindness and hospitality to others. Just a few verses earlier in this chapter, of course, Luke provides a little more detail. “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42). There was a certain specificity with regard to the foundation of this evangelistic community in Word and Sacrament. There
was a peculiar nature to the worship of God that they practiced. But all of this life together – including the sharing of personal possessions so that no one lacked the basic necessities of life – was aimed at living in and manifesting the reign of God.

It is a cliché anymore to describe worship, and more precisely liturgy, as “the work of the people” and to think of evangelism in similar fashion, not as the work of a single individual, but of “the whole people of God.” The purpose of this corporate service – this shared labor of love – is to form us in praise and engage us in God’s mission. Charles Wesley seems to have learned early in life that worship/evangelism is *paideia* – life-shaping instruction or formation through action. For the earliest Christians – like those we see in the Acts of the Apostles – this classical Greek understanding of discipline must have entailed all those things that are done in the community of faith that shape the whole person in their journey toward maturity in Christ. In this process, however, nothing was more critical than the words and actions of the liturgical assembly that spilled over naturally into lifestyles of good news in the world. True worship springs from the heart, but worship (defined here in the more narrow sense as the liturgy) also has the potential to shape Christ-like people who become evangel-bearers for others.

The writer to the Hebrews uses the language of *paideia* to describe a vision of the Christian life: “We had human parents to discipline us, and we respected them. But [God] disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share his holiness” (Heb. 12:9-10). The concept of a discipline that frees the human spirit and leads the emancipated child of God into a life characterized by holiness of heart and life clearly inspired the Wesleys. Charles bears witness to the potency of the vision:

Loose me from the chains of sense,
    Set me from the body free;
Draw with stronger influence
    My unfettered soul to thee!
In me, Lord, thyself reveal,
    Fill me with a sweet surprise;
Let me thee when waking feel,
    Let me in thine image rise.
Let me of thy life partake,
    Thy own holiness impart;
O that I might sweetly wake
    With my Saviour in my heart!
O that I might know thee mine!
    O that I might thee receive!
Only live the life divine!
Only to thy glory live!

Authentic evangelism both reflects and creates an “O that I might ... modus operandi in life and a desire to praise God in all things. So orthodoxy — the right praise of God — involves a joyful obedience and a daring surrender. It is not too much to say that the evangelistic ministry of the community of faith and the worship of the assembly — and specifically the liturgy — shape us in such a way that we believe in God (faith), desire nothing but God (love), and glorify God by offering our lives fully to Christ (holiness).

St. Paul places this concept at the center of his admonition to Christian parents in Ephesians 6:4 where he commands them to bring up their children “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Charles picks up this theme in one of his “family hymns” and refers to this process — in a profoundly evangelistic turn of phrase — as a means to “draw their souls to God,” in a hymn written for the opening of the Methodist School in Kingwood he expands the image:

Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
To whom we for our children cry!  
The good desired and wanted most  
Out of thy richest grace supply—  
The sacred discipline be given  
To train and bring them up for heaven.  

Answer on them the end of all  
Our cares, and pains, and studies here;  
On them, recovered from their fall,  
Stamped with the humble character,  
Raised by the nurture of the Lord,  
To all their paradise restored.  

The more famous fifth stanza of the hymn articulates the holistic nature of this integrative, formational process:

Unite the pair so long disjoined,  
Knowledge and vital piety:  
Learning and holiness combined,  
And truth and love, let all men see  
In those whom up to thee we give,  
Thine, wholly thine, to die and live.

My contention here is quite simple. I believe that the Wesleys viewed the liturgy of the church — doxological evangelism, if you will — as the primary matrix in which this nurture raised and restored the children of God, both those inside, and potentially those outside the household of faith. Through Word and Sacrament, God sets us on our journey of faith, offers us spiritual nourishment, and provides the necessary guidance for
us to find our way home, especially when we require the perennial reminder that home is wherever God’s reign is realized in the life of the world.

II.

