New Clothes for the Old Man

by C.F. Wimberly

Rev. Bud Robinson says:

“There is not a chapter in the book but what is worth many times the price of the book, and the last chapter is something that is simply wonderful and will hold you breathless until you see the last word.”

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The Asbury Journal publishes scholarly essays and book reviews written from a Wesleyan perspective. The Journal’s authors and audience reflect the global reality of the Christian church, the holistic nature of Wesleyan thought, and the importance of both theory and practice in addressing the current issues of the day. Authors include Wesleyan scholars, scholars of Wesleyanism/Methodism, and scholars writing on issues of theological and theological education importance.

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From the Editor

On Wednesday February 8, 2023, Asbury University experienced the beginning of another revival. I am writing this as the revival is entering its tenth day, with no sign yet of stopping. The air in Wilmore is quite electric with expectation as people come from other parts of the country and the news of the revival spreads through social media. As a historian, I know the stories of the 1950 and 1970 revivals and how they impacted both Asbury College (now University) and Asbury Theological Seminary. God is always willing to meet people who seek after God, but somehow the communal experience often seems to take on special meaning to those involved.

Peter, James and John had a similar experience which is recorded in the Gospels (it is significant enough to be recorded in Matthew 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-10, and Luke 9:28-36). Jesus took his closest disciples up on a high mountain and appeared in his radiant true self along with Moses and Elijah, two great heroes of the Old Testament who were recorded to have met God in physical form (Exodus 33:18-23 and 1 Kings 19:11-13). The three disciples were witness to Jesus Christ being revealed as the real presence of God. This is the heart of what revival is about. People experience the real presence of God. Of course, this can happen anywhere and at any time, but it can also be especially impactful to witness this as part of a group.

The danger, which we see from scripture, comes in our response. Scripture records that Peter suggested building three shelters, or shrines, to this amazing experience. Human beings have a natural tendency to try and capture an experience and preserve it, when this is not really the purpose God had for the experience. Jesus had taken the disciples up to a high place, where they had an amazing spiritual revelation about the presence of God, but the point was not to put that experience in a box, or live forever in that experience. This experience was meant to encourage, inspire, and strengthen the disciples for life in the valleys. I have known so many people in the Christian life who seem to run from spiritual high to spiritual high, seeking to maintain that “mountain top” experience. But that is not the purpose of such an experience. This type of experience is to empower us to
go back into the world and share the love of God with a hurting world full of sinful people in need of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

This issue of *The Asbury Journal* is not intentionally about the revival (there would not have been enough time), but as with every issue, it is about how people encounter God on the mountain tops and in the valleys of life. Howard Snyder opens the issue with a thoughtful reflection on N. T. Wright’s lectures, which were given in November of 2022 as part of the Seminary’s Centennial Celebration. Snyder explores the theological implications of the challenges Wright raised, many of which Snyder has also written on in the past. Ruth Anne Reese follows with an article about cruciform teaching—living out the Gospel in the valleys of everyday academic education. This was a paper originally presented at the Advanced Research Program Colloquium in October of 2021. The next article by Chase Franklin seeks to try and help extend that mountain top experience for pastors by returning to a stronger understanding of Sabbath and the need to observe this commanded time of rest. W. Creighton Marlowe returns to *The Asbury Journal* to examine Psalms 1 and 2 as an extended chiasm exploring the plans God has for human beings and the importance of following the laws of God. Ryan Kristopher Giffin exposes the history of one of those mountain top experiences in the founding of the Holiness Association of Texas, while Kirk S. Sims follows this with an examination of E. Stanley Jones’ view of sanctification. Jones himself was a product of Asbury College and an early revival that occurred there, and he carried some of this experience throughout his ministry. Robert A. Danielson looks at the missional impact of Sidney W. Edwards in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean and Central America. Edwards was also a product of Asbury College and the ministry of H. C. Morrison and his views on sanctification. Philip Hardt closes out this issue with a study on how Methodism, through Dr. David Reese fought against the pseudo-science of phrenology and its impact on theology and larger social issues as well. Finally, the *From the Archives* essay continues to examine some of the most important work of Asbury Theological Seminary’s founder H. C. Morrison in the little-studied period of his ministry from the late 19th to the early 20th century. In particular, Morrison’s work in publishing and in creating a center for the Holiness Movement in Louisville, Kentucky.

Asbury has often been known as a place for revival, and I rejoice in any experience which brings people closer to God as revealed in God’s
Son, Jesus the Christ. I rejoice whenever people experience the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives and rededicate themselves to serving God wherever they might go in ministry. We might be called to academic theology and teaching, to biblical study and pastoring a local church, to missions in India or Central America, or to secular fields like medicine or business. But we must remember that mountain-top experiences serve a function of empowering us to move into the valleys of life. If we struggle to remain on the mountain-top we end up building a shrine to an experience which serves no purpose for the Kingdom of God. We end up putting God into a box at the same time God is calling us out of our boxes and into a hurting world full of struggles and pain. Revival only succeeds when it is able to transform the experience of the mountain-top into ministry in the valley. I rejoice at what God is doing in Wilmore right now, but I will rejoice even more when I see it impacting those on the margins of society in real concrete ministry. Remember that the Jesus who was transfigured on the mountain, also told of a final judgment,


Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?”

The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25: 37-40)

Revival is only truly a revival when it comes down from the mountain and becomes the Gospel lived out among the hungry, the needy, the immigrant, and the prisoner. We are “revived” in order that we might serve a hurting world and introduce Jesus Christ to those who have never met him before. Do not stay on the mountain-top and try to enshrine an experience, but bring it down with you into the valleys which need that experience and touch from the living God. Then we can truly say, “We have experienced a revival!”

Robert Danielson Ph.D.
If N. T. Wright is Right, How Then Shall We Do Theology?

Abstract:
In November of 2022, theologian N.T. Wright gave a series of lectures for the Centennial Celebration of Asbury Theological Seminary. In this response from Asbury Theological Seminary’s Howard Snyder, the implications of Wright’s lectures are explored and expanded. In particular, Snyder explores the meaning of Scriptural Theology as opposed to Systematic Theology. He explores how Systematic Theology came to be the dominant way of reading scripture, and then proposes ten principles for doing theology rooted in scripture instead of any human system.

Keywords: Scriptural Theology, Systematic Theology, Church history, mission, globalization

Howard A. Snyder served as the professor of history and theology of mission in the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary from 1996 to 2006. He served as distinguished professor and chair of Wesley Studies at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto, Ontario from 2007 to 2012. He has been a pastor in Chicago and Detroit as well as São Paulo, Brazil, and written extensively with books such as The Problem with Wineskins, The Community of the King, The Radical Wesley, and Salvation Means Creation Healed: The Ecology of Sin and Grace.
N. T. Wright said something truly radical in his November 15, 2022, chapel address at Asbury Seminary. Wright said that for most of church history, Christians have been “reading the biblical story upside down. It’s time to get it the right way up.” For the past 1,500 years and more, the church has misunderstood the Bible. Let’s begin to get the story straight.

Audiences are charmed by Wright’s eloquence. But have we pondered the deeply radical claim he makes? —that the church for nearly two millenia has misread and misunderstood the Bible, and the whole meaning of salvation? If Wright is right (and he is!), this raises two critical questions: How did we get into this mess? And how do we get out of it? Is it possible for the church to get the story “right way up,” as Wright proposes?

Part One: How We Got Here

For centuries the Christian church has systematized its theology in ways that are now familiar. We recognize the great doctrines and their interpretations in the different branches of the church. But we should take a close look at how this systematization developed. Systematic theology organizes truth according to some system. Generally, this is a system either external to scripture, or perhaps one reduced or abstracted from scripture. Systematic theology is widely understood as the “human work of classifying and systematizing [biblical truth] according to logical principles,” noted Geerhardus Vos.¹

Systematic theology was born in medieval Europe. Its origins trace to the 1200s as part of the development of universities. “In truth Theology [before 1200] had not yet become a system,” noted Hastings Rashdall. “The object of an ecclesiastical education was to enable the Priest or Monk to read and meditate upon the Bible and Fathers for himself: the theological writings of the times are for the most part either refutations of prevalent errors or abridgements of the patristic commentaries or treatises.”² With the rise of formal theological instruction in universities, this changed and theological systematization flourished.

Neither the New Testament nor the early church engaged in systematic theology as we know it now. Biblical writers of course had always used metaphors, analogies, and sometimes allegories. Paul says in Galatians 4:24, speaking of the sons of Sarah and Hagar, “Now this is an allegory” (Greek, allegoreo, meaning “to use an analogy”).³ The Apostle Paul is often viewed as a master of logic. Yet most of his profound arguments are built on analogies and metaphors, mining the Old Testament. But neither
Paul nor any other biblical writer employed some overall organizing system from outside scripture.

Christian thinkers in the early centuries of church history developed the idea of multiple “senses” of scripture. First of course there is the literal, historical “sense” or understanding. Then there is the metaphorical or figurative sense. Gradually this figurative sense expanded to include what came to be called the “moral” sense and also the “anagogical” or mystical sense. From the time of the Emperor Constantine on, the idea of the “four senses” of scripture took hold: *literal* (or historical), *allegorical*, *moral* (or tropological), and *anagogical* (mystical). This idea was popularized, noted Henri de Lubac, in the aphorism, “The letter teaches events, allegory what you should believe, morality what you should do, anagogy what mark you should be aiming for.”

Over the centuries different writers used different terms for these senses. Some distinguished three, some four. It grew increasingly common however to speak of “the four senses of scripture.” In the mid-1200s one author summarized the prevailing way of Bible interpretation this way: “For when it comes to divine eloquence, we find a set of four wheels, according to a fourfold differentiation of senses... There are four rules or senses of Sacred Scripture, that is to say, history, allegory, tropology, and anagogy... All of divine Scripture turns on these four wheels.”

Two crucial points arise here. First, the foundational sense (literal/historical), as the most basic and obvious meaning, remained relatively fixed and stable, whereas the figurative or metaphorical sense (less tied to the actual biblical text) mushroomed and expanded. Second: In this way, theology developed a structure or system of interpretation not found in the Bible itself. The “four senses” concept was not itself based in scripture. Yet this concept became the lens through which all scripture, every word and passage, was viewed. Throughout the Middle Ages, interpreters thus began their biblical exegesis with the assumption already in their heads that they would find four senses. And (no surprise) that is indeed what they found and in turn taught.

The result was the flourishing of all sorts of metaphorical, figurative, symbolic, allegorical, and mystical interpretations (something N. T. Wright mentioned in passing). Many of these interpretations relied more on human ingenuity and the growing free market of metaphors than on the biblical text itself. Increasingly, biblical interpretation sprang from these subjective sources more than from the narrative of scripture, inductively
Henri de Lubac noted that “from the dawn of the Middle Ages” this “doctrine of the ‘fourfold sense’” was “at the heart of exegesis,” unquestioned, and it “kept this role right to the end.” In time it lost its force however, eventually becoming “no more than a lifeless shell.”

This is the point where “modern” systematic theology emerges. The “fourfold sense” approach gave way to other ways of organizing, all mostly external to scripture. Before the twelfth century “there was no such thing as systematic theology,” noted de Lubac. “All theological erudition was concentrated on Exegesis” conducted by means of scripture’s supposed “four senses,” often leading to “ingenious contrivances, as well as the broadest speculations.”

By the time systematic theology arose in Europe, allegory—allegorizing—had become “the most widespread literary form,” not only in theology but also in poetry and even legal texts, noted Dominican theologian and historian Marie-Dominique Chenu. Allegory was “decidedly overworked.” Chenu elaborates:

... allegory, with the usage of the fathers for a model, was to by-pass history and, letting itself go, was to abuse incidental literary elements of a narrative by turning them into symbols. Despite some reactions against the practice, systematic allegorization in the twelfth century would universally destroy the literal texture of scripture... the error was extremely widespread in all departments of theological endeavor.

Wow. This is another way of saying radical Wright is right.

In biblical interpretation, the pendulum had swung away from primary accent on the plain, literal meaning of scripture and biblical history toward an actual preference for allegory. Biblical history and literal texts were still important—for they were God’s inspired Word—but understanding and applying them was done through allegory. As systematic theology arose and developed from the 1200s on, it was thus less and less tied directly to the biblical text, particularly in its literal and historical (narrative) form and meaning.

Systematic theology was thus born with a bias away from the literal and physical and toward figurative, “spiritual,” and symbolic interpretations of scripture. Today most systematic theologies correct for that tendency to some degree. But still, often there is a greater emphasis on the spiritual (in the sense of non-physical, non-material) meaning and application of
biblical texts and truths than on their literal, physical application. Spiritual disciplines, for example, focus (appropriately) on prayer and the life to come, but tend not to focus on things like earth stewardship, physical and environmental health, and day-by-day engagement with time, money, and our relationship with the physical creation.

The various forms and branches of systematic theology that we know today gradually emerged from this heritage. At the time of the Protestant Reformation John Calvin (1509-1564) wrote his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which for most Protestants became the “standard model” for how orthodox theology should be done. Sound theology should be systematic theology. Given this history, theologians still today tend to think of systematic or analytic theology as the highest, purest form. No other way of theologizing enjoys such status. The result: Theology focuses on doctrines, not discipleship. On theological debates, not on down-to-earth following of Jesus.

Part Two: Theology Now and Tomorrow

How then shall we do theology today? Reflecting on the history of Christian theology in the West, and even more on Jesus words in Luke 24, we may distill ten guiding principles for doing theology today. We find most of these (not all) embedded in N. T. Wright’s theology.

1. **Follow Jesus.**

In doing theology faithfully, we seek first to follow the steps of Jesus, taking his hermeneutical lead. This means that “beginning with Moses and all the prophets” we interpret today, repeatedly, ongoingly, endlessly, back and forth, all “the things about [Jesus] in all the scriptures” (Lk 24:27). This more than anything else is what marks N. T. Wright’s theology, in my opinion.

Jesus promised continually to guide this process by his Spirit. “When the Spirit of truth comes,” Jesus said, “he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come” (Jn 16:13). Jesus, himself led by the Spirit, gives this promise not just to his first followers but to the church, world without end. To be led by the Spirit means to live a life of prayer, as Jesus himself models. The fourth-century disciple Evagrius Ponticus wrote, “If you are a theologian you truly pray. If you truly pray you are a theologian.” Jesus by the Spirit gives us theological depth.
and insights over time as we meditate on God’s Word and humbly seek the guidance of the Spirit. Sound theology follows the footsteps of Jesus in prayer, lowliness, and listening for God’s Spirit.

2. **Engage the entire biblical narrative in its fullness without exception.**

Sound theology follows the full, whole Bible narrative, without exception, using the proven principles of interpretation (hermeneutics) that Jesus himself modeled. This means in particular: 1) grasping the fundamental narrative form of the entire Bible; 2) observing the key themes and covenants that form the living sinews of scripture; 3) keeping the focus on God’s promised future and the way the plan or economy of God brings creation to this fullness through Jesus Christ by the Spirit; and 4) paying attention to the missional thrust of all scripture. God’s Word is a word for us, for the nations, for the whole creation.

Engaging all of scripture also requires, of course, sensitivity to the various kinds of literature in the Bible and to other sound inductive hermeneutical principles, as will be noted below in point 5. Irenaeus, the first great Christian theologian, provides a useful model for engaging the whole of scripture. Irenaeus insisted that we pay attention to “the order and connection of the scriptures”—the way everything ties together coherently under Jesus Christ the Head.

Irenaeus lived from about 134 to 202 AD, completing his ministry as Bishop of Lyons in Gaul (modern-day France). He learned how to walk in God’s ways from the Christian martyr Polycarp (69-156 AD), Bishop of Smyrna, who himself was taught by John the Apostle. Polycarp used to speak of “the things concerning the Lord” he had heard from John and other “eye-witnesses of the Word of Life,” and Polycarp “reported all things in agreement with the scriptures,” Irenaeus said. “I listened eagerly... and made notes” of Polycarp’s words, “not on paper, but in my heart, and ever by the grace of God do I truly ruminate on them.”

Irenaeus is known especially for his concept of recapitulation. The idea comes directly from Ephesians 1:10, which speaks of God’s plan “to gather up [anakefalaioomai, bring together under one head] all things in [Jesus Christ], things in heaven and things on earth.” The English word recapitulate, from the Latin, translates literally the Greek verb Paul uses. Irenaeus developed this key theme of recapitulation in connection with three
other linked concepts: intellect (in the sense of God as universal personal loving mind), economy (oikonomia, God’s overall plan), and participation, by God’s grace becoming “participants of the divine nature” (2 Pet 1:4), living in communion with God in the body of Christ transformingly in the world. These themes were not totally unique to Irenaeus, but he gave them classic expression. Irenaeus, John Wesley, and other great teachers down through history underscore this truth: The soundest and most helpful theology engages the full biblical narrative in all its linked dimensions.


Traditional systematic theology speaks of God’s attributes. Scripture however focuses primarily on God’s character. Discerning the character of God as revealed in scripture and especially in Jesus illuminates the entire message of the Bible and the power of the Good News. The kingdom of God makes sense when we grasp the character of this High Holy God who reigns, not just abstract “attributes.”

Highlighting the character of Yahweh the Lord helps us understand the Bible’s consistent focus on God’s lovingkindness (steadfast love; hesed) and his covenant faithfulness (emunah). The Bible shows repeatedly that the Triune God of steadfast love and faithfulness establishes covenant—not one only, but a connected coherent sequence of covenants culminating in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ and the New Creation that covenant faithfulness brings. This biblical covenant structure is undergirded by God’s twin covenants with humankind and with the whole earth, as Genesis 9:8-17 shows.

Focusing on God’s revealed character and covenants keeps theology linked to life grounded in discipleship. Otherwise doctrine wanders off into abstract ideas and concepts, theories and disputes. God’s character and covenants lead us in turn to mission: proclaiming, extending, and embodying God’s loving covenant purposes in all the earth. Sound theology is all about walking in God’s ways.

4. Learn from the Book of Creation.

God has given the world two books, the Book of Scripture and the Book of Nature (or better, the Book of Creation). It is silly to base theology solely on one or the other. The Bible and the created order are the two lenses God gives us to see him, his character, and his covenants;
The two angles that together give depth perspective; the two voices calling and singing out and echoing God’s truth, calling and beckoning people to follow him through Jesus by the Spirit.

Sound theology therefore calls us to study and learn from “the wisdom of God in creation,” as John Wesley repeatedly phrased it. The medieval theologian Hugh of St. Victor wrote about 1130 AD, “This whole visible world is like a book written by the finger of God... to make manifest the wisdom of God’s mysterious workings.” For Hugh and others before and since, studying both books was, as the scientist Seb Falk noted, “not only legitimate.” It was in fact “an integral part of praising God.” God’s everlasting covenant with the earth/land (Gen 9) gives us both a discipleship responsibility and a theological responsibility—two sides of the same coin.

The awareness of these two books of revelation—with Jesus by the Spirit in a sense being the animating, interconnecting third—goes back to scripture itself. The Apostle Paul wrote, “Ever since the creation of the world [God’s] eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made” (Rom 1:20). This is a theme the Psalms constantly stress—for example, Psalm 19:1-6.

Together, scripture and the book of Creation are mission resources to help God’s people “declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples” (1 Chron 16:24; Ps 96:3). The Lord says his people “shall declare my glory” to and among the nations, to “the coastlands far away that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory” (Isa 66:19). Standing in awe and humility before God’s written word and God’s wisdom revealed in creation, we seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance so we may understand and interpret God’s two books wisely and missionally in our day.

5. Understand the role of culture and language in our theological endeavors.

Culture in all its dimensions, but especially language, imagination, and modes of thinking, unavoidably shapes the ways people formulate and express doctrine. This is true in positive, negative, and more or less neutral ways. Doing theology responsibly means understanding and engaging culture. The Bible models this for us. Every story in scripture inhabits a cultural-historical, earthly home. All the language, terminology, images, and truths of the Bible are expressed in a variety of cultural forms. This is part of the richness of scripture.
Positively, culture offers a kaleidoscope for seeing God’s truth and sharing it with others, fulfilling our kingdom-of-God mission. Negatively, culture can distort Bible truth in subtle, unseen ways. The Good News and our discipleship must always be “inculturated,” of course. God’s grace and truth and love invade from outside our cultural context, even as it is already present in culture and history through creation and the prevenient grace and providence of God. Here again, we see this modeled in scripture and especially in Jesus. Theology and discipleship are necessarily cultural. We see this all around us, if we pay attention. Recognizing this helps us do theology soundly.


The Great Tradition is a wise teacher. It should be studied and understood. But it carries less authority than scripture, than Jesus’ own witness, and than God’s revelation in the created order. Where theologies or creeds conflict with creation they are wrong, or at least skewed.

The Great Tradition does three things: 1) It lifts up key insights and truths that have emerged from a range of historical contexts; 2) it shows us how church, culture, and doctrine always interact; and 3) it expresses critical points of theological consensus on fundamental truths such as the Trinity, Christology, and salvation. We learn how the Great Tradition has developed over time, a historical progression as doctrine builds on doctrine amidst newly emerging challenges.

However, since the Great Tradition is itself culturally embedded and reflects issues arising at different times, it engages some doctrinal truths and neglects others. The Great Tradition has gaps. In Western theology after the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, mission was largely neglected. John Howard Yoder observed, “Doing theology as an educational enterprise in Western Europe was in a non-missionary context. Europe thought of itself as a Christian culture, and whatever could be called ‘missions’ belonged in some other part of the world. Since the context itself did not raise the missionary question, it was natural that theology did not deal with it.” It seemed as though God’s mission—the conversion of the known world—had pretty much succeeded. This misunderstanding still persists in much contemporary Protestant theology and in the academy. But in the Bible, and wherever God’s people have been fully faithful, mission always interweaves dynamically, symbiotically, with theology.
The Great Tradition is still growing. It continues to emerge globally in varied ways, and especially in relation to culture and to the role of the physical creation in God’s economy. Doctrinal growth will continue until New Creation comes fully. Now we “see through a glass, darkly,” but then we shall know even as we are known (1 Cor 13:12 KJV).

7. Learn from the global church.

What is God doing in and through the church globally? What is the worldwide body of Christ in all its amazing diversity learning that should inform and enliven our theology and mission today, wherever we live?

In doing theology, the church must engage not only the historic Great Tradition but also the emerging Global Tradition. Both time (theology through history) and space (theology across cultures) inform us. Through this partnership the varied church traditions enrich each other in the spirit of Paul’s exhortation in 2 Corinthians 8 about sharing economic resources: each part of the church receiving from and supplying the need of the other.

As both church and world increasingly interconnect, becoming more and more networked, so Christianity is more and more a global enterprise. Above all, where Christians are suffering pain, poverty, persecution, and death and yet giving witness, the global church is our teacher. Theology can continue to learn from liberation theology in its varied forms. Liberation theology rightly stresses doing theology “from the base”—that is, from the perspective and experience of the poor and oppressed; from what the world calls the margins. This means open-eyed focus on political and socioeconomic realities, global and local; a process of “conscientization”—an awakening to the socio-political-spiritual powers that often shape and victimize human lives. Paulo Freire spoke of “the pedagogy of the oppressed.” So did Jesus, in plain words and parables, two thousand years earlier.

In learning from the global church, we learn of the glorious diversity of global theological thought and the multiple ways of expressing it. Theology is as varied as is the rainbow, the color spectrum. Or think of growing crops and forests. Just as agriculture suffers from being reduced to mere monoculture, so theology suffers from being squeezed to a mere multidisciplinary or mono-culture. Healthy integral theology is a multidisciplinary quest. Life in all forms thrives on diversity, variety, interchange, symbiosis. Here the global church (both today and yesterday) helps us.
8. Focus always on edification in the full biblical sense.

The purposes of theology are the praise of God, witness in the world, upbuilding the body of Christ, the church, and extending God’s creation project. The New Testament letters focus especially on edification; building and reinforcing the “edifice” of faith—that is, the Christian community—for the sake of fidelity and mission.33

In the New Testament, edification means building up and strengthening the household of God, the community of faith. Edification is a community enterprise with intimate personal application. Speaking to the church about gifts and graces, the Apostle Paul says, “Let all things be done for building up” (1 Cor 14:26 NRSV); “Let all things be done unto edifying” (KJV). As an integral part of discipleship, doing theology means strengthening the bonds of Christian community, making the church’s witness more winsome, persuasive, and prophetic, its praise more true and glorious, and its engagement with earth more authentic and nourishing.

Theology in itself has always a fatal tendency to turn in on itself, to focus on doctrinal nuances and forget its prime purpose. This is the “occupational hazard” of all who specialize in theology. The prime purpose of theology is not theory but praise, witness, and healthy, functioning members of the body of Christ. For this reason, doing theology needs to be understood and practiced within the context of the multiple and reinforcing fullness of spiritual gifts, as we see especially in 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4, Romans 12, and 1 Peter 4:10-11. Theology is the church, led by the Spirit, understanding and performing its calling as body of Christ and kingdom community in the earth.

9. Honor the sovereignty and glory of God as we work in humility and in awe of great mystery.

The more we truly perceive and experience God, the deeper our humility. The deeper also, however, our responsibility. The book of Job shows how to do theology in this mode. Towards the end of the book, Yahweh confronts Job directly. Your “comforters,” God says, are merely “darkening counsel by words without knowledge.” But you, Job: “Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me”! (Job 38:2-3). Earlier God had said, “Hear this, O Job; stop and consider the wondrous works of God” (Job 37:14). Now Yahweh declares, “Anyone who argues with God must respond” (Job 40:2). The Lord spoke similarly to the
prophet Ezekiel when he fell on his face before the Divine Majesty: “Son of man, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you” (Ezek 2:1).

This is how to do theology. Honoring the sovereign Personhood of God, which means not only humility but also daring to respond consciously, willfully to God’s reality through further reflection, ever seeking understanding. For humans are created in God’s image, not in the image of creatures unable to respond rationally and willfully and in words to God’s self-disclosures. “Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding, whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not stay near you” (Ps 32:9). But Yahweh also says: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways… For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa 55:8-9). The Lord God of hosts has self-revealed as lovingkindness and covenant faithfulness, the God who makes covenant requiring faith and fidelity in all dimensions of life—today, and into the future. We do theology in humility and in awe of great mystery.

10. Rest in faith, hope, and love, and in the consolation of Christian community.

Doing theology means resting in God’s grace and faithfulness—daily now, and in the end ultimately. Resting humbly in faith, hope, and love together with our sisters and brothers in Christian community on earth and in heaven and in comradeship with the “all creatures” and “all things” of God’s creation. For theology is a communal endeavor. Shared. It is a synergy and symbiosis of interconnection between the Triune God, one another, and all creation. Not in chaos or confusion, but in the trusting, obedient, loving relationship revealed to us in Christ Jesus.

Open Questions

This is doing theology the way Jesus did. Yet we know that the story of theology is never complete for us. This is so for four big reasons:

- Much has not yet been revealed.
- We have not yet reached the end of the story.
- Our spacetime-bound minds are not capable of understanding much that is beyond our dimensions of experience and understanding.
- New and ongoing scientific discoveries will require new theological reflection.
So, we are left with many mysteries and imponderables, part of The Great Mystery. Many things (as my wise aunt used to say) that we hide in our mystery bag. We still ponder troubling puzzles such as this: Will evil in the end prove to be more positive than negative in the long story of human history, as Christians earnestly wish to affirm? Or are we even asking the right questions?

**Finale**

Finally, we remind ourselves once again that theology is way more than words. It is not done with words only. Yes, some do theology by writing. Some by teaching or preaching. Some do theology by singing or dancing or composing. Some do theology by discipling newborn believers. Some do theology by serving the poor or providing shelter for the homeless. Some do theology by prayer, contemplation, intercession. Some do theology by encouraging others. Some do theology by planting trees, painting pictures, or pursuing science. Some do theology by government service or by social or economic research. Some do theology by prophetic silence. “They also serve who only stand and wait,” wrote John Milton, reflecting “On His Blindness.”

There is no narrowly right way to do theology. For theology is always faith seeking understanding and life seeking fidelity. The task can be approached in many ways. But any way of theology that fails to focus on the divine calling to walk in God’s ways is gravely deficient and can be fatal.

It is all a matter of grace, of **charism**, calling, and covenant; of unity, diversity, and mutuality; of life together in the body of Christ while walking by faith in the world, looking “forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Heb 11:10).

**End notes**


3. The KJV uses “allegory” only here. The NRSV however uses the term also in Ezekiel 17:2 and 24:3; the KJV uses “parable” instead (as
does the Septuagint, *parabola*). The Hebrew term here is *chidah*, meaning “riddle.”


5 Quoted in de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 1:73.

6 Quoted from an 1898 source by de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 1:13.

7 De Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 1:74. Some church school libraries were even organized according to the fourfold sense, books catalogued by sections on *historia*, *allegoria*, *anagogia*, and *tropologia*. De Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 1:12.

8 Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century*, trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 141. Thus “the least details, individual words themselves, were lifted to the level of a persistent allegory.” One author for example “classified and interpreted allegorically all the biblical texts that mention bread” (111).


10 The plasticity of symbolic and metaphorical interpretations meant one could quite easily find one’s way around (for example) Jesus’ troublesome teachings about the cost of discipleship.


12 Dennis F Kinlaw in his *Let’s Start with Jesus: A New Way of Doing Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005) proposes to do this. But he limits “creation” almost exclusively to the human creation, which Jesus did not do. See Snyder and Scandrett, 53.


14 This approach may be contrasted with that of Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991). In Chapter 14, “Systematic Theology,” Osborne describes five “components of theological construction”: 1) scripture, 2) tradition, 3) community, 4) experience, and 5) philosophy (287-98). Though there are similarities between Osborne’s approach and that proposed here, Osborne does not focus on Jesus’ own theological interpretation or on God’s character and does not deal with the book of creation or the need for engagement with the global church.
Osborne says “systematic theology is the proper goal of biblical study and teaching” (286). Not really. The goal is the further revelation of Jesus Christ, the edification of the church, and the embodying of the kingdom of God. Additionally, Osborne does not deal at all with God’s covenant with the earth (Genesis 9) and hardly at all with the whole subject of covenant.


19 I am indebted to John Oswalt on this point.

20 This is another theme N. T. Wright emphasized in his Asbury Seminary lectures.


25 See James Orr, *The Progress of Dogma* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1901). There are a great number of fine books on the history of doctrine. All major theologians engage the history of dogma to some degree.

26 John Howard Yoder, *Theology of Mission: A Believers Church Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: 2014), 36-37. Yoder adds, “If you look through European systematic or practical theology texts, the theme of mission is absent in most of the texts and even in the presuppositions with which most of the texts were written.” Thus a “theologian in a European Protestant university (or an American Ivy League university) did not feel that the missionary enterprise was something for which his or her church was responsible. Theology had to do with domestic church management.”

28 Hence the importance of engaging theologically all the areas of culture, from economics to technology.


30 “I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written, ‘The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little’” (2 Cor 8:13-15).


33 These also are points N. T. Wright emphasized at Asbury.
Abstract:
Jesus’s way of life was one of humility and utter reliance upon God. This way of life ultimately led to the cross and to God’s raising of Jesus from the dead. Similarly, Christian teachers are also called to a way of humility and dependance upon God as they pursue the vocation of teaching.

Keywords: teaching, cross, humility, vocation

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Introduction

Many of our classes begin with a roll call or, if online, with an introduction (either synchronous or asynchronous). The teacher reads out names and students reply—often with “here” or “present” but sometimes with a raised hand or even a joking or flippant response. Each response signifies the presence of the student and begins the process of creating a distinctive community of learners. The roll call has often become perfunctory, but it is the place where students begin to announce, “I am present.” I am present—the person the teacher sees with their history, their experience, their prior knowledge. This person is present in this space and in this time. For the teacher, it can be a challenge to see the “I” who is present among the community that is beginning to be formed. But even here, we invite the beginning of relationship when we hear a student indicate that they prefer to be called by a middle name or a nickname or a shortened version of their name. And, when we note this, teachers begin the work of listening and responding to the “I” that is present in this learning community. Ideally, in the framework of theological education, the student who says “here” or “present” gives this answer to their name in the presence of Emmanuel—God with Us. It is not only the student who announces their presence but usually the teacher as well. Perhaps, “Hi, I’m Dr. Reese, welcome to Exegesis of 1 Corinthians.” I might even ask, “Are you sure you’re in the right class?” One time, some years ago, I was sitting in my office in the afternoon on the first day of class going over the last details for a class I was going to teach at 4:00 pm. My phone rang, and a student I knew well asked me, “Dr. Reese, what room is your class meeting in?” I told him. He asked, “What time is your class?” I said, “4:00 pm.” He said, “Dr. Reese, your class is at 2:30, and we are all here waiting for you.” I looked at my watch—2:40. I was not present in my class. When I arrived a few minutes later, hot, discombobulated, and now anxious, I opened up my Greek Bible, turned to the student I knew well and said, “Let’s begin reading at chapter 1, verse 1 in Greek. Please start for us.” I sat down and began to listen to the students reading aloud, translating, falling into a rhythm. But I felt that the failure to be present at the very beginning, that failure to set the tone of welcome, that failure to begin together tainted that class (at least in my mind if not in the minds of the students). Presence in the classroom can be a sacred invitation to learning. And so, the teacher and the student gather together. Ideally, they both announce their presence, and in the context of theological education, they gather in the presence
of Emmanuel—God with Us. Such a gathering can be explicit—a song, a prayer, a devotional, a period of thanksgiving or sharing of joys—and can take place each time the class gathers to remind all who are present that we gather for the work of teaching and learning in the presence of Jesus, the teacher, Rabbi.

Today, I begin this set of reflections by inviting you, the reader, to be present. We are gathered together in the presence of Jesus, a man whose very existence is rooted in the communal trinitarian relationship of Father, Son, and Spirit. And what I want us to do is to contemplate what we might learn as both teachers and students from the way of Jesus and the challenge of the cross.

The Way of Jesus

When I speak of “the way” of Jesus, I’m speaking first about the trajectory of his life. Paul captures this clearly in Philippians 2 when he writes that Christ Jesus,

though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father. (Phil 2:6-11)

On more than one occasion, I’ve heard this referred to as a “v” shaped trajectory—a kind of example of Jesus Christ downsizing from a heavenly mansion to an earthly existence only to have that experience reversed as he is exalted. But let’s pause here to note two things: first, the emptying, the downward movement, if you will, of Christ, is his own action. Christ chooses humility. “He emptied himself … he humbled himself.” Second, the upward movement, the exaltation is undertaken by God. Jesus Christ does not exalt himself; his exaltation is God’s doing. In response to (“therefore”) Christ’s actions—including his obedience even to death on a cross, the most humiliating form of death in the Roman world, a form of death usually reserved for slaves and rebels—God highly exalted him. In other words, Paul describes Jesus’s downward trajectory as actions initiated by Christ and
Christ’s upward trajectory as actions initiated by God. There is no point at which Jesus ceases to humble himself. Instead, Paul describes the ongoing humility of Jesus Christ and the subsequent response of God the Father. Even as Jesus is raised up, even as the name of Jesus becomes the name to which every knee will bow, Jesus remains a person of humility, a person who does not grasp after the authority of God. He does not exalt himself; he does not make his own name great; he does not demand that his name become the exclamation “Jesus Christ is Lord.” This is what God graciously gives (ἐχωρίσατο) to the Son who has humbled himself taking on human flesh with all of its mortality. Even at the end of this passage we see that “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” When Christ has been highly exalted, when every tongue has confessed that Jesus Christ is Lord, he is still other-oriented. This declaration of Christ’s lordship is “to the glory of God.” At the beginning, Christ does not “regard equality with God as something to be grasped,” and, at the end, Christ’s exaltation and the resulting confession that Jesus Christ is Lord is not in service to himself but is directed to the glory of God. Paul, of course, begins this great hymnic description of Christ with the imperative, “have this same mind in you which also is in Christ Jesus.”

The trajectory of Phil 2:6-11 is the trajectory of the Christian—the movement toward humility. Any exaltation which one might experience comes solely as a gift from God. This is reflected in various locations in scripture where those who humble themselves before God will be raised up by God (e.g., Matt 23:12; Jam 4:10; 1 Pet 5:6). In other words, humility is not an attribute that Christians take on for a season: it is instead a way of life. And, when God lifts up those who humble themselves, that is not the moment when humility ceases to exist. Indeed, as human beings created by God, we always exist in a relationship of humility before God, and any exaltation that we receive—whether in this life or in the life to come—is a gift of God. It is precisely when we are tempted to think that we have earned or deserve exaltation that there is the opportunity to slip into a space in which our humble posture before God is exchanged for the attempt to stand on our own apart from God (a reminder of one aspect of that sin that took place in a garden at the beginning of time). When I speak of the way of Jesus, I’m particularly concerned with this downward trajectory, with humility, emptying, and obedience. But perhaps one further observation is in order. Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of the one with status and
The Way of Jesus in the Gospel Narratives

So, if the way of Jesus is characterized by this downward trajectory that leads to the cross and by the exaltation enacted by God that leads to the recognition of Jesus as Lord and Messiah, then we might think of the Gospel narratives as examples of what the humility of Jesus looked like during his earthly life. The whole life of Jesus—his birth, his exile in Egypt, his faithfulness in the face of temptation, his teaching, his miracle working, his disciple making, his sharp rebuke of the temple and the Pharisees, his entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, and his death on the cross—can be understood as humility, as self-emptying, taking on human likeness. This is an important observation, as it helps us to understand that the humble life can take many forms, and it rejects the idea that to be humble is to give up every form of agency. Instead, if humility is characterized as the life lived in full obedience before God, then humility can include both the overthrowing of temple tables and the touching of lepers. If humility is doing the will of the Father, then humility can include both feeding five thousand people and washing feet. If humility is speaking truthfully in light of God’s message, then humility can include a rebuke of the Pharisees and an invitation to follow.

Just as Philippians shows Jesus in both equal and humble relationship to God, so too we find this relationship in the Gospels, perhaps most prominently in John’s gospel. Jesus is both equal to God (“he was in the form of God,” Phil 2:6; “the Word was with God, and the Word was God” Jn 1:1), and Jesus is in a relationship of submission to God (Son to Father). As soon as the roles of Father and Son are introduced, we move into a relationship between Father and Son. But let us not think of this relationship as the demands of the Father overriding the will of the Son. Instead, the values of kinship in the first century leaned toward trust, familial cooperation toward a common goal “in a common quest to advance the family’s honor and … to advance one another’s interests” (deSilva 2000: 
Harmony among members of the family is highly valued. The Son serves the interest of the Father not because he is coerced, but out of mutual love for one another. And the Father trusts the Son as the one who represents the interests of the Father on earth. Thus, we read in John, “The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.” We see that the Father and the Son work together cooperatively, “My Father is working until now, and I am working” (Jn 5:17). As we read further in this passage, we see that the Son does the things that the Father does:

Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. (Jn. 5:19-23 ESV)

The intimacy between Father and Son is one of mutual respect, honor, cooperation, trust, and love. They are together from the beginning and one in purpose: they work together to make life available to believers through the sacrificial death of the Son, the lamb of God, and to invite believers into the intimate eternal life available through the Son (Jn 6:40) and modeled in the relationship of Father and Son. At the same time, we see the Son deferring to the Father. As he says,

For I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. Now this is the will of the one who sent me— that I should not lose one person of every one he has given me, but raise them all up at the last day. For this is the will of my Father— for everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him to have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. (Jn 6:38-40 NET)

Jesus defers to the will of God, while at the same time Jesus is in complete harmony with this will. In other words, the will of God is not imposed upon Jesus. Jesus retains agency: he chooses to take up the work necessitated by God’s will, and it is Jesus who promises to raise those who have looked to
the Son and received eternal life. Jesus’s humility does not obliterate his identity or his agency.

The Way of Jesus and Teaching

Having shown that humility is a key characteristic of the way of Jesus, there are any number of ways that we might further unpack the humility of Jesus. But this colloquium is focused on teaching in a global context. So, let me make a few observations about Jesus as a teacher. Here, I’m following Pheme Perkins and her little book *Jesus as Teacher* (1990). Perkins begins by observing the various kinds of teachers that existed in the first century: philosophers, sages, teachers of the law, and prophets. Various scholars have presented evidence that places Jesus in one or more of these categories of teacher, but it is likely that Jesus’s teaching draws from multiple influences and isn’t confined to one type of teacher. Jesus’s teaching is directed toward a diverse audience—men and women, crowds and disciples, teachers of the Law and Roman officials, supplicants and lepers. While there are obviously circles of influence (Peter, James, and John; the twelve; the seventy-two; the crowds), one of the most important observations about Jesus’s humility as a teacher is that he associates with the lowly. Most of Jesus’s time is spent in itinerant ministry. He is not teaching in the Roman equivalent of Cambridge and Harvard (e.g., Rome or Alexandria, etc.), but in the fields and paths of ordinary life. And in his teaching, he uses the ordinary objects of daily life—seeds, pots, meals, weeds, lamps—and the ordinary experiences of daily life in Palestine—encounters with soldiers, growing food, traveling, paying taxes. And Jesus invites his disciples to associate with the lowly. In fact, much of Jesus’s teaching presents a deep challenge to the view that those who are wealthy and powerful are somehow favored by God. Instead, Jesus’s teaching says such things as “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” And it will continue with “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:3-5, 10). Indeed, this kingdom has been referred to as “the upside-down kingdom” and as a kingdom characterized by “great reversals.” This kingdom appears to be populated by the poor, the meek, and the sorrowful. While the wealthy and powerful are not excluded (“all things are possible with God” Mk 10:27), it is clear that entry into the kingdom of God is difficult for those who have wealth (Mk 10:23). Jesus, as
a teacher, uses a variety of teaching styles (questions, parables, commentary on daily life, interpretation of scripture) to communicate with a wide variety of people while associating with the lowly, and he invites his disciples to do the same.

When we turn to Matthew’s Gospel, we find a passage that is specifically focused on teaching. Here Jesus draws a contrast between two types of teachers, the scribes and Pharisees, and his disciples. In Matthew 23:2, Jesus begins by talking about the scribes and the Pharisees—groups with whom he has already clashed and with whom he has also debated some of the points of the Law. Despite this clash, Jesus says, “The experts in the law and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat. Therefore, pay attention to what they tell you and do it” (Matt 23:2-3 NET). There is significant scholarly debate on what is meant by the unusual phrase, “sit on Moses’ seat,” and some have argued that it should be taken ironically (France) or metaphorically (Keener) or as something that happened in the past but is no longer relevant (among other ideas listed by Powell). But I find John Nolland’s comment here (based on Powell) helpful. He writes,

So, what is the force intended by ‘sit/sat in the seat of Moses’? According to Powell, “Jesus may be simply acknowledging the powerful social and religious position that [the scribes and Pharisees] occupy in a world where most people are illiterate and copies of the Torah are not plentiful. Since Jesus’ disciples do not themselves have copies of the Torah, they will be dependent on the scribes and the Pharisees to know what Moses said…. In light of such dependence, Jesus advises his disciples to heed the words that the scribes and Pharisees speak when they sit in the seat of Moses, that is, when they pass on the words of the Torah itself.” We might say that the scribes and Pharisees were walking copies of the Law. What they did with it might be suspect, but not their knowledge of it. They could be relied on to report the Law of Moses with care and accuracy. (Nolland 2005: 923)

Jesus’s instruction to pay attention to the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees is followed immediately by this instruction:

But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they teach. They tie up heavy loads, hard to carry, and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing even to lift a finger to move them. They do all their deeds to be seen by people, for they make their phylacteries wide and their tassels long. They love
the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues and elaborate greetings in the marketplaces, and to have people call them “Rabbi.” (Matt 23:3-7 NET)

While the scribes and Pharisees may have known Torah, Jesus describes them as those who do not practice what they teach. Instead, they pursue prideful recognition. Their actions are for the purpose of being noticed. They want people to see them, affirm them, and give them honor. There should not be a disjunction between teaching and practice, between words and deeds. In contrast to those who seek recognition for themselves, Jesus says to his disciples,

You are not to be called “Rabbi,” for you have one Teacher and you are all brothers. And call no one your “father” on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Nor are you to be called “teacher,” for you have one teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. (Matt. 23:8-12 NET)

The disciples are to reject the title of “Rabbi”—the title of recognition, of honor, of position in society. Why? Because they all have one Teacher and instead of being in a location where one (the teacher) is elevated over others (the students), they are all “brothers” (siblings); thus, all are members of the same family sharing in the honor they derive from their father and working together to learn and to practice what they learn. Nor are you to be called “teacher.” Although the Greek word here, (καθηγητής) is a hapax not found elsewhere in the New Testament or Septuagint and means a tutor or someone who teaches individuals, the meaning is substantially the same as verse 8, with its rejection of position and status. All those who are disciples of Jesus have one teacher. Because they all have one teacher and are all identified as siblings of one another—thus, as those who work cooperatively together in pursuit of the family vocation—there is no place for self-exaltation, pride, empty words, teaching unenforced by action on the part of those who are all siblings in the same family. Yet, it is obvious both from the history of the church and from our own experience that there are those within the Christian community, who do know more than others and who do bear responsibility for sharing their knowledge with others. There is no rejection of the vocation of teaching in this passage; rather, there
is a rejection of status seeking in relationship to teaching, status by means of title. So? What about those titles that all of us in this room either have or are striving toward? Doctor. Professor. When students ask me, “What would you like me to call you?” I usually reply, “Ruth Anne,” but I also realize that just as there are cultural values attached to the title “Rabbi” in the first century, so too there are different cultural values attached to titles like “Doctor” or “Professor.” Some belong to cultures in which it is disrespectful or overly intimate to call teachers by their first name; others want to honor the work that someone has put into education. The use of titles needs to be assessed within individual cultural milieus, but two things are clear. First, the use of titles should never obscure the true Teacher; second, the use of titles should not become a source of boasting.

For several years now, I have included a section in my syllabus entitled “Core Values,” in which I lay out a few of my assumptions about the classroom, teaching, and learning. One of those core values states, “God is our first and best teacher.” In the context of this value, I invite my students to think about what they really want to learn and then to ask God to teach them. I also recognize that whatever teaching I do in my class is (ideally) derivative. At its best it comes from and through God. I also remind my students that all knowledge belongs to God and that God can assist in all of our learning: the biblical text, certainly; original languages, yes; history, of course; the formation of our character to be more like God’s Son. God delights in such teaching. But there’s also a posture of asking. Sometimes students work hard (and even learn) but haven’t asked God to teach them and in so doing may miss the very things God wants to teach.

This passage from Matthew concludes, “The greatest among you will be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted” (Matt. 23:11-12 NET). The disciples take up the same posture as their teacher. This is the one whom Matthew identifies through Isaiah saying, “Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I take great delight. I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations” (Matt. 12:18 NET). And again Matthew writes, “Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:26-28 NET). The disciples imitate the humility of their teacher. The disciples take on the same life of service and servitude, including service in teaching. Matt 23:12 warns
about the dangers of “exalting oneself.” That way lies humiliation. But those
who humble themselves, those who take up the life of service and the way
of humility, place their hope in the God who lifts up the lowly, in the God
who raises the dead, and in the God who makes the name of Jesus higher
than any other name.

The Challenge of the Cross

For Jesus, the way of humility led all the way to the cross. When
we look back at Philippians, we are reminded that Christ Jesus was in
the form of God, but he chose to empty himself and then chose humble
obedience all the way to death on the cross. The cross. So much meaning
is located there: redemption, justification, eternal life, new covenant, new
creation, new identity, reconciliation, atonement, and so much more. But
what I want to take up is the challenge that the cross presents to us as
teachers and learners and for that I want to turn to 1 Corinthians.

Let’s stop to remind ourselves of the audience that Paul is
addressing in this book. This is a group of Christians just a few years old
who have experienced the cleansing work of Jesus Christ (“to those who
are sanctified”) and who belong to and participate in the sphere of the
Messiah (“in Christ”), where they are being shaped into the community
of Jesus. Despite having received abundant gifts from the Lord, the church
struggles with a variety of divisions related to both popular teachers (Paul,
Apollos, Cephas) and embodied practices (sexuality and religious practice
in particular). In the midst of these divisions, Paul writes, “Christ did not
send me to baptize but to proclaim the good news, not with clever speech,
so that the cross of Christ should not be made empty [vain/void/useless]”
(1 Cor 1:17). Paul’s focus is on proclaiming the good news. What is the
gospel that Paul proclaims? He delineates it in 1 Cor 15:3-5: “That Christ
died on behalf of our sin according to the scriptures and that he was buried
and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures and
that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve …” The good news begins
with a proclamation of Christ’s death, the same death that Paul has already
associated in 1 Corinthians with the cross where Christ died. This is the
starting place for Paul’s understanding of the cross where Christ died. This is the
starting place for Paul’s understanding of the gospel. It is a death on behalf
of our sin, and the good news continues with the affirmation that Christ was
buried, that he was raised on the third day, and that he appeared to various
people (1 Cor 15:3-5). In 1 Cor 2:5, Paul declares that it is his intention to
focus on Jesus Christ, the one who has been crucified. He indicates that the wisdom that he must share is wisdom rooted in “the message of the cross” (1 Cor 1:18), and he is utterly clear that this message is perceived as foolishness to all those who are perishing but that it is the power of God to those who are being saved (1 Cor 1:18).

The cross is the power of God. In this particular passage, Paul does not locate power in the triumphant resurrection of Christ or in his position at the right hand of God. He locates power in the cross. It is the power of God to those who are being saved (to everyone else it is foolishness). But let us not be tempted to think that the cross is only a means of salvation, a ticket into heaven or some such thing. Paul notes that the wisdom of the world is cast down and destroyed; in contrast, the message that is proclaimed is the scandalous, non-sensical message of Christ crucified; it is this crucified one who is the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:23-24). To locate the power and wisdom of God solely in the resurrection would be to lay claim to the same audacious, triumphalist “wisdom” that the Roman Empire itself was tempted toward with its exaltation of emperors to divine status and its constant striving for status and position. In contrast to this status-seeking drive, Paul indicates that God chose the foolish, weak, and base things of this world in order to shame the wise and the strong: “God chose what is low and despised in the world, what is regarded as nothing, to set aside what is regarded as something” (1 Cor. 1:28 NET). We could debate whether “low and despised and things that are not” refers to people such as the Corinthians or events such as the manger and the cross, but the point is that God does not choose the very people and events that anyone in their right mind would choose, those obviously wise in the eyes of the world—the educated, the rhetorically able—nor does he choose the palaces and government offices of this world. He chooses the low, the despised, the things that are not. And the cross of Christ is the ultimate example of God’s selection of the most despised thing, undoing, destroying, making naught “the things that are.” Why? So that any boasting that anyone is doing is only boasting in what God has done. Among other things, we are reminded that the cross is both the place of Jesus’s ultimate humility, and it is the revelation of God—the God of the lowly, the oppressed, the humble, the God who is present in the midst of suffering. The cross reveals both the humility of Christ and “the identity of God” (Gorman 2001: 18). And what does this lowly, crucified, Messiah Jesus do? He knits together a community in himself (“in Christ,” 1 Cor 1:30) and the lowly one becomes the source of
this community’s wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. In other words, the cross and all the benefits of Christ’s wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption that become available through the cross are to shape the life together of Christ’s community. Over and over again in 1 Corinthians, Paul will indicate that status seeking is to be rejected and that the wisdom of self-emptying for the sake of the lowly, the weak, and the poor is the way of life for those who are “in Christ.” And ultimately in 1 Corinthians 13, Paul will indicate that any action (whether speaking in tongues, engaging in prophetic speech [including teaching], or giving everything away) is completely useless without love. This is followed by descriptions of what love is: patient, kind, not envious, boastful or arrogant, nor irritable or resentful. Love does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. Love bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things. More than one theologian has referred to the cross as God’s love: “The cross is the sacrificial character of love, for love is sacrifice, self-surrender, self-renunciation, voluntary self-depletion for the sake of the loved one” (Bulgakov 2008: 3). Thus, Christians take on a cross-shaped ethic, what Michael Gorman has named “cruciformity.”

This is a significant challenge for Christians in higher education because like the larger academic world, we too face the temptations of status seeking and self-promotion. We too are enamored of teaching or lecturing in the best places, of having our work promoted by the most recognized publishers, or of having our scholarship promoted by “influencers.” We too can be quick to dismiss knowledge and wisdom that originates outside—in schools deemed “not sufficiently rigorous” or from people labeled “uneducated.” And we also can be too easily accepting of knowledge that comes from the “right” schools or the “right” scholars. But that is perhaps a critique of the academy, whether in its secular or Christian iteration, that we can put aside for the moment. Instead, we have seen that the way of Jesus is the way of humility, of self-emptying, and that it leads all the way to the cross, and we have seen that the cross presents a significant challenge to our status seeking, self-promoting ways of engaging the world. But the challenge goes deeper, the temptation is to tell ourselves to “just say no,” to “just stop” whatever behavior it is that falls on the self-serving side of the ledger. But we know several things: First, that we may not even be able to identify and rightly analyze our own behavior. We are prone to self-justification. Once we have come to see ourselves as “right,” it is extremely difficult to change one’s mind (Arinson and Tavris 2013). Second, even if
The cruciform teacher is the teacher whose work is characterized by the humility of cross shaped love. I want to be very clear about this. There is only one pattern for such teaching; Jesus as he is known through the cross and in relationship within the Trinity. Your teaching style may look very different than mine. You may have the opportunity to teach at Oxford. You may teach a small group of students gathered in the shade of a tree. Cruciform teaching is not about where you teach, how you teach, and who you teach; instead, it is about the formation of the teacher. The invitation is to be a teacher who continues to be shaped and fashioned by humility of Jesus ultimately demonstrated in the cross. Such cross-shaped love is always for the sake of others and is undertaken in response to the love of God poured out on our behalf. Christ invites us to take up our cross. We are not invited either to force others to take up their cross (a form of crucifying others) nor are we invited into self-flagellation simply for the sake of looking humble. We are invited into a life of humility, in which we have the agency to choose the other-oriented, cross-like way of love that has been lived and demonstrated by Jesus himself. And there we find the same life and the same hope for resurrection and eternal life shared with the crucified and risen Lord.

This has clearly not been a “tips and tricks” teaching paper. But I do have a few suggestions, not about the actual methods of teaching, but
about the way in which teachers see themselves in relationship to students. Cruciform teaching is other oriented. It is characterized by loving attention to our students. This does not mean giving them everything they ask for or doing things for them! But it does mean attending to their needs and concerns as students, and as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ created in the image of God, to the best of our ability.

Cruciform teaching especially in the Christian community is characterized by recognition of the shared identity of all in the classroom (teacher and students) as brothers and sisters in Christ who work cooperatively to hear and respond to the will of the Father in their learning. Teachers may remind Christians of our kinship identity and its meaning in the classroom. For students who have been embedded for decades in a system that demands individual performance without reference to others, such work together requires an undoing of the system of education which rewards individual merit over cooperative engagement. The work of forging a community of learning oriented around the true Teacher is part of the work of cruciform teaching. Those Christians teaching in a secular environment can remember that humanity bears the image of God, and while that image is marred by sin (in every environment), teachers can demonstrate cruciform love and call students, even those who are not Christians, to a shared environment of trust, cooperation, care for others, etc.

Cruciform teaching undertakes teaching as service. In this way, the cruciform teacher is more like a witness to that which is greater than her, so that the teacher in service to students becomes a conduit to growth in knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. One of the challenges of such service is how one attends to students of varying ability. It is easy for the teacher to delight in the student who “gets it” and who tracks with the professor. It is even fairly easy to appreciate the student who comes to the office seeking help and approaches with sincere effort at understanding. It is much more difficult to try to understand and serve the student who thinks quite differently from the professor. Humility seeks to understand such students rather than dismissing them.

Finally, the cruciform teacher is dependent—this is part of the posture of humility, the recognition that life is fully intertwined both with God and with others. In contrast to much of western culture which privileges the free-standing individual, cruciformity—whether of the teacher or the student—is rooted in relationship to God and relationship to other members of God’s family. The teacher who recognizes this dependance is able to
invite others to a similar intertwined life in which learning rests in God’s hands, in the hands of the community, and in the hands of the learner. Just as we saw with Jesus in Philippians, there is a subtle dance of agency and emptying, decision making and obedience. There is a type of paradox among the humble, they retain agency even as they depend on the Lord.

I could say more about cruciform teaching—about teaching that speaks the truth, about teaching that asks questions and waits for answers, about teaching that is responsive to seekers without providing all the answers, or about teaching that expects transformation. But cruciform teaching is really a challenge to follow the way of Jesus and respond to the challenge of the cross while living in hope of the resurrection. So instead, let me end with one image that I’ve been meditating on for some time now: Kosuke Koyama’s image of the cross without a handle. In his book *No Handle on the Cross* (2011) he describes how the cross does not come with a convenient handle by which to carry it, nor does it come like a neatly packaged lunch box full of beautiful nourishing food. Because the cross does not come with a handle, those who would pick up the cross are required to stoop down. This is the posture of cruciform teaching. The teacher stoops down.

**End notes**

1 All Bible passages are from the *New Revised Standard Version* unless otherwise noted.

2 The Greek in Phil 2:5 raises two questions: the referent of Τούτο and the verb to be supplied in the second half of the clause. Gorman cites two main ways these issues have been resolved. Either a) Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who … (NRSV and most translators and interpreters) b) Let the same mind be in you that you have in Christ Jesus, who... (NRSV margin and some translators and interpreters). Those (the majority) who support translation (a) normally understand ‘this’ and ‘which’ to look ahead to the hymn and believe that the hymn depicts the ‘thinking’ or ‘mind’ that was ‘in’ Christ, that is Christ’s attitude of humility…. Those who prefer translation (b) emphasize (rightly) that the Pauline phrase ‘in Christ’ is a standard term for the community that lives in the sphere of Christ’s lordship, not for some inward attitude Christ had. They tend to take ‘this’ and ‘which’ … as general references to the Christian mindset..... Critics of this interpretation, however, point out (rightly) the awkward if not nonsensical translation that emerges when the indicative verb ‘you have’ is supplied” (Michael Gorman, *Cruciformity: Paul’s Narrative Spirituality of the Cross*, Eerdmans, 2001, 41). Gorman continues with his own proposal that combines options (a) and (b) into an option (c), also advocated by G. B. Caird. He proposes that “‘which’ [ὅ] is understood in conjunction with the following word, translated ‘also,’ and with the missing verb. Together
they produce, with emphasis something like the Greek equivalent of the Latin phrase *id est* (‘i.e.’) or the English ‘that is.’ ‘Which also’ should be interpreted, therefore, as a phrase linking and equating ‘in you [plural],’ meaning ‘among you,’ with ‘in Christ.’ The phrases are parallel… The resulting (wooden translation is: Think this way in [en] yourselves, which also is in [en] Christ, who … A better translation, as suggested above, would be: Have this mindset in your community, which is indeed a community in Christ, who … The emphasis in the text is on the reality that life ‘within you (all)’ is life ‘within’ Christ” (Ibid., 42-43, all brackets, italics, and bold text are original).

Throughout his teaching Jesus insists that his followers must be lowly. He set the example himself, for in his whole life he forsook the corridors of power and was content to be a lowly teacher, mostly in the remote rural areas of the province in which he lived. He has earlier taught plainly that his followers must tread the lowly path, and he has linked their service with his own, going on to say that he would give his life a ransom for many (20:26–28). The theme of lowliness is now resumed as part of the contrast with the Pharisees that must mark the lives of the servants of Jesus. If they are seeking to be great, they are not to look for the kind of prominence that Jesus has denounced in this discourse. For them to be great is to take the place of a servant (earlier he has taught that they must be like little children, 18:4). It is in giving service, not in receiving adulation, that true greatness consists” (Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Pillar NT Commentary, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992, 578). My friend Ellen Marmon also reminds me that there must be a cultural awareness and sensitivity in the area of service as well. To force our service onto others is also not truly service. Or, as she put it, “I’ll serve you even if it kills you!” The posture of humility is readiness and willingness to serve; how that service takes place must be culturally sensitive and aware.

My translation.

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Chase Franklin

*Redeeming the Time: Sabbath Observance for the Christian Minister*

**Abstract:**

In a world impacted by COVID-19, Christian clergy have reevaluated how their time is spent in response to new challenges. Rabbi Abraham Heschel, augmented by the work of Walter Brueggemann and Marva Dawn, provided guidance to focus more on the realm of the spirit and less on the physical world. This is achieved through a renewed dedication to Sabbath observance. The Sabbath is the consecrated day where both God and people find rest from their labors. Because clergy work to help others observe the Sabbath, they must be willing to think outside the box to observe their own.

**Keywords:** Sabbath, pandemic, minister health, time, Heschel

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Introduction

Currently, the world finds itself coming out of the shadow of pandemic. With the removal of mask mandates and availability of COVID-19 vaccines, most lives are returning to a sense of pre-pandemic normalcy. One result of the pandemic is that people are evaluating aspects of their lives such as political beliefs and beliefs about God (Bernacer 2021) (Kowalczyk 2021: 2672). Another topic of interest in a post-pandemic world is that of time. During the COVID-19 pandemic, people found themselves with more time on their hands as they were laid off from jobs, going to school virtually, or quarantining due to virus exposure.

In 1951, Abraham Heschel, a leading Jewish scholar and ordained rabbi in the 20th century, argued against focusing on the material world and purported the spiritual importance of Sabbath observance in his work The Sabbath. Heschel wrote The Sabbath to the American Jewish community in a post-World War 2 society. The Jews were only a few years removed from the horrors of the Holocaust and its anti-Semitic evils.1 Once the war ended, American Jews discovered a culture that gave them more opportunities than ever (Koltun-Fromm 2010: 145). They suddenly had the chance to earn greater wealth which would have implications on their priorities. If more wealth provided more purchasing power, then their priorities could shift towards ownership of possessions. Heschel wrote to reorient Jewish Americans away from the love of material things towards the love of God by adjusting their focus from the material world to the spiritual world. The way forward for their faith community was through a renewed understanding and observance of the Sabbath. As Patrick Miller has observed, the Fourth Commandment is a bridge that links the first three commandments focusing on God with the last six commandments focusing on the neighbor (2009: 117). The Sabbath is where the worship of God and the treatment of others come together. God and people both find rest on the Sabbath. People become linked to God and linked to each other through the rest the Sabbath provides, thus forming a stronger community.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused churches and other faith communities to close or meet at reduced capacities. Because of this, clergy have been faced with the need to adapt to a rapidly changing environment in which congregants are not returning to the physical worship space either through personal choice or government regulation. With these new challenges come new stresses, and pastors could be at risk for burnout if
they are not careful to maintain their own physical, mental, and spiritual health. A possible key to maintaining that health is through their own observance of the Sabbath (Speedling 2019: 1384). As Christians have a faith heritage in Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, it is important to gain a Jewish perspective on a practice that is still part of the Christian faith today. Heschel’s work has value for clergy. The goal of this article is to examine Heschel’s definition of the Sabbath from a Christian perspective, formulate a modern definition of Sabbath observance, and discover the implications for the Christian minister.

**Heschel’s Thoughts**

Heschel grounded his view of the Sabbath in the separation of time and space. While they are interrelated, they are also different. Space is the material world we see around us. It is the physical world that we can touch, manipulate, and dominate. Humankind’s domination of space motivated Heschel to write *The Sabbath*. One of his concerns was that as people gained power in the world of space, they would lose any desire for the world of time. Time is the moments we currently encounter, the remembrance of historical events, and the anticipation of events to come. Heschel argued that Judaism was a “...religion of time aiming at the sanctification of time.” (1951: 8) He moved beyond the traditional use of time as a measuring device and argued it is something altogether different. It is the process of creation. A world without time, he posed, is a world without God. Heschel said:

> The Bible is more concerned with time than with space. It sees the world in the dimension of time. It pays more attention to generations, to events, than to countries, to things; it is more concerned with history than with geography. To understand the teaching of the Bible, one must accept its premise that time has a meaning for life which is at least equal to that of space; that time has a significance and sovereignty of its own. (1951: 6-7)

Judaism is a religion of time whose goal is to see the sanctification of moments and events. The basis of the Jewish faith is remembering the works of God accomplished in history, specifically the history of their faith community. An important part of the Jewish faith is the celebration of festivals or feasts which occur throughout the calendar year. These feasts remember different works of God in their history as a people and culminate
in the Day of Atonement in which atonement is made for the sins of the people.

The Sabbath itself is representative of God consecrating time. Heschel recounted the first use of holiness in the Bible is in Genesis 2:3 at the end of the creation account. While the things God created are called good, only the Sabbath is called holy because God blessed that day and set it apart by resting. Thus, the Sabbath stands out from creation as time was made holy before anything else. It becomes an escape from the world of space and a refocus on the holiness of time. On the first Sabbath, peace and tranquility were created when God decided to rest. This rest is also synonymous with happiness, stillness, and harmony. Embracing the holiness of time is what allows us to receive the same peace that was created when God rested and is expressed in how the Sabbath is celebrated. Heschel argued the Sabbath itself is the symbol of the Covenant in which Jews remember what God has done (1951: 82).

Heschel saw the Sabbath as a way to move beyond the desire to conquer the material world and reorient one’s perspective towards God’s eternal holiness. The Sabbath is both a reminder and a foretaste of eternity. Heschel argued the Sabbath is preparation for eternity and is eschatological in nature. Hope for the future is found in the Sabbath, and those who cannot observe the Sabbath in the present world cannot experience it in the world to come. Heschel thought the Sabbath and the other six days in the week were linked together and that neither could exist without the other. The longing for the Sabbath during the other six days was a form of longing for the eternal Sabbath and directed people towards coveting the things of time and away from coveting the things of space (Heschel 1951: 90-91). He saw the physical world as something that would stop humankind’s progress if allowed, and the Sabbath was a way to physically and spiritually move forward as a society. He posited these thoughts on the relationship between humankind’s hope and the Sabbath:

To set apart one day a week for freedom, a day to which we would not use the instruments which have been so easily turned into weapons of destruction, a day for being with ourselves, a day of detachment from the vulgar, of independence of external obligations, a day on which we stop worshipping the idols of technical civilization, a day on which we use no money, a day of armistice in the economic struggle with our fellow men and the forces of nature—is there any institution
that holds out a greater hope for man's progress than the Sabbath? (Heschel 1951:28)

Though technology, money, and economic structures are not necessarily evil as Heschel described them, Heschel saw the Sabbath as a way to gain independence from the physical world. While Heschel's views here sound contrary, the goal of the Jewish religion was to find a way of being within the world while rising above it at the same time. As God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, so people have been placed in the world to live and yet not be controlled by the evil that exists in civilization. The Sabbath allowed respite from the world where one could rise up into the realm of time and leave behind the dangers, worries, and temptations of the material world.

One distinguishing hallmark of the Jewish Sabbath is the restriction of all work. Heschel engaged with the command found in Exodus 20:8 to do all work and labor in six days by posing a question: *is all our work ever really complete* (1951: 32)? He offered an interpretation that one should rest as though all their work is done and rest even from the thought of work itself. Heschel further expounded on the thoughts of ancient rabbis by reinterpreting Sabbath regulations on what work could be done. As the rabbis said only work that pertained to the construction and furnishing of the Sanctuary in the desert was acceptable (Heschel 1951: 29), Heschel posed that the Sabbath itself is a sanctuary in time and anything which helps build this sanctuary through Sabbath observance is permissible on that day. The intent of the Sabbath is not on work itself being performed. What is more important is freedom from the influence of the realm of space and anything that would detract from peace, joy, happiness, and the holiness of God.

**A Christian Perspective**

As Christianity's roots come from Judaism, there is much about the Christian faith that draws from the Jewish background of Jesus (Brueggemann 2014: x). A Jewish perspective such as Heschel's on shared doctrines like the Sabbath can be beneficial for Christian theology. However, one area where Heschel differed from Christian thought is the idea of the Sabbath making one holy. Heschel said, "The quality of holiness is not in the grain of matter. It is a preciousness bestowed upon things by an act of consecration and persisting in relation to God." (1951: 79) The measurement of one's holiness does not come from their identity but from what has been granted to them.
As their relationship with God deepens, that relationship is the portal to a deeper holiness that cannot be found outside of God himself. However, Heschel went on to describe how the Sabbath imparts a refreshing of the soul and added holiness to Israel (1951: 87). Creation itself does not make anything holy just as observing a ritual does not add to one’s piety. Sabbath observance itself does not guarantee that one will experience deeper holiness. Heschel stated that one’s identity depends on what the Sabbath is to them (1951: 89). The Sabbath is one of many avenues to experience the presence of God. One’s identity ultimately does not depend on how consistently the Sabbath is observed. Identities as people, the who or what we are, are found in Christ Himself. The Sabbath is one way in which people discover that identity. The One who declared himself Lord of the Sabbath is the One who reveals himself through observance of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a means to an end, not the goal itself. Christians express their devotion through worship to the God who created the Sabbath.

Additionally, Christian scholars have addressed the Sabbath and provide additional viewpoints. Two leading scholars have produced works that contribute to an understanding of the Sabbath: Walter Brueggemann and Marva Dawn. In his work Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now, Brueggemann argued the Sabbath is an alternative for the Christian against current culture, similar to the Israelites in Egypt (2014: xiv). Like Heschel, Brueggemann argued the need to resist the material world, but Brueggemann argued from a different perspective. He examined the Exodus story and claimed the Egyptian culture was one of endless commodity and production demanded by its gods. Because of this, the Sabbath was a way of remembering the First Commandment by resting from their own economic system once they left Egypt (Brueggemann 2014: 2). As the gods of Egypt demanded more goods to be produced, particularly bricks in the case of the Israelites, rest was something not granted to the Israelite slaves. The Sabbath was given as a reminder that the Lord was different from the gods of Egypt and valued people more than production. If God took time to cease from His work on the seventh day of creation, then His people should do so as well. Brueggemann argued:

Such faithful practice of work stoppage is an act of resistance. It declares in bodily ways that we will not participate in the anxiety system that pervades our social environment. We will not be defined by busyness and
by acquisitiveness and by pursuit of more, in either our economics or our personal relations or anywhere in our lives. Because our life does not consist in commodity. (2014: 31-32)

According to Brueggemann, the people of God are not identified by their surrounding culture which can be filled with the anxiety that comes from never having enough commodities. God’s people should stand in contrast to it, and that is the goal of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a time to temporarily exit the culture’s anxious production system and resist participating in it. Brueggemann further argued this anxious system coerces others to perform better in order to increase their worth (2014: 40). Because of this, the Sabbath is also a resistance against coercion. While Brueggemann limited the scope of his work to a socioeconomic perspective, it is a work that augments Heschel’s argument to focus on time instead of space.

In her work *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, Marva Dawn argued the Sabbath is a form of ceasing. However, she approached the Sabbath as way of allowing God to take care of His people “….not by becoming passive or lazy, but in the freedom of giving up our feeble attempts to be God in our own lives.” (Dawn 1989: 4) This Sabbath ceasing entails not just stopping all work but, as Brueggemann also argued, ceasing possessiveness, anxiety, and enculturation. While the Sabbath is a form of ceasing, it is also a form of embracing the purposes of God and the Christian lifestyle (Dawn 1989: 101). Ceasing and embracing are mutually dependent. It is when one ceases, in a positive way, to acquiesce to the social culture that one can embrace the culture of God. In this embrace, Dawn argues, one finds rest not just for the spirit and body as Heschel says, but also finds rest for the intellect and emotions (1989: 53). In order to become fully at rest and experience the Jewish concept of shalom⁵, one should be at rest spiritually, physically, and mentally (Dawn 1989: 137). As Dawn further reasons in her companion piece *The Sense of the Call*, ceasing, embracing, and rest allow Christians to celebrate the Sabbath with an eschatological joy grounded in the work of Christ. Because of Jesus’s redemptive work on the cross, death and sorrow are not permanent. The Sabbath is a feast, or celebration, that is a reminder of the joys to come for those who follow Christ.
Defining The Sabbath for the Christian Minister

According to Marva Dawn, the question of Sabbath observance is one that faces Christian ministers with little theological guidance (2006: 34). Since church services are conducted on the traditional Christian Sabbath day, ministers find themselves in a dual atmosphere of both work and worship. Ministers are responsible for all planning and execution of the service itself. It takes “work” to lead others in a church service. This raises the following question: what does a minister do for a Sabbath observance if they work to help others observe their own? Is a worship service in which the minister is working considered a Sabbath? If not, how does the minister move forward? The biblical text argues the need of rest from work as God instituted the Sabbath in the Fourth Commandment and Jesus called his own disciples away for a time of rest in the New Testament. However, little is known about how ministers practice their own forms of Sabbath observance. In order to discover how ministers are practicing the Sabbath, the Sabbath must first be defined.

When defining the Sabbath for North American culture, it should begin with the concept of time. While North American culture views time as a measuring device, Heschel’s views on time are a contrast (1951: 96). The Sabbath is not about a specific ritual but the reclamation of something that has been lost to humankind: holiness in the world. The redemption of the realm of time begins with the consecration of time. When something is consecrated, it is set apart. The Sabbath begins when time is intentionally set aside to break away from the rhythms of the other six days of the week and, like Brueggemann and Dawn have argued, resist the culture of busyness. It is a time to depart the ordinary and reorient towards the Holy One. Heschel viewed Sabbath observance in this way:

We must conquer space in order to sanctify time. All week long we are called upon to sanctify life through employing things of space. On the Sabbath it is given us to share in the holiness that is in the heart of time. Even when the soul is seared, even when no prayer can come out of our tightened throats, the clean, silent rest of the Sabbath leads us to a realm of endless peace, or to the beginning of an awareness of what eternity means. There are few ideas in the world of thought which contain so much spiritual power as the idea of the Sabbath. (1951: 101)
As Heschel argued here, a proper Sabbath observance involves silence and rest. Heschel directed the reader to the possible outcomes: peace and a greater awareness of spiritual matters. Though literal silence and rest can be part of an observance, he posed there should be a move away from the material realm of space, silence the busyness and necessities of the other six days, and enter into a holy rest that awaits on that day (Heschel 1951: 22-23). When one's perspective is shifted away from the minutiae and demands of the other six days, then the soul can be open to the rest received from the hand of God. As God himself rested on the seventh day, so must humankind take a period of rest.

Traditional Sabbath observance in the Jewish faith has been a 24-hour period beginning at sundown on Friday and ending at sundown on Saturday with an emphasis on worship (Dawn 1989: 10). The Christian faith is similar with the worship service being a key part of Sabbath observance, but has been more fluid than Judaism with no standard observance schedule. Depending on the denomination and culture, worship services can take place on Saturday morning and evening, Sunday morning and evening, and other times. With more businesses requiring nontraditional work schedules, it is becoming difficult for Christians to attend church at all, much less observe a 24-hour Sabbath. Christians would do well to follow what they see in Genesis 2:2-3: the Sabbath should be observed as a consecrated 24-hour period. This means if it is not possible to have a full Sabbath on Sundays, then one should choose another time when the entire day can be set aside to be free from the rigors of work and schedules of the other six days. It should be a day in which the observer can change their atmosphere. As Heschel wrote, “The seventh day is like a palace in time with a kingdom for all. It is not a date but an atmosphere. It is not a different state of consciousness but a different climate; it is as if the appearance of all things somehow changed.” (1951: 21) This can be a challenging aspect of Sabbath observance. Because time is in short order, priorities and boundaries should be made around what one considers the most important for them. This is where it is essential for someone to recognize and understand what activities and practices benefit them the most. When these practices are utilized in a consecrated 24-hour day, then one can observe a true Sabbath.

Two major studies have been conducted to examine ministers and their own Sabbath activities. A team of researchers from Duke University, headed by Holly Hough, published a study entitled Relationshi...
Sabbath Observance and Mental, Physical, and Spiritual Health in Clergy in issue 68 of the journal *Pastoral Psychology*. This study examined the relationship between Sabbath observance and other forms of rest to mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. The team focused on United Methodist clergy who were appointed to a lead pastor or staff position in the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences. Overall, 1,316 clergy (both elders and deacons) responded. For their data, the team used a quantitative survey conducted by the Duke Clergy Health Initiative. The multi-year survey began in 2008, and the team used data from 2014 due to the evolving nature of the survey. In the survey itself, one question was directly related to Sabbath observance. Fourteen other areas related to physical, mental, and spiritual health were measured also. The team took away five major results of interest: 1.) Sabbath-keeping did not have a significant effect on mental health and physical health when other factors such as amount of sleep, vacation-taking, etc. were included. 2.) Sabbath-keeping was strongly related to better spiritual health and overall quality of life. 3.) 74.9% of clergy kept the Sabbath at least once a month. 4.) Bivocational clergy were less likely to practice the Sabbath due to work commitments outside the church. 5.) Caucasian clergy were less likely than African American clergy to observe the Sabbath. Although not without its flaws, this study broke new ground in this field.11

A second study entitled *The Practice and Experience of the Sabbath among Seventh-day Adventist Pastors*, published in volume 62 of *Pastoral Psychology*, looked at Seventh-Day Adventist ministers. After demonstrating a need for addressing the lack of Sabbath observance by quoting several major mental health studies, Erik Carter conducted a phenomenological study of Seventh-day Adventist ministers in the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference. All participants understood the Sabbath to be a literal 24-hour period going from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. They worked to have personal and professional responsibilities completed by Friday evening and going to bed early to properly prepare for church responsibilities the next day. Saturday mornings were filled with church activities. Saturday afternoons were divided with some still engaging in church responsibilities and some resting at home. Saturday evenings were similarly spent with no uniform practices. Sabbath among all ministers was seen as primarily physical rest with getting as much sleep as possible, a time to enter into God’s presence, and a time to reconnect with family. Sabbath for these ministers was found to be a paradox of rest and stress, and it became apparent the ministers
had difficulty with boundaries. Carter ended the study by suggesting that taking cues from one’s family and vocational identity is helpful in drawing boundaries to observe a Sabbath. Additionally, the Sabbath must also be seen as setting a date with God as a day to look forward to, prepare for, and protect.

These two studies in tandem with scholars such as Heschel, Brueggemann, and Dawn lead to an unorthodox conclusion: proper Sabbath observance for clergy should take place outside the boundaries of a worship service and involve activities that bring both spiritual and physical refreshing for optimal health. Deuteronomy 6:5 says that people are multifaceted beings when they are told to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, and might, or spirit, mind, and body. When any of these three is out of alignment, then they are out of alignment as people. The Sabbath is a time to minister to all three areas. Heschel proposed, “...the Sabbath is not dedicated exclusively to spiritual goals. It is a day of the soul as well as of the body; comfort and pleasure are an integral part of the Sabbath observance. Man in his entirety, all his faculties must share its blessings.” (1951: 19) It is an opportunity to recognize both the here and now and the eternal. It is a chance to reject the systems of the world and embrace the systems of God. It is a redemption of the realm of time in which people live and a looking forward to the realm of eternity found in the presence of the Lord.

**Conclusion**

As the demands and pressures of life increase, they lead to a renewed evaluation of one’s time and health. Clergy are no different in this regard. An unspoken expectation can exist within the church for clergy and volunteer church staff to meet every need and fulfill every obligation possible. Ministers can feel the need to conquer the world of space at the expense of neglecting the world of time. In other words, to-do lists can begin to outweigh spiritual needs. Work was never meant to occupy someone’s thoughts every day. As seen in the creation story in Genesis 2, God worked through six days and rested on the seventh. He declared all his work good, and yet the day he rested was declared holy. The day of rest was consecrated and set apart as a special day unlike the others. This holy Sabbath day of rest is an opportunity for ministers to connect with God and form a closer bond with others. Ministers should follow this Biblical pattern and return to the consecrated day of rest for their own benefit, their
family’s benefit, and the benefit of their community. While little research has been done on how ministers observe the Sabbath, ministers can use the insights of Abraham Heschel’s *The Sabbath* along with works by other writers such as Walter Brueggemann and Marva Dawn to help form their own Sabbath observance. They could benefit by practicing a regular 24-hour period of rest and refreshment outside of the weekly worship service or services. This Sabbath should break their regular routines and focus on activities that provide spiritual, physical, and mental refreshing. Families and congregations both benefit from a minister who is intentional in ensuring Sabbath observation, and proper Sabbath observance will help ensure the vitality of loved ones and the church. Communities need healthy ministers in order to hear the Gospel and be discipled. The minister will find the shalom that Jesus Christ offers through observing the Sabbath.

**End notes**

1 Heschel experienced these terrors firsthand as he was arrested by the Gestapo in 1938 and had family murdered by the Nazis. He was deported to Poland and fled to London six weeks before the Germans invaded in 1939.

2 In some ways, prophetic thinking points towards the holiness of time as well. Heschel observes the preference of “The Day of the Lord” over “The House of the Lord” in the prophetic writings.

3 The Christian Bible recognizes the canonicity of the Hebrew Bible and renames it *Old Testament*. Additionally, Jesus and his early disciples were all ethnically and religiously Jewish.

4 However, it is an avenue that has seen its share of neglect, particularly from Christian clergy.

5 Although Brueggemann’s argument is similar to Heschel’s when dealing with the material world, Brueggemann says little about the realm of time and the consecration of people and moments. His work is primarily focused on socioeconomic matters. This view ignores the full message of the Kingdom of God which not only includes social and economic matters but also looks at spiritual issues.

6 Shalom is the Jewish concept of wholeness. While the Hebrew is typically translated as “peace,” the word encompasses body, mind, and spirit. When all of these areas are right with God and in alignment with each other, then shalom is experienced.
7 Ministers do not receive the chance to be an average church attendee unless they have taken a vacation day or entrusted the worship service to someone else for planning and execution on special occasions.

8 Exodus 16:23 and Mark 6:31 respectively.

9 In my own research, I have found little in the ways of Sabbath observance research. Two studies are presented here, but these are the only two studies I have found that survey ministers in regards to their own Sabbath observance.

10 The redemption of time is the process of seeing the world return to its state prior to the fall of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:1-24.

11 In the initial survey, the term “The Sabbath” was not defined. Using a survey in which an important variable is not defined is a critical mistake. It is important to know how ministers observe the Sabbath, not just if they do or do not. The Sabbath can be different things to different people, and what we call a Sabbath sometimes may not be a Sabbath in terms of how others describe it. The question was simply “How often do you observe a Sabbath?” with three possible answers being none, 1 to 2 weeks a month, or 3 to 4 weeks a month.

12 Future research in this area is needed in order to help denominational officials understand their clergy’s overall health. The research can also help officials formulate policies and protocols for active ministers in order to maintain good health.

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Speedling, Barbara Baker
PSALM 1A–B (1:1–2:12 as combined and a chiasm): What YHWH Knows about People’s Paths and Plans that will Perish

Abstract:
This article seeks to explore whether a division really exists between Psalm 1 and Psalm 2. The author argues that the presence of a chiasm which extends throughout the two psalms gives potential further evidence for the argument that the two psalms where once part of one continuous literary creation. The themes involve the laws of YHWH and the consequences of breaking these laws both for individuals and for nations.

Keywords: Psalm 1, Psalm 2, law, consequences, chiasm

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Often Psalm 1 or Psalms 1 and 2 are treated as a fitting editorial introduction to the OT Psalter.¹ Many see this as interesting in light of the frequent interpretation of Psalm 1 as sapiential and Psalm 2 as royal (even Messianic to some).² Naturally, such editorial and theological approaches leave behind the reality that each psalm was originally composed independently and likely with no knowledge of the other. We do not know when either was written or why, and we have no suggestive superscriptions.³ While it is an intriguing idea, in Psalter reception, for Psalms 1–2 to provide an ideal preface, this conclusion has only human warrant. Regardless, from a practical perspective, the wise man of Psalm 1 together with the conquering king of Psalm 2 form collectively a fitting entrance into the OT Book of Psalms, characterized mainly by poems of praise and lament.⁴

“Book” is also problematic, since it conveys the notion of a written work with chapters composed consecutively by someone with knowledge of the preceding texts. The various psalms in the Psalter mostly grew out of different (and mostly unknown) times and circumstances, and the current order (1–150, with five separate collections, each ordered by unknown reasons) is mysterious.⁵ Psalms 1–2 represent(s) a conscious creation of a seeming introduction by some unknown editor (or editors) for unknown reasons (objectively indicated by the presence of an inclusio using יָשָׁר יִשָּׂרָאֵל in 1:1a and 2:12c). In light of ancient and recent reflections on how these two psalms have common themes and were originally one psalm (Psalm 1A and 1B),⁶ I will try to demonstrate a chiastic structure, which in broad strokes is (cf. Table A below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Proclamation of favor</th>
<th>1:1a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Lawful Rules</td>
<td>1:1b–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Lawless Nature/Consequences</td>
<td>1:4–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Transitional Theme</td>
<td>1:6a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C’</td>
<td>Lawless Nations/Consequences</td>
<td>2:1–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B’</td>
<td>Lawful Rule</td>
<td>2:4–12b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A’</td>
<td>Proclamation of favor</td>
<td>2:12c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If such a structure was intended by the author, as divinely guided, it would be “inspired” and authoritative, unlike later (rabbinic or Christian) editorial activity.⁷
Proclamation of Favor (1:1a; 2:12c)

should not be translated “happy” since that word, as currently used in English, does not provide an accurate counterpart to what the Hebrew word meant when Psalm 1 was composed. Most English readers in the West will derive connotations from “happy” that will detract from understanding this text contextually. ESV uses “blessed” but that is a word whose current understanding is vague and debated, and whose current (especially popular) usage again is misleading (per its OT sense). Such a person in OT terms is “favored” by God or fortunate. Here the outcome is not psychological or spiritual, as seen in the verses that follow. This standing is a result of avoiding advice that is contrary to YHWH’s laws (cf. vv. 1b–2). The result is not feelings but productivity. They are compared to well-watered trees that produce the right fruit at the right time (v. 3). The person is favored by God with effectiveness. His emotions have nothing to do with it.

The text literally speaks of “the man” as . Egalitarian concerns tempt us to translate like the NRSV: “those who do not follow.” The masculine singular in Hebrew can be used as a collective, just as we speak in English of “the poor” as a group, although grammatically singular. But in terms of respecting the historical and cultural sense of this verse, we might expect a sage writing a psalm to have only his male disciples in mind. He may specifically have been thinking of young men tempted by their unrighteous peers. In 2:12b, the psalmist ends (and recaptures 1:1a) by proclaiming that “favored” is everyone taking refuge (participle) in him, him being the king mentioned previously in Psalm 2. In particular and specifically, the psalmist is addressing those kings/leaders who have been in rebellion against YHWH’s chosen or anointed king (2:1–3). What they will gain by submission to this king is, again, not something emotional or psychological, but is the favored or fortunate status of safety from his wrath (2:11–12b). To say that these texts are promoting “happiness” as we use that term today (as the outcome for the wise decisions encouraged in these psalms) is at odds with the setting of these psalms and the author’s (or authors’) contextual clues. Psalm 1A-B begins and ends with the proclamation that success and safety are favored conditions that result from following YHWH’s laws and the king who administers his laws.
B, B’ Lawfulness (1:1b–3; 2:4–12b)

Psalm 1:1b–3 mirrors 2:4–12b. In Psalm 1:1, a person is fortunate, or positioned favorably for success, who chooses to avoid the influence of lawless people.10 “Blessed is the man” to some is sexist, and it could be used that way, and does sound that way to a modern ear. Alternatively, however, if we want to hear a text in its original setting, and understand what the ancient speaker intended (as much as is possible), it stands to reason that such a sage would have had in mind the males whom he tutored. That they lived in an age that restricted and objectified women in ways we today find problematic, is a reality of this text’s context; and to translate it to more accurately reflect its setting and sense does not require an interpretation and application that understands the words to be prescriptive for all future situations. That the speaker was colored by his world culturally is a “given” for any text, but the reader can extract the intended ethical principle without drawing a universal and absolute law about women’s or men’s rights based on a culturally conditioned and idiomatic use of the gender of a Classical Hebrew noun. Rather than being concerned about advice from “sinners,”11 “his” enjoyment comes from YHWH’s rules, on which he reflects every day (1:2). The translation of נָבַל in 1:2b as “meditate” is problematic because English readers are tempted to read anachronistic current usage into the meaning.12 Also one wonders how this can be said of all law-abiding Jews at that time. Only the religious elite had access to any copies of Mosaic law, so the picture is inaccurate that the average reader gets of someone sitting down with a “Bible” and cup of coffee to “meditate” on these legal texts. And it should be obvious that if “day and night” is taken as a merism for “all the time” then no one could do that apart from perhaps a priest in training.13 More likely is that the idiom indicates “daily” or once in the morning and once in the evening. Yet if we think of the ancient Jews who were familiar with and dedicated to YHWH’s laws, the picture we get should be of Jews who regularly and daily reflect on their religious rules as they go about their business. (1:2). Such reflection leads to application that produces the right (righteous) responses to life’s challenges, which in turn leads to a productive (successful) existence, materially and physically.14 Picture a tree with its roots near a stream (1:3a). Such a tree is always nourished so is always fruitful (1:3b). Such a person will be productive (1:3c).15 Why did some editor decide to place this wise advice at the start of the Psalter? To know for sure, we will have to ask him,
but perhaps he thought of the Psalms as presenting an overall theme about the contrast between those who do right or wrong.