Another biblical text, I believe, affords a provisional lens through which to explore the integral nature of evangelism and worship. In an effort to flesh out the foundational concepts of worship/evangelism as doxology and discipline I want to import a motif that is not without some dangers; but I find it helpful in exegeting the Wesleyan tradition nonetheless. I refer to the so-called “Isaiah Motif” drawn from the call of the prophet in Isaiah 6:1-8, a pattern one time fashionable for ordering the various acts of Christian worship and also explicating the evangelistic call to mission. A reminder of the text might prove helpful:

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

The paradigm embedded in this narrative involves, at least, a five-fold progression:

1) Adoration, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts,” moves the worshiper to
2) Confession, “Woe is me!” to
3) Forgiveness, “your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out,” and through
4) Proclamation, “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,” to final
5) Dedication, “Here am I; send me!”
While there is an abiding truth in this sequence of devotion, it is dangerous to transpose it mechanically either into worship or the practice of evangelism. It is always important to remember that the inbreaking Word gives and sustains life. At times God acts unpredictably. There is also a potential danger, I want to admit, in mechanically imposing this structure upon the Wesleys. But while it is artificial to choreograph God’s presence and movement or to plot these serially in a service of worship or in a strategy of evangelism, much less to squeeze Wesley into this mold, there is a certain “evangelical” logic in the Isaiah motif that resonates with a Wesleyan understanding of the divine/human encounter. I think this is well worth exploring. So permit me to examine briefly these specific dimensions of Isaiah’s theophany.

Adoration

The Isaiah narrative opens with an overwhelming sense of awe, majesty, and wonder. Our first response to God is an acknowledgment of whom it is we worship. The good news about God only becomes intelligible in this posture. Virtually every day of Charles Wesley’s life began with Morning Prayer, including the words of the ancient prayer of praise, the Te Deum:

We praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting. To thee all Angels cry aloud: the Heavens, and all the powers therein. To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and Earth are full of the Majesty of thy Glory.

In the 1780 Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists, Wesley alludes to the Isaian Sanctus in at least four hymns:

Meet and right it is to sing,
In every time and place,
Glory to our heavenly King,
The God of truth and grace.
Join we then with sweet accord,
All in one thanksgiving join:
Holy, holy, holy, Lord,
Eternal praise be thine!10

Selections drawn from his earlier collection of Hymns on the Trinity emphasize the awe with which one should approach God and the glory of God’s tremendous and mysterious majesty:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God the Father and the Word,
God the Comforter, receive
Blessing more than we can give!
Thee while dust and ashes sings,
Angels shrink within their wings;
Prostrate Seraphim above
Breathe unutterable love.

Fain with them our souls would vie,
Sink as low, and mount as high;
Fall, o’erwhelmed with love, or soar,
Shout, or silently adore!

“All honour and glory to Jesus alone!” Charles cries, as he stands in beatific rapture coram Deo — before a “universe filled with the glory of God.”\(^1\) It is the radiance of God’s nature, revealed most fully in the dual graces of creation and redemption, that overtakes the awestruck child:

Th’o’erwhelming power of saving grace,
The sight that veils the seraph’s face,
The speechless awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love!\(^2\)

Little wonder that one of the most memorable lines in all of Charles Wesley’s verse concludes his great hymn to love: “Lost in wonder, love, and praise.” Is this not where true worship, where faithful evangelism, must always begin: in this posture?

**Repentance and Forgiveness**

The prophet can only respond: “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips!” When we contemplate our own lives in relation to this God — or compare them with the life of Jesus — we are overwhelmed, as well, by our inadequacy, our brokenness, our fallen condition. In the Wesleyan tradition, repentance is a paramount concern because it strikes at the very heart of salvation. Confession and forgiveness are central to the Christian view of what it is we need to be saved from and what it is we need to be saved into. For Charles, no less than for his brother, salvation is both legal and therapeutic; it is related both to Christ’s redemptive work for us and the Spirit’s transforming work in us; it revolves around freedom from sin and freedom to love. Repentance is like the threshold of a door that opens the way to our spiritual healing. It is like the first step in a journey that leads us home.

Nowhere in scripture is repentance and forgiveness more poignantly expressed than in Jesus’ parable of the lost child in Luke 15. Stripped of dignity, value, and identity, the critical turning point for the estranged son comes with these important words, “But when he came to himself.” Both John and Charles define repentance as “true self-understanding.” The prodigal “came to himself.” In the depth of his despair, he remembered who he was and to whom he belonged. Charles plays with this image in his sermon on Ephesians 5:14. As he turns directly to the text, he admonishes:
Wherefore, ‘Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.’ God calleth thee by my mouth; and bids thee know thyself, thou fallen spirit, thy true state and only concern below: ‘what meanest thou, Ó sleeper? Arise! Call upon thy god that thou perish not.’