Psalm 2 (1B?) continues this theme by highlighting the defeat that awaits those who oppose YHWH’s rule through his king, who is to uphold his decrees. 2:6 clarifies that this king and son is (in the poet’s mind) a specific Israelite monarch (cf. comments below on vv. 7–9) since it presents YHWH as proclaiming “I have [just] installed my [chosen/anointed] king on the holy/distinct Mount Zion [in Jerusalem].”\(^{16}\) 2:4-12b and 1:1-3 both deal with right behavior. In the former, rebellious rulers are cautioned against unwise choices (2:10), specifically against fearlessly refusing to serve YHWH (2:11) by withholding allegiance to his “son” (i.e. his anointed or chosen ruler 2:12a). Otherwise they risk his wrath, easily stirred up, leading to war and their defeat (2:12b). YHWH had decreed this one as king over Israel, making him (in typical ANE thought) his “son” (2:7), who has the right to make requests of Father God, who will (as promised to the Hebrew patriarchs) give him possession over the nations (Gentiles; goat) throughout all the land (not “earth” as NIV in Canaan (2:8)).\(^{17}\) He will be victorious in battle: he will break them into pieces (2:9).\(^{18}\) This bi-colon should be marked as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
A & \text{you-will-break-them} & C \\
B & \text{with-a-rod-made-of iron} & \text{//}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
D & \text{like-pots-made-by} & E \\
E & \text{a-potter} & A'
\end{array}
\]

A possible alternative is:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
A & \text{you-will-break-them} & C \\
B & \text{with-a-rod-made-of iron} & \text{//}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
B' & \text{with-a-weapon-made-by} & C'
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
C' & \text{a-craftsman} & A'
\end{array}
\]

you-will-shatter-them.\(^{19}\)

**C, C’ Lawlessness (1:4–6, 2:1–3)**

Psalm 1:4–6 mirrors 2:1–3. Here the law breaker is contrasted with the previous law keeper (“righteous” in terms of doing what is right or lawful versus “wicked” in terms of doing what is wrong or unlawful; cf. n 6 above). In so-called Psalm 1, the “wicked” (lawbreakers) are not preoccupied with YHWH’s directives, so unlike stable and productive well-watered trees, they are like unanchored pieces of tree bark, easily blown by
the wind in any direction (1:4). Consequently, they are unable to stand their
ground when challenged (1:5). This is a curious verse. Exactly why and how
are these law breakers among an assembly of law keepers for judgment?20 If
we look at this in light of its possible parallel in Psalm 2 (vv. 1–3), then we
have those rebelling against YHWH’s rule (through his king in Jerusalem)
being addressed by YHWH as a wrathful and furious Judge. We see these
wicked rebels (cf. 1:4) taking counsel together towards rebellion (cf. the
wicked/lawless counsel that wise people reject in 1:1). Those coalitions of
individuals (1:1) or institutions (2:10) who reject YHWH’s rules (1:4) or rule
(2:1–3), are subject to prosecution by those in power and empowered by
allegiance to YHWH’s rules and established rulers (1:5; 2:1–3; cf. 2:4–6).21

D Transitional Climax (1:6; the fate of law-keepers/-breakers)
The climax or fulcrum of this chiasm comes in 1:6, where the fate
of those who do what is right or just is juxtaposed with those who do what
is wrong or unjust. Again, the righteous/wicked terminology is to be read
in light of its ancient wisdom genre, and not our current theology related
to imputed righteousness or sinners as unbelievers. In the social context
of this psalm (Ps 1), the audience is Israelites, all of whom belong to the
chosen nation and recognize YHWH, but (as today) some follow good and
others bad advice. 1:6 presents what traditionally was labeled antithetical
parallelism. The contrasting of the “righteous” with the “wicked” is a
regularly recurring theme in OT wisdom literature on both the larger book
and periscope level as well as with various bi-cola. The bi-colon of Psalm
1:6 is as follows schematically (literal English rendering of the MT):

A   B  C
Because--He-knows YHWH (the)-way-of

D   C'  D'
righteous-ones // But-the-way-of wicked-ones

E/A'? she/it-will-perish.

In the Hebrew text the metrics (not isolating maqqeph) involve
4:3 words and 10:8 syllables (A-B-C-D // C'-D'-E/A'). The value of the verb
ending the second line is questioned as either E or A' because it provides the
parallel action related to the wicked (in juxtaposition with the righteous in
the preceding line) but unlike the first line, the verb of the send line is about
what happens to “the way” whereas in the first the action is what YHWH does. At first blush this is a curious text. In what way does YHWH “know” the ways of the righteous? Why is a participle used? What are the “ways” of the righteous? What kind of syntax explains “ways of” here, in each line? How does the wicked “way” perish? Is “perish” the best rendering of this verb? What is the syntax of the yiqtol verb? Why does this verse begin with “because”?

If we apply the possibility of reverse parallelism to this bi-colon, we can perceive an uncommon perspective about what this verse is postulating:

A  B  C  D  
“For” --He-knows YHWH (the)-way-of righteous-ones

[E]  C’  D’  
(not-will-perish) // But -(the)-way-of wicked-ones

[A  B]  E  
[He-knows YHWH] will-perish/perishes.

Although the verb E in the second line is not negated, the antithetical nature of the parallelism would imply a negation in the first line. Traditional interpretation of this verse has wrestled with the nuance of “knowing” and how that is related to what YHWH does with the wicked in the future in the second line, requiring the addition of words not in the Hebrew text. This in itself is not incorrect (since translation often requires additional words in the receptor language to convey what was intended in the source text), it just exemplifies the interpretive/translational challenge. The NIV has, “For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.” The implication for the reader is that “knows” equals “watch over” (righteous people), and “perish” suggests God does not pay close attention to “wicked” people. Such a rendering raises theological questions. Part of the problem is the juxtaposition of righteous/wicked since Christian readers bring their theology and theological baggage about “all are sinners” and “none is righteous” to the table, and then for the sake of harmonization of scripture (and the improper commitment to cross references) have to make “righteous” mean “justified ones” or “those declared righteous,” and then the “wicked” are the unbelievers. The whole matter is much more straightforward if we read the text in its immediate
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literary and OT/ANE-wisdom contexts. Most likely all the players here are Hebrews and part of YHWH’s covenant community; and they are fallible humans.24

The מִיַּקַּשׁ “nations” of Psalm 2 do not have to be taken as we use “nation” today, but can just refer to other Hebrew and/or Canaanite tribes. The parallel term for מִיַּקַּשׁ in 2:1a is “peoples” (נְעֵרָכֹת) in 2:1b.25 “Nation” plants an idea in the mind of modern readers that may be foreign to what the author intended. The “kings of the מִיַּקַּשׁ” in 2:2 is usually rendered “kings of the earth” but מִיַּקַּשׁ is basically and usually “land,” and מִיַּקַּשׁ “king” in the OT setting is not always a king as we use the term. In Joshua and Judges and before Hebrew monarchy the term is used for leaders of towns or tribes or territories, so does not have to be more than a “leader” in many cases (so the rendering “king” can be misleading). The parallel term in 2:2b is רָפָיתֵים “rulers.” Translators often fail to consider enough the impact of what idea is planted in a reader’s mind when a certain gloss is chosen. The original proposition could have been that wise (law abiding) and unwise (law breaking) Hebrews existed and the latter needed to be reminded that the consequence of their behavior is a fruitless life and likely an early death (Ps 1); and that rebel rulers against YHWH’s anointed king in Jerusalem risk his anger and their annihilation (Ps 2). The occasion of Psalm 2 could be the time when Absalom revolted or when David had to fight other enemy tribes within or without Israel.26 During such times many “foolish” people would have listened to and been persuaded by bad advice. In OT wisdom, a common theme and contrast is between the wise and the foolish, where the “fool” is not mentally but morally deficient. When people did what was right they were wise and righteous, and when they did wrong they were foolish and wicked. The “perishing” of Psalm 1:6b has to be understood in light of the previous warnings in verses 4–5, and as the opposite of how law keepers (right living people; “righteous”) are blessed in verses 1–3. In the OT, spirituality is a relationship with God but related to (Mosaic) rules; and in the NT, Christianity is a relationship (as many underline frequently) but not apart from obedience to Christ.

Summary/Conclusion

The fulcrum, center-point, or climax of a chiastic Psalm 1A–B (= traditional Psalms 1–2) is Psalm 1:6. It provides a hinge between the two sections of a poem about (1) how people who rebel against YHWH’s rules are subject to godly judgment and “perishing” (1:6 יָפֹשׁ) and (2) how
coalitions of people who rebel against YHWH’s rule are doomed to God’s judgment and “perishing” (2:12 ;ןָדַע). An overall contrast is made between those who either own or oppose YHWH’s governance and guidance (the rule of divine law). The rebels are not atheists or unbelievers or faithless or non-religious types. First (Psalm 1A = 1), individually, they are Israelites that belong to YHWH’s covenant but choose to behave foolishly (immorally or unethically) when tempted by peer pressure, although the advice is contrary to godly rules or regulations and may be risky or ruinous. (1:1b–c). They are not pleased or preoccupied with YHWH’s precepts (as is the one who does what is right or just; 1:2, 1:5b–6a). They are, therefore, unstable and subject to dismissal from participation in gatherings of law keepers for official business (1:4–5). YHWH “knows” (makes known?) that right behavior is productive, but wrong behavior is unproductive (1:6; cp. vv. 3, 4–5). Second (Psalm 1B = 2), collectively, they are tribal or territorial groups within Israel that may or may not be connected to YHWH’s covenant but choose to rebel against YHWH’s rule through his appointed/anointed Israelite/Hebrew ruler/king, (2:1–3, 6–9) which “nation” is exercising sovereignty over Canaan in line with its identity as YHWH’s legitimate light and landlord. The heavenly King views such insolence as laughable and worthy of rage, so reminds these opponents that he installed Zion’s king and warns them to fear and serve YHWH only, or he will dispense his anger and military judgment through his son and king (2:6, 10–12b). Those who consent to the K/king’s commands and covenant, and seek his cover, will be favored/“blessed” (1:1a; 2:12c). A chiastic unity of Psalms 1–2 is observable with the structure A-B-C-D-C’-B’-A’ (1:1a)-(1:1b–3)-(1:4–5)-(1:6)-(2:1–6)-(2:7–12b)-(2:12c). Those who “mock [םָזֶר]” (l-y-tz) God’s guidance (1:1c) will be “mocked [םָזֶר]” (l-g) by God (2:4b). The climax (1:6) pivots on those who are careful or careless about obedience to divine tôrah/law or kingship, which two types of people are featured in both psalms as foolish and futile. Neither psalm has a superscription (as does Psalm 3, perhaps the initial psalm of the body of the Psalter proper, in the current canonical arrangement); so as a supposed introduction to the Psalms, its parallel bookend and conclusion (Psalms 145–150), emphasize the praiseworthiness of YHWH (the Law Giver). A good God gives good governance. Per Westermann, the OT Psalter then revolves around praise and lament because the latter is often created by lawlessness while the former results when the painful consequences and ruin from rebellion are forgiven or fixed, which encourages renewed loyalty to God and godly guidelines.
However interpreted, YHWH “keeps knowing [ʔʲ४ʒʣˣʩ]” human “ways” (beliefs and behaviors; 1:6). Those who accept what is right and YHWH’s rule (1:2 // 2:7, 10) will experience God’s favor/“blessing” (fruitfulness; 1:1a, 1:3 // 2:8–9, 12c), but those who reject what is right and the divine K/king’s rule (1:4 // 2:1–3) will experience God’s discipline (futility; 1:5 // 2:4–6, 11–12b). The data presented so far significantly increase the likelihood that so-called Psalms 1 and 2 were composed by the same poet/psalmist/author, who remains anonymous, and that they may have been originally combined and chiastic.

End notes


2 Kidner thought it likely Psalm 1 was composed as an introduction but conceded at least it stands as a “doorkeeper, confronting those who would be the ‘congregation of the righteous’ (5)”; cf. Derek Kidner, Psalms 1–72, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, ed. D. J. Wiseman (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 47.

Some claim 60% of this psalm is used directly or indirectly in the NT (cf. Witness Lee, “Christ and the Church Revealed and Typed in the Psalms” (https://www.ministrysamples.org/excerpts/NEW-TESTAMENT-QUOTATIONS-OF-PSALM.HTML). Living Stream Ministry. Accessed 07 Aug 2019. While a messianic application is found in the NT (cf. Acts 2:36; 4:25–28; 13:33; Heb 1:5) an exegetical approach would find no conscious prediction about Jesus as Messiah in this psalm. None of the OT passages claimed as “Messianic” employs the Hebrew word “anointed one” (ʧʩˇʮ). The teachings about a coming Messiah as used by the apostles in the NT arose in Judaism during the 2nd Temple period. Jesus and his followers built on this and found they could connect Jesus typologically and spiritually to many OT passages. It did not matter that the OT text did not intentionally speak about the one we call Jesus the Christ since such a spiritual use of the OT was current and accepted in Judaism of the first century. This hermeneutic as employed by the first Christians was consistent with how the Jews handled their scripture. Cf. Richard N. Longenecker, Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1999). Ironically, the only OT use of “anointed” (װָשָׁה) that has a chance of
being applied directly and prophetically to Jesus is Psalm 2 (but as hinted at already, the meaning of the anointed son and king contextually and historically and exegetically has to be an ancient Jewish king, although he can be seen to typify Jesus in retrospect but not interpreted as Jesus in prospect. The text is framed in past-tense language, and no one in the original audience would have come away thinking a future “messiah” like Jesus was being portrayed. After all, “messiah” is not a translation but a transliteration of Hebrew māši’āh (the meaning being “anointed”; as was done with all OT kings).

3 Psalm 2, however, is mentioned in Acts 4:25 and ascribed to David; and Acts 13:33 calls it the second psalm, but an alternative Greek text (D) calls it the first psalm (cf. a Latin ms. known to Bede and cf. Origen, according to whom the Jews often combined 1 and 2; cf. The Expositor’s Greek Testament, ed. Nicoll [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976 rpt.], II:296). This is often viewed as evidence that the first two psalms were originally connected and so-called “Psalm 2” (having no superscription) was a continuation of Psalm 1. Cf. Kidner, Psalms 1–72, 49–50. That people in prayer, rejoicing over the release of Peter and John from prison, are cited as expressing their understanding that David wrote Psalm 2 (Acts 4:25) is not actually a proof that David was the author. Such a text is accurate in that it factually reports what these people believed, which reflects their traditions of the time. This is not an apostolic pronouncement but what believers said in prayer. It does not have to be read as a doctrine or prescription (which is not the function of every biblical text, especially in isolation from the larger context). This verse describes what was said. Those saying it reveal what they truly believed, but that is not the same as an authoritative declaration, of which not every verse is capable.


Books I–V are sometimes popularly and speculatively related, respectively, to the five books of Moses (the Pentateuch): I (Pss 1–41; Genesis); II (42–72; Exodus); III (73–89; Leviticus); IV (90–106; Numbers); and V (107–150; Deuteronomy). Psalm 72 ends (v. 20) with an editorial insertion: “Thus concludes the prayers of David, son of Jesse.” Others see a respective connection to the feasts Passover, Pentecost, Trumpets, Tabernacles, Purim; or the Megilloth scroll: Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther. https://www.academia.edu/30193711/ THE_STRUCTURE_OF_THE_FIVE_BOOKS_OF_PSALEMS. Accessed 12 Aug 2019.


As early as Lowth (1778) inversion of thought in OT poetry was observed (https://www.jstor.org/ stable/529193?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents; Nils W. Lund, Chiasmus in the Psalms, 281, citing Bishop Robert Lowth, Isaiah: A New Translation [London, 1778], xiv). Psalms 1 and 2


11 A Christian familiar with NT theology might find this wording strange, seemingly at odds with the NT. If everyone is a “sinner” (Rom 3:23; 1 John 1:10), then why does the psalm juxtapose this “man/human” and those who are wicked, sinful, and mocking? (Ps 1 :1). If none is righteous (Rom 3:10; cf. Ps 14:1–3; 53:1–3), why was Noah saved from the Flood specifically due to his “righteousness”? (Gen 6:9, 22). In the OT there is the perspective of a distinction between those who (are not perfect) yet are blameless and who earnestly seek the obey God’s laws and please Him, as opposed to “sinners” who care little or nothing about strict adherence to religious or even many ethical regulations, and who also follow other gods. Still in the OT good behavior earns God’s favor, which in NT terms could be seen as in. conflict with forgiveness based on grace through faith and not for works or good deeds, so no one can boast in a self-righteous manner. The difference, however, is that the OT is focused on punishments and rewards in earthly life resulting from decisions made on earth, while many NT passages focus on eternal life and how it cannot be merited by human effort. Kirkpatrick (*The Book of Psalms*, 2) speaks about the intensive form of the word indicating habitual action but the word in the MT (BHS) is a noun (רָאוּשָׁן), which also like a piel verbal form doubles the middle letter of the root, so he must have mistaken it as a verb/participle. If the MT vocalization is ignored this could be postulated as original, but “the wicked ones” and “the mockers” are also nouns. The habitual idea is, however, relevant because these “sinners” are juxtaposed to those “righteous ones” who follow God’s laws but not perfectly or as sinless people.


13 While the English idiom “light and dark” (or “day and night”) could be used for “good and bad [times],” Classical Hebrew or related Semitic manuscripts (in whole or part; biblical or extra-biblical; or inscriptions dating to OT times) have no evidence of this usage. Dahood translates נָשָׁה in 1:2 as “recites,” cf. Dahood, *Psalms 1: 1–50*, 1, 3. Krause supports the meaning “all the time” or “constantly”; cf. Kraus, *Psalms 1–59*, 117.

14 This is not the guarantee of health and wealth but the typical OT wisdom perspective that does not make promises but reminds the audience about reliable principles. The exception proves the rule. That a lawbreaker “gets away with murder” at times would not cause a wise person to conclude that “crime pays.” Normally crime is punished and the odds of not getting caught are so low that only a fool or completely desperate person chooses to be criminal. Wise (lawful) behavior greatly enhances the chances of a more prosperous and productive and prolonged life. While great wealth
and many years are not guaranteed, the wise people still choose to live in a manner that honors God's laws and increases their odds of success.


16 The use of upper-case letters on words like “King” in this psalm is a theological and eisegetical/canonical but not exegetical/historical/cultural/contextual interpretation or translation. It puts ideas in the author's mind that could not be there (or at least he does not express them clearly). Hebrew does not use upper-case letters so in versions these features do not follow the original text. As mentioned already, Psalm 2 may well indeed legitimately be framed as a retrospective foreshadowing of God’s ultimate King and Son on an applicational interpretive level, but to translate words in this psalm as “Son” and “King” and “Anointed” suggests a theology being communicated that the audience would not have noticed, and if it did, would not have understood. Whatever was being communicated was for the mental world of these ancient Hebrews. Any interpretation that is not objectively supported by the context and language being used (i.e. that is between the lines or “hidden” or what God knows that the author doesn’t) is subjective and unverifiable and so is more commentary than translation or exegesis. It cannot, then, be authoritative if unauthenticated. Attempts at NT cross-reference “proofs” are anachronistic and produce canonical idea unknown to those living when this psalm was composed. The NT is clear that the OT is useful and to be used by Christians, but we have to let these texts speak for themselves in their own contexts and not misuse and abuse them for apologetical purposes. “Son” here suggests a Trinitarian ideology foreign to the OT as does the frequent use of “Spirit” in English OT versions. A translation should not be a commentary, although explanatory footnotes are welcome. The day the first OT and NT were glued together did not stop these texts’ statements and books from having literary, linguistic, and life settings that control what a given writer or speaker meant by how ancient words were used to speak to an ancient audience. We have to accept these texts as they are and bridge these gaps in culture and communication to best determine what they say to us today.

17 NIV speaks of the “Son” twice (vv. 7, 12). But some other versions only in verse 7. The usual word for “son” (בֶּן) is in the former, but in the latter verse the term בָּשַׁם is used, and the entire verse has textual issues. Some propose that the verse begins after “with fear” in verse 11. An alternate Hebrew manuscript adds “with joy” (בָּשַׁם) at that point. Instead of “rejoice with trembling” at the end of verse 11 (NIV), JPS has “tremble with fright” (cf. NRSV; but all admit the Hebrew here and in v. 12 is uncertain). NETS (LXX rendering in English) has: “rejoice in him with trembling.” Seize upon instruction, lest the Lord be angry.” Corrupted transmission in the copying process seems likely. The following “kiss” in verse 12 is likely a dittography from the same letters in “with trembling” (בָּשַׁם) in verse 11. The following “rejoice” of verse 11 may have originally been בָּשַׁם; hence NRSV has “...kiss his feet...” which
fits the context ordering them to “serve YHWH with fear!” (v. 11a). See text critical notes in BHS for verses 11–12.

18 The versions are misleading when they parallel “rule” and “dash to pieces” (cf. NIV e.g.). The word rendered “you will rule” is Hebrew יָדָיוָהּ from the root יָדָא but this is a homographic root. Which יָדָא did the poet intend? The most obvious answer is one that best parallels or is restated by the verb in the following line of the bi-colon: יָדָא “shatter.” Some choose “rule” following the Greek OT (LXX; the Syriac version has the equivalent), which has ποιμαντής “you will shepherd” (since these translators thought the Hebrew root word was יָדָא). Latin Vulgate also follows LXX with pasces. But the context and poetic parallelism support “break” (recognized by NASB and ESV). The Luther Bible (1912 version) uses zerschlagen “smash” (cf. JPS).

19 This is then a parallelism that restates the verbal idea of “smashing” but also the second line of the bi-colon moves from stating the nature of the weapon used (iron) to the outcome of this king’s attack (reduced to rubble). The two construct genitives (rod of; pots of) are syntactically material (made of) and then agency (made by) or possession (owned by). "scepter" in NIV) can also be used for “rod” or “tribe” and יתָה ("pieces of" in NIV) can be used for “vessels” or “weapons” (all these choices of course dependent on context). The יָדָא is a “potter” typically but it can refer to a “thrower, caster” (Zech 11:13; cf. HALOT s.v. יָדָא). To use Kugel’s minimalist parallelism: (A) This king will use strong means (then B) to bring about these rebels’ crushing defeat (pictured as smashed pots in a pottery store). Cf. James Kugel, The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, reprint ed.); but more nuance is needed in practice. Lowth’s pioneering approach that found three general categories for bi-cola in the OT (synonymous; antithetical; synthetic) is an oversimplification (but then Kugel is more simplified or reductionistic; cf. Robert Lowth, Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews (https://archive.org/details/lecturesonsacred00lowthpage/n6). While “synonymous” is rejected in current scholarship, the fact of numerous parallel lines in OT poetry that are static (where line B really offers little or no change) needs more attention and analysis. Restatement does appear to be a valid descriptor in some if not many cases. If the “potter” can be viewed as a “manufacturer” then we may have a restatement with 2:9, “you will break them with an iron rod // you will shatter them as (with) a crafted weapon.” Is it possible the preposition before “utensil/weapon” (the ב) was originally a ו (as the one before “rod”)? The Hebrew letters ב and ו are easily confused.

20 Kraus suggests that the Hebrew word for “the wicked” (the יָדָא) in 1:5 may have legal and cultic connotations. For the latter, in relation to YHWH’s תּוֹרָה “law,” the “wicked” person is one who has already been found guilty of transgression the law and is, thereby, banned from worship in the holy place. Cf. Kraus, Psalms 1–59, 119. He also refers to but rejects the application here of Köhler’s comment that the accused person would kneel or lie on the ground while awaiting the verdict; Kraus, Psalms 1–59, 119, citing Köhler, Hebrew Man (1956), 155.

22 Cf. David Noel Freedman, “What the Ass and the Ox Know—But the Scholars Don’t.” Bible Review (February 1985) 42–43. Freedman demonstrates how Isaiah 1:3a is understood best by observing that the word “manger” in 3aii has to be read back into the previous parallel line so that the ox and the ass “know” (i.e. remember) the same thing, i.e. the master’s (manger) in 3ai and the (master’s) trough in 3aii. Not only can the first line of a parallelism provide a word understood as repeated in the second line, the reverse also happens (i.e. the second line contains a thought understood in the first line; hence the phenomenon of “reverse parallelism” in Hebrew poetry; significant for exegesis). Also note in light of the surrounding discussion in the present paper that “know” in Isaiah 1:3 is the same Hebrew word as in Psalm 1. And only means intellectual knowledge or awareness, although of course in the former this is knowledge possessed by animals. The form in Isaiah is a qatal, completed or past action, so literally “he knew” (understood as repeated in the second line), but is regularly translated “knows” in context (as the participle in Psalm 1:6a and 37:18a, where YHWH knows the days of the blameless. And how is this intimate since He knows about events?). The participle in Hebrew often conveys the present tense. The verb in 1:6b is a yiqtol (future tense often but also present). So Psalm 1:6 could be saying that YHWH knows the effects of the actions of people doing right remain while those of people doing wrong perish. It is interesting that the vowel points for the participle and for the yiqtol are the same (since the latter is irregular, beginning with a guttural letter). But perhaps the original text had a participle or yiqtol for both (although the original text was only consonants, which would suggest the initial pronoun yod on “perish” was added, and the participle or qatal forms would have been original).

23 F. Delitzsch made reference to Psalm 37:18, where the same participle for “know” is used. Cf. F. Delitzsch, Psalms, Three vols. in one, Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes, C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973, reprint), 87. He claims this is intimate knowledge (nosse con affectu et effectu), but offer no real proof other than this cross reference. All the Jewish Soncino commentary has to say is that the knowing (“regardeth”) has to do with causing the righteous to prosper. They and the wicked get what is coming to them, reward or retribution, respectively. Cf. A. Cohen, The Psalms, Soncino Books of the Bible (New York: The Soncino Press, 1945), 2. This is Rabbinic not contextual exegesis. Anderson also stresses relational knowledge but only for the righteous, since His knowledge of the wicked would be only intellectual. This sounds too much like the influence of modern preaching than the ANE context and that these people are most likely all Hebrews/Israelites (people of the covenant, who can all make good and bad choices). Besides “watch over” he points out others who use the translation “preserveth” and even “loves. Cf. A. A. Anderson, Psalms 1–72, The New Century Bible Commentary, ed. Clements and Black (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 63. Kraus offers that “know” mean taking care of someone with affectionate concern, and refers
to Buber’s explanation that it has to do not with contemplation but contact. Cf. Kraus, *Psalms 1–59*, 120.

24 Gillingham takes verses 5 and 6 together as providing a double dose on the fate of the “wicked” in contrast with the “righteous.” Remarkably even a scholar of her caliber still speaks of “synonymous” parallelism in 1:5 and “antithetical” in verse 6 (notwithstanding Kugel’s now well-received dismissal of Lowth’s categories; which do need revision but Kugel’s one category for all parallelism [A, what’s more B] can be criticized as too reductionistic or minimalist; cf. Kugel, *The Idea*, n. 15 above. One is hard pressed to demonstrate how numerous OT bi-cola actually have real added value and advancement in the second line. Those who loathe Lowth’s three categories may be going too far). For Gillingham 1:5 indicates the bad guys will be judged and condemned by the good guys. 1:6 contrasts how God knows (i.e. cherishes) those who do right but will make those who do wrong perish. In reception history much focus is given to these two verses. Cf. Gillingham, “An Introduction to Reception History,” n.p. (see n. 7 above).


26 Even the Evangelical *Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (NIV) accepts that “Anointed One” refers to “any anointed king who was seated on the throne of David” (Accordance abridged 2 vol. version 1.5, *EBC*, ed. Barker [Zondervan, 1994], ¶ 10730.

27 Bradley’s review of Gillingham (cf. n. 6 above) makes the important statements that reception history of these two psalms enable us to understand better (1) why a text is read affects how it is read; (2) how the reader’s context influences the possible number of readings; and (3) the literal sense. Cf. Bradley, “The Value of Reception History for Theological Interpretation,” 43–44.https://search.proquest.com/religion/docview/1750209965/fulltextPDF/13860D0874B849EEPQ/1?accountid=31623.Accessed 14. Aug 2019.
Ryan Kristopher Giffin

‘Launched Upon Its God-Ordained Career’: The Founding of the Holiness Association of Texas

Abstract:

The Holiness Association of Texas was one of several local, regional, and state holiness associations established during the Holiness Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Active from 1900 to 1910, the Holiness Association of Texas should rank among the most historically important of these para-church associations. Its work was significant and its membership was noteworthy. This article provides a historical account of the association’s founding. It offers a more extensive treatment than has yet been produced and corrects factual errors from previous accounts. Furthermore, unlike previous accounts, it engages with the original minutes of the association’s meetings.

Keywords: Holiness Movement, Holiness associations, Holiness Association of Texas, Nazarene history, revivalism

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The Holiness Association of Texas was a voluntary, interdenominational group of Protestant Christians active in the Lonestar State from 1900 to 1910. Local, regional, and state holiness associations such as this one were common in the United States of America during the Holiness Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As individuals participated in worship services, revivalistic camp meetings, and other aspects of religious life associated with this movement, many of these “holiness people” felt less comfortable within established churches. Others among them claimed to be recipients of open hostility and persecution from leaders and members of preexisting churches. Still others simply yearned to worship and experience community with like-minded believers. Holiness associations were intended to meet the needs generated by these dynamics without going so far as to create a new denomination, or until such time as a new holiness denomination could be established.

Looking back, the Holiness Association of Texas should rank among the most historically important of these para-church associations. In its decade of existence, it engaged not only in the typical association work of receiving members, licensing ministers, and providing oversight of local holiness bands, but it also founded a university, established a publishing house, supported an orphanage, and sustained a home for unwed mothers. Its members included several influential figures in what would emerge as the Church of the Nazarene, a global denomination of now over 2.5 million members with over 22,000 local churches and 700 missionaries serving in 80 world nations (Board of General Superintendents 2017: 5). Noteworthy members of the Texas group included Reuben “Bud” Robinson (a nationally-known itinerant evangelist), C. B. Jernigan (the first Nazarene district superintendent over churches in Oklahoma and Kansas), A. K. Bracken (president of what is now Southern Nazarene University), and future Nazarene General Superintendents Roy T. Williams and J. B. Chapman. These leaders were in the sunrise of their formation as ministers at the time of their participation in the Holiness Association of Texas. No doubt their involvement with this group during these impressionable years had a profound impact on their futures in positions of prominence.

Others have provided general accounts of the founding of this group (DeJernett 1911a: 6-7; 1911b: 6-7; Jernigan 1919: 97-108; Rogers 1944: 28-30; McConnell 1946: 41-42; Smith 1962: 161-166; Jones 2005: 248-249; White 2006: 36-37; Cunningham et al. 2009: 125-30; Giffin 2020: 41-43). However, none of those accounts approaches the length,
detail, or level of interaction with primary sources necessary fully to chronicle this epochal moment in the association’s history. Additionally, while these general accounts are basically reliable, some contain factual mistakes related to dates, locations, decisions, and persons involved. My primary purposes for this article, therefore, are twofold. First and foremost, I seek to provide a more extensive treatment of the founding of the Holiness Association of Texas than has yet been produced. Second, I intend to correct the factual errors I have noticed in previous accounts. A key contribution to the fulfillment of both purposes will be a direct engagement with photocopies of the original minutes of the meetings of the association. To the best of my knowledge, no previous account has utilized this valuable source.²

The Merging of Three Regional Groups to Form the Holiness Association of Texas

Reminiscing several years after the events took place, Dennis Rogers, the inaugural president of the Holiness Association of Texas, relayed a simple summary of the association’s founding:

The facts were that we had three small groups of people, working independently in adjoining territory. Rev. R. L. Averill had held a great meeting at Sunset on the west, where Brother C. A. McConnell lived. We had our little church adjoining them. Brother Jernigan was on the east with a few folks. So we decided to bring the three groups together and make one body of them (Rogers 1944: 29).

Although Rogers’s summary represents an oversimplification of a series of events that would take more than two years to play out, it is nevertheless accurate in its essentials. The Holiness Association of Texas consisted largely of a merging of “three small groups of people”: the Holiness Church Association of Texas (Rogers’s organization), the Northwest Texas Holiness Association (the group Rogers associated with Averill and McConnell), and the holiness people of Greenville, Texas (the group Rogers associated with Jernigan). As Rogers indicated, the basic purpose of merging these three entities was “to bring the three groups together and make one body of them.”

The oldest of the groups was the Holiness Church Association of Texas. This association represented the independent holiness churches known simply as the Holiness Church. The Holiness Church originated
in California in 1883 and was “one of the earliest come-outer groups to form within the Holiness Movement” (Cunningham et al. 2009: 123). Its work was established in Texas in 1886 by Dennis Rogers and his cousin, George M. Teel, with Rogers as “the acknowledged leader of the church” (Jernigan 1919: 92; on the establishment of the group in Texas by Rogers and Teel in 1886 see Cunningham et al. 2009: 124). In Texas, the Holiness Church Association was composed of about a dozen independent Holiness Church congregations. It hosted a camp meeting at Throckmorton and published a periodical, *True Holiness*. Of the three bodies that formed the Holiness Association of Texas, the Holiness Church Association of Texas appears to have been the most religiously conservative. They favored the autonomous government of each local church and opposed the use of musical instruments and the public collection of financial offerings in worship services.³

The second group, the Northwest Texas Holiness Association, came into existence on August 9, 1899, through the leadership of John T. Stanfield. Stanfield was a Cumberland Presbyterian minister who testified to the religious experience of entire sanctification in response to the preaching of R. L. Averill at the “great meeting at Sunset on the west” mentioned by Rogers.⁴ Stanfield began preaching the doctrine of entire sanctification and, as a consequence, was immediately suspended from his church. After his suspension, he continued to minister in and around Sunset. He organized his converts into nine holiness bands, served them as a circuit pastor, and established a campground in Sunset. The first camp meeting there took place in August of 1899, and on the ninth day of the month, Stanfield and thirty-five other people organized thirteen holiness bands into the Northwest Texas Holiness Association. C. A. McConnell, editor of both the local newspaper at Sunset (the *Sunset Signal*) and the official paper of this association (the *Texas Holiness Banner*), was a key layperson in this organization (on the Northwest Texas Holiness Association see Jernigan 1919: 94-96; Smith 1962: 163-164; Jones 2005: 252-253).

The third group was the one Rogers referred to when he mentioned “Brother Jernigan … on the east with a few folks”: the holiness people of Greenville, Texas. C. B. Jernigan, an itinerant evangelist, along with many more than “a few [holiness] folks,” had made their home in an area just two miles north of Greenville known as Peniel. This community, in fact, “became a thriving center for Holiness leaders” (Cunningham et al. 2009: 128) including R. L. Averill, A. K. Bracken, Bud Robinson, Roy T. Williams,
and E. C. DeJernett. Peniel was home to Texas Holiness University, an institution which boasted an enrollment of nearly 350 students in 1906 and “became noteworthy among Holiness people throughout the country” (Cunningham et al. 2009: 128-129). The holiness people of Peniel also supported a local orphanage, hosted the well-attended annual Greenville Holiness Camp meeting, and provided a publishing base for the Texas Holiness Advocate (later the Pentecostal Advocate) paper (On the holiness people of Greenville, see Smith 1962: 164-166; White 2006: 51-73; Cunningham et al. 2009: 128-130).

Members of all three groups received a call prepared by DeJernett and Jernigan to all the holiness people of Texas to assemble for a convention in Terrell on September 7-8, 1898 (Jernigan 1919: 97-98). The convention was to take place in conjunction with a camp meeting led by two of the most prominent holiness preachers of the day, Henry Clay Morrison and Bud Robinson. The purpose of the call, according to Jernigan, was “to provide a home for homeless holiness people of the South; or at least to organize them into an association for mutual protection, for the spread of scriptural holiness” (Jernigan 1919: 98).

**A General Convention of All Holiness People: The Texas Holiness Convention in Terrell, September 7-8, 1898**

Although Jernigan mentioned “the spread of scriptural holiness” as one of the purposes for the Texas Holiness Convention at Terrell, his firsthand account inclines one to believe that it was motivated more directly by the opposition he and other holiness people felt from other established groups. Jernigan indicated that “outspoken opposition” to the preaching of holiness as a second blessing existed “among all churches” (Jernigan 1919: 97). While one senses a measure of hyperbole in that last statement, Jernigan did provide evidence for such opposition. He highlighted the involuntary expulsions and voluntary withdrawals of various holiness preachers and laypersons from the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, along with the “turning out” of “hundreds” of ministers and laypersons from Baptist churches (1919: 97; Jernigan specifically mentioned the expulsions of Henry Clay Morrison, Bud Robinson, E. C. DeJernett, A. W. Rogers, and John T. Stanfield, and the voluntary withdrawals of C. M. Keith, J. W. Lively, Julian Woodson, and Ben Hines). Jernigan also spotlighted opposition to holiness camp
meetings, along with opposition from a Methodist Episcopal Church South bishop who “stated on the floor that they would stamp the ‘second blessing heresy’ out of their church if it took five years” (1919: 97). The portrait Jernigan painted is one of high-running tensions that had finally reached their boiling point. Agitation with the current state of affairs and an urgency to take decisive action filled the air as the holiness people marched toward Terrell. They were determined to belong to a church in which their message and experience of holiness was welcome, even if it meant creating their own.

Leaders from at least three already-established ecclesiastical groups represented themselves at the convention at Terrell: The Holiness Church (Rogers’s group), the Free Methodist Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church (not to be confused with the Methodist Episcopal Church South). Each of these groups held hopes that the holiness people would unite with them. It is not clear, however, if any portion of the convention was taken up with formal petitions from their representatives. For various reasons, the holiness people refused officially to tie themselves exclusively to any one of them (see the discussion in Jernigan 1919: 99-100).

In the fourth of a series of articles written by E. C. DeJernett in 1911 for the Pentecostal Advocate paper on the history of organized holiness in Texas, DeJernett recalled that “some of the questions which were up for consideration” at the Terrell convention were these:

1. “What are our people to do for a church home who have been turned out of the various churches for professing holiness, or who have withdrawn from, or who no longer find agreeable fellowship in the various churches to which they have belonged or of which they are now members?”

2. “What are we to do with the new converts who have been brought to pardon by the revival meetings held by our evangelists?”

3. “What shall be done to give official recognition and appointment to those of our people who feel called to preach the gospel?”

After what DeJernett referred to as “several days of deliberation,” the outcome of the discussion amounted to three general recommendations. The first pertained to persons who were already members of an established church. For these, it was recommended that they keep their membership in that church and continue to support it. They should continue to profess holiness at their home church even if it resulted in opposition, “enduring patiently the slights or open persecutions of their fellow members” (DeJernett 1911b:6; cf. Jernigan 1919:99).

A second recommendation applied to those who, for whatever reason, currently held no church membership. These were admonished to seek membership in whichever established church best suited them and then (presumably) to do what those who were already members of an established church were recommended to do: support that church and receive whatever opposition might come their way.

The third recommendation probably felt more substantive to the attendees than the previous two. This one called for the establishment, not of a new church, but of a state holiness union. This state organization, it was proposed, could serve as a parent organization for smaller county and local holiness unions or bands that could provide fellowship and sponsor evangelistic services and conferences. Rogers’s account suggests that this recommendation included organizing holiness bands and using John Wesley’s sermon on “Christian Perfection” as their statement of doctrine (1944: 29). Anyone who wished to join the proposed state holiness union would be required to demonstrate proof of membership in a local church or provide a “reasonable excuse” for not uniting with one (DeJernett 1911b: 7; cf. also Gassaway’s contemporary account [1898: 9]; Jernigan 1919: 100-101).7

However well-intended these recommendations were, they did not stick. The holiness people were no longer willing to tolerate opposition in existing churches. DeJernett indicated that the only churches in Texas which were friendly toward them were the three with representatives at the meeting. He reported that only a few of the unchurched holiness people united with these. The vast majority refused to do so for several reasons, including disputes over the use of instrumental music in worship services, appropriate dress, and staunch sectarianism (see DeJernett 1911b: 6; Jernigan 1919: 99-101; Smith 1962: 162). As for the recommended state holiness union, such a union was indeed organized in 1899 and a few local unions may have been established under its auspices.8 However,
this organization gained no real traction and did not even hold a second annual meeting. In their respective accounts, both Jernigan and Rogers labelled the organization “a failure,” and the “Historical” sections of the Year Book published by the Holiness Association of Texas for years 1903-1904 and 1904-1905 indicate that “the convention was soon forgotten” (Jernigan 1919: 101; Rogers 1944: 29; Holiness Association of Texas 1903: 3; 1904: 5). Jernigan placed the blame for this squarely on the requirement of membership in an existing church. He also reported that “there was a clamor for another convention to provide a home for the homeless holiness people” (1919: 101). The clamor was heard. Just one year after the Texas Holiness Convention at Terrell, another gathering was scheduled to take place in Greenville.

Clearing Away the Underbrush: The Convention in Greenville, November 23-24, 1899

As they did for the Terrell convention, DeJernett and Jernigan put out a call for all the holiness people of Texas to assemble in Greenville on Thursday and Friday, November 23-24, 1899. The Thursday sessions took place at a mission hall in town. On Friday, the holiness people continued their sessions in the spacious new dining room and chapel of Texas Holiness University in Peniel.

C. A. McConnell’s contemporary report of this gathering gives one the impression that it was basically a repeat of the Terrell convention. DeJernett served as chair. Determining the kind of lasting organization to be established was, in McConnell’s words, “the meat of the whole matter” (1899: 7). Some still favored sticking to the established churches, which essentially amounted to upholding the outcome determined at Terrell. Others, including DeJernett, Jernigan, Dennis Rogers, Tom Rogers, and Noah J. Cooley, favored forming a wholly independent holiness denomination. No consensus was reached on the first day (McConnell 1899: 7).

During the morning session of the second day, representatives of each of the established denominations were granted the opportunity to make their case for why theirs was the most ideal church home for the holiness people. Early accounts expound only on the appeal of J. W. Lively, which probably suggests that his pitch was the one taken most seriously. Lively was the presiding elder of the Gulf Mission conference of the
Methodist Episcopal Church. DeJernett referred to his appeal as “a vigorous plea” (1911c: 6; cf. Jernigan 1919: 101). Lively emphasized the power, wealth, and stability of the Methodist Episcopal Church, an established organization in which the holiness people would have direct access to the church’s mission funds, building funds, church extension funds, and educational opportunities (McConnell 1899: 7; Jernigan 1919: 101). Lively prophesied that the day would come when the holiness movement would, in fact, almost exclusively come under the care of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that “certain destruction” would come to any holiness work remaining outside of it (McConnell 1899: 7). A brand-new holiness church, Lively argued, simply could not be sustained. If all the holiness people were to unite under the banner of a new church “they would proceed to destroy each other” (McConnell 1899: 7). In his opinion, the church of Wesley was “the only logical home of every sanctified person” (McConnell 1899: 7). According to Jernigan’s account, Lively ended his impassioned speech with an invitation: “Come home, boys, to your mother. Methodism is the mother of holiness. Come home, and we will do as they used to do: give you a horse to ride, and a pair of old-fashioned saddlebags, with a Bible in one side and a Methodist hymn book in the other; and put some money in your pockets, and send you out to preach holiness” (1919: 101-102).

While Lively’s appeal did not persuade the holiness people to unite with his church, it seems to have had some impact on the outcome—or lack thereof—of the Greenville convention. Texas Holiness University president A. M. Hills cautioned the assembly against taking quick action toward starting a brand-new denomination. McConnell reported that some in the audience were, in fact, “strenuously opposed” to doing so. At one point during the meeting, McConnell himself was invited to explain the ministry plan of the Northwest Texas Holiness Association, although he does not report on how his explanation was received. In the end, two motions were made. The first was to form a committee of seven persons to craft a statement of doctrine and to hold another gathering in three years, at which said committee would report. The second motion was the same as the first, except this motion called for the gathering to be held in three months instead of three years. Neither motion passed. To put an end to the two days of passionate appeals, dead-end motions, merry-go-round discussion, and lack of consensus, Lula Rogers made a motion that the Greenville gathering adjourn sine die. This motion carried (see McConnell 1899: 7; Jernigan 1919: 102).
For all intents and purposes the Greenville convention ended the same way as the Terrell convention. The homeless holiness people of Texas would either need to remain homeless or find a home among one of the established churches. For “a large minority” of the attendees this outcome was unacceptable (Jernigan 1919: 102). For some among these, the *ad nauseum* deliberations of the two failed gatherings brought clarity. As McConnell reported, “during the two days discussion the underbrush was cleared away” (1899: 7). They were ready and determined to take decisive action toward either starting a new church or organizing some sort of association that could perform the basic functions of a church.

After the meeting adjourned in the dining hall at THU, either Jernigan found Dennis Rogers or Rogers found Jernigan and one of them said to the other, “Since the big folks won’t do anything, why can’t we little folks get together and do something?” Whoever was asked this responded with, “We can” (Rogers 1944: 29).¹¹ Wasting no time, Jernigan and Rogers huddled up with a few like-minded colleagues and, following a “hurried consultation,” made an impromptu decision to continue the conversation that very night at Jernigan’s house in Greenville (Jernigan 1919: 102).

**The Little Folks Get Together: The Spontaneous Meeting at the Jernigan Home on November 24, 1899**

C. B. Jernigan and his wife, Johnny, and their children lived in a home located at 271 North Wesley Street in Greenville.¹² According to McConnell, it was inside this house that “at night after the second day the Holy Ghost had right of way” (1899: 7). Those who longed for a home for the holiness people of Texas believed the Holy Spirit had thus far been barricaded from moving them toward this. The two larger gatherings at Terrell and Greenville only seemed to cement the blockades. In McConnell’s view, those obstacles were finally cleared at an informal nighttime get-together at the Jernigan home.

The surviving records are somewhat muddled on just how many people showed up at the Jernigan house that night, but it was not a large group.¹³ No doubt the excitement in the room was less fuzzy to the attendees than the headcount. At some point during the gathering McConnell was asked to lay out the form and plan of organization adopted just four months earlier by the Northwest Texas Holiness Association (Jernigan 1919: 102;
McConnell 1946: 41). Those in the house moved to adopt the same plan but to increase its scope to encompass the whole state. Furthermore, those present from the Holiness Church (Rogers’s group) presented the idea of modifying their own discipline and rules with an eye toward uniting themselves with the Northwest Texas Holiness Association ahead of the proposed state association (McConnell 1899: 7).

This scenario apparently satisfied the hopes of everyone in the room. They planned their next steps. Those at Jernigan’s house would go back to the local groups they represented, and these groups would send delegates to a follow-up meeting in Greenville set to take place just one month later on either December 22 or 23, 1899. As Christmas day approached, these delegates would gather with the intent of gifting the holiness people of Texas with a present: the formation of a holiness association chartered under the laws of the state.

A Few Heard the Wail of the Unchurched Holiness People: Another Meeting in Greenville on December 22 or 23, 1899

The December meeting was not well attended. According to the Holiness Association of Texas Year Book 1903-4 and 1904-5 only three people showed up (1904: 3; 1905: 5). Smith indicates that “Rogers, Jernigan, McConnell, and a few associates met in Greenville in December” (1962: 164) but there may not have been any associates. Jernigan recalled that there were “only a few present” and gives the following reason why: “the most conservative leaders had decided that nothing could be done; and many talked of would-be leaders, and self-appointed Moseses. Such talk frightened many away from the December convention” (1919: 102). Although a way forward was found at the Jernigan home, on the heels of the failed gatherings in Terrell and THU, the idea of congregating for a third “convention” may well have seemed like an exercise in futility.

The December gathering took place either on Friday the 22nd or Saturday the 23rd. With more than a touch of irony, in light of his reference to “self-appointed Moseses,” Jernigan employed exodus imagery to describe the gathering: “there were a few who had heard the wail of the unchurched holiness people and were determined to follow the pillar of cloud and fire and provide a home for these excluded people” (1919: 102-103). The practical purpose of the meeting was to follow up on the idea generated at the nighttime meeting in November of forming a state-
wide association by uniting the Holiness Church with the Northwest Texas Holiness Association.

The small meeting in December produced two outcomes. The first was the formation of a North Texas Holiness Association (Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 4; 1905: 5). McConnell’s report of the meeting at Jernigan’s house mentioned a determination on the part of the attendees to form a “North Texas Association” (1899: 7). Those at the December meeting acted on this. Jernigan served as its president. He indicated that holiness bands were rapidly organized under its auspices (1900: 8). Other than that, little else is known about this regional association. It seems likely that it never had a plenary gathering and was discarded when it met in joint session with the Northwest Texas Holiness Association and Rogers’s Holiness Church group the following April. The scheduling of that meeting was the second outcome of the December meeting. The Holiness Church was already scheduled to meet in April at their Holiness Park campground in Collin County, seven miles north of McKinney, Texas, for its semi-annual gathering. Those at the December meeting hoped that at the April gathering the Holiness Church would formally unite with both the Northwest Texas Holiness Association and the freshly-minted North Texas Holiness Association (See Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 4; 1905: 5; Jernigan, 1919: 104; Smith 1962: 164; Cunningham et al. 2009: 126). Their hopes would be realized.

Drafting a Statement of Doctrine and Form of Organization: The Meeting at Holiness Park Campground on April 3-4, 1900

At a meeting of the Northwest Texas Holiness Association, D. F. Redding read aloud a letter from Jernigan requesting that their association send delegates to meet with other holiness groups at Holiness Park campground on Tuesday, April 3, 1900 “for the purpose of organizing a state association” (Harvey 1900: 4). A notice from Dennis Rogers was also published in the March 1900 issue of the Texas Holiness Banner indicating that “three Associations” would gather at their campground in Collin County “to form the Texas Holiness Association” (Rogers 1900: 4). In the same issue, Jernigan published a correspondence indicating that he and his North Texas Holiness Association colleagues were “looking forward to the state convention in April with fond hopes” (1900: 8). McConnell’s editorial in the April issue published just ahead of the gathering contained an earnest
exhortation: “Let all God’s people pray mightily that the Holy Spirit may be in power in the conference, and the will of our Master Jesus be done in His cause” (1900: 4). Anticipation ran high as delegates representing each of the three groups set out for Collin County.

The photocopies of the handwritten minutes of the Holiness Association of Texas begin with this meeting at Holiness Park. They constitute the opening pages of the collective minutes of the annual sessions of the association until the final annual session in 1910. These minutes offer direct evidence for what took place at Holiness Park and all subsequent annual gatherings of the association. The minutes of the Holiness Park meeting opened with this report:

Pursuant to a call in the Texas Holiness Advocate, the North Texas Holiness Association and the Northwest Texas Holiness Association met in joint session with the Holiness Church association at Holiness Park 7 miles north of McKinney, Tex April 3rd 1900…. After a season of worship of prayer and praise and old-time shouting, the house was called to order by Bro. Dennis Rogers, President of the Holiness Church association (Holiness Association of Texas. (1910: 1)

The large sessions of the meeting took place under a tent (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 3). At least thirty-two people were present. After noting the elections of Rogers as meeting chairman, Jernigan as secretary, and J. T. Stanfield as assistant secretary, the minutes then record the purpose of the meeting: “All present agreed that the purpose of the meeting was to get the homeless holiness people together in a body for the purpose of unity of action and more aggressive work in the future” (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 1).

Following a discussion of “the present situation of the Holiness Movement,” Rogers moved to appoint a committee “to formulate some statement of doctrine and rules of government for the association” (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 2). Eleven persons were appointed to this committee, and the meeting adjourned until the committee could report (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 2). The minutes record no further activity or action on the first day.

The second day began with the report of the appointed committee. The report contained seven articles of faith and seventeen articles related to the association’s form of government. The articles of faith included
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statements on “The Godhead,” “Man’s Nature and Destiny,” “Conviction,” “Repentance,” “Justification by Faith,” “Sanctification by Faith,” and “Ordinances.” The articles on the form of government addressed issues such as voting and elections, membership eligibility and requirements (including ethical and behavioral requirements relating to the prohibition of opium, buying and selling alcohol, renting pews, violating the sabbath day, etc.), and licensing ministers. Each article was discussed and adopted one at a time (See Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 3-9).

The next section of the minutes records a description of the leadership offices of the association and their duties. The established offices consisted of a president, a vice president, a secretary-treasurer, and “seven directors or trustees, all of whom shall possess the Scriptural qualifications as set forth in Acts 6:3, Titus 1:6-9, Titus 3:1-4” (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 10). The minutes then note the elections of Dennis Rogers as president, J. T. Stanfield as vice president, and C. B. Jernigan as secretary-treasurer (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 12).

Next, the minutes transcribe the text of the form of minister’s license adopted by the association:

This to certify that _____ is a member of the Holiness Association of Texas and is a recognized minister of the gospel, duly licensed and ordained; and we recommend _____ to the love and fellowship of the saints everywhere. _____ is entitled to the benefits and privileges due to _____ calling.

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15. Good for one year _____ date.

_____ President,

_____ Secretary (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 12).

The minutes of the Holiness Park meeting concluded with two action items. First, the delegates decided the new association should publish its statement of doctrine and rules of government. A financial offering of ten dollars was
collected toward this end. McConnell was to oversee the publication. The statement of doctrine and the rules of government were published in the May issue of the Texas Holiness Banner (Anonymous 1900: 5). Second, the newly-formed association scheduled their “next annual meeting” in Sunset on November 13, 1900 at 10:00am (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 12-13).

If the Sunset meeting was to be their “next” annual meeting, the delegates must have considered this gathering at Holiness Park the first official annual meeting of the Holiness Association of Texas. It surely felt like that for the participants as they named their new association, elected their leaders, drafted a statement of doctrine, and established a set of governing rules. Jernigan contrasted the Holiness Park meeting with the previous ones at Terrell and Greenville: “At this gathering, things worked more smoothly, since those who did not want anything remained away, and left those who did want an organization to go ahead with their work” (1919: 104). Go ahead with their work they did, and the outcome was precisely what they had been hoping and praying would result. Later historical statements of the association published in their Year Book identified the Holiness Park meeting as the one at which the union of the three holiness groups crystalized (see, e.g., Holiness Association of Texas 1906: 5; 1907: 5; Jernigan 1919: 104). From this meeting forward, the homeless holiness people of Texas had an organizational roof over their head.

Kindling Fire for Others to Warm By: The Meeting in Sunset on November 13, 1900

Seven months later, on Tuesday, November 13, 1900, members of the Holiness Association of Texas assembled in Sunset, Texas for what the minutes, recorded by Jernigan, refer to as their “regular annual session” (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 22). At the first business session at 2:30pm, association president Dennis Rogers called the house to order. Rogers opened with “a suitable talk on kindling a fire for others to warm by, saying we are dealing for future generations. Perhaps God often chooses little men to accomplish great ends” (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 22).

Much of the Sunset meeting was taken up with roll calls, reports, and elections. Roll was called for the “original members of the association.”
Names were added to the roll where no local bands were organized. The reports of eleven local holiness bands were received. Seven ministers gave formal reports. Recognitions of calls to the ministry were approved for twenty-two individuals. The treasurer’s report was read and approved. Rogers, Stanfield, and Jernigan were reelected to the offices of President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer. Seven local directors were also elected (for all this see Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 23-27).

Following these business items, the delegates devoted time to discussing “what can be done to advance the work” (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 28). Nine motions were passed. The most consequential were the adoption of the Texas Holiness Advocate as the association’s official periodical and the appointment of a committee to produce and distribute the association’s Year Book and minister’s licenses. The delegates also set the third Sunday in November as the date for its annual meeting (see Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 28-29). Each of these decisions impacted the Holiness Association of Texas from this meeting until its final one in 1910.

The two most important outcomes of the Sunset meeting were the decisions to incorporate the association and to revise the statement of doctrine and form of government drafted at Holiness Park. Jernigan shared with the delegates his view that incorporation was necessary, and Rogers appointed a committee to have the association incorporated under the laws of the state (see Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 27). The final item noted in the minutes prior to the reading of the minutes and adjournment is the appointment of seven persons to a “committee on revision of Statement of Doctrine and Form of Government” (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 29).25 Neither the minutes of this meeting, the Holiness Park meeting, nor the minutes of the following meeting at Greenville where the revised statement was presented and approved provide any information on why the delegates believed the original version needed revising. All that is known is that a revision committee was appointed at Sunset, and that a revised version of the statement drafted at Holiness Park was adopted at Greenville.26 More will be said about the revisions in the discussion of the Greenville meeting below.
Given Every Function of a Church: The Articles of Incorporation Granted on December 31, 1900

For the association to have legal standing, hold property, and receive recognition from the railroad bureaus it was necessary for them to seek incorporation with the state of Texas. The advantages of incorporation were well understood by Jernigan, who recorded the following note in the minutes of the Sunset meeting:

On chartering the association C. B. Jernigan reports necessary to incorporate to have legal standing and holding property and getting R. R. courtesies.

President then appointed a committee of Incorporation as follows to have the Holiness Association of Texas incorporate and to secure charter and seal –

Dennis Rogers

Chas. A. McConnell

C. B. Jernigan

A freewill offering was then taken and $9.50 was raised and turned over to Dennis Rogers chairman of incorporation committee (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 27).

Although Jernigan’s note states that Rogers was appointed to the incorporation committee, all other records, including the original articles of incorporation submitted to the Texas Department of State and the certificate of incorporation issued by the Department of State, indicate that the three incorporators were McConnell, Jernigan, and DeJernett. These three leaders appeared personally before C. L. Elder, a notary public in Hunt County, on Friday, December 21, 1900 to present him with the articles of incorporation. Elder placed his official seal on the document, which was subsequently filed with the State department on New Year’s Eve, Monday, December 31, 1900 under the hand of Texas Secretary of State I. D. H. Hardy in Austin (Holiness Association of Texas 1900).
The articles of incorporation declare that “the purposes for which [the association] is formed are the support of public worship, the dissemination of the gospel, and for the purpose of binding more closely together the Holiness people and promoting the Holiness movement at home and abroad” (Holiness Association of Texas 1900). As McConnell later noted, “The charter granted by the state gave the association every function of a church, even to the ordaining of elders and licensing preachers” (1946: 42). Rogers echoed the same sentiment: “We were practically functioning as a church. We had our association incorporated and had a state seal with which we stamped the license of our preachers” (1944: 30).

Launched Upon its God-Ordained Career: The Session in Greenville on May 29-30, 1901

On May 29-30, 1901, five months after it was officially incorporated with the state, the Holiness Association of Texas held what the minutes refer to as its “semiannual session” in the tabernacle of the Greenville Holiness Campground (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 32). DeJernett remembered there being “a large and enthusiastic hearing of business at the 10:00am session on Wednesday, May 29, was to suspend regular business and hear the report of the committee on the revision of the statement of doctrine and form of government. The committee requested further time and the addition of more persons to its roster. President Rogers granted the request and added four names to the committee: W. B. Huckabee, R. L. Averill, A. G. Jeffries, and C. M. Keith. The committee was given until 9:00am the next day to complete their report. After this, and a few welcoming remarks from Rogers, the association dispensed with all opening day hearing sermons and anticipating the report of the revision committee (for all this see Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 32).

At the 9:00am session on Thursday morning, Dr. J. W. Harvey, secretary of the revision committee, read their report one article at a time. The association adopted each in turn. Noteworthy changes included the addition of articles on the actual name of the association (“This association shall be known as the Holiness Association of Texas”) and its objective: “The object of this association shall be the promotion of the doctrine and experience of Scriptural Holiness throughout the world.” The revised
statement removed the article in the original statement on “The Godhead” and replaced it with the full text of the Apostles Creed. Noticeably absent from the new edition are the statements from the original version on the nature and destiny of humanity, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, the forbiddance of singing certain types of songs, buying and selling alcohol, taking another member of the association to court, using houses of worship for other activities, and renting pews. Noticeably present in the new version, unlike the original one, are explicit statements that ministerial members “shall be in the experience of holiness” and that elected officers “shall be in the experience of entire sanctification.”30 When the two statements are laid side-by-side, one senses that a motivating factor in the decision to revise the document was the desire for unity within the association around the doctrine and experience of Christian holiness and entire sanctification. Many statements which could lead to division were removed. Statements encouraging harmony in holiness were added.

Jernigan’s later reference to this Greenville gathering as “the constitutional meeting” of the association suggests that revising and adopting the statement of doctrine and form of government was its primary purpose. The Holiness Association of Texas was now, in Jernigan’s estimation, “fully launched” (1919: 105).31 The remainder of the meeting was occupied with more customary business such as appointing persons to various committees, receiving new members, and licensing preachers. Thirteen individuals were listed in the minutes among the new members received into the association. Twenty-one persons were recorded as having been granted a license to preach (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 38-41). Included on both lists is Reuben “Bud” Robinson, arguably the most famous evangelist of both the Holiness Movement and the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 39).32 Nine years later Robinson published a tribute in the Pentecostal Advocate paper on the occasion of the association’s ending (Robinson 1910: 3). Here, in Greenville, the association was only beginning. As the “Historical” sections of most of the surviving editions of its Year Book stressed, it was in the tabernacle on the Greenville Holiness Camp Grounds that “the Holiness Association was launched upon its God-ordained career” (Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 5; 1906: 5; 1907a: 5).
Summary

In this article I have attempted to provide a more extensive treatment of the founding of the Holiness Association of Texas than those previously offered. By consulting photocopies of the handwritten minutes of this group I have also tried to clarify factual mistakes found in previous accounts. In future studies I intend to explore the lives of the leaders of this important group, the key events of its history, the various ministries it supported, and the circumstances which led to its end.

End notes

*Dr. Stan Ingersol and Dr. Mary Lou Shea read and responded to an initial draft of this article. An earlier iteration of the section “The Merging of Three Regional Groups to Form the Holiness Association of Texas” was also submitted to Dr. Robert D. Smith for the graduate course “History, Missions, and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene” at Olivet Nazarene University in Fall 2021. I thank all three historians for their valuable feedback. Remaining glitches in this final version are, of course, my sole responsibility.

1 For a historical survey of the Holiness Movement see Kostlevy 2009: xxxiii-xl. On the prevalence of holiness associations see, e.g., Chapman 1926: 21-22; Peters 1974: 49-50. Peters indicates that by 1888 there were twenty-six holiness associations of state or local character in the USA and two in Canada.

2 Two sets of unbound photocopies of the ledger book containing the handwritten minutes of the meetings of the Holiness Association of Texas are housed at Nazarene Archives in Lenexa, Kansas and one set is housed at the Fred Floyd Archives at Southern Nazarene University (Holiness Association of Texas: 1910). A handwritten note dated December 1986 from one “Joe Wilson” to Dr. Paul Gray, founder of the Fred Floyd Archives, is included with the set housed at SNU. The note claims that Wilson and “the pastor from Pittsburg” made the copies from the original book owned by a “Mrs. Rankin.” According to the note, “Mrs. Rankin still says she will give up the books someday. But she did let us copy them.” The other ledger book contains various ministry reports from members of the Holiness Association of Texas. Photocopies of its pages are also housed at Nazarene Archives and at the Fred Floyd Archives at Southern Nazarene University (Holiness Association of Texas: 1907b). If the original books still exist it is not known where they are located. See Giffin 2020: 45-46 n. 24.


The doctrine and religious experience of entire sanctification is a hallmark of the Holiness Movement and its modern expressions. This doctrine generally teaches that a person can have an experience following conversion—a “second work of grace”—in which God makes them free from the inclination to sin and moves them into a state of full devotion to God. On the importance of holiness teaching and the doctrine of entire sanctification for the Holiness Movement see, e.g., Hunter 1983: 26-27; White 2006: 25-26; Kostlevy 2009: 105-106.

Jernigan erroneously stated that the convention took place in August. For these exact days of the convention see DeJernett and Reinhardt 1898: 6. That it place in September is further confirmed by Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 3; 1905: 5; as well as Henry Clay Morrison’s camp meeting calendar anonymously published in the Pentecostal Herald (1898: 5), which dates the camp meeting in Terrell with which the convention was connected to September 2-13.

DeJernett provided further context for each of these questions. For example, the question pertaining to what to do with new converts drew some significance from the viewpoint that “they are not, as a rule, welcomed into the churches; nor do the new converts themselves desire to seek fellowship in the church with those members.”

According to Smith (1962: 162), the proposal for the state holiness union came from Henry Clay Morrison.

Some sources indicated that no local unions or bands were organized (e.g., Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 3; 1905: 5; Rogers 1944: 29). However, both DeJernett (1911b: 7) and Jernigan (1919: 101) stated that “not a half dozen local unions were organized under its constitution,” suggesting that at least one local union may have been organized somewhere.

For more on the annual Year Book produced by the Holiness Association of Texas, four editions of which are known to exist, see Giffin 2020: 46-47.

Jernigan indicated that the call was “drawn up by” DeJernett, and that he (Jernigan) “vigorously pushed” it (1919: 101). In his autobiography written decades later, C. A. McConnell recollected that Jernigan issued the call (1946: 41). For the venues see Jernigan 1919: 101. In his invaluable contemporary report of the meeting for his paper, McConnell relayed that the Friday sessions were held at “the splendid new building of the Holiness College” at the invitation of THU president A. M. Hills (1899: 7).

Smith indicates that Rogers said these words to Jernigan (1962: 163, followed by White 2006: 53), but Rogers’s firsthand recollection was that Jernigan said them to him.
In his autobiography, Jernigan cited this address as the location of the home where he and Johnny lived and where all their children were born (Jernigan 1926: 35). In his history of the holiness movement in the South, Jernigan recounted that the meeting was held “at his home on North Wesley street” (1919: 102).

DeJernett reported that there were seven men present: Jernigan, McConnell, Thomas Rogers, Dennis Rogers, C. M. Keith, William Jenkins, and “Bro. McGowan” (1911c: 6). Jernigan also reported that there were seven present and spiritualizes the headcount by referring to it as “the Bible number” (1919: 102). All four surviving editions of the Holiness Association of Texas Year Book agree with this number (Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 3; 1905: 5; 1906: 4; 1907a: 4), as does McConnell’s later autobiography (1946: 41). Jernigan did not mention Thomas Rogers or McGowan but does include his wife, Johnny Jernigan, in the headcount (1919: 102). McConnell’s contemporary account said “a number of preachers, evangelists, and workers met at the home of Bro. Jernigan,” giving the impression that perhaps many more than seven persons attended (1899: 7). This impression is somewhat vindicated by Rogers’s recollection that “thirteen of us gathered at his house” (1944: 29), although it must be recognized again that Rogers’s account came decades after the events.

Jones cites the “Form and plan of local organization of the Northwest Texas Holiness Association, Adopted by the Association, Sunset, TX, 1899” (2005: 252). In Smith’s brief discussion of the Northwest Texas Holiness Association he also cites the “Form and Plan of Local Organization, Adopted by the Association” and adds, “the only copy I have seen is in the possession of M. L. Locke of Bridgeport, Texas” (1962: 371 n. 19). If the copy mentioned by Smith or another copy still exists it would provide the details of what McConnell shared at Jernigan’s home.

McConnell recorded that the meeting was to take place on December 23 (1899: 7). Jernigan indicated that it did in fact take place on that day (1919: 102, followed by Redford 1948: 131; Smith 162: 163; White 2006: 36, 53). However, the Holiness Association of Texas Year Book 1903-4 and Year Book 1904-5 both record that the meeting took place on December 22 (1904: 3; 1905: 5).

Jernigan indicated that it was decided to meet in May at Holiness Park but all other sources, including the surviving minutes of the Holiness Park meeting themselves, indicate that the meeting took place on April 3 (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 1).

The notice is attributed to “Dennis Roberts” but is signed “Pres. H. C. A. of Tex.”; since Dennis Rogers was the president of the Holiness Church this is clearly a simple misprint. In his later account, Rogers mistakenly listed Throckmorton (approximately 180 miles west of Collin County) as the place of meeting (1944: 29).
The pages of the ledger book in which the minutes of the Holiness Association of Texas were recorded are numbered 1-271, although there are intermittent gaps in the numbering. The minutes of the Holiness Park meeting were recorded on pages 1-13.


The historical sections of Holiness Association of Texas Year Book 1903-4 (Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 4) and Holiness Association of Texas Year Book 1904-5 (Holiness Association of Texas 1905: 6) underestimated that “there were about twenty delegates present.”

The minutes name the following persons appointed to this committee: C. B. Jernigan, J. T. Stanfield, William Jenkins, W. S. Hill, J. W. Bowers, James W. Pierce, Thomas G. Rogers, Thomas Broad, J. M. Henry, Dennis Rogers, and T. J. Moore. Curiously, although T. J. Moore is named as a member of the committee he is not listed among the attendees of the meeting.

Instead of Stanfield, Dennis Rogers erroneously stated that C. A. McConnell was elected vice-president (1944: 30).

Other sources indicate the statement of doctrine and form of government were also published in book form. See Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 4; 1905: 6.

The minutes of the meeting end with the signature, “C. B. Jernigan, Sect.” (page 30). Jernigan recorded November 13 as the date of the meeting (page 22). The meeting is wrongly dated to November 12 in Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 4; 1905: 6. Other sources simply record that the meeting took place in the month of November (Holiness Association of Texas 1906: 5; 1907a: 5; Jernigan 1919: 104; Smith 1962: 164; Cunningham et al. 2009: 127).

The seven appointed were McConnell, Jernigan, Stanfield, Dennis Rogers, E. C. DeJernett, J. W. Harvey, and J. W. Bowers.

Some early sources indicated that the statement of doctrine was “revised” at the Sunset meeting and subsequently “adopted” at the next meeting in Greenville on May 29-30, 1901 (e.g., Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 4; 1905: 6). Other early sources indicated that a constitution and statement of doctrine was “drawn up” or “prepared” at Sunset and ratified at Greenville (Holiness Association of Texas 1906: 5; 1907a: 5; DeJernett 1911c: 6; Jernigan 1919: 104-105, followed by Redford 1948: 132; Smith 1962: 164; White 2006: 36; Cunningham et al. 2009: 127). It is clear from all sources—including the minutes—that the revised statement
was adopted at the Greenville meeting. However, the minutes of the Holiness Park meeting, the Sunset meeting, and the Greenville meeting are also clear that the original statement was drawn up at Holiness Park, and that the only action pertaining to it at the Sunset meeting was the appointment of the committee of seven for its revision. The minutes of the Greenville meeting indicated that at the 10:00am session on Wednesday, May 29, the revision committee “asked for further time” and that it “was given till 9 a.m. Thursday to complete report” (Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 32). All this reveals the value of the handwritten minutes for correcting factual errors in the printed sources: The statement of doctrine and form of government was drafted at the Holiness Park meeting, and both the revision itself and its adoption took place not at the Sunset meeting but at the Greenville meeting.

27 Photocopies of the original “Articles of Incorporation of the Holiness Association of Texas” and the certificate of incorporation are available at the Fred Floyd Archives at Southern Nazarene University, and at Nazarene Archives (Holiness Association of Texas 1900). For DeJernett, Jernigan, and McConnell as the three incorporators see also Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 4; 1905: 6; 1906: 5; 1907a: 5; DeJernett 1911b: 7; Jernigan 1919: 105; McConnell 1946: 42.

Both the Articles of Incorporation and the certificate of incorporation record December 31 as the incorporation date. This date was correctly cited in the Holiness Association of Texas Year Book 1903-4 (Holiness Association of Texas 1904: 4), but Holiness Association of Texas Year Book 1904-5 erroneously cited the date as “Dec. 13, 1900” (Holiness Association of Texas 1905: 6). Only the month and year (December, 1900) are cited in Holiness Association of Texas 1906: 5; 1907a: 5; Jernigan 1919: 105.

28 Cunningham et al. (2009: 127) erroneously name Pilot Point as the location of this meeting.

All of these changes are reflected in the revised statement recorded in Holiness Association of Texas 1910: 33-38.

30 Robinson was received into membership in the association at this same meeting and is listed as belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church and residing in Greenville.

Among the surviving editions, only the Holiness Association of Texas Year Book 1904-5 did not include this phrase.
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Kirk S. Sims

A Spirit-filled Christian-in-the-making: E. Stanley Jones’s Views on Entire Sanctification

Abstract:

With his educational formation at Asbury College, E. Stanley Jones was a scion of the Wesleyan Holiness Movement of the early twentieth century. In his early years, he seems to be a champion for entire sanctification, and one may have concluded that he would have fought the same fights for this doctrine in Methodist circles as his mentors had done. However, after he set off to India as a missionary and later become a formidable Christian leader on the world stage, he appears to eschew his preaching and teaching on “entire sanctification,” except when addressing people in the Wesleyan Holiness Movement. The rare times when he talked about sanctification, he often had words of critique of its operant inadequacy in the Holiness circles, yet Jones repeatedly called Christians to surrender their all to Christ. In A Song of Ascents, his spiritual autobiography, written in his ninth decade, he maintained a humility about entire sanctification by describing himself as a “Christian-in-the-making.”

Keywords: E. Stanley Jones, entire sanctification, holiness movement

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May 8, 1942 was declared by Asbury College to be “Dr. E. Stanley Jones Day,” and it was a day that its most arguably famous alumnus was coming to town to speak. It was going to be quite an event. A few years earlier when E. Stanley Jones had spoken in Hughes Auditorium in 1937, visitors had come to sleepy Wilmore, Kentucky from as far as Georgia and Michigan to soak up his sage wisdom. A team of three stenographers were lined up to capture his every word. E. Stanley Jones, who was known worldwide as a friend of Gandhi, counselor to Franklin Roosevelt, and best-selling author had returned to his alma mater, a college and context that had indeed shaped his faith journey before he headed off to serve as a missionary in India.

Jones had been asked by President Z. T. Johnson to speak on “The Christ of the Asbury Road.” Everyone in attendance would understand the reference to his best-selling book, *The Christ of the Indian Road*, where he told of his faith journey as a missionary. Now, he was back in Wilmore giving his insights to Asbury College, a liberal arts college very much rooted in the Wesleyan Holiness tradition.

Asbury College had grown significantly since he graduated in 1907 in a class of 16. In 1929, Asbury had completed Hughes Auditorium, a chapel with a seating capacity of 1500. Jones was in the pulpit, in the shadow of an Austin pipe organ and under the central “icon” of Hughes Auditorium. This “icon” was not a cross or an image of Jesus, but text, and these words were reflective of the major theological message upon which Asbury College had been founded. Carved in bold gold leaf letters that all in the chapel could see, worshippers were reminded to give “Holiness unto the Lord.”

In his address, Jones used language he did not typically use in his writings or during his addresses in other contexts. He talked about “entire sanctification,” a term that would have been commonplace in Hughes Auditorium and Asbury classrooms. Jones validated Holiness theology and language. “That experience which this institution and other institutions and movements have called entire sanctification — I believe that, too, is sound.” However, Jones went on to say something that would have made many of the faculty members uncomfortable. “May I tell you what I should like to see added to this interpretation of the Christ of the Asbury Road? You stop short on the word ‘entire.’ It is not entire enough.”

Jones was saying this Holiness theology upon which Asbury was founded was coherent, but its operant theology was often lacking. Jones
had spread his wings by this time and traveled the world. He had interacted with intellectuals who belonged to other religions, and he had even suffered what some may call an emotional breakdown. He was speaking to an audience whose theology he knew very well and essentially told them that their Holiness theology was too small.

**Shaped by the Wesleyan Holiness Movement**

In his early faith journey, Jones had been shaped by the Wesleyan Holiness Movement, which had a significant following within American Methodism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the voices that spoke into his early spiritual life advocated the “shorter way” of holiness through the doctrine of entire sanctification that can be attained and should be expected in this lifetime. Although throughout his life, Jones would often give testimony of his own experience of being filled with the Spirit while reading Hannah Whitall Smith’s *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life* as a young man, he tended to distance himself from the language of this shorter way and adopted a more nuanced position on sanctification only rarely using the word “sanctification.”

Throughout much of the twentieth century, E. Stanley Jones received great acclaim in Methodist and Protestant circles as a great missionary. He was once described as “the world’s greatest missionary” in *Time*, and Bernie Smith said in 1950 that he was “perhaps the best known living preacher in the world.” Jones’s 1925 book, *The Christ of the Indian Road*, sold over a million copies in his lifetime, and his other books totaled over 3.5 million sales. He had even been elected bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, but he declined the office because he was “called to be a missionary and an evangelist.”

Jones has often been associated with the Holiness Movement. In fact, he clearly associates himself with it in his 1942 address, calling it “our movement.” Writers have often interpreted his theology through the nomenclature of the Holiness Movement. Years later, Henry Clay Morrison described Jones as a “fine student” who “received a baptism with the Spirit and claimed the experienced [sic] of entire sanctification.” Bernie Smith published a compendium of twenty six testimonies that shall cause the reader “to hunger and thirst after a genuine, old-fashioned baptism with fire.” One testimony was titled “The Sanctification of E. Stanley Jones,” despite the fact that Jones never once used the word “sanctification” in his narrative. In his *Historical Dictionary of the Holiness Movement*, William Kostlevy says,
“Jones was converted in 1899 and experienced entire sanctification in 1902 after reading Hannah Whitall Smith’s Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life.” Kostlevy goes on to say “Jones remained an unreconstructed Holiness evangelist.” William Arnett cites Jones’s testimony in Flames of Living Fire that “Jones bore joyful witness to God’s sanctifying grace.”

The reality is that E. Stanley Jones was indeed formed by the Wesleyan Holiness Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in American Methodist circles. After his conversion under the ministry of Robert J. Bateman, Jones “walked in the joy of that for months.” However, Jones went on to say:

Then the clouds began to come over me, or more accurately, the clouds seemed to arise from within. There were apparently depths that this new conversion experience touched and subdued, but did not control and cleanse. There was a dark, ugly something that was not amenable to this new life which had been introduced in conversion. I was a house divided against myself. And I knew I could not stand unless I was inwardly unified.

This experience led to a call to ministry and a desire to head off to Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky. Jones had heard Henry Clay Morrison preach, and Morrison had been an advocate for Asbury. Jones wrote, “I felt if Asbury could make me preach like Morrison, I would like to go there.” In 1903, he matriculated at Asbury College “where he imbibed holiness teachings and Wesleyan theology” and where he “learned the spiritual vocabulary to describe the second blessing, a deeper work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.”

Asbury College had been founded a little more than a decade earlier by John Wesley Hughes, a Holiness preacher who saw the aim of the school to “get sinners converted, and believers sanctified” because it stood for “Free salvation for all men and full salvation from all sin.” Asbury was birthed in a season when those in the Holiness Movement saw the need to assert their theology within the structures of American Methodism because they thought that Methodism had moved too far away from the teachings of John Wesley. According to Morrison, who later became president of Asbury College, “The school was founded at the time when a bitter battle of opposition and persecution was being conducted against the Methodist people who professed the experience of entire sanctification.”
Students would go to Asbury College and then bring “the warmed heart” back to their mainline denominations. They were also encouraged to spread the Asbury version of scriptural holiness. A Methodist who attended Asbury would be well versed in the theology of the Wesleyan Holiness Movement, and Jones was no exception.

At Asbury, Jones would encounter leaders who would fight for entire sanctification as a doctrine in the Methodist circles. John Wesley Hughes, who was president of Asbury when Stanley arrived in Wilmore was known to “testify to the experience of entire sanctification at annual conferences in the presence of bishops, secretaries and all kinds of dignitaries.” Hughes admitted that his daily preaching on entire sanctification “cost me some very severe criticisms and some preferments in my conference relations, closing of many church doors that used to be open to me.”

While at Asbury, Jones was also influenced by Leander Lycurgus Pickett. After his arrival at Asbury, he was not pleased with his accommodation in the men’s dorm, so he resolved to head back to his home in Baltimore but decided to stay when an opportunity to live in the Pickett house opened up. Stanley ended up sharing a room with his son, J. Waskom Pickett, who also served for many years as a Methodist missionary (and bishop) in India. Waskom’s father, Leander Lycurgus Pickett, was a prominent leader and publisher in the Holiness Movement.

L.L. Pickett was a strong advocate for entire sanctification and fought for it as a doctrine of the church. “Full salvation is the God-given remedy for these evils [ambition, pride, self-love, and place-seeking]. Praise the Lord, the ‘fullness of the blessing’ is the divine antidote that effectually removes these contagious diseases. But the sad truth is that many oppose the doctrine and deny the experience.” Pickett was clear that Holiness theology was central to Methodist theology. “If we would, therefore, be true to the spirit of original Methodism, to the evident purpose of God in raising us up as a people, we must insist on the experience of entire sanctification.” While a student living in the Pickett home, Jones would sometimes write personal letters on paper with a letterhead that stated “Office of Pickett Publishing Co., Publishers of Holiness Books and other Religious Literature.” In a letter probably written in 1906, Jones seems to be enthusiastic about the doctrine of the “baptism of fire” that was “so much stressed at ‘Pickett Hill.’” He went on to show his deep affinity to the Holiness Movement. “I believe with Morrison ... that this present Holiness
Movement is the last call to an apostate church, the last call to prepare to meet Him before He comes to take His elect.”

As someone being molded in a Holiness intellectual community, Jones found himself identifying with the Holiness movement. In a letter he wrote to his mother in 1905 about a journey down to Mississippi for a Holiness convention, he said, “The preaching was extraordinary. It raised me off my seat several times. H. C. Morrison and others were at their best.” He shared with her that a mission board was being discussed amongst members of the Holiness Movement within Southern Methodism.

While a student at Asbury, Jones was clear that he had attained sanctification, and he found himself as an evangelist for it. Through his regular letter writing, he would frequently dialog with Miss Nellie Logan, someone who had been a spiritual mother to him in Baltimore and with whom he would correspond for decades. In his letters in this season, he would often describe entire sanctification to Miss Nellie and express his desire for her to receive it. He wrote,

> How I long to see you have it [sanctification] Miss Nellie, for which I have long been burdened in prayer knowing of what use you would be in the service of God. … I covet for you, both on your own account and for your usefulness in the service of the Master, a deeper experience in Him. The Lord grant it.

Jones also responded to her objections to entire sanctification. He would often give testimony of his own experience of it as part of his argument for it.

> Whatever may be said, thank God it has been a stay to me, for without Him in his sanctifying grace I could never have held out. If it is of no “use” then and strangely desired, but oh how sweet the deception. If in being shown wherein be falsely lies I am robbed of the holy hush, quiet and silent joy that floods my soul just now then I say let me remain in ignorance in order that I may enjoy Christ. Sanctification does do something for the ‘individual’ a present tender supreme love to Him just now in present experience testifies to this. Amen!

And Jones even spoke of how he perceived that his sanctification was essential for the empowerment of his evangelistic efforts.
When I think Miss Nellie of the possibilities of a soul dead to everything but God and His commands and knowing too that I am responsible to God for what I am and for what I may be and of the souls who will not be saved if I do not get the power of the Holy Ghost upon me I feel like laying on my face before God and crying for power with God for souls and when I think that this death is essential. ... I must have it at any cost of suffering and He is under obligation to give this power of the Spirit to use if I pay the price.32

Jones continued to write Miss Nellie for the next few decades. After he moved to India, he ceased trying to convince her to become sanctified in their correspondence. Instead, he focused on topics such as his mission encounters, their friendship, and appeals to for help and for pleas for more frequent letters. The fervor for preaching sanctification dissipates after graduation from Asbury College.

**Jones’s Sanctification**

Exactly when Stanley attained entire sanctification may be a point of discussion.33 From his spiritual autobiography, *A Song of Ascents*, published in 1968, it appears as if this took place a couple of years after his conversion when he was reading a copy of Hannah Whitall Smith’s *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life* he had borrowed from his church library. Upon getting to the forty second page, he sensed the Lord speaking to him. Dropping to his knees, he said,

“Now, Lord, what shall I do?” And he replied: “Will you give me your all?” And after a moment’s hesitation I replied: “Yes, Lord, of course I will. I will give you my all, all I know and all I don’t know.” Then he replied: “Then take my all, take the Holy Spirit.” I paused for a moment: my all for his all; my all was myself, the Holy Spirit. I saw as in a flash the offer. I eagerly replied: “I will take the Holy Spirit.” ...When suddenly I was filled—filled with the Holy Spirit. Wave after wave of the Spirit seemed to be going through me as a cleansing fire. I could only walk the floor with the tears of joy flowing down my cheeks. I could do nothing but praise him—and did. I knew this was no passing emotion; the Holy Spirit had come to abide with me forever.34
In this spiritual autobiography published over six decades after this experience, it is interesting to note that Jones does not use the term “entire sanctification” to describe what happened when he read Hannah Whitall Smith. In fact, the word “sanctification” only appears once in *A Song of Ascents*, and it only appears because Jones is quoting 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, and that word appears in the RSV.\(^{15}\)

In a testimony published in 1950, he also avoids the term “entire sanctification,” but instead he talks about being filled with the Holy Spirit.

I walked around the room, pushing my hands from me as if pushing away doubts which closed in on me. I did this for about ten minutes when suddenly I was filled. … The Holy Spirit had invaded me and had taken complete possession. He was cleansing and uniting at depths I couldn’t control. The subconscious mind, which is the special area of the work of the Holy Spirit, was being purified and empowered and united with the conscious mind. So that now conscious mind and subconscious mind were under a single control—the Holy Spirit. Life was on a permanently higher level.\(^{36}\)

However, Anne Mathews-Younes, Jones’s granddaughter and president of the E. Stanley Jones Foundation points to the moment while he was at Asbury. “In the course of his time in college, Jones received the ‘second blessing’ of being filled with the Holy Spirit.”\(^{37}\) \(^{38}\) Jones narrated this experience of praying with his roommates one evening in the Pickett home in *A Song of Ascents*.

[W]e were all swept off our feet by a visitation of the Holy Spirit. We were all filled, flooded by the Spirit. … I was drunk with God. I say “for three or four days,” for time seemed to have lost its significance. The last night I could only walk the floor and praise him. About two o’clock L.L. Pickett, the father of Bishop J. Waskom Pickett, came upstairs and said: “Stanley, he giveth his beloved sleep.” But sleep was out of the question.\(^{39}\)

Others may point to a prayer time in the Central Methodist Church in Lucknow in 1917. After eight and a half years in India, Jones had been sent back to the United States on furlough to recover from physical ailments and his “nervous collapses.”\(^{40}\)
I was at the back of the church kneeling in prayer, not for myself but for others, when God said to me: “Are you yourself ready for the work to which I have called you?” My reply: “No, Lord, I’m done for. I’ve reached the end of my resources and I can’t go on.” “If you’ll turn that problem over to me and not worry about it, I’ll take care of it.” My eager reply: “Lord, I close the bargain right here.” I arose from my knees knowing I was a well man…. I was possessed with life and health and peace…. It involved the total person. I was made well and whole—body, mind, and spirit. I was flooded with a sense of energy, of peace, of power, of adequacy. And I knew this was no wave of passing emotion that would recede and leave me with nothing but my own resources. God was not playing hide and seek, coming and going. This was being taken possession of by the Holy Spirit, the “Spirit of Truth” who should “abide forever.”

According to Jones, a marble tablet was installed in the church to mark the spot of his experience. An article in the Lucknow Observer about the Central Methodist Church referenced this experience in the church as the place where Jones “surrendered his life to Jesus.”

In his later life as he narrated his spiritual journey, Jones preferred to claim that he was “only a Christian-in-the-making,” a phrase that appears multiple times in A Song of Ascents and Victory Through Surrender. This seems to be in contrast to the “shorter way” of the Holiness Movement.

**Context of the “Shorter Way”**

“Entire sanctification” was the term of choice of the Holiness Movement in the early twentieth century and of the doctrine of Asbury College. Particularly in his early adult years while at Asbury and when he would attend Holiness conferences, Jones lived in a theological context that was one that was shaped by the “shorter way” theology of Phoebe Palmer. According to this theological framework, Bounds points out that “[e]ntire faith by a Christian is met immediately with deliverance from the inner propensity to sin by the Holy Spirit.”

Although Wesley often had a more gradual approach toward what he typically called “Christian Perfection,” Palmer “reinterpret[ed] Wesley’s assertion that God can ‘do the work of many years in a moment’ as evidence that new converts can very quickly attain perfection.” Although it has since been changed, the doctrinal statement of Asbury College (now...
University) that would have been operant during Jones’s days spoke of entire sanctification as “a definite, instantaneous work of grace wrought in the heart of a believer.” 46 47 This work of sanctification is accomplished after conversion “through faith in the cleansing merit or the blood of Jesus Christ, subsequent to regeneration and is attested by the Holy Spirit.”48

Did E. Stanley Jones hold to the “shorter way” of sanctification? In a sense, the answer could be yes, no, and entire sanctification is not enough. As was stated earlier of his own testimony, upon reading Hannah Whitall Smith, he was indeed filled with the Spirit. In one of the rare instances when he used the word “sanctification” after being a student at Asbury, Jones addressed Asbury’s students on the topic. In fact, he spoke of entire sanctification as essential to longevity of missionaries in India. If missionaries do not have it, the missionary “will sink back into mediocrity or go on to a full surrender to God and find resources in the cleansing and purifying of God in your life…. [Entire sanctification] may be a spiritual luxury to you [Asbury College students] but to us it is a minimum necessity, up against pagan life.”49

While Jones was still a student at Asbury, he began to question the sense of a single “second blessing.”

I found a thought by G. D. Watson that perfectly fits my experience and I find it my life explained….It is this: First we thirst for God’s Smile, then for His Image and finally for His essence and person. This is the first, second and “third blessing” if we may call it such. The first—his being found instantaneously The last—a progressive work lasting above us in His essence … if we have the first—it begets a thirst for the second and the second the third each step showing a higher and finer degree of thirst.50

In letter to Miss Nellie Logan, he said, “The Lord so flooded my soul in Church this morning that I forgot my hat until I got to the door.”51

As was stated earlier, Jones’s experience in the Central Methodist Church could also be seen as a subsequent filling of the Spirit.52 This was definitely a significant crisis for Jones. In some ways, it could have been that the practice of ministry in India showed him that the way entire sanctification was taught in the Holiness Movement was insufficient for his needs. A few years after his nervous collapses, Jones would talk about the inadequacy of his Western theology.
When I first went to India I was trying to hold a very long line—a line that stretched clear from Genesis to Revelation, on to Western Civilization and to the Western Christian Church. ...The sheer storm and stress of things had driven me to a place that I could hold. Then I saw that there is where I should have been all the time. I saw that the gospel lies in the person of Jesus, that he himself is the Good News, that my one task was to live and to present him. My task was simplified.\(^5\)

It appears as if Jones moved to a very Christo-centric theology. After his prayer time in Lucknow, Jones realized what was most important. “So when I shortened my line and took my stand at Jesus, I passed from the verbal to the vital, the inconclusive to the conclusive. This had very wide implications. I needed no longer to try to defend Western civilization or Western forms of Christianity.”\(^5\)

For Jones, the Holiness Movement was not all wrong, but it missed the mark on its emphasis. It focused too much on a personal experience of entire sanctification to the neglect of simply being surrendered to Jesus. In his devotional book *In Christ*, Jones addresses this.