For Charles, repentance signifies a true self-knowledge that leads to contrition and total reliance upon God’s pardoning mercy in Christ.

He employs this image in a hymn celebrating God’s universal grace as it is made manifest in the context of the worshiping community of God’s people:

Sinners, obey the gospel word!  
Haste to the supper of my Lord;  
Be wise to know your gracious day!  
All things are ready; come away!  
Ready the Father is to own  
And kiss his late-returning son;  
Ready your loving Saviour stands,  
And spreads for you his bleeding hands.  
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost  
Is ready with their shining host;  
All heaven is ready to resound:  
The dead’s alive! The lost is found.’

In the successive stanzas Charles layers the imagery of spiritual emotion elicited from the struggle to know God and to entrust one’s life to God: pardoning, favor, peace; the seeing eye, the feeling sense, the mystic joys; godly grief, pleasing smart; meltings, tears, sighs; guiltless shame, sweet distress, unutterable tenderness; genuine meek humility, wonder.

A full paragraph from another of Charles Wesley’s sermons is well worth quoting in its entirety at this point. It is taken from his sermon on 1 John 3:14, which Charles preached at least twenty-one times during 1738 and 1739, just at the outset of the revival and as a consequence of the brothers’ shared reawakening to living faith. The sermon itself is a depiction of the three states of humanity, describing those who do not know and do not seek God, those who do not know but seek God, and those who know God. It is a compelling appeal to come to one’s self so as to know God fully. Charles pleads:

‘Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.’ Oh that this infinite goodness of God might lead
you to repentance! Oh that any one of you would even now arise and go to his Father and say unto him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!’ He sees you now, while you are a great way off, and has compassion, and only awaits your turning towards him, that he may run and fall on your neck and kiss you. Then will he say, ‘Bring forth the best robe (even the robe of Christ’s righteousness) and put it upon him, for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’

Charles Wesley understood that worship, in all of its various dimensions, but particularly in the liturgy of the people of God, has the power to bring us into an awareness of the Holy. He also understood, it would seem, with Henri Nouwen, that forgiveness is the name of love in a wounded world. Acknowledgment and confession bring healing. Forgiveness liberates people from enslavement to sin through the power of God’s love in Jesus Christ. Liturgy offers the gift of this divine forgiveness as God comes to us in Christ with “healing in his wings.” Wesley realized that reconciliation and restoration are only possible through the intervention of God’s grace. That grace is offered, first and foremost, he believed, in the context of a worshiping community that manifests the hospitality of God and proclaims boldly to all:

His bleeding heart shall make you room,
His open side shall take you in.
He calls you now, invites you home—
Come, O my guilty brethren, come!

Proclamation

“There then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying . . .” Charles Wesley celebrated the presence of the Word of God and trusted in its power. It is not too much to claim that the Wesleyan revival was nothing other than a rediscovery of the sacred Christian scriptures. “The Bible, the whole Bible, nothing but the Bible,” one Wesleyan scholar observed, “this is the theme of John Wesley’s preaching and the glory of Charles’s hymns.” It is not without value to remember that the most critical works related to Wesleyan doctrine — John’s Standard Sermons and Notes on the New Testament and Charles’ Hymns (particularly the 1780 Collection) — all revolve primarily around the community of God’s people in worship. The proclamation of God’s Word in corporate worship and the rediscovery of the “living Word” among the early Methodist people was the life force of the movement. The essential content of Charles Wesley’s preaching was the inclusive love of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Nowhere in the Wesleyan corpus is the living encounter with this good news summarized more poignantly than in the
familiar lines of his great hymn, “Wrestling Jacob”:

'Tis Love! 'Tis Love! Thou diedst for me;
I hear thy whisper in my heart.
The morning breaks, the shadows flee,
Pure Universal Love thou art:
To me, to all, thy bowels move–
Thy nature, and thy name, is LOVE.19

This inclusive, unconditional love is made known to us through the Word and the Spirit. For Wesley, the Word (Jesus Christ and the story of God’s love in scripture) is distinct from, but can never be separated from the Spirit of God. Three hymns that Charles intended for use “Before reading the Scriptures” (Hymns 85-87 from Section III. Praying for a Blessing in the 1780 Collection) and one of his most noteworthy hymns of petition that precedes them (Hymn 83, “Spirit of faith, come down”) demonstrate this essential connection. He identifies the Holy Spirit as the “key” to the sacred book, the active force that opens to us the treasure of God’s message of grace and love: “Come, Holy Ghost,” he implores, “Unlock the truth, thyself the key, / Unseal the sacred book.”20 “Now the revealing Spirit send,” he prays, “And give us ears to hear.”21 Only the Spirit is able to “Reveal the things of God” by removing the barrier to our spiritual sight.