Sanctification comes through surrender to Jesus Christ, and remains as long as we continue in Christ Jesus. If I say, “I am sanctified,” instead of saying, “I am sanctified in Christ Jesus,” then I am calling attention to an experience instead of to the One Who brings the experience. It makes me experience-centered instead of Christ-centered—self-conscious instead of Christ-conscious. When I am self-conscious the experience fades; when I am Christ-conscious the experience remains and grows. ... As long as sanctification remains in Christ Jesus it is sanctification. When sanctification gets out of Him, it is “cranktification.”\(^5\)

Jones seems more concerned about a life surrendered to Jesus than an experience in a crisis. “Entire sanctification would be the life of Christ entirely dominant in the soul.”\(^5\)

Jones had stronger issues with the Holiness Movement than the theological concept of entire sanctification. In his book, *Christ of Every Road*, first published in 1930, he states “My only quarrel is that the sanctification, as usually presented, has not been sufficiently entire.” He then goes on to critique the individualistic nature of Holiness theology.
If it is to be entire, it should begin at the individual man and go as far as his relationships-social, economic, racial, and international—extend. Then, and then only, would it be entire sanctification. I am committed to the personal and the social applications of the gospel, nevertheless we must face the fact that Jesus did not undertake to make Jerusalem a safe environment for their faith before he dared send the disciples into it. He changed them, and they went out to change the whole structure of human society. His method was a man.57

Jones dared to bring in a holistic Gospel at a time when evangelicals and social gospel advocates did not typically mix. Twelve years later, he stepped into the pulpit in Hughes Auditorium at Asbury College.

May I tell you what I should like to see added to this interpretation of the Christ of the Asbury Road? You stop short on the word ‘entire.’ It is not entire enough. You have limited it to a very definitely personal application. It lacks a great social application. I know some people have nervous chills going up and down their backs when I talk like that. I’m going to talk about it anyhow. I’m not going to think one thing and say another. Life is one. You can’t tell where the individual ends and the social begins.58

He does not have issues with the concept of entire sanctification. He takes on the Holiness Movement, especially as it was manifested at Asbury College. The way it stresses entire sanctification is focused too much on a personal experience over submission to Jesus. Entire sanctification as it had been taught was much too individualistic. In his Asbury address, Jones went on to critique the emotionalism that is experienced when the Spirit comes upon people, and then he says, “I believe in getting happy. I believe in going to Heaven, but my brother, if that is the only program that Christianity has for the redemption of the world, it is not big enough.”59

He explained that entire sanctification belongs to the collective and is for the collective. “An individual gospel without a social gospel is a soul without a body. A social gospel without an individual gospel is a body without a soul. One is a ghost and the other a corpse, I don’t want one of them. I want both, I want a gospel that comprehends the whole of life, that changes the collective will.”60
For Jones, holiness must include how people treat one another and how people speak to injustices. Jones expressed his own desire for social holiness to the Asbury College community in a poignant way during the next decade. He resigned as a trustee because of its structural racism.61

Jones also critiqued the pretense of the Holiness Movement. During the cultural revolution of the late 1960s, Asbury took a conservative stance toward the countercultural practices of the day. In 1968, Jones granted an interview with the *Asbury Collegian*, the student newspaper. Ray Hundley, the student interviewer, questioned Jones's views about some practices on campus. “What do you think about the outward holiness such as longer dresses, less makeup, and not going to movies that are pressures on us at Asbury?” Rather than staying out of the discussions about the community standards at Asbury, Jones spoke in ways that could have been perceived as subversive to the administration and would have ruffled feathers in the broader Holiness Movement of the time. Quoting Galatians 6:15, Jones said, “Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” 62 He went on to explain how he had been in Sweden with committed Christians with long hair and beards. “[L]ong hair and beards availeth nothing and short hair and short beards availeth nothing, but the new creature. So, I believe that outwardism can be a snare and a disillusion.”63 To Jones, sanctification was not about performing in a way that helps people perceive one is sanctified, it is much more. Jones was concerned about living a life surrendered to Christ.

What are we to make of E. Stanley Jones’s views on sanctification? When he was a new convert and young college student at Asbury, he was clearly influenced by the shorter way theology of instantaneous entire sanctification. Showing the favor of some holiness leaders of the day, one could have imagined that he would have continued with the same evangelistic zeal for the Holiness Movement within Methodism. However, as he transitioned to missionary life, entire sanctification became somewhat of a secondary theological concept for him. On the one hand, he saw sanctification as foundational for missionary life. However, he does not speak on the subject very frequently. In fact, he often seems to challenge the ways that the concept had been received in the Holiness Movement. Entire sanctification as it had been used in the Holiness Movement was much too personal and led to focusing on externalities.

As he gave his sage wisdom in his spiritual autobiography in the twilight of his life, perhaps a continual life of surrender and the work of the
Holy Spirit summarizes Jones’s views on sanctification. “I shall sing my song of the pilgrimage I am making from what I was to what God is making of me. I say ‘what God is making of me,’ for the best that I can say about myself is that I’m a Christian-in-the-making. Not yet “made,” but only in the making at eighty-three.”64

End notes


3 “One Hope,” Time, 12 December 1938, 47. This appellation has often been attributed to Jones. It must be noted that this was not a “Person of the Year” type of article, but a passing statement in a three-paragraph article on the “Religion” page.


8 Smith, Flames of Living Fire, introduction.


13 Jones, *A Song of Ascents*.


27 Letter to Miss Nellie Logan dated January 4, 1904 from Asbury Theological Seminary Information Services Special Collections Department Manuscripts Collection E. Stanley Jones Papers ARC1982-002, box 2, folder 3.

28 Letter to Miss Nellie Logan dated March [1906?] from Asbury Theological Seminary Information Services Special Collections Department Manuscripts Collection E. Stanley Jones Papers ARC 1982-002, box 2, folder 3.

29 Letter to his Mother, dated Dec 2 1905, from Asbury Theological Seminary Information Services Special Collections Department Manuscripts Collection E. Stanley Jones Papers ARC 1982-002, box 2, folder 3.


31 Letter to Miss Nellie Logan letter dated Mar. [1906?]). Emphases in original.

32 Letter to Miss Nellie Logan, dated Nov 5, 1904, from Asbury Theological Seminary Information Services Special Collections Department Manuscripts Collection E. Stanley Jones Papers ARC 1982-002, box 2, folder 3. Emphases in original.

33 Jones talks about other crisis moments and other instances of being filled with the Spirit.


38 Being “filled with the Spirit” is language used by the Holiness Movement. In fact, several terms are used interchangeably. Christopher Bounds points out, “Over the course of Church history this work of the Spirit has been called such names as “Christian perfection,” “perfect love,” “Baptism of the Holy Spirit,” “entire sanctification,” and “fullness of the Spirit.” Arnett uses the same list and adds “Heart Purity,” “Full Salvation, and Christian Holiness.”
39 Jones, A Song of Ascents, 68-69.

40 ibid., 86-87.

41 ibid., 89-90.

42 ibid., 89.


44 Bounds, “What Is the Range of Current Teaching on Sanctification and What Ought a Wesleyan to Believe on This Doctrine?”: 36.


47 At some point, Asbury College (later University) changed its position on entire sanctification. On Asbury’s current website, this statement now reads, “That entire sanctification is that act of divine grace, through the baptism with the Holy Spirit, by which the heart is cleansed from all sin and filled with the pure love of God. This is a definite, cleansing work of grace in the heart of a believer, subsequent to conversion, resulting from full consecration and faith in the cleansing merit of the blood of Jesus Christ.” Asbury no longer believes that it must be an “instantaneous work of God wrought in the heart of a believer.”

48 ibid.


50 Letter to Miss Nellie Logan, dated Nov 24 1904 from Asbury Theological Seminary Information Services Special Collections Department Manuscripts Collection E. Stanley Jones Papers ARC 1982-002, box 2, folder 3. Punctuation and emphases as in original.

51 Letter to Miss Nellie Logan letter dated Asbury College Mar. [1906??]. Emphases in original.

52 Jones, A Song of Ascents, 89-90.


54 Jones, A Song of Ascents, 94.


57 Ibid., 186.


59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.


63 Ibid.

64 Jones, *A Song of Ascents*, 17.

65 Bounds, “What Is the Range of Current Teaching on Sanctification and What Ought a Wesleyan to Believe on This Doctrine?”. 35.

66 Arnett, *Entire Sanctification*, 137.

Robert A. Danielson


Abstract:
Holiness missions is an area of mission history that is often understudied, yet it can provide insight into the growth of the Church in various parts of the world. This article examines the life of Sidney W. Edwards, a Holiness missionary who was a key part of H. C. Morrison’s missionary efforts. He served as the missionary of a mission H. C. Morrison founded in Cuba, as one of the first Holiness missions in the Caribbean. He then went on to serve in Puerto Rico with the Methodist Episcopal Church in planting churches in some of the mountainous regions of that island. Finally, Edwards became the pioneer missionary for the Methodist Episcopal Church in Costa Rica, almost single-handedly starting the Methodist Church in that nation and running it until various problems and a scandal led to his leaving the mission field. Edwards was also involved in a very early evangelistic tour of Central America, and so he becomes a key figure in the early mission history of the Spanish-speaking Caribbean and Central America. His story helps illustrate the problems Holiness missionaries faced in terms of finances, leadership of the mission, and dealing with family issues from the mission field. His example also demonstrates how early Holiness missionaries sometimes made the decision to become part of more traditional denominational mission agencies.

Keywords: Holiness mission, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Sidney W. Edwards

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Introduction

Understanding Holiness missions is often a complex task. Many of the missionaries who entered the field for the Holiness Movement were relatively obscure and are often difficult to research. Yet, sometimes they played a crucial part of mission history and opened works with significant impact. This article explores the life of one such missionary, who provides an interesting connection between Asbury Theological Seminary and the Methodist Church in Costa Rica. The story traces a missionary passion of H. C. Morrison, the founder of Asbury Theological Seminary, for Cuba, which would go on to impact Puerto Rico and ultimately Costa Rica. It is a story of both missionary success and tragic missionary failure, but it helps to show how Holiness missions operated in the opening of mission fields in the Caribbean and in Central America.

Sidney William Edwards was born on July 27, 1878 in Cross Keys, Union County in South Carolina. The son of farm laborers, Albert and Fannie Edwards, Sidney’s life was transformed from serving as a soldier in the Spanish-American War in Cuba with the 7th Calvary, Company K. While stationed in Cuba, he heard the preaching of Kentucky evangelist, Henry Clay Morrison, who had come to Cuba to found a mission in early 1900 in Cárdenas, Cuba. By March 14th Morrison sailed out of Cuba after preaching among U.S. soldiers at a Y.M.C.A. hall. In reflecting back on this trip in 1904, Morrison wrote,

*I little dreamed that God was going to let me be the first man to unfurl the white banner of perfect love on the Island, and preach the first sermon on holiness, as a subsequent work of grace to the people. I would rather have done this than to have commanded the American army at San Juan Hill. Amen. Bro. Edwards, our missionary at Cárdenas, was the first man on the Island to receive the second definite work of grace.¹*

According to his 1917 passport application, Edwards had been in Cuba from January 1899 to January 1901 (after being discharged from the military). Most likely influenced by Morrison, Edwards enrolled as a student at Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky from 1901-1902. The College kept records of who attended at this time, but did not record if they actually graduated or just took classes. By early 1904, Sidney Edwards (1878-1962) was leading the mission in Cárdenas, Cuba and Morrison was raising money for the mission in The Pentecostal Herald.² This established Edwards as one of the
first Holiness missionaries on the island. Edwards would follow M. L. (Max Leon) Pardo (1867-1928), who served the mission from 1900 to 1903.

While the entire story is not known, Edwards married a young Cuban lady, Margarita Rosa Sacerio Rosello, who was born May 14, 1886 in Havana, Cuba. They were married June 20, 1904 in Cárdenas, Cuba. The couple would have five children, which help show the extent of their ministry together: Lillian born July 6, 1905 in Louisville, Kentucky, Geneva born March 16, 1907 in Cárdenas, Cuba, Evangelina born July 23, 1909 in Juyuya, Puerto Rico, Dorothy born July 16, 1911 in Utuado, Puerto Rico, and Margarita born April 3, 1915 in Utuado, Puerto Rico. Yet, Edwards greatest achievement might have come from his final mission assignment in Costa Rica, even though he stayed there less time than in his ministry in Cuba and Puerto Rico and had to leave there in disgrace. But it is helpful to explore Edwards’ work in each country separately to understand his development as a missionary, and indeed one of the paths often taken by early Holiness missionaries through the work of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Holiness Mission in Cuba (1904-1908)

Edwards was briefly described in an account of the Holiness Union of the South convention held in Meridian, Mississippi in 1905, by C.F. Wimberly who wrote,

The pleasures of the day were greatly enhanced by the arrival of Bro. S.W. Edwards and his beautiful Cuban wife. Bro. Edwards is the Pentecostal missionary at Cárdenas, Cuba. Seven years ago, Bro. Edwards went to Cuba with his gun to fight for Cuban liberty, and while serving as a soldier boy, was sanctified under the preaching of Bro. Morrison. From that hour he began to study and prepare for a liberty to the Cubans that would make them free indeed. He took the first Protestant printing press to the Island, and with it, he has printed tracts by thousands... God can do more for the salvation of a people, with one soldier boy, fully saved, than with scholarly emissaries, endorsed by bishops, university faculties, and missionary boards, without the holy anointing.

Edwards sent in regular reports to Morrison’s paper, The Pentecostal Herald, and frequently reported preaching in three different parts of Cárdenas. His additional work involved visiting and distributing tracts and Bibles, or portions of the Bible in Spanish. Edwards also enjoyed using military
imagery for his work as he wrote, “By the grace of God, I have raised a hostile flag to all sin in the island of Cuba; and by His grace will wage an unrelenting warfare against it until the victory is won, and the warm seas that bathe her rocky shores sing the sweet anthem of the free; or till I am honorably discharged from the service. Then I will lay my gun aside, pull off my uniform, and calmly leave the field, to receive a welcome reception from my loved ones at home.”

By February of 1904, Edwards wrote about a revival breaking out in Cárdenas where the size of the church building they rented could not hold the people, so he moved the pulpit into the doorway so he could preach to the standing-room only crowd inside the church and those gathered outside as well. As the year progressed, Edwards had the help of Raymond C. Moreno, the son of a Cuban professor who received several years of education in the U.S. sponsored by holiness people, and the work continued to grow with the help of some 700 copies of Bibles, testaments, and gospels from the American Bible Society (which Edwards called his “ammunition”).
By the end of 1904, the mission in Cárdenas was quite successful. There was a new mission hall created in May from renting two houses and removing a wall so that it could seat 500 people.\(^7\) E. E. Hubbard and his wife Laura, who ran an orphanage in Matanzas relocated to Cárdenas and soon had 75 children in their care. A Cuban Holiness Association had been formed with E. L. Latham of Matanzas as the president, E. E. Hubbard as the vice president, S. W. Edwards as the secretary, and F. E. Blanes of Cárdenas (apparently a director of a museum) as the treasurer.\(^8\) Contact had been made with a holiness evangelist, T. L. Adams who visited the area, and he and his wife became correspondents advocating for the mission work. Outreach work in the community of Hato Nuevo had begun with some of Edwards’ largest crowds yet (there is some indication this area was where his father-in-law lived) and the mission had received a portable organ.\(^9\) By December, E. L. Latham had also relocated from Matanzas and was listed as a new missionary working alongside Edwards.\(^10\) Edwards had also written a longer article on the importance of prayer and missions, in which he wrote,

If holiness people were to get the burden of prayer and the spirit of missions and begin to agonize to God, and open their pocket-books, would it be impossible for God to cause a great upheaval in Cuba within the next five years? Suppose we set a day for prayer and fasting that God may raise up workers and means for the speedy evangelization of Cuba? I say, speedy, because the work is urgent. We are not responsible for those who lived a hundred years ago, neither are we responsible for those who will live a hundred years hence; but a fearful responsibility rests upon us for those who now inhabit this fair isle. By bringing those to Christ we shall solve a problem in regard to those who shall live in Cuba a hundred years hence.\(^11\)

By February of 1905 Edwards appealed to readers of *The Pentecostal Herald* to help in supplying a building for the rapidly growing mission.

The time has come when we ought to move forward in our work here. House rent is exceedingly high in Cuba. We pay twenty-six dollars every month for house rent; that is more than three hundred dollars a year, and our chapel and living apartments are not at all what they ought to be. There is a corner lot now for sale only a few blocks from the center of the city, and I believe the best located lot for us in Cárdenas, and it is remarkably
cheap. A lot near this one and not so well located for us is valued at one thousand dollars. But this lot can now be bought for six hundred dollars,- really we can buy it for four hundred and pay the other two hundred in the future, or never pay it- just as we prefer, only that we will have to pay ten dollars every year until we pay the other two hundred.

I am praying the Lord to touch the hearts of the people to help us buy this. We have received one hundred dollars with which to buy the lot and have deposited it in the bank, so we only lack three hundred dollars. A Cuban gentleman who loves our work, and who owns a rock quarry, has kindly offered us all the stone we need to build with. We ought to take advantage of these things. This lot is so cheap that it will not remain unsold very long. I understand that a merchant is now trying to sell some of his property in order to buy this lot and build on it. Let us lay the foundation of a monument to the blood of Jesus to cleanse from all sin, by buying this lot, and then let us put two or three men in the quarry getting out stone with which to build the Lord's house. Remember that to get this lot we must not delay; in this, time means much money. If you want to have a share in this work send what you can to the Pentecostal Publishing Company, to Brother Morrison, or to us, only do not delay. Remember we only lack three hundred dollars, but it must be had at once or the lot will be sold.12

While Morrison was interested in the mission work in Cuba, he had a larger goal in mind, which required establishing the Holiness Union of the South. Part of the work of this organization would be to take on Holiness mission work, including the mission in Cuba. In September 1905, Edwards also added some of his thoughts about the potential of work with the Holiness Union. He noted, “Our Holiness Union must not think of having just one little mission station in Cuba. We must establish a great printing plant here at Cárdenas, and sow this country down in holiness literature. We must have a home for holiness here in Cárdenas. But we must have a score of holiness missionaries who will follow God's plan, that is, get the people saved and then educate them. We must have missionaries who will labor to make the Cubans Christians, not Protestants” (italics in the original).13 Edwards went on to report the soon arrival of a printing press, but the need for $300 for printing material. One imagines this goal was probably due to the direct help of Morrison and his Pentecostal Printing Company work in Louisville, Kentucky, which printed The Pentecostal Herald.
By May of 1906 the oversight of the Cuba mission shifted to the Holiness Union, and Morrison became more concerned with the overarching work of that organization. But the work of the Cuban mission remained connected, especially through *The Pentecostal Herald* as the voice of the Holiness Union. Throughout 1906 Edwards was busy with a new project, the arrival of the printing press. By June, Edwards had created a weekly Spanish language holiness paper in Cuba (possibly the first Spanish language holiness paper in Latin America) called *El Cristiano Pentecostes*, and had a distribution to 3,000 readers. In addition, he was printing out thousands of Spanish language tracts, which were being requested from Spain, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Central America as well as occasionally from South America and parts of the U.S. Edwards even dreamed of creating a Pentecostal Bible and Tract Depository in Cuba! As Morrison wrote in reporting on the third Holiness Union Convention in Atlanta, Georgia that year,

Bro. S. W. Edwards, our missionary from Cuba, is here in excellent health with a good report, and full of enthusiasm for the spread of full salvation in Cuba. Through the means of the weekly full-salvation paper he is publishing, he no doubt is touching more people than any other score of missionaries on the Island, and the hungry people of other Spanish speaking countries are eagerly taking the paper... The government authorities of Cuba are so well-pleased with the moral tone of this paper, and its good effect upon the people that they have permitted it to go through the post-office free of any charge.

At this same convention, the Board of the Holiness Union listed new missionaries, including Bro. Sarmast of Persia, two brothers of the last name Roberts who were planning to go to India, and Bro. James Taylor and his wife Sister Flora Phelps who were leaving to do evangelization in the West Indies.

In early 1907, Edwards returned from the Holiness Union convention to Cuba via New York where he picked up much needed printing supplies. In February, M. L. Pardo returned to Cárdenas and reported that the mission was reaching 4,000 people a week. Pardo returned to his former position leading the Cárdenas mission work in March, allowing Edwards to focus more attention on the printing and evangelistic work. In addition, Edwards reported on a third missionary convention being held
with all of the evangelical churches in Cuba. By September, Pardo was starting a school in Cádiz with a $2 a month tuition. In October of 1907, Edwards wrote of increasing anti-Protestant opposition from Catholic leaders, in particular over a lengthy drought that year. Catholic priests blamed the cause of the drought on Cubans allowing Protestants onto the island. In 1908, The Pentecostal Herald suddenly becomes silent about Cuba, focusing instead on other missionary endeavors. Sidney Edwards then suddenly reappears in Puerto Rico by the end of 1908. It is difficult to discern exactly what happened, but there are some clues.

Brother Sarmast, the Holiness Union missionary to Persia had a letter published in The Pentecostal Herald in August of 1909 in which he reported that he was returning to the United States to raise funds. He wrote, "Three years ago while I was working in Persia, a letter came to me saying that the holiness work in Persia had been taken charge of by the Southern Holiness Union. I said Glory to God. Our duty is to preach, and God will take care of us. But last winter I received another letter telling me that the Holiness Union had dropped the work and asked me to join some church-the hardest temptation I ever had in my life." This letter was followed by an official decision about the mission work of the Holiness Union of the South coming out of their convention in Chattanooga, Tennessee in October of 1909. President L. P. Brown announced, "The prayerful consensus of opinion of our Missionary Board and Convention is that our work is not to pile up brick and mortar, establish churches and support local pastors, but to spread Scriptural holiness through deeply spiritual and entirely sanctified holiness evangelists and native workers who are to come in direct contact with the people." It can be assumed that the successful mission in Cuba received the same type of letter as Sarmast. Sidney Edwards had a young family to support, and with a lack of funding from the Holiness Union, he seems to have joined the Methodist Episcopal Church and transferred to their work in Puerto Rico.

It is important to remember that H. C. Morrison was not the only person to enter the mission field in Cuba. The end of the Spanish-American War in 1898 had opened both Cuba and Puerto Rico to missionary work as their administration fell under the government of the United States (the same was true of the Philippines in Asia). Suddenly, areas controlled by the old Spanish Empire, which had restricted access to Roman Catholicism, had ended, and the doors were open to Latin America. As Louis Pérez wrote, "By the time U.S. military rule over Cuba came to an end in May 1902, no
less than a score of Protestant denominations had inaugurated evangelical activities in Cuba, including Northern and Southern Baptists, Southern Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, the Disciples of Christ, Quakers, Pentecostalists, and Congregationalists. In fact, so many missionaries arrived in Cuba at one time that denominational competition quickly got out of hand.”  

American (or Northern) Baptists, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians arrived in 1899 shortly after the Methodists in 1898, with the Quakers arriving in 1900 and the Pentecostal Mission (a holiness group which joined the Nazarene Church in 1915) in 1902.

This early period of time was an intense period of training for missionaries entering the work in the former Spanish Empire. The missionaries of the Cárdenas mission scattered with the rapid end of the work. By June of 1908 E.L. Latham had left to take an American congregation in the Canal Zone, and he was expecting to go into the interior of Panama to preach to the natives by the end of December as an independent holiness missionary. By the 1910 census, M.L. Pardo and his family were living in Waco, Texas, where he was serving as a minister. Edwards, took a similar path, but remained on the mission field. There is some speculation that the Cuban mission became part of the Methodist Episcopal Church South (MECS) in Cuba, but this is doubtful. It is unclear how Morrison felt about this change in the Cuban mission at the time, but he had reflected on this earlier in 1904, when he wrote, “Some suggested that the mission work at Cárdenas be turned over to the church (in this case the MECS). Under existing circumstances, we could not consider such a proposition. The holiness movement needs a Port of Entry, and a coaling station on that Island.”  

Morrison had previously written in the same article a strong criticism about Methodist missionaries on Cuba not having had the sanctification experience. In looking at Conference accounts of the MECS mission in Cuba, there is no sign of the mission moving into Cárdenas at this time. The Presbyterians had been active since 1899 in Cárdenas, so possibly they took over the mission work. Morrison was part of the Board of Missions of the Holiness Union, and seems not to have defended the work in Cuba, which is unusual. Rather, he embarked on an evangelistic world tour of holiness missions in late 1909 paid for by the Holiness Union of the South. Morrison was exhibiting what their new missiological position would look like, but meanwhile, Sidney Edwards would have to start over again in Puerto Rico.
Methodist Episcopal Church Mission Work in Puerto Rico (1908-1916)

Edwards’ first letter from Puerto Rico appeared in The Pentecostal Herald in November of 1908 in which he indicated some people might be surprised at his current location. He missed Cuba, but,

God has put His seal upon our work here; the first week after landing we began a revival at Culebra Island; it lasted just one week. Fifty were converted and over one hundred professed to have been blessed and expressed a desire to be saved. From Culebra we went to Vieques, or Crab Island, where the Lord most wonderfully blessed us. We were in Vieques nearly two months and the power of God was felt in every service; here we found a large number of English-speaking negroes of the British West Indies; many of them Christians and on fire for God. Some of them may be converts of Bro. Taylor. We held English services occasionally for them. My! How they could pray. We kept no account of professions; nineteen joined the M. E. Church.

From Vieques we came to Guayama where we are at present battling for God. The Superintendent of the M. E. Missions here is an old time Methodist; he believes, teaches, professes, and I think possesses the blessing of entire sanctification. We will continue our present work until conference the last of January, when we will be given a circuit of from twelve to twenty appointments, scattered over the mountains and separated by rapid flowing rivers. The circuits here in many respects resemble the circuits of the mountain districts of Kentucky, save that they are larger and much more densely populated.27

Edwards does not seem to cast any blame on Morrison for his move, and he continues to send in reports to The Pentecostal Herald, emphasizing his holiness commitment, even within the Methodist Episcopal Church and their missionary structure.

In January of 1909, he wrote that he was in the district of Guayama but planning to move to Arroyo in a week. By March, he wrote, “Though having been ordained a local-deacon several years ago, the time did not seem to have come for me to join the conference until recently. Last December my brethren of the Gulf Conference kindly admitted me on trial. And last week I received my first appointment from a bishop. I was sent to Juyuya. God help us to make it Hallelujah before the end of the year.” He continued to note that this was a large mountainous district in the interior where coffee was grown. There had been no American missionary before and he would have 20 appointments with three native helpers. He needed
to raise money for his own horse to travel about, and so he was asking for contributions. By the Fall of 1909, Edwards was reporting on a local religious movement by a man with a Roman Catholic background who claimed to be the Apostle John and had gathered thousands of followers encouraging them to vote for an anti-American political party. He also had established six Sunday Schools and one day school with over 500 children and an Epworth League for the young people.

A Postcard of a Methodist Episcopal Sunday School in Puerto Rico, 1922
(From the Collection of the Author)

The Methodist Episcopal Church mission work in Puerto Rico had begun in 1900 and by 1910 it contained 210 congregations on the island with 16 mission centers, 50 local preachers, and 5,500 members in the church, and around 5,050 additional people attending services. In the annual report of the Puerto Rican mission for 1910, it noted,

Jayuya, the real mountain district of the Mission, where Sidney W. Edwards, our Methodist Andrew Jackson, is the district missionary. Much of the unique and unusual is in Edwards, but he is a factor of tremendous energy. He knows how to take the initiative, and some of the results achieved in his district this year are little less than marvelous. His Epworth and Junior Leagues are the talk of the town. The Roman Church even borrow his Juniors for funeral services and, wise man that he is,
he lends them to the priest, and gains favor thereby with
the enemy. He insists that his young people must know
things, and there are not idlers in his church.30

By the following year’s report, Edwards was making stellar advancements in
Jayuya. The report noted,

Jayuya District evangelization reads like a romance,
and its eccentric missionary is often a law unto himself,
but Sidney W. Edwards has become an inspiration to
many. Edwards is from South Carolina, where there are
more Protestant church members to the hundred than
in any other State in the Union, which perhaps is the
cause of the irritation when he looks into the caldron of
superstition. He holds a unique place in the community,
and has more influence even over civic matters than
all other residents combined. Yet this power is never
abused… Jayuya leads the mission in conversions
and membership growth—a gain over last year of 539.
An epidemic of typhoid fever in the summer months
developed into a plague, and relief came by our pastor’s
heroic effort in directing the attention of the government
authorities to the situation.31

The report from 1912 notes once again Edwards’ evangelistic
accomplishments in leading in membership growth, noting in the area he
oversees “we have never seen so great a fruitage” and of Edwards himself,
“For three years the missionary leadership has been given Sidney W.
Edwards—a combination of Southern fire and Northern sense—who apes no
one, but is ever himself. He ever crowds on through apparent defeat and
wins the goal.”32 In 1912, Sidney Edwards also teamed up with another of
the early Holiness Union of the South missionaries, James M. Taylor for
an adventurous exploration of Central America. Taylor was an evangelist
who travelled and preached in many locations, but early on was focused
on the English-speaking West Indies. For his expedition to Guatemala,
El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama in 1912 he took Edwards along as a
Spanish translator and fellow evangelist. This tour, presented in Taylor’s
book, On Muleback Through Central America, represents one of the first
glimpses of holiness missions on the ground in Central America.33 Edwards
plays a major role in the book, not just for his knowledge of Spanish and
ability to deal with local officials, but also his creative ability to adapt to
situations, such as an occasion in Honduras when the missionaries were
worried some of the natives hired to carry their materials were planning to rob them, and Edwards convinced them his flashlight was actually a new type of weapon which could be used in the dark. At the time of the 1913 report on the Puerto Rican mission, Edwards was still working with Taylor, and the account notes, “He (Edwards) is engaged in an evangelistic tour of Central America with the Rev. James M. Taylor of Knoxville, Tenn., serving principally as interpreter to Mr. Taylor. Brother Taylor is one of the best friends of our Mission, supporting part of our work. Brother Edwards is still with him in Central America, so far as we know, Guatemala, Panama, and other places, preaching the gospel.”

By 1914 Sidney Edwards was the chairman of the Committee on Evangelism for the Puerto Rican mission. In that same conference, he was also ordained an elder of the Puerto Rican Mission Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Edwards continued to work in the difficult mountain areas of Utuado and Jayuya. In 1915 the conference report noted, “The Rev. S. W. Edwards is in charge of this large, mountainous center, and over 40,000 people scattered along these mountains, depend on us for the Gospel. Brother Edwards has recently, in one year, passed a satisfactory examination of the three years’ course of law study, so that now he is an attorney-at-law and we shall call him the Rev. Attorney Edwards.” In the 1916 conference report, Edwards is listed as ending his service in February of 1916. It notes that he applied for a change of location, which was granted. In the renewal application for his passport, Edwards gives as his residence the address of College Heights, Meridian, Mississippi. This continues to connect him to the Holiness Movement through Meridian College, which along with its founder John Wesley Beeson had been closely involved with H. C. Morrison and the Holiness Union of the South. A letter from the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church attached to the passport application noted that Edwards would be serving as a missionary in Costa Rica.

**Methodist Episcopal Church Mission Work in Costa Rica (1918-1921)**

While Edwards’ experience in Cuba was a training period, his work in Puerto Rico helped refine his abilities as an evangelist, and so he was ready when he was asked to enter mission work in Costa Rica as a pioneering missionary for the Methodist Episcopal Church. Methodists had entered Costa Rica in 1917, with George Amos Miller from Panama and
Eduardo Zapata from Mexico. Miller soon returned to Panama, but Zapata founded the “Church of the Redeemer” in San José in the private home of Modesto Le Roy, and was replaced in 1918 by Sidney Edwards. According to Barclay, Edwards

... got off the train in San José at four o’clock on Tuesday afternoon, 22 January 1918, found himself a hotel room, went out and looked up Modesto Le Roy, went back to the hotel for supper, returned to Le Roy’s at eight, and held a prayer meeting with five people. The next night, Edwards held another prayer meeting in the Le Roy home, with twelve present. Following a careful explanation of membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church, all twelve stepped forward and stood in a semicircle around Edwards to signify their candidacy for membership- “twelve as bright conversions as I have ever seen,” said Edwards, who also saw the streets and alleys of San José as “just full of humanity needing salvation.” This he called the beginning of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Costa Rica. Prayer meetings continued nightly at Modesto Le Roy’s, winning more converts- young men and women- until on his first weekend in Costa Rica, Edwards received twenty-five probationers.36

Within a short time, Edwards established additional congregations in Cartago and Heredia and rented a building for the congregation in San José and equipped it from his own personal funds. Soon the hall was overwhelmed with more than 100 candidates for membership. The “Church of the Redeemer” moved into a building on Avenida Central in 1919. Some administrators seemed worried Edwards was doing too much too quickly, but an account of his work in Costa Rica from Methodist Mission Secretary North noted, “He is doing one of the finest bits of organizing and training work that I have seen anywhere. He is following the discipline literally and developing a church on strictly old-fashioned, John Wesley, class-meeting lines. He has seven classes with leaders and the leaders report every week on every member and collect the contributions.”37
By 1919, Edwards and his family were in Meridian, Mississippi again while applying for a passport. While Edwards did not remain long in Costa Rica (leaving in 1921), few would guess that this pioneering Methodist missionary (arguably the founder of the first Methodist congregations in Costa Rica) was trained and inspired through Morrison's short holiness mission in Cuba and through Asbury College. A letter by J.A. Brownlee from Costa Rica, published in *The Pentecostal Herald* in 1921 also noted the connection, as he wrote, “Asbury College is well represented here. Rev. S. W. Edwards, Rev. and Mrs. James N. Smith, and Mrs. Brownlee and I are Asbury folks and none of us ashamed of the doctrines taught there." Unfortunately, the situation in Costa Rica would decline rapidly and lead to Edwards leaving the mission field in disgrace.

The Failure of Edwards’ Mission in Costa Rica

The failure of Sidney Edwards in Costa Rica is a complex issue, and is not easily addressed. From an analysis of the correspondence related to the mission during 1919 and 1921, there appear to be three major problems
which led to Edwards leaving the mission field. These problems can be grouped into financial aspects, administrative aspects, and family/personal aspects. These problems built upon each other resulting in a perfect storm of issues which led to the destruction of the Edwards family and a major scandal in the local church. The Mission Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church worked primarily to cover up the damage of the issues in an attempt to minimize their impact on the Costa Rican mission, but even the Mission Board itself was divided over some of the issues. Important missiological lessons can be learned from this case in terms of understanding the benefits and problems between the traditional Holiness faith-based independent approach to missions and the denominational salary-based approach. Sidney Edwards clearly had problems making this transition.

Financial Aspects

The first sign of problems came at the very start of the Costa Rican mission. As an independent missionary in Cuba, Edwards was used to raising his own support through the help of H. C. Morrison and The Pentecostal Herald. In Puerto Rico, Edwards maintained a certain level of autonomy, even in the Methodist Episcopal Church, as is witnessed by his efforts to raise his own money for a horse to help him in his mission work in the mountains. The situation in Costa Rica was very different. Edwards was not a full missionary of the Board, rather he was a contract missionary who had switched his conference affiliation to the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church before going to Costa Rica. He also spent some time raising his own support before he left. Much of the correspondence between Edwards and the Board office in New York tend to deal with this issue.

The Costa Rican mission at the start fell under the control of the mission in Panama, and so Edwards was instructed that all the support he raised had to be sent to the New York office, which would then send it to Panama, which would then forward funds to Costa Rica. As a result of this awkward arrangement, Edwards actually received no funds for his first three months in Costa Rica, being forced to fund all of his work from his own pocket. At one point, in desperation, Edwards took out fifty dollars of the Board’s money in order to survive. He notified the office and apologized, since he knew he was not supposed to do this, but the New York office was not happy with his action. In addition, Edwards continued on occasion to receive funds from supporters and use these funds and then report the funds
to the New York office instead of always having the funds go through New York first. All of this created financial tensions between Edwards and the New York office, but also with Edwards' immediate superiors in Panama.

To make this issue even more complicated, it seems that Edwards published his own small paper, called *Onward*, in which he apparently expressed financial needs for the work in Costa Rica. The New York office complained to Edwards that any appeals should be approved by them and they also wanted him to send them copies of the paper. He seems to have sent copies sporadically and those in charge of the Board of Missions in New York tended to feel he was not seriously trying to abide by the rules regarding finances.

**Administrative Aspects**

When Edwards entered Costa Rica as a contract missionary, he was essentially on his own. This suited Edwards' traditional Holiness approach in Cuba and even in the mountainous regions of Puerto Rico. He was used to being in charge of the mission work and making authoritative decisions. Costa Rica was a different scenario, and with the emerging conflict over finances, the Board of Missions in New York wanted to be sure some level of oversight was being exerted from Edwards' immediate supervisors in Panama. The administrative problem seems to have begun when another missionary, Charles W. Ports and his wife moved from the Panama mission to Costa Rica in 1919. Ports was a full missionary with experience and was viewed as being in charge of the Costa Rican mission. According to Barclay, Ports and Edwards had two diametrically opposed views in regards to mission. Edwards followed the procedures and plans by the book and Ports was more “impractical” and “tangential” in his approaches. Ports also seemed more interested in social ministries as opposed to Edwards' strong focus on evangelism.

In addition to their different approaches to mission, it appears that leaders in Panama were increasingly concerned about Ports' physical and mental stability. Rev. U. S. Brown of the Panama mission wrote to Rev. Harry Farmer in New York on December 31, 1919 and noted, “It is my conviction that Brother Ports is physically and I am afraid mentally unfit for the work there. His nerves are gone and there are constant quarrels. Brother Edwards has written to the Bishop to release him. He feels that he cannot work with Ports and with Ports’ methods and plans.” While in the correspondence Ports and Edwards seem to
have led to Edwards, along with the other workers, threatening to resign. In a letter from Rev. U. S. Brown to the New York office on February 13, 1920, Brown wrote “Brother Ports has so persistently failed to carry out plans and so completely upset all the work and workers that it is utterly impossible to open the school at this time. All the workers have or are on the point of resigning and the entire Mission is in a most critical condition.” The final straw came when a leader from Panama found that Ports, instead of working on developing a school per the plans of the Mission Board, was working on a plan to set up a candy factory to help employ and reform prostitutes in San Jose (which was not in the official mission plan), and Ports was ordered off the field in March of 1920. Edwards had left the field to retrieve his wife and family and bring them to Costa Rica in early 1920, leaving no one on the field for a period of time. However, before leaving the field, Ports seems to have made a final attack on Edwards by accusing Edwards of indiscretions with two women in the church in Costa Rica.

A letter from Rev. U. S. Brown, who oversaw the Costa Rican mission from Panama, to Rev. Harry Farmer of the New York office of the Board of Missions, dated March 22, 1920 details his investigation into stories apparently reported by Ports (this investigation was done while Edwards was out of the country),

I have failed to find any evidence that would lead me to believe that Brother Edwards has been immoral. I am led to believe that he has done some indiscrete and unwise things that have been the basis of considerable gossip, much of which, I fear, originated in the Church.

It was an unwise thing for Sra. Rosa Valverde and her mother to live in the Church building and to have Brother Edwards board and room there when he was in San Jose. The Church has been used as a meeting place for the members before and after the services and at other times and there was a friendly relation existing between Rosa, her mother, and Brother Edwards which was easily misunderstood and readily furnished grounds for talk. I have failed to get any evidence that would substantiate any charge other than indiscretion.

In regard to Genoveva Mora (the girl who accompanied him to Alajuela) it was a natural but unwise occurrence. The mother and the girl desired that Brother Edwards would take the girl to Alajuela to visit a relative who lived there. He took the girl with him on one of his regular trips and they stopped at the Mission building before the girl went to her relatives. Guillermo Saens was in the mission house during the entire time the girl
was there and he is certain that there was nothing wrong during the visit. The whole story seems to have started from a remark which was made by the girl’s mother to Sr. and Sra. Carranza in Carranza’s home. The whole thing started from the remark that the mother made which was to the effect that “The actions of Brother Edwards were not nice.” I failed to locate any definite statements concerning actions and Guillermo declared that he was in the Mission property all the time the girl was there.

I questioned each of the workers personally and apart from other folks and each were positive in their statements that it was their judgement that there was absolutely nothing wrong with Brother Edwards.

It is my judgement that Brother and Sister Ports seemed to think that Brother Edwards was more popular than they and that he desired to have their position as head of the work in Costa Rica and for this reason I am fearing that they talked too much and made it very easy for other folks to bring stories and rumors to them."41

Brown went on to indicate that the church wanted Edwards to return with his family, and he noted, “I feel quite sure that having Sister Edwards with him in the work will immediately stop all gossip and talk.” Sadly, it did not work out this way.

Family/Personal Aspects

While the truth of Ports’ allegations was difficult to determine, the rumors they created were devastating for Edwards and his family. In June of 1920, Margarita Edwards and her daughters had arrived in Costa Rica with Sidney. It had been a difficult trip. When Edwards went to Costa Rica, it was decided that he should go without his family since no work existed there at the time. Margarita Edwards and her five daughters lived in Meridian, Mississippi until they could join Edwards on the field. In October of 1918 Edwards had to return briefly as Margarita was very ill with pneumonia. When he returned in 1920 to bring his family, Margarita was struck with a severe case of malaria and pleurisy. In a letter to Rev. Harry Farmer of the Board of Missions in New York dated May 4, 1920, Edwards noted he was not sure if they could leave on time, and he wrote, “I left it all in Mrs. Edwards’ hands, and she never hesitated to say, ‘Let us go’ although she could not stand up and could eat nothing, besides her fever was 104 when we left home.”42 Because of her health, the family stopped for a short stay in Cuba, where she had a relapse, but then seemed to recover, and they arrived around May 30th in Panama. Edwards was appalled by the
condition in which he found the Costa Rican mission when he wrote Rev. Harry Farmer on June 2, 1920, “The work here in San Jose has been shot to pieces. The enemy has certainly been very active. The work of repairing the walls and mending the breaches has already begun. I am not discouraged, but the job confronting me is by no means easy or agreeable. The work of my predecessor here during the last few days of his stay here did not tend to make my work easier when I returned.”

While the correspondence does not reveal much, it does seem to be clear that Margarita came to believe the rumors about Sidney and their relationship collapsed. In addition, the office in New York had decided to find a new District Superintendent for Costa Rica, bypassing Edwards again for a leadership role. Rev. Harry Farmer of the New York office wrote to Rev. U. S. Brown in Panama on July 27, 1920,

I wrote Mr. Edwards some time ago suggesting that probably upon the organization of the Central American Mission Conference we would ask Mr. Oliver to go there as District Superintendent. This has stirred him up considerably, so you may have heard by this time, and he has not only written me but to the Bishops as well, stating that he cannot keep his own dignity and standing by having anyone come in from the outside and become the head of the Mission. He has asked, therefore, that he be made a general Evangelist for South America… I can understand the viewpoint of Mr. Edwards, but inasmuch as he has not been accepted as a regular missionary of the Board, I do not see what other action could be taken.

Edwards apparently agreed to stay on for one more year, but felt his position as leader of the mission had been undermined and would not remain longer. By September of 1920, J.A. Brownlee was sent as the District Superintendent of the new Central American Mission Conference headquartered in Costa Rica.

The relationship between Sidney and Margarita continued to disintegrate. In a letter to Rev. Harry Farmer in New York, Rev. E. M. Oliver wrote on July 12, 1921, “The relationship between Edwards and his wife is deplorable and of course that is circulated in the church. I am told that they do not eat at the same table, and that she declares that she cannot stand conditions much longer as they are. They do not go about together.”

The issues of their personal problems and the stress of the leadership and financial issues were all building and would erupt into a difficult scandal.
Brownlee was given the task of sorting out the problems, and he seems to have taken a view in support of Sidney Edwards with a negative view towards Margarita, mostly because he saw her attitude as being disruptive to the mission work itself. In a letter to Bishop Thirkield on July 23, 1921, Brownlee wrote, “No proof whatsoever is forthcoming. At the same time one can hardly blame the people for believing them because of the attitude his wife has taken. Had she kept her mouth shut and stood by him and lined up with the work we might have lived down the evil report. She is very bitter against him and until the last few Sundays has taken no part whatever in the church work.” Brownlee seems to have been trying to find a way to keep Edwards on the field, or bring him back after a short hiatus. But by September of 1921 the marriage was seen as irreconcilable, and a meeting of the missionaries was called for Margarita to put forward her proof. It is interesting that Brownlee decided not to allow any “natives” in the meeting except one loyal to the mission. He wrote to Harry Farmer on September 13, 1921,

> Before we met, I talked the matter over with them both together and in this conference we came to this understanding: that Mrs. Edwards would take the youngest child and he would send her to her folks in Cuba. That before going they would go together to the Judge and dissolve their marriage contract. This can be done in this country provided both parties agree to it. In my opinion this is the best way to settle the difficulty for I am persuaded that conditions are such that there would never be any harmony in the home and he would be crippled in any work he might wish to undertake.

Rev. Farmer made it clear in a following letter that both of the Edwards should leave the field, not just Margarita.

Margarita Edwards found herself in an impossible situation. Her marriage was dissolved and she had to leave four of her daughters with Sidney. She left in late September of 1921 from Panama to Cuba, but the story was not yet finished. When she arrived in Cuba, her father and an uncle met the boat and encouraged her to continue on the boat to New York City and put her case before Rev. Harry Farmer and the Mission Board. She arrived in New York, on the S.S. Calamares on October 2, 1921 sailing from Havana, Cuba and apparently stayed with the Ports family. Harry Farmer described the event to Rev. E. M. Oliver in a letter dated October 24, 1921,
I note your correspondence with Mrs. Edwards. I may have written you that she came to New York and laid the whole case before us. At the same time Mr. Eastman was here and told us what he observed and what Marian had written him since that time. He feels with me, that Mrs. Edwards was treated with undue harshness and I hope the whole matter will be investigated when the Bishop goes down. She was made to sign a paper of separation, allowing her the youngest child and under threat that if she refused to sign they would take away even that child. The next two children wanted to go with her but they were not permitted to do so. Mrs. Edwards is from one of the best families in Cuba, being a cousin of former President Menocal and her uncle is now a government official and related to many leading people there. I have cabled Mr. Brownlee twice to see that Edwards is sent out of the country but have had no other word from him. Mr. Eastman stated that there would not be much chance to go ahead in our work until he was gotten rid of and Mr. Morales, a Costa Rican business man who joined the church under Edwards told me the same thing.\footnote{48}

Farmer seems to have been convinced by both Margarita and the witness of Mr. and Mrs. Morales who accompanied her. Farmer also related the visit in a letter to Brownlee dated October 11, 1921,

Mrs. Edwards came to the office a few days ago in company with Mr. and Mrs. Morales whom she had on the boat. When Mrs. Edwards reached Havana her uncle and father met her and advised her to come to New York and see us personally. She was very lady like and stated the case about as you have given it to us. Of course there is no question in her mind as to the guilt of Mr. Edwards. She was evidently informed of the reported immorality of Mr. Edwards when she first arrived. She said to me that her observation confirmed the stories. She states that she was forced to sign the paper of separation, and that while she was permitted to take the youngest child, that the two next children were kept from her. I do not know just what has been done but the children ought to be given an opportunity to decide with whom they wish to live. Mr. and Mrs. Morales were among the first converts of Mr. Edwards but left the church on account of his shortcoming. Living next to the church they saw things with their own eyes and confirmed the stories about Edwards.\footnote{48}

Margarita Edwards followed up this visit with a heart-rending personal note to Harry Farmer written from Hato-Nuevo, Cuba,
Please tell me something about my children, if you know. Not a word from them and is over a month now since I left home. I write but never get any answer. It is a regret to be separated but don't you think they can write me a few lines? Dr. Farmer, can you be my advisor? I wait for your answer. Anything you can do for me will be appreciable. All I want is to work so my baby can learn while I work and this cannot be done here. Father is very sick and you can imagine how my heart is full of sorrow and only the will and love of the Lord makes me patient. Will you (like a father) advise me and tell me the place where my girls are today?50

This meeting between Margarita Edwards and Harry Farmer appears to have set up a case where mission leaders on the field (especially Brownlee) supported Sidney Edwards and mission leaders on the Mission Board supported Margarita Edwards. Brownlee responds to Farmer in a letter dated November 1, 1921,

I hardly think that Mrs. Edwards was forced to sign the paper of separation. I was there when it was signed and advised her to do it. In a way of course it was a forced action for it was a choice between this and an action of divorce in which he was determined to secure the possession of all the children. In previous conversations she had always stated that she would be contented if only she could be free from him and have possession of the youngest child. I brought all the influence to bear on both parties that I possibly could in order to get them off the field as quietly as possible.51

The discussion between Brownlee and Farmer continues through the end of 1921, and no clear conclusion seems to be reached. One additional letter to Brownlee from Farmer, dated November 23, 1921 sheds a little more light on the situation,

Your letter of October 8th has been received, enclosing a letter to Mr. Shepard, which seems to me to cover the situation as well as it could be handled. This confirms the report of Mrs. Edwards, that Mr. Edwards had been writing to various parties concerning Rosa Valverde and telling what wonderful work she was doing. In fact, Mrs. Edwards had taken crumpled letters out of the waste basket in their home which she showed to me, and which she now has in her possession. I am very much afraid that we will find other matters of this kind before we get through.52
Sidney Edwards did send a letter to Harry Farmer from Meridian, Mississippi on November 1, 1921 asking for the address of the “ex-Mrs. Edwards” ending the letter, “My heart is broken, but ‘Since Right is right, and God is God, Right the day must win. To doubt would be disloyalty, to falter would be sin.’”

On November 1, 1922, Edwards married his second wife, Elsie Pearl McGuire in Muscatine, Iowa. According to a genealogical resource, she attended Iowa State Teacher’s College and taught while planning to attend Moody Bible Institute. She was known for being quite religious and was considered a good minister’s wife. By the 1930 census, Edwards is living in Poplarville, Mississippi as a Bible Agent. Sidney and Elsie had three children: Grace, Amy, and Sidney William, Jr., but were also living with his daughter Lillian from his first wife. By the 1940 census he is listed as the minister of a church in Shelby County, Alabama. Elsie died of leukemia on April 4, 1943. Edwards married a third time to Vivian Ruth Ginn in Alabama on November 25, 1944. She was about 40 years younger than him at the time. Sidney William Edwards, Jr. is recorded as having said of his father, “My father was a big man who could tell the most interesting stories regarding almost any subject. He always had a great store of information about the questions which I and my sisters were always asking. Quite often he would regale us with his anecdotes of the Spanish-American War.”

Sidney Edwards passed away on January 3, 1962 about 84 years of age, and is buried in Eden, Alabama. Edwards’ Cuban wife, Margarita would die July 6, 1976 at 90 years of age and be buried in Havana, Cuba.

Lessons Learned from Sidney Edwards

Putting aside the scandal which ended Edwards’ missionary service for a moment, the story of Sidney Edwards helps demonstrate the dilemma of early Holiness missionaries. In their earliest forms, Holiness missions were faith-based, individually focused efforts. Edwards’ work in Cuba exemplifies this period. Edwards had full control over the funds and leadership of the Cuban mission, but it was a constant battle in which he depended on both H. C. Morrison and The Pentecostal Herald and the Holiness Union of the South for his support. When their missiological methodology shifted, Edwards was left without a mission or support. He made the shift to a denominational mission with the Methodist Episcopal Church in Puerto Rico. This was an organized existing mission, and by being willing to take appointments in remote mountainous regions, Edwards was
able to maintain a certain level of independence, which worked for him. He had the flexibility to raise money for a horse for his mission work and was able to take time to travel through Central America with James M. Taylor for several months as an evangelist.

Costa Rica was a different situation. As a pioneer mission field, he had to remain connected within the leadership of the mission organization and its local headquarters in Panama. The Board of Missions had tightened controls on how funds could be raised, used, and supplied to the field. Edwards lost much of his flexibility in needing to seek permission and funding (even with funds he raised from his own supporters) in order to accomplish his mission goals. This level of control frustrated Edwards and he felt it impacted his own ability to lead and find respect among the very churches he planted. Had Edwards followed his patterns in Cuba and Puerto Rico, he would have opened the mission in Costa Rica alongside of his wife and family. The family issues which arose were heightened by the decision of the Board for his family to remain in the United States while he established the work. The problems in Costa Rica emphasize the reason some Holiness missionaries avoided denominational entanglements. Other Holiness missionaries joined Holiness denominations as they emerged, such as the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Church of the Nazarene, and the Free Methodist Church. This allowed for organized fund raising and leadership support without concerns about theological control.

Since Edwards was closely tied to H. C. Morrison, it is not surprising that he was influenced to remain within Methodism, even if it was not the Methodist Episcopal Church South to which Morrison belonged. The Methodist Episcopal Church appears to have been a bit more friendly to those in the Holiness Movement, but by the 1920s it had developed a solid bureaucracy. Edwards clearly found this system difficult to manage, but on the positive side such a system was in place to deal with problems on the field. Removing Charles Ports when he seemed to be having problems in terms of his mental stability, and even in removing Edwards for his potential moral flaws, shows the potential value of denominational mission organizations. In reflecting on the scandal which forced Edwards from the mission field, the historic critique aimed at the Mission Board was its overriding concern for the reputation of the mission instead of the well-being of the Edwards family. Margarita Edwards was treated badly in the name of keeping the scandal quiet and potentially keeping a successful Edwards on the field. Her role as a Hispanic woman, a mother, and as a
companion missionary to Edwards over 17 years of marriage seemed to count for very little.

Sidney Edwards is indeed a flawed missionary figure, but he established a strong presence of the Methodist Church in Costa Rica. As Central America was divided by comity agreements, only Costa Rica has a prominent Methodist presence in the region. Likely due to the scandal which forced Edwards from the field, his story is little known, and his connections to H. C. Morrison and the Holiness Movement are even more obscured. It remains a fascinating reality that the Costa Rican Methodist Church has maintained connections with Asbury Theological Seminary over many years, even if unaware of this early connection and influence.

End notes


2 Later in 1904, a visiting missionary from Matanzas who would join this mission work, wrote, “This mission was opened by M.L. Pardo and wife whose self-sacrificing work has been rewarded with success. Over work has forced them to return to the States.” E.L. Latham, “A Missionary Trip to Cuba.” The Pentecostal Herald. (May 25, 1904): 6-7. Latham later appears in Chitre, Panama at least by May 25, 1916 when a portion of a letter is published by him in The Gospel Trumpet, 36(21) (May 25, 1916): 12.


16 H.C. Morrison, “The Atlanta Convention; Chap. II.” The Pentecostal Herald. (November 7, 1906): 1. The larger work of Edwards’ paper in the Spanish-speaking world can be seen in at least one reprint from El Cristiano Pentecostes in the Presbyterian mission publication in Mexico, El Faro, from December 1, 1907: 179.


21 S.W. Edwards, “Bro. Edwards in Cuba.” The Pentecostal Herald. (October 23, 1907): 11. Despite these problems, Edwards is upbeat and noted since April fourth he had visited 41 towns, and 3,000 homes in his new evangelistic role.


31 Year Book, Superintendent’s Annual Report and Official Minutes of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Porto Rico Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Held in the Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church, Arecibo, Porto Rico, February 8 to 13, 1911: 43.


37 Ibid., 313.


47 Letter from Rev. J. A. Brownlee to Rev. Harry Farmer, dated September 13, 1921. From Correspondence of J. A. Brownlee, microfilm,


55 Ibid. The quote is from a poem, “The Right Must Win” by Frederick William Farber (1814-1863).
Abstracto:

Las misiones de santidad son un área de la historia de las misiones que a menudo no se estudia lo suficiente, pero que puede proporcionar información sobre el crecimiento de la Iglesia en varias partes del mundo. Este artículo examina la vida de Sidney W. Edwards, un misionero de Santidad que fue una parte clave de los esfuerzos misioneros de H. C. Morrison. Sirvió como misionero de una misión que H. C. Morrison fundó en Cuba, como una de las primeras misiones de Santidad en el Caribe. Luego pasó a servir en Puerto Rico con la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en la plantación de iglesias en algunas de las regiones montañosas de esa isla. Finalmente, Edwards se convirtió en el misionero pionero de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Costa Rica, iniciando casi sin ayuda la Iglesia Metodista en esa nación y dirigiéndola hasta que varios problemas y un escándalo lo llevaron a dejar el campo misionero. Edwards también participó en una gira de evangelización muy temprana por América Central, de habla hispana del Caribe y América Central. Su historia ayuda a ilustrar los problemas que enfrentaron los misioneros de Santidad en términos de finanzas, liderazgo de la misión y cómo lidiar con los problemas familiares desde el campo misional. Su ejemplo también demuestra cómo los primeros misioneros de Santidad a veces tomaban la decisión de convertirse en parte de agencias misioneras denominacionales más tradicionales.

Palabras clave: Misión de santidad, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Sidney W. Edwards

Introducción

Comprender las misiones de santidad es a menudo una tarea compleja. Muchos de los misioneros que ingresaron al campo del Movimiento de Santidad eran relativamente oscuros y, a menudo, difíciles de investigar. Sin embargo, a veces jugaron una parte crucial de la historia de la misión y abrieron obras con un impacto significativo. Este artículo explora la vida de uno de esos misioneros, que proporciona una conexión interesante entre el Seminario Teológico Asbury y la Iglesia Metodista en Costa Rica. La historia rastrea una pasión misionera de H. C. Morrison, el fundador del Seminario Teológico Asbury, por Cuba, que impactaría a Puerto Rico y, en última instancia, a Costa Rica. Es una historia tanto de éxito misionero como de fracaso misionero trágico, pero ayuda a mostrar cómo operaron las misiones de Santidad en la apertura de los campos misioneros en el Caribe y en Centroamérica.

Sidney William Edwards nació el 27 de julio de 1878 en Cross Keys, condado de Union en Carolina del Sur. Hijo de trabajadores agrícolas, Albert y Fannie Edwards, la vida de Sidney se transformó al servir como soldado en la Guerra Hispanoamericana en Cuba con el 7th Calvary, Company K. Mientras estaba estacionado en Cuba, escuchó la predicación del evangelista de Kentucky, Henry Clay Morrison, quien había venido a Cuba para fundar una misión a principios de 1900 en Cárdenas, Cuba. El 14 de marzo, Morrison salió de Cuba después de predicar entre los soldados estadounidenses en salón de Y.M.C.A. Al reflexionar sobre este viaje en 1904, Morrison escribió:

Poco soñé que Dios me iba a permitir ser el primer hombre en desplegar la bandera blanca del amor perfecto en la Isla, y predicar el primer sermón sobre santidad, como una obra de gracia posterior al pueblo. Preferiría haber hecho esto que haber comandado el ejército estadounidense en San Juan Hill. Amén. Hermano. Edwards, nuestro misionero en Cárdenas, fue el primer hombre en la Isla en recibir la segunda definitiva obra de gracia.¹

Según su solicitud de pasaporte de 1917, Edwards había estado en Cuba desde enero de 1899 hasta enero de 1901 (después de ser dado de baja del ejército). Probablemente influenciado por Morrison, Edwards se matriculó como estudiante en Asbury Colegio en Wilmore, Kentucky, de 1901 a 1902. La Universidad mantuvo registros de quienes asistieron en

Si bien no se conoce toda la historia, Edwards se casó con una joven cubana, Margarita Rosa Sacerio Rosello, quien nació el 14 de mayo de 1886 en La Habana, Cuba. Se casaron el 20 de junio de 1904 en Cárdenas, Cuba. La pareja tendría cinco hijos, lo que ayuda a mostrar el alcance de su ministerio juntos: Lillian nacida el 6 de julio de 1905 en Louisville, Kentucky, Geneva nacida el 16 de marzo de 1907 en Cárdenas, Cuba, Evangelina nacida el 23 de julio de 1909 en Juyuya, Puerto Rico, Dorothy nacida el 16 de julio de 1911 en Utuado, Puerto Rico, y Margarita nacida el 3 de abril de 1915 en Utuado, Puerto Rico. Sin embargo, el mayor logro de Edward podría haber venido de su última asignación misionera en Costa Rica, a pesar de que permaneció allí menos tiempo que en su ministerio en Cuba y Puerto Rico y tuvo que irse de allí en desgracia. Pero es útil explorar el trabajo de Edwards en cada país por separado para comprender su desarrollo como misionero y, de hecho, uno de los caminos que a menudo tomaron los primeros misioneros de Santidad a través del trabajo de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal.

**Misión de Santidad en Cuba (1904-1908)**

Edwards fue descrito brevemente en un relato de la convención Unión de Santidad del Sur celebrada en Meridian, Mississippi en 1905, por C. F. Wimberly quien escribió,

> Los placeres del día se vieron muy realizados por la llegada del Hno. S. W. Edwards y su bella esposa cubana. Hno. Edwards es el misionero pentecostal en Cárdenas, Cuba. Hace siete años, el hno. Edwards fue a Cuba con su arma para luchar por la libertad cubana, y mientras servía como niño soldado, fue santificado bajo la predicación del hno. Morrison. A partir de esa hora comenzó a estudiar ya prepararse para una libertad a los cubanos que los hiciera verdaderamente libres. Llevó a la Isla la primera imprenta protestante, y con ella ha impresó tratados por millares… Dios puede hacer más por la salvación de un pueblo, con un niño soldado, totalmente salvado, que con emisarios eruditos,
Edwards enviaba informes regulares al periódico de Morrison, *The Pentecostal Herald*, e informaba con frecuencia que predicaba en tres partes diferentes de Cárdenas. Su trabajo adicional involucró visitar y distribuir tratados y Biblas, o porciones de la Biblia en español. Edwards también disfrutó del uso de imágenes militares para su trabajo cuando escribió: “Por la gracia de Dios, he levantado una bandera hostil a todo pecado en la isla de Cuba; y por Su gracia librará una guerra implacable contra ella hasta que se gane la victoria, y los cálidos mares que bañan sus costas rocosas canten el dulce himno de la libertad; o hasta que sea honorablemente dado de baja del servicio. Luego dejaré mi arma a un lado, me quitaré el uniforme y saldré tranquilamente del campo para recibir una recepción de bienvenida de mis seres queridos en casa.”

En febrero de 1904, Edwards escribió acerca de un avivamiento que se desató en Cárdenas, donde el tamaño del edificio de la iglesia que alquilaron no podía contener a la gente, por lo que movió el púlpito a la entrada para poder predicar a la multitud de pie dentro del salón de la iglesia como a los reunidos afuera también. A medida que avanzaba el año, Edwards contó con la ayuda de Raymond C. Moreno, hijo de un profesor cubano que recibió varios años de educación en los Estados Unidos auspiciado por gente de santidad, y la obra siguió creciendo con la ayuda de unos 700 ejemplares de Biblas, testamentos y evangelios de la Sociedad Bíblica Estadounidense (que Edwards llamó su “munición”).
Una Postal de Cárdenas, Cuba sobre la época de la Misión de Santidad, a principios de 1900
(De la Colección del Autor)

A fines de 1904, la misión en Cárdenas fue bastante exitosa. En mayo se creó un nuevo salón de misiones a partir del alquiler de dos casas y la eliminación de una pared para que pudiera albergar a 500 personas. E. E. Hubbard y su esposa Laura, quienes dirigían un orfanato en Matanzas, se mudaron a Cárdenas y pronto tuvieron 75 niños a su cargo. Se había formado una Asociación Cubana de Santidad con E. L. Latham de Matanzas como presidente, E. E. Hubbard como vicepresidente, S. W. Edwards como secretario y F. E. Blanes de Cárdenas (aparentemente director de un museo) como tesorero. Se había hecho contacto con un evangelista de santidad, T. L. Adams, que visitó la zona, y él y su esposa se convirtieron en corresponsales que abogaban por la obra misionera. El trabajo de divulgación en la comunidad de Hato Nuevo había comenzado con algunas de las multitudes más grandes de Edwards hasta el momento (hay algunos indicios de que esta área era donde vivía su suegro) y la misión había recibido un órgano portátil. Para diciembre, E. L. Latham también se había mudado de Matanzas y figuraba como un nuevo misionero que trabajaba junto a Edwards. Edwards también había escrito un artículo más largo sobre la importancia de la oración y las misiones, en el que escribió:
Si la gente de santidad tuviera la carga de la oración y el espíritu de misiones y comenzara a agonizar ante Dios y abrieran sus carteras, ¿sería imposible que Dios causara una gran conmoción en Cuba dentro de los próximos cinco años? ¿Y si fijamos un día de oración y ayuno para que Dios levante obreros y medios para la pronta evangelización de Cuba? Digo, rápido, porque el trabajo es urgente. No somos responsables de los que vivieron hace cien años, ni somos responsables de los que vivirán dentro de cien años; pero una terrible responsabilidad recae sobre nosotros por aquellos que ahora habitan esta bella isla. Al traerlos a Cristo resolveremos un problema con respecto a los que vivirán en Cuba dentro de cien años.11

En febrero de 1905, Edwards hizo un llamado a los lectores de The Pentecostal Herald para ayudar a proporcionar un edificio para la misión en rápido crecimiento.

Ha llegado el momento en que debemos avanzar en nuestro trabajo aquí. El alquiler de la casa es extremadamente alto en Cuba. Pagamos veintiséis dólares cada mes por el alquiler de la casa; eso es más de trescientos dólares al año, y nuestra capilla y nuestras viviendas no son en absoluto lo que deberían ser. Ahora hay un lote de esquina a la venta a solo unas pocas cuadras del centro de la ciudad, y creo que es el lote mejor ubicado para nosotros en Cárdenas, y es notablemente económico. Un lote cerca de este y no tan bien ubicado para nosotros está valorado en mil dólares. Pero este lote ahora se puede comprar por seiscientos dólares, realmente podemos comprarlo por cuatrocientos y pagar los otros doscientos en el futuro, o no pagarlos nunca- así como prefiramos, solo que tendremos que pagar diez dólares cada año hasta que paguemos los otros doscientos.

Estoy orando al Señor para que toque los corazones de las personas para ayudarnos a comprar esto. Hemos recibido cien dólares con los que vamos a comprar el lote y los hemos depositado en el banco, así que solo nos faltan trescientos dólares. Un señor cubano amante de nuestro trabajo, dueño de una cantera, nos ha ofrecido amablemente toda la piedra que necesitamos para construir. Deberíamos aprovechar estas cosas. Este lote es tan barato que no permanecerá sin vender por mucho tiempo. Entiendo que un comerciante ahora está tratando de vender parte de su propiedad para comprar este lote y construir sobre él. Pongamos los cimientos de un monumento a la sangre de Jesús para limpiar de todo pecado, comprando este lote, y luego pongamos dos o
Si bien Morrison estaba interesado en la obra misionera en Cuba, tenía en mente una meta mayor, que requería establecer la Unión de Santidad del Sur. Parte del trabajo de esta organización sería asumir el trabajo de la misión de Santidad, incluida la misión en Cuba. En septiembre de 1905, Edwards también agregó algunos de sus pensamientos sobre el potencial del trabajo con la Unión de Santidad. Señaló: “Nuestra Unión de Santidad no debe pensar en tener solo una pequeña estación misionera en Cuba. Debemos establecer una gran imprenta aquí en Cárdenas, y sembrar este país en literatura de santidad. Debemos tener un hogar de santidad aquí en Cárdenas. Pero debemos tener una veintena de misioneros de santidad que sigan el plan de Dios, es decir, salvar a la gente y luego educarla. Debemos tener misioneros que trabajen para hacer cristianos a los cubanos, no protestantes” (cursivas en el original). Edwards continuó informando sobre la próxima llegada de una imprenta, pero la necesidad de $300 para material de impresión. Uno se imagina que esta meta probablemente se debió a la ayuda directa de Morrison y su trabajo en Pentecostal Printing Company en Louisville, Kentucky, que imprimió The Pentecostal Herald.

En mayo de 1906, la supervisión de la misión de Cuba pasó a manos de la Unión de Santidad y Morrison se preocupó más por el trabajo general de esa organización. Pero el trabajo de la misión cubana siguió conectado, especialmente a través de The Pentecostal Herald como la voz de la Unión de Santidad. A lo largo de 1906, Edwards estuvo ocupado con un nuevo proyecto, la llegada de la imprenta. Para junio, Edwards había creado un periódico semanal sobre la santidad en español en Cuba (posiblemente el primer periódico sobre la santidad en español en América Latina) llamado El Cristiano Pentecostés, y tenía una distribución a 3.000 lectores. Además, estaba imprimiendo miles de tratados en español, que se solicitaban desde España, Puerto Rico, México y América Central, así como ocasionalmente desde América del Sur y partes de los EE. UU. Edwards incluso soñaba con crear un depósito de Biblias y tratados Pentecostales en
Como escribió Morrison al informar sobre la tercera Convención de la Unión de Santidad en Atlanta, Georgia ese año,

El hermano S. W. Edwards, nuestro misionero de Cuba, se encuentra aquí con excelente salud, con un buen informe y lleno de entusiasmo por la difusión de la salvación completa en Cuba. A través del periódico semanal de salvación completa que está publicando, sin duda está tocando a más personas que cualquier otra veintena de misioneros en la Isla, y las personas hambrientas de otros países de habla hispana están tomando ansiosamente el periódico... Las autoridades gubernamentales de Cuba están tan complacidas con el tono moral de este periódico y su buen efecto sobre la gente que han permitido pasarlo por la oficina de correos sin costo alguno.

En esta misma convención, la Junta de la Unión de Santidad enumeró nuevos misioneros, incluido el hno. Sarmast de Persia, dos hermanos de apellido Roberts que planeaban ir a la India, y el hno. James Taylor y su esposa, la hermana Flora Phelps, que partirían para evangelizar en las Indias Occidentales.

A principios de 1907, Edwards regresó de la convención de la Unión de Santidad a Cuba a través de Nueva York, donde recogió los suministros de impresión que tanto necesitaba. En febrero, M. L. Pardo regresó a Cárdenas e informó que la misión estaba llegando a 4.000 personas por semana. Pardo volvió a su puesto anterior al frente de la obra misionera de Cárdenas en marzo, lo que le permitió a Edwards centrar más su atención en la obra de imprenta y evangelización. Además, Edwards informó sobre la realización de una tercera convención misionera con todas las iglesias evangélicas en Cuba. Para septiembre, Pardo estaba abriendo una escuela en Cárdenas con una matrícula de $2 al mes. En octubre de 1907, Edwards escribió sobre la creciente oposición antiprotestante de los líderes católicos, en particular durante la prolongada sequía de ese año. Los sacerdotes católicos culparon de la causa de la sequía a los cubanos que permitieron la entrada de protestantes a la isla. En 1908, The Pentecostal Herald repentinamente guarda silencio sobre Cuba, enfocándose en cambio en otros esfuerzos misioneros. Sidney Edwards reaparece repentinamente en Puerto Rico a fines de 1908. Es difícil discernir exactamente qué sucedió, pero hay algunas pistas.
El hermano Sarmast, el misionero de la Unión de Santidad en Persia, publicó una carta en The Pentecostal Herald en agosto de 1909 en la que informaba que regresaba a los Estados Unidos para recaudar fondos. Él escribió: “Hace tres años, mientras trabajaba en Persia, recibí una carta que decía que la Unión de Santidad del Sur se había hecho cargo de la obra de santidad en Persia. Dije Gloria a Dios. Nuestro deber es predicar, y Dios cuidará de nosotros. Pero el invierno pasado recibí otra carta que me decía que la Unión de Santidad había dejado el trabajo y me pidió que me uniera a alguna iglesia, la tentación más difícil que he tenido en mi vida.”

Esta carta fue seguida por una decisión oficial sobre el trabajo misionero de la Unión de Santidad del Sur que salió de su convención en Chattanooga, Tennessee en octubre de 1909. El presidente L. P. Brown anunció: “El consenso de oración de nuestra Junta Misionera y Convención es que nuestro trabajo no es apilar ladrillos y cemento, establecer iglesias y apoyar a los pastores locales, sino difundir la santidad bíblica a través de evangelistas de santidad profundamente espirituales y totalmente santificados y obreros nativos que deben entrar en contacto directo con la gente.”

Se puede suponer que la exitosa misión en Cuba recibió el mismo tipo de carta que Sarmast. Sidney Edwards tenía una familia joven que mantener y, debido a la falta de fondos de la Unión de Santidad, parece haberse unido a la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal y se transfirió a su trabajo en Puerto Rico.

Es importante recordar que H. C. Morrison no fue la única persona que entró al campo misionero en Cuba. El final de la Guerra Hispanoamericana en 1898 había abierto tanto a Cuba como a Puerto Rico a la obra misional ya que su administración cayó bajo el gobierno de los Estados Unidos (lo mismo sucedió con Filipinas en Asia). De repente, las áreas controladas por el antiguo Imperio español, que había restringido el acceso al catolicismo romano, habían terminado y las puertas estaban abiertas a América Latina. Como escribió Louis Pérez: “Para cuando los militares de los Estados Unidos gobiernaron sobre Cuba llegaron a su fin en mayo de 1902, no menos de una veintena de denominaciones protestantes que habían inaugurado actividades evangélicas en Cuba, incluidos bautistas del norte y del sur, metodistas del sur, presbiterianos, episcopales, los Discípulos de Cristo, Cuáqueros, Pentecostalistas y Congregacionalistas. De hecho, llegaron tantos misioneros a Cuba al mismo tiempo que la competencia denominacional rápidamente se salió de control.”

Los
bautistas americanos (o bautistas del norte), los discípulos de Cristo, los episcopales y los presbiterianos llegaron en 1899, poco después que los metodistas en 1898, con la llegada de los cuáqueros en 1900 y la Misión Pentecostal (un grupo de santidad que se unió a la Iglesia del Nazareno en 1915) en 1902.

Este primer período de tiempo fue un período intenso de preparación para los misioneros que ingresaban a la obra en el antiguo Imperio español. Los misioneros de la misión de Cárdenas se dispersaron con el rápido fin de la obra. Para junio de 1908 E.L. Latham se había ido para llevar una congregación estadounidense a la zona del Canal, y esperaba ir al interior de Panamá para predicar a los nativos a finales de diciembre como misionero independiente de santidad. Según el censo de 1910, M.L. Pardo y su familia vivían en Waco, Texas, donde se desempeñaba como ministro. Edwards, tomó un camino similar, pero permaneció en el campo misionero. Existe cierta especulación de que la misión cubana pasó a formar parte de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal del Sur (MECS) en Cuba, pero esto es dudoso. No está claro cómo se sintió Morrison acerca de este cambio en la misión cubana en ese momento, pero había reflexionado sobre esto a principios de 1904, cuando escribió: “Algunos sugirieron que la obra misionera en Cárdenas se entregara a la iglesia (en este caso el MECS). Bajo las circunstancias existentes, no podríamos considerar tal proposición. El movimiento de santidad necesita un puerto de entrada y una estación carbonera en esa isla.” Morrison había escrito previamente en el mismo artículo una fuerte crítica a los misioneros metodistas en Cuba por no haber tenido la experiencia de la santificación. Al observar las cuentas de la Conferencia de la misión MECS en Cuba, no hay señales de que la misión se traslade a Cárdenas en este momento. Los presbiterianos habían estado activos desde 1899 en Cárdenas, por lo que posiblemente se hicieron cargo de la obra misionera. Morrison formó parte de la Junta de Misiones de la Unión de Santidad, y parece no haber defendido la obra en Cuba, lo cual es inusual. Más bien, se embarcó en una gira mundial de evangelística de misiones de santidad a fines de 1909 pagada por la Unión de Santidad del Sur. Morrison estaba exhibiendo cómo sería su nueva posición misionológica, pero mientras tanto, Sidney Edwards tendría que empezar de nuevo en Puerto Rico.
Obra misionera de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Puerto Rico (1908-1916)

La primera carta de Edwards desde Puerto Rico apareció en The Pentecostal Herald en noviembre de 1908 en la que indicaba que algunas personas podrían sorprenderse por su ubicación actual. Extrañaba Cuba, pero,

Dios ha puesto Su sello sobre nuestro trabajo aquí; la primera semana después del desembarco comenzamos un avivamiento en la Isla Culebra; duró apenas una semana. Cincuenta se convirtieron y más de cien profesaron haber sido bendecidos y expresaron el deseo de ser salvos. De Culebra fuimos a Vieques, o Isla del Cangrejo, donde el Señor nos bendijo maravillosamente. Estuvimos en Vieques casi dos meses y el poder de Dios se sintió en cada servicio; aquí encontramos un gran número de negros de habla inglesa de las Indias Occidentales Británicas; muchos de ellos cristianos y apasionados por Dios. Algunos de ellos pueden ser conversos del hno. Taylor. De vez en cuando celebrábamos servicios en inglés para ellos. ¡Cómo podían orar! No llevamos cuenta de las profesiones; diecinueve se unieron a la Iglesia M.E.

De Vieques llegamos a Guayama donde actualmente estamos batallando por Dios. El Superintendente de las misiones M. E. aquí es un metodista de antaño; el cree, enseña, profesa y creo que posee la bendición de santificación completo. Continuaremos nuestro trabajo actual hasta la conferencia finales de enero, cuando se nos dará un circuito de doce a veinte citas, esparcidas por las montañas y separadas por ríos caudalosos. Los circuitos aquí en muchos aspectos se asemejan a los circuitos de los distritos montañosos de Kentucky, salvo que son más grandes y mucho más densamente poblados.27

Edwards no parece culpar a Morrison por su movimiento, y continúa enviando informes a The Pentecostal Herald, enfatizando su compromiso de santidad, incluso dentro de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal y su estructura misionera.

En enero de 1909 escribió que estaba en el distrito de Guayama pero que planeaba mudarse a Arroyo en una semana. Para marzo, escribió: “Aunque había sido ordenado como diácono local hace varios años, no parecía haber llegado el momento de unirme a la conferencia hasta hace poco. En diciembre pasado, mis hermanos de la Conferencia del Golfo amablemente me admitieron a prueba. Y la semana pasada recibí mi
primer nombramiento de un obispo. Me enviaron a Juyuya. Dios nos ayude a hacerlo Aleluya antes de fin de año.” Continuó señalando que este era un gran distrito montañoso en el interior donde se cultivaba café. No había habido ningún misionero estadounidense antes y tendría 20 citas con tres ayudantes nativos. Necesitaba recaudar dinero para comprar su propio caballo para viajar, por lo que estaba pidiendo contribuciones.28 Para el otoño de 1909, Edwards estaba informando sobre un movimiento religioso local de un hombre con antecedentes católicos romanos que afirmaba ser el apóstol Juan y había reunido a miles de seguidores alentándolos a votar por un partido político antiestadounidense. También había establecido seis Escuelas Dominicales y una escuela diurna con más de 500 niños y una Liga Epworth para los jóvenes.29

Una Postal de una Escuela Dominical Metodista Episcopal en Puerto Rico, 1922

(De la Colección del Autor)

El trabajo misionero de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Puerto Rico había comenzado en 1900 y para 1910 contenía 210 congregaciones en la isla con 16 centros de misión, 50 predicadores locales y 5.500 miembros en la iglesia, y alrededor de 5.050 personas adicionales que asistían a los servicios. En el informe anual de la misión de Puerto Rico para 1910, señaló,
Jayuya, el verdadero distrito montañoso de la Misión, donde Sidney W. Edwards, nuestro metodista Andrew Jackson, es el misionero del distrito. Mucho de lo único e inusual está en Edwards, pero él es un factor de tremenda energía. Sabe cómo tomar la iniciativa, y algunos de los resultados logrados en su distrito este año son poco menos que maravillosos. Sus ligas Epworth y Junior son la comidilla de la ciudad. La Iglesia romana incluso toma prestados sus Juniors para los servicios funerarios y, como hombre sabio que es, se los presta al sacerdote, y gana así el favor del enemigo. Insiste en que sus jóvenes deben saber cosas, y no hay ociosos en su iglesia.  

Según el informe del año siguiente, Edwards estaba logrando avances estelares en Jayuya. El informe señaló,

La evangelización del distrito de Jayuya se lee como un romance, y su excéntrico misionero es a menudo una ley para sí mismo, pero Sidney W. Edwards se ha convertido en una inspiración para muchos. Edwards es de Carolina del Sur, donde hay más miembros de la iglesia protestante por cien que en cualquier otro estado de la Unión, lo que quizás sea la causa de la irritación cuando mira el caldero de la superstición. Ocupa un lugar único en la comunidad y tiene más influencia incluso en asuntos cívicos que todos los demás residentes juntos. Sin embargo, nunca se abusa de este poder... Jayuya lidera la misión en conversiones y aumento de miembros, una ganancia con respecto al último año de 539. Una epidemia de fiebre tifoidea en los meses de verano se convirtió en una plaga, y el heroico esfuerzo de nuestro pastor al dirigir la atención de las autoridades gubernamentales a la situación.  

El informe de 1912 señala una vez más los logros evangelísticos de Edwards al liderar el crecimiento de la feligresía, señalando en el área que supervisa “nunca hemos visto un fruto tan grande” y del mismo Edwards: “Durante tres años se le ha dado el liderazgo misionero a Sidney W. Edwards, una combinación de fuego sureño y sentido norteño, que no imita a nadie, pero siempre es él mismo. Siempre se amontona a través de una aparente derrota y gana el gol.” En 1912, Sidney Edwards también se asoció con otro de los primeros misioneros de la Unión de Santidad del Sur, James M. Taylor, para una exploración aventurera de América Central. Taylor fue un evangelista que viajó y predicó en muchos lugares, pero al
principio se centró en las Indias Occidentales de habla inglesa. Para su expedición a Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras y Panamá en 1912, llevó a Edwards como traductor de español y compañero evangelista. Esta gira, presentada en el libro de Taylor, *On Muleback Through Central America*, representa uno de los primeros atisbos de misiones de santidad sobre el terreno en Centroamérica.\(^{33}\) Edwards juega un papel importante en el libro, no solo por su conocimiento del español y su capacidad para tratar con los funcionarios locales, sino también por su capacidad creativa para adaptarse a situaciones, como una ocasión en Honduras cuando los misioneros estaban preocupados por algunos de los nativos contratados para llevar sus materiales planeaban robarlos, y Edwards los convenció de que su linterna era en realidad un nuevo tipo de arma que podía usarse en la oscuridad. En el momento del informe de 1913 sobre la misión de Puerto Rico, Edwards todavía estaba trabajando con Taylor, y el reporte señala, “Él (Edwards) participa en una gira de evangelización por América Central con el reverendo James M. Taylor de Knoxville, Tennessee, sirviendo principalmente como intérprete del Sr. Taylor. El hermano Taylor es uno de los mejores amigos de nuestra Misión, apoyando parte de nuestro trabajo. El hermano Edwards todavía está con él en América Central, hasta donde sabemos, Guatemala, Panamá y otros lugares, predicando el evangelio.”\(^{34}\)

Para 1914, Sidney Edwards era el presidente del Comité de Evangelismo de la misión puertorriqueña. En esa misma conferencia, también fue ordenado presbítero de la Conferencia Misionera Puertorriqueña de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal. Edwards continuó trabajando en las difíciles zonas montañosas de Utuado y Jayuya. En 1915, el informe de la conferencia señaló: “El reverendo S. W. Edwards está a cargo de este gran centro montañoso, y más de 40,000 personas esparcidas a lo largo de estas montañas dependen de nosotros para el Evangelio. El hermano Edwards recientemente, en un año, aprobó un examen satisfactorio del curso de tres años de estudios de derecho, por lo que ahora es abogado y lo llamaremos el reverendo abogado Edwards.”\(^{35}\) En el informe de la conferencia de 1916, se menciona que Edwards finalizó su servicio en febrero de 1916. Señala que solicitó un cambio de ubicación, que se le concedió. En la solicitud de renovación de su pasaporte, Edwards da como residencia la dirección de College Heights, Meridian, Mississippi. Esto continuó conectándolo con el Movimiento de Santidad a través de Meridian College, que junto con su fundador, John Wesley Beeson, había estado estrechamente involucrado con H. C. Morrison y la Unión de Santidad del Sur. Una carta de la Junta de
Misiones Extranjeras de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal adjunta a la solicitud de pasaporte señaló que Edwards serviría como misionero en Costa Rica.

**Obra misionera de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Costa Rica (1918-1921)**

Si bien la experiencia de Edwards en Cuba fue un período de capacitación, su trabajo en Puerto Rico ayudó a reinar sus habilidades como evangelista, por lo que estaba listo cuando se le pidió que ingresara al trabajo misionero en Costa Rica como misionero pionero de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal. Los metodistas habían entrado a Costa Rica en 1917, con George Amos Miller de Panamá y Eduardo Zapata de México. Miller pronto regresó a Panamá, pero Zapata fundó la “Iglesia del Redentor” en San José en la casa privada de Modesto Le Roy, y fue reemplazada en 1918 por Sidney Edwards. Según Barclay, Edwards

... se bajó del tren en San José a las cuatro de la tarde del martes 22 de enero de 1918, buscó una habitación de hotel, salió y buscó a Modesto Le Roy, volvió al hotel para cenar, regresó donde Le Roy a las ocho, y celebró una reunión de oración con cinco personas. La noche siguiente, Edwards celebró otra reunión de oración en la casa de Le Roy, con doce presentes. Después de una cuidadosa explicación de la membresía en la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal, los doce dieron un paso adelante y se pararon en un semicírculo alrededor de Edwards para indicar su candidatura a la membresía: “las doce conversiones más brillantes que he visto”, dijo Edwards, quien también vio las calles, y callesones de San José como “simplemente llenos de humanidad necesitada de salvación”. A esto lo llamó el comienzo de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Costa Rica. Las reuniones de oración continuaron todas las noches en casa de Modesto Le Roy, ganando más conversos, hombres y mujeres jóvenes, hasta que en su primer fin de semana en Costa Rica, Edwards recibió veinticinco personas en prueba.36

En poco tiempo, Edwards estableció congregaciones adicionales en Cartago y Heredia y alquiló un edificio para la congregación en San José y lo equipó con sus propios fondos personales. Pronto, el salón se llenó con más de 100 candidatos a miembros. La “Iglesia del Redentor” se mudó a un edificio en la Avenida Central en 1919. Algunos administradores parecían preocupados de que Edwards estuviera haciendo mucho y demasiado rápido, pero un relato de su trabajo en Costa Rica del Secretario de la Misión
Metodista Norte señaló: “Él está haciendo uno de los mejores fragmentos
de trabajo de organización y capacitación que he visto en cualquier lugar.
Él está siguiendo la disciplina literalmente y desarrollando una iglesia en
líneas de reunión de clase estrictamente a la antigua, como John Wesley.
Tiene siete clases con líderes y los líderes informan cada semana sobre
cada miembro y recolectan las contribuciones.”

Una Foto de Pasaporte de Sidney W. Williams por el tiempo que estuvo
en Costa Rica

En 1919, Edwards y su familia estaban nuevamente en Meridian,
Mississippi, mientras solicitaban un pasaporte. Si bien Edwards no
permaneció mucho tiempo en Costa Rica (se fue en 1921), pocos
adivinarían que este misionero metodista pionero (posiblemente el
fundador de las primeras congregaciones metodistas en Costa Rica) fue
capacitado e inspirado a través de la breve misión de santidad de Morrison
en Cuba y a través de la Universidad Asbury. Una carta de J. A. Brownlee
de Costa Rica, publicado en *The Pentecostal Herald* en 1921, también notó
la conexión, cuando escribió: “Colegio Asbury está bien representado aquí.
El reverendo S. W. Edwards, el reverendo y la señora James N. Smith, y la
señora Brownlee y yo somos amigos de Asbury y ninguno de nosotros se avergüenza de las doctrinas que se enseñan allí.”38 Desafortunadamente, la situación en Costa Rica empeoraría rápidamente y llevaría a Edwards a dejar el campo misionero en desgracia.

El fracaso de la misión de Edwards en Costa Rica

La quiebra de Sidney Edwards en Costa Rica es un tema complejo, y no es fácil de abordar. A partir de un análisis de la correspondencia relacionada con la misión durante 1919 y 1921, parece haber tres problemas principales que llevaron a Edwards a dejar el campo misionero. Estos problemas se pueden agrupar en aspectos financieros, aspectos administrativos y aspectos familiares/personales. Estos problemas se sumaron unos a otros y dieron como resultado una tormenta perfecta de problemas que condujo a la destrucción de la familia Edwards y un gran escándalo en la iglesia local. La Junta de Misiones de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal trabajó principalmente para encubrir el daño de los problemas en un intento de minimizar su impacto en la misión de Costa Rica, pero incluso la Junta de Misiones estaba dividida sobre algunos de los temas. Se pueden aprender importantes lecciones misionológicas de este caso en términos de comprender los beneficios y los problemas entre el enfoque independiente basado en la fe de la santidad tradicional para las misiones y el enfoque denominacional basado en el salario. Sidney Edwards claramente tuvo problemas para hacer esta transición.