No man can truly say
That Jesus is the Lord
Unless thou take the veil away,
And breathe the living word.22

Or again:

While in thy Word we search for thee
(We search with trembling awe!)
Open our eyes, and let us see
The wonders of thy law.23

“Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire,” pleads Wesley, “for you are the ‘Source of the old prophetic fire’ ”24 His concern throughout is for a dynamic, relational, vibrant encounter with God through the Spirit, who can:

Inspire the living faith
(Which whosoe’er receives,
The witness in himself he hath,
And consciously believes),
The faith that conquers all,
And doth the mountain move,
And saves whoe’er on Jesus call,
And perfects them in love.25
Dedication

On the most basic level, all worship is response to God’s prevenient action, and response is the goal of all evangelistic practice. In answer to the Lord’s question, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isaiah responds by saying, “Here am I; send me!” In Charles’ vision of the worshiping community, and certainly in the evangelistic practice of the early Methodist communities, God commissions the faithful as ambassadors of Christ and graciously enables each disciple to reaffirm his or her true vocation. Charles’ hymns reflect a myriad of potential responses to God’s call, both individual and corporate. While each deserves full attention in its own right, I will simply hint at two interrelated aspects of dedicatory response in Wesley, namely, mission and Eucharist. The former aspect, related to Wesley’s missiological ecclesiology, is, most likely, immediately obvious to most; the latter, reflecting the absolute centrality of Charles’ sacramental vision of life, affords, I believe, some of Wesley’s most important insights and contributions to contemporary conversations about worship and evangelism.

The Imperative of Mission. Charles’ hymns frequently reflect an understanding of the Christian life in which the most appropriate response to God’s transforming grace is Christian outreach to the world and participation in God’s mission to restore justice, peace, and love to all. In one of Wesley’s greatest missionary hymns, as S. T. Kimbrough has observed,

...there is an intermingling of praise and mission, for to follow means faithful service. How does one know and feel sins forgiven, anticipate heaven on earth and own that love, even in this world, is heaven? Through service to God and others—by breaking out of the world of self and reaching out to others!

In Charles Wesley’s vision of the church — and particularly the authentic community of faith in continuous praise of God — mission and evangelism flow directly out of our encounter with God’s Word in worship. Evangelism, like worship, as we have seen, is an essential activity of the whole people of God. In imitation of Christ, and through our encounter with the living Word, we learn to woo others into the loving embrace of God and then help them to see that their mission in life, in partnership with Christ, is to be the signposts of God’s reign in this world.

In his hymn, “For a preacher of the gospel,” Charles Wesley reminds us of this transforming, evangelistic call of God upon our lives:

I would the precious time redeem,
   And longer live for this alone,
To spend and to be spent for them
   Who have not yet my Saviour known;
Fully on these my mission prove,  
And only breathe to breathe thy love.  
My talents, gifts, and graces, Lord,  
Into thy blessed hands receive;  
And let me live to preach thy word;  
And let me to thy glory live:  
My every sacred moment spend  
In publishing the sinner’s friend.  
Enlarge, inflame, and fill my heart  
With boundless charity divine!  
So shall I all my strength exert,  
And love them with a zeal like thine;  
And lead them to thy open side,  
The sheep, for whom their Shepherd died.28

_The Imperative of Eucharist._ The connection between evangelism and Eucharist is extremely intimate for Wesley, and can be discerned most clearly, in his concept of Eucharistic sacrifice. In Charles’ sermon on Acts 20:7 (more properly what might be described as an introductory “treatise” to a larger, unfinished work on the sacrament) we encounter a concept of sacrifice consonant with the view he espouses in his _Hymns on the Lord’s Supper_ devoted to this theme. Charles views the sacrament as a “re-presentation” of the sacrifice of Christ.29 As J. Ernest Rattenbury has demonstrated, his stress is persistently on the two-fold oblation of the church in the sacrament; the body of Christ offered is not merely a sacred symbol of Christ’s “once-for-all” act of redemption, but is also the living sacrifice of the people of God.30