Aspectos financieros

La primera señal de problemas llegó al comienzo de la misión de Costa Rica. Como misionero independiente en Cuba, Edwards estaba acostumbrado a obtener su propio apoyo a través de la ayuda de H. C. Morrison y The Pentecostal Herald. En Puerto Rico, Edwards mantuvo un cierto nivel de autonomía, incluso en la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal, como lo demuestran sus esfuerzos por recaudar su propio dinero para comprar un caballo que lo ayudara en su trabajo misionero en las montañas. La situación en Costa Rica era muy diferente. Edwards no era un misionero completo de la Junta, sino que era un misionero contratado que había cambiado su afiliación a la Conferencia de Alabama de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal antes de ir a Costa Rica. También pasó algún tiempo recaudando su propio apoyo antes de irse. Gran parte de la correspondencia entre Edwards y la oficina de la Junta en Nueva York tiende a tratar este tema.
La misión de Costa Rica en un principio quedó bajo el control de la misión de Panamá, por lo que se instruyó a Edwards que todo el apoyo que recaudara debía ser enviado a la oficina de Nueva York, que luego lo enviaría a Panamá, que luego enviaría fondos a Costa Rica. Como resultado de este incómodo arreglo, Edwards en realidad no recibió fondos para sus primeros tres meses en Costa Rica, viéndose obligado a financiar todo su trabajo de su propio bolsillo. En un momento dado, desesperado, Edwards sacó cincuenta dólares del dinero de la Junta para poder sobrevivir. Notificó a la oficina y se disculpó, ya que sabía que se suponía que no debía hacer esto, pero la oficina de Nueva York no estaba contenta con su acción. Además, en ocasiones, Edwards continuó recibiendo fondos de sus partidarios y usó estos fondos y luego reportó los fondos a la oficina de Nueva York en lugar de que los fondos siempre pasaran primero por Nueva York. Todo esto creó tensiones financieras entre Edwards y la oficina de Nueva York, pero también con los superiores inmediatos de Edwards en Panamá.

Para complicar aún más este tema, parece que Edwards publicó su propio pequeño artículo, llamado Onward, en el que aparentemente expresaba las necesidades financieras para el trabajo en Costa Rica. La oficina de Nueva York se quejó con Edwards de que cualquier apelación debería ser aprobada por ellos y también querían que les enviara copias del documento. Parece que enviaba copias esporádicamente y los encargados de la Junta de Misiones en Nueva York tendían a sentir que no estaba tratando seriamente de cumplir con las reglas relacionadas con las finanzas.

Aspectos Administrativos

Cuando Edwards ingresó a Costa Rica como misionero contratado, básicamente estaba solo. Esto encajaba con el enfoque tradicional de santidad de Edwards en Cuba e incluso en las regiones montañosas de Puerto Rico. Estaba acostumbrado a estar a cargo de la obra misionera y a tomar decisiones autorizadas. Costa Rica era un escenario diferente, y con el conflicto emergente sobre las finanzas, la Junta de Misiones en Nueva York quería asegurarse de que los supervisores inmediatos de Edwards en Panamá ejercieran cierto nivel de supervisión. El problema administrativo parece haber comenzado cuando otro misionero, Charles W. Ports y su esposa se mudaron de la misión de Panamá a Costa Rica en 1919. Ports era un misionero completo con experiencia y se consideraba que estaba a cargo de la misión de Costa Rica. Según Barclay, Ports y Edwards tenían
dos puntos de vista diametralmente opuestos con respecto a la misión. Edwards siguió los procedimientos y planes al pie de la letra y Ports era “poco práctico” y “tangencial” en sus enfoques. Ports también parecía más interesado en los ministerios sociales en comparación con el fuerte enfoque de Edwards en el evangelismo.

Además de sus diferentes enfoques de la misión, parece que los líderes en Panamá estaban cada vez más preocupados por la estabilidad física y mental de Ports. El reverendo U. S. Brown de la misión de Panamá escribió al reverendo Harry Farmer en Nueva York el 31 de diciembre de 1919 y señaló: “Tengo la convicción de que el hermano Ports está físicamente y me temo que mentalmente no está apto para el trabajo allí. Sus nervios se han alterado y hay peleas constantes. El hermano Edwards ha escrito al obispo para que lo libere. Siente que no puede trabajar con Ports y con los métodos y planes de Ports.”39 Si bien en la correspondencia Ports y Edwards parecen trabajar juntos, los problemas con Ports parecen haber llevado a Edwards, junto con los demás trabajadores, a amenazar con renunciar. En una carta del reverendo U. S. Brown a la oficina de Nueva York el 13 de febrero de 1920, Brown escribió: “El hermano Ports ha fracasado de manera tan persistente en llevar a cabo los planes y ha trastornado tanto el trabajo y los trabajadores que es completamente imposible abrir la escuela en este momento. Todos los trabajadores han renunciado o están a punto de renunciar y toda la Misión se encuentra en una condición sumamente crítica.”40 La gota que colmó el vaso llegó cuando un líder de Panamá descubrió que Ports, en lugar de trabajar en el desarrollo de una escuela según los planes de la Junta de la Misión, estaba trabajando en un plan para establecer una fábrica de dulces para ayudar a emplear y reformar a las prostitutas en San José (que no estaba en el plan oficial de la misión), y a Ports se le ordenó salir del campo en marzo de 1920. Edwards había salido al campo para recuperar a su esposa y familia y traerlos a Costa Rica a principios de 1920, sin dejar a nadie en el campo por un período de tiempo. Sin embargo, antes de abandonar el campo, Ports parece haber hecho un último ataque a Edwards al acusar a Edwards de indiscriciones con dos mujeres en la iglesia de Costa Rica.

Una carta del reverendo U. S. Brown, quien supervisó la misión costarricense desde Panamá, al reverendo Harry Farmer de la oficina de Nueva York de la Junta de Misiones, fechada el 22 de marzo de 1920, detalla su investigación sobre historias aparentemente reportadas por Ports (esta investigación se hizo mientras Edwards estaba fuera del país),
No he podido encontrar ninguna evidencia que me lleve a creer que el hermano Edwards ha sido inmoral. Me hacen creer que ha hecho algunas cosas indiscretas e imprudentes que han sido la base de considerables chismes, muchos de los cuales, me temo, se originaron en la Iglesia.

Fue una cosa imprudente que la Sra. Rosa Valverde y su madre vivieran en el edificio de la Iglesia y tener comida y alojamiento para el hermano Edwards allí cuando él estuviera en San José. La iglesia ha sido utilizada como un lugar de reunión para los miembros antes y después de los servicios y en otros momentos, y existía una relación amistosa entre Rosa, su madre y el hermano Edwards que fácilmente se malinterpretaba y proporcionaba fácilmente un motivo de conversación. No he podido conseguir ninguna prueba que justifique cualquier cargo que no sea indiscreción.

En cuanto a Genoveva Mora (la chica que lo acompañó a Alajuela) fue un hecho natural pero imprudente. La madre y la niña deseaban que el hermano Edwards llevara a la niña a Alajuela para visitar a un pariente que vivía allí. Llevó a la niña con él en uno de sus viajes habituales y se detuvieron en el edificio de la Misión antes de que la niña fuera con sus familiares. Guillermo Saens estuvo en la casa de la misión durante todo el tiempo que estuvo la niña y está seguro de que no pasó nada malo durante la visita. Todavía parece haber comenzado a partir de un comentario que hizo la madre de la niña al Sr. y la Sra. Carranza en la casa de Carranza. Todo comenzó con el comentario que hizo la madre en el sentido de que “las acciones del hermano Edwards no fueron agradables”. No pude ubicar ninguna declaración definitiva sobre las acciones y Guillermo declaró que estuvo en la propiedad de la Misión todo el tiempo que la niña estuvo allí.

Interrogué a cada uno de los trabajadores personalmente y aparte de otras personas y cada uno fue positivo en sus declaraciones de que era su juicio que no había absolutamente nada malo con el hermano Edwards.

Es mi juicio que el hermano y la hermana Ports parecían pensar que el hermano Edwards era más popular que ellos y que él deseaba tener su puesto como jefe de la obra en Costa Rica y por esta razón temo que hablaron demasiado e hicieron muy fácil que otras personas les tajeran historias y rumores.41

Brown continuó indicando que la iglesia quería que Edwards regresara con su familia, y señaló: “Estoy bastante seguro de que tener a la hermana
Edwards con él en el trabajo detendrá de inmediato todos los chismes y conversaciones.” Lamentablemente, no funcionó de esta manera.

**Aspectos familiares/personales**

Si bien fue difícil determinar la veracidad de las acusaciones de Ports, los rumores que crearon fueron devastadores para Edwards y su familia. En junio de 1920, Margarita Edwards y sus hijas habían llegado a Costa Rica con Sidney. Había sido un viaje difícil. Cuando Edwards fue a Costa Rica, se decidió que debía irse sin su familia ya que allí no había trabajo en ese momento. Margarita Edwards y sus cinco hijas vivieron en Meridian, Mississippi hasta que pudieron unirse a Edwards en el campo. En octubre de 1918 Edwards tuvo que regresar brevemente ya que Margarita estaba muy enferma de neumonía. Cuando regresó en 1920 para traer a su familia, Margarita sufrió un caso severo de malaria y pleuresía. En una carta al reverendo Harry Farmer de la Junta de Misiones de Nueva York fechada el 4 de mayo de 1920, Edwards señaló que no estaba seguro de si podrían irse a tiempo y escribió: “Dejé todo en manos de la Sra. Edwards, y ella nunca dudó en decir ‘Vámonos’ aunque no podía ponerse de pie y no podía comer nada, además tenía 104 de fiebre cuando salimos de casa.”

Debido a su salud, la familia se detuvo por una corta estadía en Cuba, donde ella tuvo una recaída, pero luego pareció recuperarse, y llegaron alrededor del 30 de mayo a Panamá. Edwards estaba horrorizado por la condición en la que encontró la misión de Costa Rica cuando escribió al Rev. Harry Farmer el 2 de junio de 1920: “La obra aquí en San José ha sido destruida. El enemigo ciertamente ha estado muy activo. Ya han comenzado los trabajos de reparación de los muros y reparación de las brechas. No estoy desanimado, pero el trabajo al que me enfrento no es ni fácil ni agradable. El trabajo de mi antecesor aquí durante los últimos días de su estadía aquí no tendría a facilitar mi trabajo cuando regresé.”

Si bien la correspondencia no revela mucho, parece claro que Margarita llegó a creer los rumores sobre Sidney y su relación colapsó. Además, la oficina en Nueva York había decidido encontrar un nuevo Superintendente de Distrito para Costa Rica, pasando por alto a Edwards nuevamente para un rol de liderazgo. El Rev. Harry Farmer de la oficina de Nueva York escribió al Rev. U. S. Brown en Panamá el 27 de julio de 1920,

Le escribí al Sr. Edwards hace algún tiempo sugiriendo que probablemente sobre la organización de la
La relación entre Sidney y Margarita siguió desintegrándose. En una carta al reverendo Harry Farmer en Nueva York, el reverendo E. M. Oliver escribió el 12 de julio de 1921: “La relación entre Edwards y su esposa es deplorable y, por supuesto, eso circula en la iglesia. Me dicen que no comen en la misma mesa y que ella declara que no puede soportar las condiciones por mucho más tiempo. No andan juntos.”45 Los problemas de sus problemas personales y el estrés del liderazgo y los problemas financieros se estaban acumulando y estallarían en un escándalo difícil. A Brownlee se le asignó la tarea de resolver los problemas, y parece haber tomado una posición de apoyo a Sidney Edwards con una visión negativa hacia Margarita, principalmente porque vio que su actitud perturbaba el trabajo misionero en sí. En una carta al obispo Thirkield el 23 de julio de 1921, Brownlee escribió: “No se presenta prueba alguna. Al mismo tiempo, difícilmente se puede culpar a la gente por creerles debido a la actitud que ha tomado su esposa. Si hubiera mantenido la boca cerrada y permanecido a su lado y alineado con el trabajo, podríamos haber superado el mal informe. Ella está muy amargada contra él y hasta los últimos domingos no ha tomado parte alguna en la obra de la iglesia.”46 Brownlee parece haber estado tratando de encontrar una manera de mantener a Edwards en el campo, o traerlo de regreso después de una breve pausa. Pero en septiembre de 1921 se consideró que el matrimonio era irreconciliable y se convocó una reunión de los misioneros para que Margarita presentara su prueba. Es interesante que Brownlee decidió no permitir la participación de
ningún “nativo” en la reunión excepto uno leal a la misión. Escribió a Harry Farmer el 13 de septiembre de 1921,

Antes de conocernos, hablé del asunto con los dos juntos y en esta conferencia llegamos a este acuerdo: que la Sra. Edwards se llevaría a la niña más pequeña y él la enviaría con sus padres en Cuba. Que antes de ir irían juntos al juez y disolverían su contrato matrimonial. Esto se puede hacer en este país siempre que ambas partes estén de acuerdo. En mi opinión, esta es la mejor manera de resolver la dificultad porque estoy convencido de que las condiciones son tales que nunca habría armonía en el hogar y él quedaría lisiado en cualquier trabajo que quisiera emprender.47

El reverendo Farmer dejó en claro en la siguiente carta que ambos Edwards deberían abandonar el campo, no solo Margarita.

Margarita Edwards se encontró en una situación imposible. Su matrimonio se disolvió y tuvo que dejar a cuatro de sus hijas con Sidney. Partió a fines de septiembre de 1921 de Panamá a Cuba, pero la historia aún no había concluido. Cuando llegó a Cuba, su padre y un tío se encontraron con el barco y la animaron a continuar en el barco hasta la ciudad de Nueva York y presentar su caso ante el reverendo Harry Farmer y la Junta de Misiones. Llegó a Nueva York, en el S.S. Calamares el 2 de octubre de 1921 navegando desde La Habana, Cuba y aparentemente se quedó con la familia Ports. Harry Farmer describió el evento al reverendo E. M. Oliver en una carta fechada el 24 de octubre de 1921,

Tomo nota de su correspondencia con la señora Edwards. Puede que te haya escrito que ella vino a Nueva York y nos expuso todo el caso. Al mismo tiempo, el Sr. Eastman estuvo aquí y nos contó lo que observó y lo que Marian le había escrito desde entonces. Él está de acuerdo conmigo de que la Sra. Edwards fue tratada con dureza indebida y espero que todo el asunto sea investigado cuando el obispo baje. La obligaron a firmar un documento de separación, permitiéndole tener la hija menor y bajo la amenaza de que si se negaba a firmar le quitarían incluso a esa hija. Las siguientes dos niñas querían ir con ella pero no se les permitió hacerlo. La Sra. Edwards es de una de las mejores familias de Cuba, siendo prima del ex presidente Menocal y su tío ahora es un funcionario del gobierno y está relacionado con muchas personas destacadas allí. Le he telegrafiado dos veces al Sr. Brownlee para asegurarme de que envían a Edwards fuera del país, pero no he tenido noticias suyas.
El Sr. Eastman dijo que no habría muchas posibilidades de seguir adelante con nuestro trabajo hasta que se deshiciera de él y el Sr. Morales, un hombre de negocios costarricense que se unió a la iglesia con Edwards, me dijo lo mismo.\textsuperscript{48}

Farmer parece haber sido convencido tanto por Margarita como por el testigo del Sr. y la Sra. Morales que la acompañaban. Farmer también relató la visita en una carta a Brownlee fechada el 11 de octubre de 1921,

La Sra. Edwards vino a la oficina hace unos días en compañía del Sr. y la Sra. Morales a quienes tenía en el bote. Cuando la Sra. Edwards llegó a La Habana, su tío y su padre la recibieron y le aconsejaron que viniera a Nueva York y nos viera personalmente. Ella fue una dama y expuso el caso tal como nos lo ha dado. Por supuesto, no hay duda en su mente en cuanto a la culpabilidad del Sr. Edwards. Evidentemente, ella fue informada de la inmoraldad reportada del Sr. Edwards cuando llegó por primera vez. Me dijo que su observación confirmaba las historias. Afirma que la obligaron a firmar el documento de separación y que, si bien se le permitió llevarse a la niña más pequeña, se le negaron las dos hijas siguientes. No sé exactamente lo que se ha hecho, pero las niñas deberían tener la oportunidad de decidir con quién quieren vivir. El Sr. y la Sra. Morales estuvieron entre los primeros conversos del Sr. Edwards, pero abandonaron la iglesia debido a su deficiencia. Viviendo al lado de la iglesia vieron las cosas con sus propios ojos y confirmaron las historias sobre Edwards.\textsuperscript{49}

Margarita Edwards siguió esta visita con una desgarradora nota personal a Harry Farmer escrita desde Hato-Nuevo, Cuba,

Por favor, cuénteme algo sobre mis hijas, si lo sabe. Ni una palabra de ellas y ya hace más de un mes que me fui de casa. Escribo pero nunca obtengo respuesta. Es un pesar estar separados pero ¿no cree que me pueden escribir unas líneas? Dr. Farmer, ¿puede ser mi asesor? Espero por su respuesta. Cualquier cosa que pueda hacer por mí será apreciada. Lo único que quiero es trabajar para que mi bebé pueda aprender mientras yo trabajo y esto no se puede hacer aquí. Padre está muy enfermo y puedes imaginar cómo mi corazón está lleno de dolor y sólo la voluntad y el amor del Señor me hacen paciente. ¿Me aconsejará (como un padre) y me dirá el lugar donde están mis niñas hoy?\textsuperscript{50}
Esta reunión entre Margarita Edwards y Harry Farmer parece haber establecido un caso donde los líderes de la misión en el campo (especialmente Brownlee) apoyaron a Sidney Edwards y los líderes de la misión en la Junta de Misiones apoyaron a Margarita Edwards. Brownlee responde a Farmer en una carta fechada el 1 de noviembre de 1921,

Difícilmente creo que la Sra. Edwards fue obligada a firmar el papel de separación. Estuve allí cuando se firmó y le aconsejé que lo hiciera. En cierto modo, por supuesto, fue una acción forzada porque era una elección entre esto y una acción de divorcio en la que estaba decidido a asegurar la posesión de todos las niñas. En conversaciones anteriores ella siempre había dicho que estaría contenta si pudiera estar libre de él y tener la posesión de la niña más pequeña. Aporté toda la influencia que pude sobre ambas partes para sacarlas del campo de la forma más silenciosa posible.51

La discusión entre Brownlee y Farmer continúa hasta fines de 1921 y no parece haber una conclusión clara. Una carta adicional a Brownlee de Farmer, fechada el 23 de noviembre de 1921, arroja un poco más de luz sobre la situación.

Hemos recibido su carta del 8 de octubre, adjuntando una carta al Sr. Shepard, que me parece que cubre la situación de la mejor manera posible. Esto confirma el informe de la Sra. Edwards, que el Sr. Edwards había estado escribiendo a varias partes sobre Rosa Valverde y contándoles el maravilloso trabajo que ella estaba haciendo. De hecho, la Sra. Edwards había sacado cartas arrugadas del cesto de basura de su casa que me mostró y que ahora ella tiene en su poder. Mucho me temo que encontremos otros asuntos de este tipo antes de terminar.52

Sidney Edwards envió una carta a Harry Farmer desde Meridian, Mississippi el 1 de noviembre de 1921 solicitando la dirección de la “ex-Sra. Edwards,” finalizando la carta, “Mi corazón está roto, pero ‘Dado que lo correcto es correcto, y que Dios es Dios, lo correcto debe ganar. Dudar sería deslealtad, vacilar sería pecado.’53

El 1 de noviembre de 1922, Edwards se casó con su segunda esposa, Elsie Pearl McGuire, en Muscatine, Iowa. Según un recurso genealógico, asistió al Iowa State Teacher’s College y enseñó mientras planeaba asistir al Instituto Bíblico Moody. Era conocida por ser bastante
religiosa y era considerada una buena esposa de ministro. Según el censo de 1930, Edwards vive en Poplarville, Mississippi como agente bíblico. Sidney y Elsie tenían tres hijos: Grace, Amy y Sidney William, Jr., pero también vivían con su hija Lillian de su primera esposa. Según el censo de 1940, figura como ministro de una iglesia en el condado de Shelby, Alabama. Elsie murió de leucemia el 4 de abril de 1943. Edwards se casó por tercera vez con Vivian Ruth Ginn en Alabama el 25 de noviembre de 1944. Ella tenía unos 40 años menos que él en ese momento. Se registra que Sidney William Edwards, Jr. dijo de su padre: “Mi padre era un hombre grande que podía contar las historias más interesantes sobre casi cualquier tema. Siempre tenía una gran cantidad de información sobre las preguntas que mis hermanas y yo siempre hacíamos. Muy a menudo nos entretenía con sus anécdotas de la Guerra Hispanoamericana.” Sidney Edwards falleció el 3 de enero de 1962 a los 84 años de edad y está enterrado en Eden, Alabama. La esposa cubana de Edwards, Margarita, moriría el 6 de julio de 1976 a los 90 años de edad y sería enterrada en La Habana, Cuba.

**Lecciones aprendidas de Sidney Edwards**

Dejando a un lado el escándalo que puso fin al servicio misional de Edwards por un momento, la historia de Sidney Edwards ayuda a demostrar el dilema de los primeros misioneros de Santidad. En sus formas más tempranas, las misiones de santidad eran esfuerzos enfocados individualmente y basados en la fe. El trabajo de Edwards en Cuba ejemplifica este período. Edwards tenía control total sobre los fondos y el liderazgo de la misión cubana, pero era una batalla constante en la que dependía tanto de H. C. Morrison como de *The Pentecostal Herald* y la Unión de Santidad del Sur para su apoyo. Cuando su metodología misionológica cambió, Edwards se quedó sin misión ni apoyo. Hizo el cambio a una misión denominacional con la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Puerto Rico. Esta era una misión existente organizada, y al estar dispuesto a aceptar cargos en regiones montañosas remotas, Edwards pudo mantener un cierto nivel de independencia, lo que funcionó para él. Tuvo la flexibilidad de recaudar dinero para un caballo para su trabajo misionero y pudo tomarse el tiempo para viajar por América Central con James M. Taylor durante varios meses como evangelista.

Costa Rica era una situación diferente. Como campo misionero pionero, tenía que permanecer conectado dentro del liderazgo de la organización misionera y su sede local en Panamá. La Junta de Misiones
había reforzado los controles sobre cómo se podían recaudar, utilizar y suministrar fondos al campo. Edwards perdió gran parte de su flexibilidad al tener que buscar permiso y financiación (incluso con fondos que recaudó de sus propios seguidores) para lograr los objetivos de su misión. Este nivel de control frustró a Edwards y sintió que impactó su propia habilidad para liderar y encontrar respeto entre las mismas iglesias que él plantó. Si Edwards hubiera seguido sus patrones en Cuba y Puerto Rico, habría abierto la misión en Costa Rica junto con su esposa y su familia. Los problemas familiares que surgieron se intensificaron por la decisión de la Junta de que su familia permaneciera en los Estados Unidos mientras él establecía la obra. Los problemas en Costa Rica enfatizan la razón por la cual algunos misioneros de Santidad evitaron enredos denominacionales. Otros misioneros de Santidad se unieron a las denominaciones de Santidad a medida que surgían, como la Alianza Cristiana y Misionera, la Iglesia del Nazareno y la Iglesia Metodista Libre. Esto permitió la recaudación de fondos organizada y el apoyo de liderazgo sin preocupaciones sobre el control teológico.

Dado que Edwards estaba estrechamente ligado a H. C. Morrison, no sorprende que fuera influenciado para permanecer dentro del Metodismo, incluso si no era la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal del Sur a la que pertenecía Morrison. La Iglesia Metodista Episcopal parece haber sido un poco más amistosa con aquellos en el Movimiento de Santidad, pero para la década de 1920 había desarrollado una sólida burocracia. Edwards claramente encontró este sistema difícil de manejar, pero en el lado positivo, dicho sistema estaba en su lugar para lidiar con los problemas en el campo. Eliminar a Charles Ports cuando parecía tener problemas en términos de su estabilidad mental, e incluso eliminar a Edwards por sus posibles defectos morales, muestra el valor potencial de las organizaciones misioneras denominacionales. Al reflexionar sobre el escándalo que obligó a Edwards a abandonar el campo misionero, la crítica histórica dirigida a la Junta de Misiones fue su preocupación primordial por la reputación de la misión en lugar del bienestar de la familia Edwards. Margarita Edwards fue maltratada en nombre de mantener el escándalo en silencio y potencialmente mantener a Edwards exitoso en el campo. Su papel como mujer hispana, madre y compañera misionera de Edwards durante 17 años de matrimonio parecía contar muy poco.

Sidney Edwards es ciertamente una figura misionera defectuosa, pero estableció una fuerte presencia de la Iglesia Metodista en Costa Rica.
Como Centroamérica estaba dividida por acuerdos de cortesía, solo Costa Rica tiene una presencia metodista prominente en la región. Probablemente debido al escándalo que obligó a Edwards a abandonar el campo, su historia es poco conocida y sus conexiones con H. C. Morrison y el Movimiento de Santidad son aún más oscuras. Sigue siendo una realidad fascinante que la Iglesia Metodista de Costa Rica ha mantenido conexiones con el Seminario Teológico de Asbury durante muchos años, incluso sin darse cuenta de esta conexión e influencia tempranas.

Notas finales


31 Year Book, Superintendent’s Annual Report and Official Minutes of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Porto Rico Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Held in the Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church, Arecibo, Porto Rico, February 8 to 13, 1911. Page 43


33 James M. Taylor, On Muleback Through Central America, James M. Taylor: Knoxville, TN (1913?).


35 Year Book, Official Minutes and Superintendent’s Annual Report. XIV Session of the Puerto Rico Mission Conference of the Methodist...
Episcopal Church. Held in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Utuado, P.R., February 17-22, 1915. Page 52


37 Ibid., 313.


55 Ibid. La cita es de un poema, “The Right Must Win” by Frederick William Farber (1814-1863).
Philip Hardt

*Dr. David Reese and the Three Errors of Phrenology: Religion, Anatomy, and Moral Insanity*

**Abstract:**

Today, phrenology is a mostly-forgotten and thoroughly medically-disgraced theory of human behavior. Yet, in its mid-nineteenth century heyday, it not only claimed to explain one’s personality based on the size of the bumps on one’s head but also (scarily) attempted to push prison reform in a less punitive direction. Somewhat surprisingly, as phrenology crossed the Atlantic in the 1820s, a number of doctors, professors, and ordinary citizens accepted and promoted its rather startling claims. At the same time, traditionalists began to speak out against its increasing influence. This traditionalist response is exemplified by Dr. David M. Reese, a highly regarded physician in Manhattan who opposed its attack on (mainly evangelical and specifically Methodist) Christianity, exposed its non-medical understanding of anatomy, ridiculed its belief in “moral insanity” and disputed the idea of religiously-induced insanity which accompanied outbreaks of revivalism.

**Keywords:** David M. Reese, Amariah Brigham, phrenology, moral insanity, prison reform, revivalism

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Introduction

Most Americans today have little or no knowledge of phrenology which gained widespread popularity in America beginning in the 1820s. Although it was initially an attempt to explain human behavior, some of its major American proponents actually used it to both undermine Christianity, especially its more evangelical expressions, and also apply its highly questionable principles to prison reform. Although initially unaware of its dubious claims, Dr. David Reese, a Methodist local preacher and highly regarded physician in Manhattan, quickly opposed it in three publications spanning twenty-two years because it demeaned traditional Christian doctrines and practices, lacked medical validity, and, perhaps most importantly, eliminated personal accountability for criminal behavior.

Phrenology: The “Science of Mind”

Phrenology originated in Vienna in the late eighteenth century. In 1792, Dr. Franz Joseph Gall “had begun his investigations into human brain functions and personality, attempting to correlate any unusual personality trait with the skull configuration and the brain” (Carlson 1958: 535). Gall believed that the “brain had twenty-seven faculties” and that the “power of a specific faculty depended on its size” (Branson 2017: 170). Later phrenologists, however, modified Gall’s system. For example, Johann C. Spurzheim, Gall’s student, “increased the number of (Gall’s) faculties, rearranging them into a philosophically acceptable order, and disagreed with Gall’s pessimism by stating that there were no bad faculties, but only abuses of the normal ones” (Carlson 1958: 535). In addition, later phrenologists put the number of “faculties” at thirty-five or more parts “to which they ascribe certain propensities, sentiments, and intelligent faculties” (Reese 1836: 40).

Moreover, they said that the key to a virtuous life depended on keeping these propensities (evil tendencies) and sentiments (good tendencies) in balance. Propensities included such behaviors as “combativeness, destructiveness, secretiveness, and acquisitiveness,” while sentiments included “benevolence, veneration, self-esteem, conscientious, and love of approbation.” Problems occurred when a sentiment became overdeveloped. For example, if the sentiment of “firmness” (i.e., perseverance) became overdeveloped, the propensity to “intransigence” and “tenacity in evil” could occur (Lewis 1965: 233).
To the consternation of Reese and many other traditional physicians, Americans embraced phrenology beginning in the 1820s due to two factors. First, Philadelphia emerged as a center of phrenological activity. For example, in 1822, the first phrenological society started there; *Essays in Phrenology*, by the English phrenologist, George Combe, was also published in Philadelphia that year. Moreover, in 1824, Charles Caldwell, a physician in Philadelphia, published the first American book on phrenology entitled, *Elements of Phrenology* (Branson 2017: 170-1). Second, European lecturers fueled even more interest in this strange doctrine. For example, in 1832, Johann Spurzheim, gave a series of lectures in New England in which he popularized the highly intellectual ideas of Gall into more easily understood categories. Again, in the late 1830s, George Combe lectured to great crowds in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia (Branson 2017: 169-171). Regarding its growing popularity, Susan Branson has written: “Riding the crest of reform ideology that emphasized human perfectibility, phrenology dovetailed nicely with temperance, prison reform, and health reform” (Branson 2017: 169).

**Dr. David Meredith Reese**

David Reese was born in Maryland in 1800 and raised in a devout Quaker family. His parent, however, eventually joined a different denomination (possibly Methodist); after seriously considering Calvinism as an adolescent, David joined the Methodist Episcopal Church (hereafter, MEC). In 1819, he graduated from the University of Maryland’s medical school, practiced for about a year in Baltimore, and then moved to Manhattan. For the next forty years, until his untimely death in 1860, he made significant contributions in three areas.

First, he ably served the MEC in several capacities. For example, he was a local preacher, class leader, Quarterly Conference member, Mission Society manager, and Young Men’s Missionary Society president (for eight years). Second, he deeply immersed himself in the socio-cultural issues of the day. This is illustrated by his apologetic works against immediate abolition and in favor of colonization, his strenuous efforts as school superintendent to retain the *King James Bible* in the common schools, and his energetic opposition to phrenology. Finally, he greatly helped the medical profession in its early years as it gradually made gains in theory and practice. For example, he wrote or edited several medical textbooks, taught at three medical schools, served on key city medical committees and
as Resident Physician at Bellevue Hospital, supported the creation on New York City’s first foundling home, and served as second vice-president of the American Medical Association.

Dr. Amariah Brigham

Reese first clashed with a Dr. Amariah Brigham, who had drawn upon phrenological ideas in his 1835 book, *Observation of the Influence of Religion upon the Health and Physical Welfare of Mankind*, which had cast doubt on certain Christian understandings. To be sure, over the next fifteen years, Brigham emerged as a formidable, but spectacularly controversial, adversary. At the time he incurred Reese’s wrath, he was a highly regarded surgeon in Hartford, Connecticut, who had gradually developed an interest in the causes and treatment of insanity. Lacking a medical degree, he had taken the more common route of apprenticeship. Indeed, in the early nineteenth-century, a university medical degree was extremely difficult to obtain. For example, in 1800, only four university medical schools existed in America: Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, and Pennsylvania.

Of the small number of students that attended, an even smaller number attained a degree. For example, in the 1700s, in New York City and Long Island, only twenty-five out of five hundred (one out of twenty) physicians had a degree. Finally, only a small number of students could afford to study abroad in Edinburgh, London, and Paris which were considered to be the best medical centers of that time (Oshinsky 2016: 20-22). As a result, in New York City in the late 1700s and early 1800s, an aspiring physician normally served an apprenticeship of four to six years in which he made “house calls, mixed his drugs and potions, assisted with bleeding and the pulling (of teeth) while reading all the medical books with reach” (Oshinsky 2016: 18-19). Previously, an examination had been required but, by the late 1700s, “all it (i.e., New York City) now required was proof of a successful apprenticeship with a ‘respectable preceptor,’ a term liberally applied” (Oshinsky 2016: 23).

Brigham’s path to successful surgeon closely followed this approach. He was born in 1798 in New Marlborough, Massachusetts, and, in 1895, moved to Chatham, New York, where his father purchased a farm. From an early age, he wanted to be a doctor and, around the age of twelve, he became an apprentice to his uncle, Dr. Origen Brigham, in Schoharie, New York. After his uncle’s untimely death, he went to Albany where he worked in a bookstore and read widely. Three years later, he went back to
Chatham and served as an apprentice for four years to Dr. Edmund Peet, a respected doctor, whose brother was Dr. H. P. Peet, president of the New York Deaf and Dumb Asylum in New York City. Next, he attended medical lectures in New York City for a year. Then, in 1820, he began to practice with Dr. Plumb in Canaan, Connecticut. The following year he had his own practice in Enfield, Massachusetts. Then, from 1824 to 1826, he practiced in Greenfield, Massachusetts, until he left for Europe to attend additional medical lectures in Paris. In 1830, he returned to Greenfield and then, in 1831, moved to Hartford, Connecticut. In 1837, he taught for one year at the Crosby Street Medical College in New York City but, due to poor health, he returned to Hartford where he became the assistant editor of the American Journal of Medical Sciences. During this time, he also developed a strong interest in the origin and treatment of mental illness; in 1841, he left private practice to assume the superintendency of the Hartford Retreat for the Insane (hereafter, HRI) (Coventry 1858: 110-3; Dwyer 1987: 58-61).

The HRI, where Brigham served for two years, allowed him to test many of his ideas, some of which had a phrenological basis. This experimentation also continued during his final appointment as superintendent of the NY State Lunatic Asylum in Utica (1843-1849). The HRI had opened in 1824 due to the efforts of Dr. Eli Todd, a well-respected physician in the Hartford area. Todd was born in 1769, graduated from Yale in 1787, served a two-year apprenticeship with Dr. Hezekiah Beardsley in New Haven, and practiced in Farmington, CT, for the next twenty-five years before finally moving to Hartford. Family tragedies led Todd to focus on mental health issues: his father had become insane and his sister had had “fits of melancholia” and eventually committed suicide after her young son died. This deeply personal concern led Todd to take action. In January, 1821, Todd met with some of his colleagues and suggested the establishment of an insane asylum based on similar hospitals in England and France. Following their approval, the Hartford County Medical Society also pledged its support, the Connecticut legislature chartered it a year later, and, in 1824, Todd became the first superintendent and executive director (Eaton 1953: 435-438).

The HRI had a decidedly progressive approach that ran counter to the prevailing orthodoxy on mental illness, especially the treatment of violent criminals, which manifested itself in several ways. The first way was its conscious effort to pattern itself after two European asylums: Samuel Tube’s in England and Philippe Penel’s in France. This was illustrated in
Todd’s five classifications of mental illness which apparently followed Penel’s quite closely: “melancholy, mania, idiotism, hypochondria, and delirium tremens” (Eaton 1953: 439). The second way was its affinity with phrenology. For example, during Spurzheim’s visit to the HRI in August, 1832, Todd took a deep interest in his phrenologically-inspired charts of the brain. Finally, in a break with current practice, the inmates were treated kindly rather than cruelly (Eaton 1953: 440). An example of a similar change in England comes from the journal of John Wesley. On Saturday, September 19, 1781, Wesley had visited Richard Henderson, a former itinerant preacher who had established a private asylum for lunatics in Hanham which was near Bristol and noted: “I spent an hour with Mr. Henderson at Hanham and particularly inquired into his whole method. And I am persuaded there is not such another house for lunatics in the three kingdoms: he has a peculiar art of governing his patients, not by fear but by love. The consequence is, many of them speedily recover and love him ever after” (John Wesley 1995: 224). Indeed, according to Leonard Eaton, “even the most advanced hospital of the day resembled well-conducted boarding houses rather than hospitals” and that “the interest of Connecticut in this humanitarian scheme is symptomatic of the enthusiasm for various kinds of reform…which culminated in the tremendous accomplishments of the eighteen-forties” (Eaton 1953: 436).

Brigham’s growing interest in mental illness, politically progressive outlook, religious skepticism, and openness to phrenological ideas would quickly put him on a collision course with Reese’s deeply evangelical faith, traditional views, and superior university medical training. The inevitable clash erupted in 1836, a year after Brigham published Observation of the Influence of Religion upon the Health and Physical Welfare of Mankind in which he severely criticized aspects of evangelical Christianity in general and Methodism in particular. An alarmed Reese quickly responded the following year with Phrenology Known by Its Fruits.

The Rationale for Phrenology Known by Its Fruits

Before attacking Brigham’s assertions concerning the harmful effects of Christianity, or at least certain aspects of it, Reese explained how his own view of phrenology had changed. In the preface to Phrenology Known by Its Fruits, Reese mentioned that, at first, he thought that the work of Gall and Spurzheim might contribute something positive to the field of medicine. Moreover, he wasn’t aware of any “moral” or “religious”
dimension of phrenology. In looking back at that earlier time, he wrote that “he had regarded the light which phrenologists claimed to have thrown upon the structure and functions of the brain, as calculated to contribute to the business of education and to aid in some questions of medical jurisprudence, and to facilitate the curative management of certain obscure diseases of the head” (Reese 1836: 7-8).

Two events, however, changed his initially hopeful assessment. The first occurred sometime in the early to mid-1830s when he was asked to defend phrenology from the charge of “materialism” or its “moral aspect” (see below). Although Reese had been a member of two phrenological societies, he had never attended any meetings and had little knowledge of its actual beliefs. Then, in preparation for the paper, as he actually read the writings of Gall and Spurzheim for the first time, he realized he completely disagreed with their ideas. At that point, he “then resolved to abstain from the subject wholly, until it could be vindicated by somebody or until he could cultivate it in works written by other than infidels” (Reese 1836: 8). Second, Reese became increasingly aware of the adverse effects of phrenology on the religious faith of others. For example, after the publication of Brigham’s book, several of Reese’s medical friends had told him that the book had both serious medical and religious errors, especially regarding insanity, and urged him to respond. Moreover, a close friend related his own devastating reading the works of Gall and Spurzheim, it had made him skeptical of traditional Christianity and had shaken his faith. Although Reese structured his book as a chapter-by-chapter “review” of Brigham’s book, he especially focused on three areas: Brigham’s definition of “religious sentiment,” his opposition to “revivals of religion,” and his phrenological understanding of the “the nature and causes of insanity” (Reese 1836: 8-9).

Brigham’s Phrenologically-Based Criticism of (Mainly Evangelical) Christianity

Reese objected to Brigham’s phrenologically-influenced understanding of religion in two significant ways. First, he objected to Brigham’s understanding of what he called the “religious sentiment” in human beings. Brigham believed that “religious sentiment” was “innate in man.” Since phrenologists believed that certain organs in the brain allowed a person to believe in God, Brigham felt that everyone had it. According to phrenologists, “religious sentiment” was the bump or prominence on
the top of the head. Earlier phrenologists had given it different names; Dr. Gall had called it the “organ of theosophy” and Spurzheim had called it the “organ of veneration.” Yet, according to Brigham, “religious sentiment” could be good or evil. Indeed, it could lead to murder, wars, and even insanity. For example, Brigham said that human sacrifice which was found in some religions was just one appropriate expression of “religious sentiment” and had been put in man “by his creator.” Amazingly, Brigham said that human sacrifice was better than no religion at all. In contrast, Reese asserted that Brigham’s “religious sentiment” actually meant “absence of religion.” Moreover, Brigham’s view of “religious sentiment” showed that he was ignorant of the natural state of man since human beings were not naturally benevolent but, according to the doctrine of original sin, were actually at enmity with God. Although Brigham called himself a Christian, Reese labeled him a “false prophet.” Finally, Reese rejected Brigham’s argument that human sacrifice was an appropriate religious act since both Judaism and Christianity had condemned it. Rather, it was a pagan practice which involved the worship of a false god (Reese 1836: 38-42, 49, 54-57). Reese ridiculed Brigham’s “positive” understanding of human sacrifice by pointing out the contradiction: “…one instinctive propensity, ‘religion,’ annihilates the other instinctive propensity, ‘love of offspring,’ and changes it to the most envenomed hatred of offspring, and yet he tells us that this murderous instinctive propensity was ‘implanted in man by his Creator,’ and say, he feels for it ‘profound respect’” (Reese 1836: 57).

Second, Reese refuted Brigham’s assertions that various Christian practices were unwarranted and could even cause disease. The first idea that Reese refuted was Brigham’s assertion that holy communion should be eliminated. Brigham had opposed it for three reasons: Jesus did not institute it, it was not “educational,” and it exalted Jesus who had preferred lowliness. In contrast, Reese quoted First Corinthians 11:23-26 which described how Jesus instituted communion on the night he was betrayed. Moreover, Reese pointed out that other New Testament passages such as the “I am” passages in John, Philippians 2, and Revelation all indicated the majesty given to the resurrected Lord. Finally, Reese described the central importance of communion in a believer’s life: “The institution of the Lord’s Supper is not only a monumental celebration of the most stupendous event in this world’s history, and an expressive symbol of the most important doctrine in the moral universe, but it is likewise a standing and irreducible evidence of the truth of Christianity, as well as the Divinely appointed soul of the covenant...
of grace. And yet the author and his ‘reflecting and inquiring’ brethren see in it nothing moral or instructive” (Reese 1836: 66). Brigham had also argued for the elimination of baptism since he believed that Jesus had not commanded it and that immersion was unhealthy for infants and the elderly. In contrast, Reese quoted Matthew chapter twenty-eight where Jesus told the disciples to go into all the world to make disciples and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Finally, Brigham had said that Jesus had not instituted fasting. In contrast, Reese mentioned Jesus’ words on fasting in Matthew 6 and concluded that Brigham simply did not know the Scriptures (Reese 1836: 67-70).

The second idea Reese refuted was Brigham’s assertion that religious gatherings in homes, camp meetings, and protracted meetings were injurious to the health of the participants. For example, Brigham asserted that night meetings in houses and churches could cause sickness in women due to the large attendance. Again, he criticized camp meetings because of both the unhealthy outdoor and indoor conditions and irregular schedules. Moreover, they were designed to “affect the mind and agitate the body” which concerned phrenologists since this could affect the propensities in the skull and cause sickness. Similarly, Brigham believed that protracted meetings or “four-day meetings” were held for the purpose of producing “religious excitement” which included the following harmful effects: “solemn and anxious feelings, sorrow for sin, trembling, weeping, and feeling different from what they ever did before” (Reese 1836: 97-98). According to Brigham, these extended meetings often caused anxiety and, in extreme cases, insanity. Finally, Brigham criticized “modern revivals of religion” and the “special effects of the Holy Spirit” which he believed also caused “disease, animal magnetism, and excitements of the nervous system” (Reese 1836: 71-75, 87).

In contrast, Reese defended these practices. First, he noted that most night meetings were not crowded and lasted only one or two hours compared to other longer secular gatherings such as the opera and dances to which Brigham apparently had no objection. Second, Reese pointed out that camp meetings were usually held during the warm summer months, were conducted outdoors, and followed a schedule. Reese sarcastically wondered if Brigham had attended a camp meeting on a rainy day! At the same time, Reese conceded that excesses could occasionally occur at protracted meetings. Finally, Reese countered that the behavior at revivals such as sorrow and weeping had a scriptural basis but, again, conceded
that excesses could occur. For example, he noted that many individuals in the New Testament, especially the Acts of the Apostles, experienced the range of emotions Brigham had mentioned (Reese 1836: 71-98).

Finally, Reese contradicted Brigham’s phrenologically-based assertion that “religious excitement” which occurred in Christian gatherings caused insanity and suicide. According to Brigham, insanity was a disease of the brain. Religious excitement could also lead to demon possession or “demonomania” and “religious melancholy” which could lead to suicide since a susceptible person might think he had committed the ‘unpardonable sin’ and was going to hell. Indeed, Brigham was surprised that more suicides had not occurred. In contrast, Reese argued that the brain was “merely an organ of transmission, not action” (Reese 1836: 122). Instead, it was the mind that acted on the brain. For example, Reese believed “thinking is an act of the mind which is conveyed through its organ, the brain, by means of the nerves, to the limb and other portions of the body” (Reese 1836: 146). Thus, according to Reese, the sickness or insanity affected the mind. Moreover, dissection proved this. In addition, Reese stated that physical causes, often of a hereditary nature, produced insanity. Finally, Reese asserted that, rather than causing sickness, religion helped people cope with distressing situations, kept them healthy, and prevented suicide (Reese 1836: 116-156).

**A Letter from Doctor Brigham to David M. Reese, M.D.**

Predictably, Reese’s strident, no-holds-barred, and sarcastic rebuttal did not escape Brigham’s notice even though he worked in another state. Just one month after *Phrenology Known by Its Fruits* appeared, an exasperated Brigham angrily responded with a pamphlet entitled, *A Letter from Doctor Brigham to David M. Reese, M.D.*, in which he rebutted Reese’s criticisms in two major ways. First, he asserted that Reese had either misquoted or misrepresented him by omitting certain phrases or passages to make his ideas morally or religiously offensive. For example, Reese had claimed that Brigham had used the word, “religion,” to mean only Christianity so that it appeared to the reader that Brigham had linked the word, “religion,” broadly to also include pagan religions so that human sacrifice could be seen as “religious” in their minds. Moreover, Brigham asserted that he had distinguished Christianity as the “pure,” the “true,” and the “Divine.” Furthermore, Brigham had written that Christianity “had
been upon the earth the most powerful promotion of the moral progress of mankind…” (Brigham 1836: 2-3). Indeed, he saw Christianity as a “civilizing” force on the nations. This is illustrated in his recommendation “that a minister be attached to every asylum so that its inmates could acquire the self-discipline produced by the study of the proper sort of religion” (Dwyer 1987: 236, n. 15).