The sacrificial character of the Christian life, in which the worshiper participates repeatedly at the table of the Lord, and its relationship to the sacrifice of Christ is clarified in Charles’ hymns. In this regard, he follows the language of Daniel Brevint’s _The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice_ very closely; namely, “The main intention of Christ herein was not the bare _remembrance_ of His Passion; but over and above, to invite us to His Sacrifice”.31

While faith th’atoning blood applies,  
Ourselves a living sacrifice  
   We freely offer up to God;  
And none but those His glory share,  
Who crucified with Jesus are,  
   And follow where their Saviour trod.  
Saviour, to Thee our lives we give,  
Our meanest sacrifice receive,  
   And to Thine own oblation join,  
Our suffering and triumphant Head,
Through all Thy states Thy members lead,
And seat us on the throne Divine.\textsuperscript{32}

Worship is recapitulation, and as we repeatedly participate in the Eucharistic actions of offering, and thanking, and breaking, and giving – the constitutive aspects of an authentic, sacrificial life — God conforms us into the image of Christ — our lives become truly Eucharistic as faith working by love leading to holiness of heart and life.

Virtually all of you know the name of Jürgen Moltmann, a name synonymous with the theology of hope. I first met Professor Moltmann when I was a graduate student at Duke University. During one of his visits to campus, I very timidly invited him to lunch, and we enjoyed a wonderful meal together. While introducing myself to him more fully, I explained that I was working in my doctoral studies with Frank Baker. He interrupted and said, “Oh, I’d like to share a story with you about Frank and Nellie Baker.” And I sat back to take it all in.

He said that during the Second World War there was a German prisoner of war camp on the northeast coast of England. A young pastor and his wife served a small Methodist circuit close by. They felt called by God to reach out to these foreign soldiers in some way. They were filled with compassion and concern. So they went to the commander and asked permission to take a German prisoner with them to church each Sunday — to share in Word and Sacrament — and then to eat their Sunday dinner together in their home. It was agreed. So Sunday after Sunday, a steady flow of German soldiers worshiped and ate with the Bakers in their home throughout the course of the war. This world famous theologian paused, looked at me intently, and said, “One of those soldiers was a young man named Jürgen Moltmann. And I want you to know that the seed of hope was planted in my heart around Frank and Nellie Baker’s Sunday dinner table.”

The Bakers lived the integral nature of worship and evangelism. I am absolutely sure that, if you had asked, “What are you doing?” Frank or Nellie would have said, “Well, we are simply doing what Christians do. We are spending time together in the worship of our good God, breaking bread together and eating our food with glad and generous hearts.” May it be so in each of our lives, to the glory of Jesus our Lord.

Notes
2. I first narrated this account at a conference on “Evangelization, the Heart of Mission: A Wesleyan Imperative,” sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church and its Mission Evangelism Committee, in January 1995.


5. Works 7:637 (Hymn 456.8).

6. Works 7:643 (Hymn 461.1, 2).

7. The analysis of Isaiah 6:2-8 which follows relies heavily upon my Presidential Address to The Charles Wesley Society, “Preliminary Explorations of Charles Wesley and Worship,” at Point Loma Nazarene University, October 2004, to be published in The Proceedings of The Charles Wesley Society.

8. See, in particular, the critique of the three-fold pattern of vision, contrition, and commission drawn from the Isaiah text in Paul W. Hoon, The Integrity of Worship (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), pp. 51, 287


10. Works 7:346 (Hymn 212.1). Note the explicit reference to the Communion Service of the Book of Common Prayer in the opening line.

11. Works 7:342, 344, the closing lines of Hymn 210.1 and 7


14. Works 7:90 (Hymn 9.1, 2, 5).

15. Sermons, p. 142.

16. For Charles’ multiple references to this Mal. 4:2 image, see Works 7:157, 252, 270, 385, 420, 530, 608, 611, and 630, in addition to “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing.”


18. Works 7:3.


20. Works 7:185 (Hymn 85.2.1, 3-4).
21. *Works* 7:186 (Hymn 86.3.3-4).
22. *Hymn* 7:182-3 (Hymn 83:1.1; 2.1-4).
23. *Hymn* 7:186 (Hymn 86.2).