In addition, Brigham refuted Reese’s claim that he had said specifically that “true Religion – Christianity – is injurious to man…” (Brigham 1836: 3). Rather, Brigham believed that it was the “abuse” of Christianity (i.e., religious excitement which adversely affected the brain) and not Christianity itself that could cause insanity. Moreover, he added, “The religion of Christ condemns that excitement, terror, and fanaticism which leads to such effects…” and quoted Second Timothy 1:7 which says that God gave us “a sound mind.” Rather than trying to undermine Christianity, he had focused only on certain worrisome and extreme behavior: “I stated in a candid and respectful manner, that a few customs and ceremonies of some Christian sects, were in my opinion contrary to the teachings of Christ and sometimes injurious to health. But I said nothing upon this subject that had not been advanced before, by men of renowned piety and learning. I may have been, with others, mistaken, but throughout my volume I constantly appealed to the scriptures for the correctness of what I advanced, and referred to them as authority not to be questioned” (Brigham 1836: 2).

Indeed, according to Brigham, “…immoderate, long continued and great excitement produced by numerous night meetings – protracted meetings – anxious meetings – camp meetings, etc., often caused this disease (i.e., insanity)” (Brigham 1836: 17). He also quoted other eminent medical and religious figures who concurred with him. For example, he cited Charles Finney’s, Letters on Revival: “…such excitements are liable to injure the health – our nervous system is so strong that any powerful excitement, if long continued, injures our health” (Brigham 1836: 17). At the same time, Brigham tried to moderate his criticism of these activities: “…those modern extravagances I stated were injurious to health, though I did not attribute as much evil to them, as your readers will suppose.” Furthermore, Brigham listed several other doctors who also believed “that mental excitement on religious subjects has been a cause of insanity and that it is more operative when the preaching is vehement, extravagant, fanatical, and often repeated…” Knowing that Reese would dismiss phrenologists as “infidels,”
he quoted only “anti-phrenological” doctors such as John Mason Good, Dr. Rush, Dr. Tickner, and Dr. Burrows who had also criticized “vehement preaching, raving, ranting, and denunciation” which frequently occurred in America (Brigham 1836: 18). Another anti-phrenological doctor Brigham quoted was Dr. Johnson who believed that although Christianity helped to prevent suicide and insanity, “we are concerned that religious meditations with the best intentions, precipitate many a mind, weak and strong into the gulf of madness” (Brigham 1836: 19). Brigham noted, however, that he was primarily referring to “fanatical or untimely preaching, or the inculcation of alarming and perplexing doctrines: rather than the more innocuous ‘religious meditations’” (Brigham 1836: 19).

Finally, Brigham singled out eighteenth-century British Methodism – Reese’s own denomination – for particular blame. While acknowledging that the severe preaching of Methodism had finally moderated in the present century, it still had adverse effects. For example, Brigham quoted the *London Quarterly Review* (1810) which had asserted “that the increase of religious madness is occasioned by and commensurate with the increase of Methodism… a fact which may be verified at the Bedlam Lunatic Hospital” (Brigham 1836: 20). To be sure, John Wesley himself, the leader of the Methodist movement, admitted that people involved in the movement, could occasionally lose their sanity but attributed it to other causes. An example comes from his journal entry on April 27, 1779: “I saw a melancholy sight indeed! One that ten years ago was clearly perfected in love, but was worried by Mr. ----- day and night, threaping (i.e., reproving or rebuking) him down he ‘was in a delusion,’ that at length it drove him stark mad. And so he continues to this day. Observe! It was not perfection drove this man mad, but the incessant teasing him with doubtful disputations” (Wesley 1995: 128). Moreover, Brigham approvingly noted the mid-century decrease of this “vehement” preaching which he attributed to three factors: the adverse effects of this type of preaching on individuals, the influence of the doctors who had criticized it, and “the more intelligent part of the clergy” who had put pressure on the more fervent preachers. At the same time, Brigham warned that, if the revival practices currently used in America were to occur in England, cases of insanity could easily increase (Brigham 1836: 20).

Yet, Wesley himself had pushed back against these same criticisms at the beginning of his itinerant preaching and Reese would surely have been aware of that through the reading of his journals and letters which most
Methodists of his time faithfully read. Although Wesley himself had initially wondered about these extremely bizarre manifestations, he had concluded that the strange behavior was the authentic working of the Spirit of God for three reasons. First, he attributed some, but not all, of this behavior to the devil. This is illustrated in his May 28, 1739, letter to “James Hutton and the Fetter Lane Society” in which he mentioned his experience while preaching at Nicholas Street on the text, “Be still, and know that I am God!” During the sermon, people began to cry out and fall down. He noted that “a young man who was near smiled at this, and sunk down as one dead, but soon began to roar out, and beat himself against the ground. I never saw anyone (except John Hayden) so torn by the evil one.” Moreover, other evangelical ministers to whom Wesley had written also concurred that it could be the work of the devil. For example, in a September 11, 1739, letter to Wesley, Reverend Joshua Reed, while acknowledging that “a moving discourse hath a natural tendency to raise the affections…” also asserted that “I observe there is sometimes a diabolical agency in raising or promoting such fits, and as you have mentioned this I need not insist on it, as otherwise I could do.” In addition, another evangelical pastor, Ralph Erskine, wrote to Wesley on September 28, 1739, “But I make no question, Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to mar and hinder the beginning of the good work in the persons that are touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, the enemy being unwilling to quit his old possession; and partly also to prevent the success of the gospel on others, while he seeks thus to disparage the work of God, and bring it under contempt and reproach, as if it tended to lead people only to madness and distraction.”

Second, Wesley believed that the preaching of the Gospel caused conviction and strong remorse but not insanity. For example, in his September 29, 1739, letter to his older brother, Samuel, he asserted that “…most of these were cut to the heart while I was inculcating the general doctrine that Christ died to save sinners; many of them were gross sinners, whoremongers, drunkards, common swearers, till that hour, but not afterwards.” Again, in an October 27, 1739, letter to Reed, Wesley wrote, “I believe nature might have a part in these fits, as well as Satan, raging before he is cast out; but that the Holy Spirit, deeply convincing them of sin, is the chief agent in most of those who are seized with them… some of them afterwards give a distinct account of the words that affected them. These have usually been some single sentence, often taken from the Holy Scripture, which suddenly pierced their soul like a dart, so that they
lost all command of themselves in that moment. The subjects were various, but always bordering upon the love of Christ to lost sinners.” In addition, Wesley defended these “fits” in an August 22, 1744, letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Hutton, the wife of Reverend John Hutton. While Wesley did not insist that “fits’ were a “certain mark” of “adoption,” he asserted, “Yet, we believe the Spirit of God, sharply convincing the soul of sin, may occasion the bodily strength to fail. And what outward effects may possibly follow, I believe no man living has skill enough to determine.”

Finally, Wesley condoned these manifestations because they often resulted in a life-changing permanent conversion. An example comes from Wesley’s May 7, 1739, letter to James Hutton and the Fetter Lane Society which described the dramatic conversion of John Haydon. Haydon, a weaver, had been upset at what had happened at Baldwin Street (in Bristol) and had blamed it on the devil. A short while later, before eating dinner, he was reading Wesley’s sermon, *Salvation by Faith*. While reading the last page, he suddenly changed color, fell off his chair, and began screaming terribly and beating himself against the ground. After Wesley was told that Haydon “was fallen raving mad,” he went to his house. Upon arrival, two or three people were holding Haydon. Haydon began yelling at the devil and the evil spirits and “then beat himself against the ground, and with violent sweats and heaving of the breast strained as it were to vomit (which, along with many other symptoms I have since observed in others at or near the time of their deliverance, much inclined me to think the evil spirit actually dwells in everyone until he receives the Holy Ghost).” After thirty minutes of prayer, Haydon finally experienced peace. Wesley gave another example of conversion in the same letter to Hutton and the society. At an evening service at Baldwin Street, after ten persons had received “remission of sins…a Quaker who stood nearby was very angry at them, and was biting his lips and knitting his brow when the Spirit of God came upon him also, so that he fell down as one dead. We prayed over him and he soon lifted up his head with joy, and joined with us in thanksgiving.” Finally, writing to James Hutton on August 13, 1739, Wesley mentioned a woman who had previously been skeptical of the strange behavior that was occurring. She had been “…saying she was sure they might help it if they would. But on Monday night at the society in the midst of her zeal, she was struck in a moment, and fell to the ground trembling and roaring for the disquietness of her heart. She continued in pain twelve or fourteen hours, and then was set at liberty…” In sum, while these manifestations
had initially puzzled and worried him and resulted in much criticism from his own contemporaries, he came to see them as a confirmation that God was at work through his preaching.

**Brigham’s “Qualified” Support for Phrenology**

Brigham’s second major rebuttal was to strenuously deny Reese’s claim that he was a phrenologist. Although admittedly sympathetic to phrenological ideas, he gave two reasons why he should not be considered one. First, he asserted that Reese had mistakenly called him a phrenologist because he had used two phrases which carried a phrenological meaning: “religious sentiment” and “action of the brain.” Brigham noted, however, that other writers besides phrenologists believed in “religious sentiment” which essentially meant only that everyone had a universal religious feeling. Indeed, some non-phrenologists had referred to it as “the sense of Deity” and also believed that it was “innate” (Brigham 1836: 4). Reese had also criticized Brigham for using the term, “action of the brain,” which Reese understood to mean that the brain acted independently of the mind. In contrast, Reese had asserted that the mind acted upon the brain. In his letter, Brigham said that he had only meant the “organic vascular action of the brain” and noted that physiologists, who were not phrenologists, also believed in this type of “action of the brain” (Brigham 1836: 6-7).

For example, Brigham noted that Professor Jackson of Philadelphia, also believed that “excitement of mind or functional action of the brain, develops and increases the size of this organ and, when excessive, produces disease of the brain and insanity” (Brigham 1836: 7).

Second, Brigham claimed that he only had an openness to phrenology and not a full commitment to it. For example, Brigham stated, “I may have occasionally advanced opinions believed by phrenologists... quoted Gall and Spurzheim a few times, but for sentiments unconnected with the peculiarities of phrenology; while the authors on which I mostly relied respecting the physiology and pathology of the brain were Esquirol, Georget, Prichard, decided opponents of phrenology.” In addition, Brigham admitted that he didn’t know enough about it to judge it: “At the same time I acknowledge with Mr. Abernathy, my inability to offer any rational objections to Gall’s and Spurzheim’s system of phrenology, as affording a rational explanation of the nature of human actions” (Brigham 1836: 9). At the same time, Brigham retained an openness to it since a number of highly regarded doctors had supported it. Again, nine years later, in 1845, when
his views on phrenology had begun to change, he wrote to a friend that “he was not a strong phrenologist, for he did not feel ‘confident that the organ of the brain can be ascertained by external examination, but I do not think this case fatal to the doctrine’” (Dwyer 1987: 237, n. 20). He rejected, however, Reese’s claim that phrenology had a “deplorable moral influence” for two reasons. First, he said that “conformity with our interpretation of the Bible should not determine whether something is scientifically true or not.” Instead, Brigham asserted that, if something is scientifically true, “it will be found to harmonize with all our truth.” Second, he believed that “no such deplorable moral effects will result from it as you imagine, from the fact that it has been embraced by some of the most pious and enlightened divines of this country and Europe” (Brigham 1836: 9-10).

An Analysis of Brigham’s (Mostly Liberal) Faith

Brigham’s spirited defense raises two questions. First, does all the evidence support Brigham’s claim that he was simply “open” to phrenology rather than a wholehearted advocate? Was he perhaps trying to minimize the opposition he knew it might provoke or was he justifiably angry that Reese had mislabeled, ridiculed, and slandered him? Based on all the available evidence, it seems that he was more than just a “cheerleader” for phrenology. Indeed, scholars of nineteenth century psychiatry have asserted that the actual record showed more than “openness” on Brigham’s part. For example, Eric Carlson has asserted that “of all the founders, it was Amariah Brigham who most publicly stated and illustrated the influence of phrenology on his thinking.” Moreover, his “phrenological thinking could be seen in his writings and he was often publicly condemned for being an agnostic and materialist” (Carlson 1958: 536). Indeed, when he left the HRI, he was hung in effigy! During the 1830s, he also gave strong support to the budding phrenological movement in America in several ways. For example, Brigham and Spurzheim had a somewhat close professional relationship: Spurzheim had visited Brigham in Hartford and several years later Brigham edited the American publication of Spurzheim’s, Observations on the Deranged Manifestations of the Mind; or, Insanity. In addition, Brigham anonymously edited Andrew Combe’s book, Observations on Mental Derangement, and wrote a letter on behalf of his brother, George, who was seeking a professorship of logic at Edinburgh. Finally, in 1839, Brigham scheduled Combe’s lectures in Hartford and gave him a tour of the HRI (Carlson 1958: 536).
Second, was Reese correct in labeling Brigham a “liberal Christian” or even an “infidel” even though Brigham insisted that he was a believer? In examining all the available evidence, Reese’s assertion was clearly correct. For example, Reese had noted numerous ways in which Brigham lacked a traditional understanding of the scriptures. Moreover, Brigham’s subsequent journal entries, correspondence, and personal conversations revealed he had a weak connection to Christianity until a change of heart occurred in the mid-1840s. This skepticism and unbelief can be traced to at least two factors. First, although Brigham had joined the Unitarian Church in Greenfield, Massachusetts, in 1827, he did not seem to have been particularly devout. Moreover, he admitted that he was more focused on his medical career and his aspiration of becoming a well-respected surgeon. Second, his sojourn in Europe in 1828 and 1829 may have exposed him to even more skepticism (Goodrich 1858: 93). Reverend Goodrich, who preached Brigham’s funeral sermon in 1849, suggested that “it is probable that his intercourse with men of literary and philosophical taste merely, rather confirmed his already loose and skeptical views in religion, or cultivated a lax charity that regards all religions alike, and all as inoperable in the form of a religious life” (Goodrich 1858: 93).

The First and Second Great Awakenings and Mental Stability

At the same time, Dr. Goodrich believed that the opposition to Brigham’s book had been unwarranted since it had been published “near the close of a period of considerable religious interest in New England, during which he had personally met with several cases of fanatical extravagance and zeal, affecting the health alike of the bodies and minds of individuals” (Goodrich 1858: 93). This “period of considerable religious interest” in New England and especially Connecticut had its antecedents in an earlier revival referred to as the “First Great Awakening” which occurred from 1734 to 1743 in three distinct stages. The first stage occurred in 1734 when Reverend Jonathan Edwards began preaching the necessity of conversion (Ahlstrom 1972: 408). This is illustrated in a sermon he preached on July 8, 1741, in Enfield, Connecticut, entitled, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” Indeed, according to Harry Stout, Edwards was not only the greatest evangelical preacher but his sermons were “influential...in fixing the tone and substance of evangelical preaching” since he mentored other graduates who continued this style of preaching (Stout 1986: 228).
The second stage occurred when the English evangelist, Reverend George Whitefield, a member of Wesley’s “Holy Club” at Oxford, preached for a month and a half in New England in 1740. Whitefield drew large crowds, preached, extemporaneously, and emphasized the “New birth” in every sermon resulting in many revivals in Connecticut and Massachusetts (Stout 1986: 195). Whitefield’s tremendous success led to the third and final stage: a proliferation of unauthorized traveling preachers. This is illustrated by the ministry of Gilbert Tennett. Originally from Pennsylvania, Tennett had accompanied Whitefield on his preaching tour. After Whitefield left, Tennett preached in places that he had not visited. Moreover, other traveling revivalists and even the “evangelical” parish ministers began to preach extemporaneous, dramatic, fiery and lengthy (sometimes an hour or more) sermons. This is illustrated by Daniel Roger’s sermon on Second Peter 3:3 in which he proclaimed, “this doctrine speaks terror to all impenitent sinners.” Again, at the end of his sermon, he declared, “If you continue such (unpenitencies), you will be sealed in flaming fire. Let such (sinners) be exhorted to make their Peace with God and get into favor with their judge” (Stout 1986: 220). Most settled ministers, however, opposed these unauthorized preachers for two reasons. First, while popular with the people, their preaching led to division as some “separate” churches were formed (Stout 1986: 202, 208). Second, their message tended to unsettle those who heard them. Indeed, Reverend Ezra Stiles looked “back at the ‘late enthusiasm’ as a time when ‘multitudes were seriously, soberly, and solemnly out of their minds’” (Ahlstrom 1972: 404).

Yet, by 1790, despite periodic local revivals in the second half of the eighteenth century, Christian faith in the majority of Congregational churches in Connecticut had dramatically declined. Four factors had contributed to this decline: European-style “infidelity,” Boston Unitarianism, general religious indifference, and political “Republicanism” (Keller 1942: 1-22). At the same time, in 1795, the General Assembly and the County Associations of the Congregationalist Church in Connecticut called for both youth meetings and weekly prayer meetings “for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit” (Keller 1942: 21-22, 50). As a result, local church revivals periodically occurred throughout the state from 1797 to 1826. Indeed, in the Farmington, Connecticut, revival of 1820, two hundred twenty-four conversions occurred (Keller 1942: 39-42, 49-50; Ahlstrom1972: 416).

Revival also occurred at Yale College under the evangelical preaching of its president, Reverend Timothy Dwight, who served from
1795 until his death in 1817 (Keller 1942: 7). To be sure, from its founding in 1701 as a “pietistic” alternative to the more liberal Harvard, Yale had enthusiastically participated in the first great awakening. According to Stout, “Yale’s student body was drawn locally from Connecticut and western Massachusetts, and welcomed the itinerant speakers during the revivals. Thereafter, the college became the major training ground for the ‘New Divinity’ followers of Edwards and ‘moderate’ Calvinists like the college’s presidents, Thomas Clap and Ezra Stiles.” Moreover, “from Yale, evangelical pastors entered the homes of New Light pastors for postgraduate study in the new methods of preaching and then served in the Connecticut countryside along the Connecticut River valley” (Stout 1986: 220). Yet, by the 1790s, spiritual fervor among students had declined markedly. This is illustrated by H. Belden’s letter to a friend, “I have broken myself of the vulgar habit of swearing and the still more pernicious one of gambling. I expect at the next meeting of the Moralists I shall propose myself as a Candidate to enter” (Keller 1942: 41). Belden was referring to the recently founded “Moralist Society of Yale College.” Yet, due to president Dwight’s tireless, evangelical preaching, Yale’s first revival occurred in 1802 in which two hundred sixty-eight students, a third of the student body, were converted. Much like the entire state of Connecticut, the college continued to experience periodic revivals from 1807 to 1825 (Keller 1942: 41).

Finally, starting in 1831, statewide revivals received a boost when Congregationalist ministers in Connecticut started using Charles Finney’s, “New Measures.” Finney was a former lawyer who had become a fervent evangelist and subsequently published Lectures on Revival which gave detailed suggestions for conducting revivals. These “new measures” included “protracted meetings,” “anxious seats,” “prayer for individuals by name and the encouragement of women to talk in the assemblies” (Keller 1942: 48-49). Yet, for the most part, the reactions to the preaching of the Second Great Awakening, as it was called, were more subdued. For example, according to Charles Keller, “…the revivals were without the hysteria and commotion that had brought the Great Awakening into disrepute in many quarters…that people were calm was indeed the second important feature of these revivals, and one for which the ministers unanimously thanked God. They were not marked by ‘outcries, distortions of the body, or any symptoms of intemperate zeal’…over and over again the effects on individual behavior were attested as permanent, while undue excess and the reaction it would have caused were rare” (Keller 1942: 417).
At the same time, instances of powerful preaching certainly did occur which could easily have caused some people to have strong reactions, including temporary insanity. For example, Reverend Ammi Robbins of Norfolk, Connecticut, wrote to his son that he observed “…others dreadfully disturbed with a sense of their horrible guilt” (Keller 1942: 40). Again, Reverend Asahel Nettleton, who graduated from Yale in 1809 and was an ordained evangelist for the Congregational Church in Connecticut, was known for “stern,” doctrinal sermons. Frequently invited to preach in various churches throughout the state, he exercised his ministry from 1812 until his health failed in 1822 (Keller 1942: 52). In sum, while people generally reacted more calmly to the preaching of the Second Great Awakening, it was quite possible for some hearers to react with agitation, despair, and fear leading to a temporary mental breakdown.

Moreover, Brigham’s predecessor at the HRI, Dr. Todd, had also encountered a significant number of patients with religiously-induced insanity which, in most cases, tended to be temporary. According to Eaton, the strongly evangelical, conversion-oriented preaching in Connecticut Congregationalism of that period often led to extreme guilt feelings, especially for those who felt they had committed the “unpardonable sin” mentioned in the gospels. For example, in October, 1832, Todd had received a letter from one of his patients, Harriet Hinsdale, which said in part: “I viewed myself marked out for destruction and the Son of God arrayed in awful majesty coming out in judgment against me like a consuming fire. Hell appeared to my fancy opened to receive me and but a step between me and its flames” (Eaton 442). Indeed, for some it was only a temporary delusion but, nevertheless, very real to them. Some Calvinist theologians, too, had moderated the strict doctrines of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield from the previous century as a way to ease people’s morbid fears. For example, Lyman Beecher, who had had some frightening moments before his own conversion, recommended that people not read David Brainerd’s, Life, and Edward’s, Treatise on the Religious Affections, due to the emotions that they could arouse. Indeed, Beecher felt these books caused “…a state of permanent hypochondria – the horrors of a mind without guidance, motive, or ability to do anything” (Eaton 1953: 443). Yet, in reviewing this period, Eaton took a more nuanced position: “It would, of course, be a mistake to postulate too intimate a relationship between revivalism and the cases of religious insanity in the state’s mental hospital; a large proportion would undoubtedly have been there without the help
of evangelical preaching. It seems fair, however, to say that continued introspection and emotional tension probably pushed a certain number of unstable individuals over the shadowy borderline of insanity” (Eaton 1953: 444).

Moreover, Goodrich asserted that “the community, from not appreciating the point from which the writer viewed this subject, i.e., its influence on sanity and health, were led, too hastily, to conclude that the writer was a disbeliever in all religion – an inference which he at the time and ever most solemnly denied” (Goodrich 1858: 94). Similarly, Dr. Charles Coventry, a manager of the Utica asylum, noted that Brigham had had a “a pious mother” and that “severe stricture in his writing…unjustly gave rise” to charges of “skepticism and infidelity” (Coventry 1858: 114). This outcry, however, rattled Brigham and he came to regret publishing the book and soon let it go out of print.

Yet, four years before he died, Brigham had a profound change of heart, if not an evangelical conversion. In 1845, while at Utica, he felt that he had achieved his goals and began to take the spiritual life more seriously. For example, he began the practice of spiritual reading which included the writings of Taylor, Philip Doddridge, Baxter, William Wilberforce, and Thomas a Kempis. He also instituted a more evangelical style of preaching at the asylum on Sunday mornings and urged all inmates and staff to attend (Goodrich 1858: 97-102). In addition, the deaths of his young son and his own mother six months apart drew him closer to God. Finally, after contracting dysentery (of which he died fourteen days later), Goodrich had visited him and noted that Brigham “referred very definitely to the change that had been going on in his mind for some years past and said that his present calmness and hope were not the work of the moment. He expressed a fixed confidence in Christ and utterly disclaimed any merits in the actions of his past life” (Goodrich 1858: 105). In sum, while Brigham practiced at a time when people exhibited religiously-induced mental instability, his own tenuous commitment to Christianity in those years led him to make a number of unsustainable charges. Moreover, his provocative claims quickly brought upon him the censure of evangelical Christians such as Reese who easily demolished his arguments.

After attacking phrenology on mainly religious grounds, Reese turned his attention to its shaky medical claims. Two years later, in 1838, he devoted a chapter of his book, *Humbugs of New York*, to the “humbug” or falseness of phrenology. The chapter was divided into four sections: the
basic claims of phrenology, a short description of its religious errors, an examination of its “moral aspect” (see below), and a convincing two-part refutation of its physiological understandings.

**Phrenology’s Complete Misunderstanding of Basic Anatomy**

Reese refuted the phrenological theory of how the brain worked in two major ways. First, he asserted that the actual “bone development” outside the brain disproved phrenology. For example, Reese noted that three layers of bone existed between the brain and the skull. Moreover, the skull itself had two layers of bone which were separated by another layer. Finally, the outside skull had “expansions of muscles, with all their accompanying membranes, blood vessels, and nerves together with the cell structure, and different coats of the skin constituting the hairy scalp…” (Reese 1838: 67). Furthermore, Reese asserted that even if phrenology was true, a person’s qualities could not be known until after death since the person would have to be scalped and the membranes removed in order to view the supposed thirty-five organs in the brain. Yet, these bumps would not even be the same as the bumps on the head (Reese 1838: 67).

Second, Reese asserted that the structure of the brain itself did not support phrenology. For example, dissection of the brain revealed that the brain is “divided.” These divisions, however, cross into each other so that the phrenologists’ belief that the brain was made up of separate parts was incorrect. Also, although the phrenologists said that the two hemispheres of the brain were the same, dissection revealed that they were different. Finally, dissection had failed to reveal any of these so-called thirty-five different “organs” of the brain (Reese 1838: 70-71). Brigham, too, had also eventually come to that same conclusion. According to Ellen Dwyer, in the mid-1840s, “when he measured the heads of his Utica patients, he found their size and shape to be the same as those of the sane. After doing a number of postmortems on Utica patients, to his disappointment he found few indications of structural disease in those portions of the brain where, according to phrenologists, the organs that controlled these faculties were situated. As a result, while continuing to believe that the brain was a ‘congeries of organs,’ he disavowed the phrenological position on craniology” (Dwyer 1987: 61).

Besides rejecting phrenology on religious and medical grounds, Reese also added his influential voice to the critics of “moral insanity”
which some leading physicians and phrenologists had been advocating since the beginning of the nineteenth century.

**Misguided (and Dangerous) Phrenologically-Influenced Prison Reform**

In the nineteenth century, “moral insanity” was one of several attempts to explain the cause of mental illness. In the 1700s, faulty reason had been widely seen as its cause. Yet, beginning in the early nineteenth century, a number of doctors who studied mental illness such as Pinel, Esquirol, Georget, Gall, and Rush believed that, while reason could be unimpaired, an unbalanced will and emotions were the cause. Moreover, in 1835, an English doctor, James C. Prichard, called this theory “moral insanity” and defined it in this way: “…the intelligent faculties appear to have sustained little or no injury, while the disorder is manifested principally or alone, in the state of the feelings, temper, or habits. In cases of this description the moral and active principles of the mind are strongly perverted or depraved; the power of self-government is greatly impaired…” (Dain and Carlson 1962: 795). This novel approach also attempted to explain criminal behavior. According to Dain and Carlson, moral insanity “embraced the many forms of mental illness in which the patient’s intellectual powers seemed to be partially or wholly intact, and consequently encompassed a class of individuals formerly regarded as merely vicious rather than mentally disturbed – individuals who, though rational, commit horrible crimes” (Dain and Carlson 1962: 795). Thus, they might realize the act is wrong but can’t avoid doing it. This understanding gained ground in the 1830s as “a growing number of cases in which the defendant pleaded insanity – often moral insanity – appeared in the courts and psychiatrists frequently testified as expert witnesses” (Dain and Carlson 1962: 796).

Despite the support of several well-known physicians such as Benjamin Rush, Eli Todd, Rufus Wyman, Luther Bell, Amariah Brigham, Pliny Earle, and Samuel B. Woodward, most traditional medical people opposed it. One prominent example was John Gray who became superintendent of the New York State Lunatic Asylum in Utica (after Brigham died in 1849); he also edited the *American Journal of Insanity* from 1855 to 1885. He rejected the idea that a healthy intellect and insanity could exist together in a person (Dain and Carlson 1962: 797). Moreover, Gray was concerned about how it would affect already prevailing standards in religion and law.
For example, he opposed it on traditional religious grounds since moral insanity allowed a person to indulge rather than restrain their desires since it was believed that a person’s emotion could not be resisted. Indeed, along with evangelical Protestants, Gray believed in free will and the need for a person to resist evil. Proponents of moral insanity had also insisted that other factors such as “bad education, loose habits, vicious indulgence, neglected parental control, and disobedience to God” could not be blamed; yet, Gray asserted that no rationale for this could be found in the Bible or “laws of reason.” For example, he asserted that the story of Cain killing Abel was not moral insanity since God referred to it as murder and punished Cain (Dain and Carlson 797-798). Finally, Gray “warned that if this kind of appeal could succeed, the time was not far off when each particular form of insanity real or simulated, would be presented as a plea in order to ward off punishment” (Dain and Carlson 797).

Thomas Reid and Dugald Steward, known as the Scottish “common sense” philosophers, had also rejected moral insanity. While they “believed that, with Adam’s fall, man lost his capacity for wholly rational thinking,” his conscience could still guide him (Dain and Carlson 798). According to Dain and Carlson, they believed that “man knew right from wrong independent of reason or experience; this knowledge was inborn and came directly from God. Crime, therefore, was the result of willful violation of moral law” (Dain and Carlson 1962: 797-798). At the same time, Reid and Steward conceded that an impaired brain could lead to a person to do something for which he was not responsible.

**Report on Moral Insanity in its Relation to Medical Jurisprudence**

In 1858, while this debate was still raging, Reese forcefully rejected it in his report to the newly-formed American Medical Association. The report attempted to answer the following questions: “What is moral insanity?” “How does moral insanity differ from moral depravity?” “Is the distinction between mental and moral insanity a fiction?” and” Shouldn’t the only distinction be between sane and insane for deciding questions of responsibility and punishment?” Reese’s critique of moral insanity can be summarized in the following two ways.

First, Reese rejected the phrenological understanding of the dichotomy of the brain. In contrast, he asserted that “…they maintain that moral insanity arises from physical disease in those organs of the brain in which resides the functions of the moral emotions; while those organs of the
brain which regulate the intelligent faculties, in contradistinction from the instinctive and moral powers remain intact, or may retain their integrity and health. The mental health is sound, but the moral health is suspended or destroyed; which implies a duality in the mind, in a sense which psychiatry never dreamed of.” Moreover, Reese noted that both English and American judges had never accepted the idea of a “moral insanity” defense in a criminal trial (Reese 1858: 5-8).

Second, Reese utterly dismissed the idea that person was not responsible for his own violent acts. Phrenologists had argued that a person acted violently due to the size of that particular bump on his head. Yet, Reese blamed “moral depravity” rather than “moral insanity” for violent acts. First, he reiterated “…the universal understanding that the mind, not the brain, controlled everything. Indeed, according to Reese, the mind had the “intellectual and moral faculties” while the brain “exercised” them (Reese 1858: 20). Moreover, Reese asserted that if a person acted in a depraved way, it was not insanity but perversion or possibly that the person was pretending to be insane. Finally, Reese quoted several Bible passages, including the seventh chapter of Romans and pagan authors to indicate that moral depravity was the cause. Since the person knowingly committed a violent crime, he must be punished; otherwise, criminals would be emboldened and society would be at risk. At the same, Reese did make an allowance for authentic insanity based on certain factors which would rule out incarceration (Reese 1858: 7-10).

Reese ended his report with several conclusions: the mind (not the brain) was the source of insanity; a person must have signs of positive disease in the brain; the person must not be aware he is impaired; “moral insanity” should be seen as “moral depravity” unless clear proof of a diseased brain exists; a truly insane person should be confined to an asylum which should be a separate facility from the prison. In addition, courses on “medical psychology” should be given in medical school. Finally, only doctors who have studied medical psychology and done their training in asylums should testify in court cases (Reese 1858: 24).

**Conclusion**

In sum, Reese convincingly refuted three major claims of phrenology: its misguided attack on so-called evangelical methods of proclaiming the Gospel, its wildly mistaken ideas of anatomy, and its dangerously permissive views of punishment. This rejection, however,
ran counter to prevailing popular opinion since many Americans had enthusiastically, yet unwisely, embraced some of phrenology’s ideas such as the way the bumps on one’s head could determine one’s personality. Indeed, during the mid-1800s, phrenological books, lectures, charts of the brain, busts, and skulls abounded. Despite this widespread acceptance, its popularity finally began to diminish not only through Reese’s publications but also as medical science both increased in knowledge and developed important organizations such as the American Medical Association and medical societies in each state.

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From the Archives: The Pentecostal Herald, The Pentecostal Publishing Company, and the Pentecostal Tabernacle: H.C. Morrison Dreams Big

One of the most interesting times to explore in the life of Asbury Theological Seminary founder, Henry Clay Morrison, is the period after his ecclesiastical trial in 1897 and before he was engaged in educational work as the president of Asbury College in 1910. In this thirteen-year period, Morrison was motivated to create a holiness organization which could stand against denominational attack and bring together holiness people to do denominational-type work without the forced structure and ecclesiastical hierarchy of a formal denomination. To do this, he needed to create an organizational center and he chose as his center Louisville, Kentucky.

To really build a platform from which he could build this organizational center, he had to develop a way to reach a wider audience, and he chose to do this through publishing. Randall Stephens has written on the importance of holiness publishing in the South, noting it was more than just informational. “The holiness press also created a strong sense of fellowship, even where no physical community existed. Spread out across the South, many holiness people could not actually attend the various revivals reported throughout the region. But within the pages of their newspapers, they entered an imagined community which united them even as they were apart.” Stephens goes on to point out the significance of Morrison and his paper, The Pentecostal Herald,

Two radical holiness papers in particular, The Pentecostal Herald (Louisville, Kentucky) and God’s Revivalist (Cincinnati, Ohio), were perhaps most influential in the transition from holiness to Pentecostal. Though one paper was published in a border state and the other in a northern one, both exerted profound influence upon the South. These papers represented the translocal holiness movement as a whole by eschewing geographic as well as social boundaries. In the 1890s
and early 1900s, scores of soon-to-be southern Pentecostals corresponded with both publications, seeking advice, offering their viewpoints, and reporting on local revivals. *The Pentecostal Herald* received letters from holiness proponents in all the former Confederate states. Though exact figures are difficult to obtain, it is clear that *The Pentecostal Herald* and *God’s Revivalist* maintained large circulations. In 1893 *The Pentecostal Herald* held a circulation of 15,000, 30,000 in 1920, 38,000 in 1934, and 55,000 in 1942. In just one week in early 1898, the *Herald* gained 1,078 subscribers. Nearly as successful, *The Revivalist* reported 20,000 copies circulated monthly by the Summer of 1899.3

In understanding the history of Asbury Theological Seminary and the work of its founder, H. C. Morrison, it is important to examine his work in *The Pentecostal Herald* and the Pentecostal Publishing Company which branched out of that work. Morrison’s work in publishing is often not given the credit which it is due. His work was both a critical spiritual lifeline for holiness people and, at various times, became a critical lifeline for Asbury College and Asbury Theological Seminary as well. This was because Morrison used his extensive subscription network to raise money for the institutions, to acquire books for their libraries, and to raise support for international students and scholarships, as well as to promote the institutions to his base of supporters. Without these vital connections it is questionable if either institution would still be around today.

*The Pentecostal Herald* – Morrison Enters the Publishing World

It was in the fall of 1888, that Henry Clay Morrison, a young pastor of a Methodist Episcopal Church, South church in Frankfort, Kentucky, was preaching at a revival meeting in Maysville, Kentucky. He was discouraged by a lack of concern for the teaching of full salvation by many in the Methodist circles of leadership. In his own account of the event, Morrison wrote,

After retiring one night I thought late into the night of the many calls I was receiving and of the great need for revival, and how impossible it was for me to respond to many of these calls without neglecting my own congregation. I tossed about and could not sleep, the question came to me very directly, “Why not use printer’s ink to send out the message?” I had written but very little for publication; all told, it would not have covered one page of *The Pentecostal Herald*. As I lay thinking, I
prayed, and was led to believe that I was divinely called
to establish a paper in order that I might send out an
evangelistic message to fields where it was impossible for
me to go, personally. This conviction became so strong
that I arose, lighted the lamp, secured ink and paper, sat
down at two o’clock at night and wrote my first editorial
for the paper yet to be born. When I returned to Frankfort,
I consulted with a publisher and made arrangements for
bringing out a six-page monthly paper. I named it “The
Old Methodist,” which attracted more attention among
the people in the surrounding country than it did among
the people in my own congregation. I received many
encouraging words and the paper grew. The money I
received for subscriptions, and the few advertisements
that were given me by merchants in the city of Frankfort,
did not meet the expenses of the publication. “The Old
Methodist” went out monthly for two years. At the end
of that time, I was three hundred dollars in debt to my
publisher, a bit discouraged, but my conviction was
strong and I was fully determined to go forward.4

According to Percival Wesche’s work on Morrison, the first printer of The
Old Methodist was E. Polk Johnson who printed and edited The Capital
in Frankfort, and the first issue of 500 copies of The Old Methodist came
out around December 14, 1888. Out of his total cost of $15.00, Morrison
had brought in $14.50 and was already in the red. In 1890, Morrison left
pastoral ministry to focus his energy on evangelism and publishing his
paper. Morrison moved his family to Lexington and sold a half-interest in
his paper to Rev. C. F. Oney for $500.00. The monthly paper now became
a weekly and was increased to eight pages; it also took on a new name as
The Kentucky Methodist. According to Wesche,

Many church members did not take any religious paper
and those who did were usually quite attached to the
one, which had been coming into their home for years
and thus had little desire to change. Furthermore, The
Kentucky Methodist took a strong stand for the Wesleyan
interpretation of the scriptures on the subject of entire
sanctification— a doctrine which had been largely
ignored by the Methodist Church, South. The editorial
policy also opposed such social sins as dancing, card
playing, theatergoing, and horse racing. It also insisted
that the use of church suppers and fairs, as a means of
obtaining the necessary funds for the church budget,
were out of harmony with the true spirit of Christian
giving. By the time the supporters of these practices were
subtracted from the prospective list of subscribers, only
a small portion of the Methodists were left. Among the
brethren who agreed with the policies and teachings of *The Kentucky Methodist* only a few had faith enough in the enterprise to invest the dollar, which was by now the subscription price of the paper.\(^5\)

Oney sold his share to T. H. Morris after six months, and Morris convinced Morrison to move the paper to Louisville in the spring of 1891. Eventually, H. B. Cockrill, a friend of Morrison’s, joined the enterprise and Morris sold his shares in the paper to the other owners. As the paper grew in popularity

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*A Young Photo of H.C. Morrison.*

(Used with Permission of the B.L. Fisher Archives and Special Collections)
across the nation the title became less relevant, and so it was changed to *The Methodist*. The men then purchased another holiness paper from Georgia, called *The Way of Life* (which helped bring subscriptions to 15,000) and used both names for two more years. According to Wesche, by 1897, as many as four hundred new subscriptions were coming in daily and publicity was worth about $10,000, so the paper had become a solid business. On August 11, 1897, the first issue of the newly named *The Pentecostal Herald* rolled off the presses.

It was during this time that Morrison faced one of his great trials within the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Leadership in the church had been moving in opposition to the growing Holiness Movement, and they passed a law in the *Discipline* that Methodist evangelists who wished to speak in the area of an existing Methodist parish, needed the permission of the local pastor before speaking. In 1896, Morrison, a well-known camp meeting speaker was asked to speak in a camp meeting in Dublin, Texas. In July of 1896, Morrison received a letter from Rev. W. H. Matthews, the preacher who oversaw the Dublin Station of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and it requested that Morrison not come and insisted he not speak at the meeting. Morrison insisted on coming and speaking as per the arranged agreement. On the morning he was to speak, September 5, 1896 the pastor and presiding elder visited Morrison in person and told him not to speak. Morrison spoke anyway. Morrison noted, “I was there under Divine leadership, and however much I might regret trouble in the church, I was not free to leave. I committed the whole matter to God and went forward with the work, and the Holy Ghost fell on every service.”  

W. E. Arnold made several points in Morrison’s defense that: 1) Morrison did not start this project, but was an invited speaker, 2) the meeting was not held in the Methodist Church or any of its property, 3) the meeting was not denominational, 4) camp meetings were historically under the management of laymen and not clergy, and 5) there was no personal animosity or heresy involved. In a trial held December 29, 1896, where Morrison was not present and did not speak, ten members of the Quarterly Conference expelled Morrison from the Conference. In an appeal, the case went to the Kentucky Annual Conference in 1897. At the Annual Conference, Morrison was found innocent and restored to the Conference. But this case, led him to realize how strong the opponents of the Holiness Movement were within the denomination, and so he began to work on developing independent avenues for holiness teaching through his publishing. This
A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

Without doubt, the past year has been one of the best in the history of the present holiness movement. There was never a better attendance at the conference meetings held throughout the land, or a greater number of workers at the stations of the past season. The full and unanimous resolutions of the convention have been largely accepted, and generously blessed.

The annual meetings of the various holiness associations and holiness classes have been held for their unity of spirit and the presence of the Holy Ghost to sanctify, consent, and sanctify. The first fruits of battle have advanced, and the newly-called line has flourished. This means that new ground is to be taken, and that the old ground is to be held. In other words, while the evangelists have been pointing out new fields, the institutions of the holiness movement have been fixing themselves upon a sterner footing. The publishing plants are becoming stronger, and the holiness schools have a larger attendance, a better class of students, and are doing better work than ever before.

The quality of young men and Christian scholars they are turning out is giving them splendid advertisement, and a firm footing in the foundation of the young generation. There is a belief that anything which is not to be seen, does not exist, and a building up of confidence in the success and good purpose of the holiness movement. The lifting up of the consciousness of individual holiness is not left to the imagination; but there is a growing conviction in the minds of the workers, that the movement is on the right track, and that the Lord is with them.

Through their literature, their schools, conference meetings, conventions and revivals, the great doctrine of a full salvation from sin has been brought home to multitudes of people, and whatever the extreme, unbelief, higher orthodoxy and worldly-minded church members may have to say of holiness opposition, all must admit that great multitudes of people, who have been converted, have seen and heard holiness, and that many of them have forsaken sin and become members of the holiness movement. This shows that the sentence of death, instantaneous work, and every feature of holiness in its fullness, are becoming known in every city in the land. There is a desire for a full salvation from sin, and a determination to receive it.

The year 1905, it is believed, will be another year of growth for the holiness movement. The Lord is about to do a wonderful work in souls in this year, and the church is on the watch to see the results. The work will be a great one, and the Lord will be glorified in it.

The Cover of The Pentecostal Herald from January 1, 1905.

(Used with Permission of the B.L. Fisher Archives and Special Collections)
In 1932, another early holiness paper, The Way of Faith, would merge with The Pentecostal Herald. This paper was started in 1890 by Rev. Robert Oliver, a holiness Methodist minister in Columbia, South Carolina. He had founded the Oliver Gospel Mission, one of the oldest holiness rescue missions (still in operation today) in 1888, and brought L. L. Pickett from Texas to be the editor. The paper, like Morrison’s, was designed to promote the Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification. After it merged, the periodical would be known as The Pentecostal Herald and The Way of Faith until Morrison’s death in 1942. It was then shortened to The Herald and continues to be published as a branch of Asbury Seminary’s Communication Office. Efforts aimed at preserving the history of Morrison’s work continue with the digitization of The Pentecostal Herald by Asbury Theological Seminary through First Fruits Press (https://place.asburyseminary.edu/ph/). While not all issues survived the ravages of time, the most complete collection of this rare and valuable research tool remains a part of the archives of the B. L. Fisher Library. It remains a great source for documenting the history of the Holiness Movement in the South, as well as the history of Asbury College (now University) and Asbury Theological Seminary.

The Pentecostal Publishing Company Broadens the Reach of Holiness Teaching

In 1898, the year after The Pentecostal Herald started to make good business sense (and the year after the Morrison Case energized Morrison to promote holiness doctrines outside of denominational control), Morrison turned to developing a larger publishing enterprise, the Pentecostal Publishing Company. Wesche notes that W. E. Arnold, one of the early editors of The Pentecostal Herald was responsible for starting with the book publishing side of things. Their earliest publications came out after 1899 under the name Pentecostal Herald Print, which would transition to Pentecostal Publishing Company around 1910 or 1911. One of the earliest books in 1899 was Andele, or the Mexican-Kiowa Captive by Rev. J. J. Methvin, which promoted holiness work at an Indian Mission Conference. For a while they published books, papers, and Sunday School material. Morrison wrote about the start of the Pentecostal Publishing Company in 1904 in The Pentecostal Herald,
Starting fifteen years ago, without experience, without type, and without a dollar, God has given us type, the fixtures worth $2,000 all paid for. For years we had to hire our printing done outside, but with strong faith we ventured upon His promise, and bought presses, folder, cutter, dynamo, shifting, belting, and other machinery amounting to $5,000, and thanks to our gracious Father, it is all paid for.

An excellent small press was added and is paid for. Next we bought a splendid Linotype, typesetting machine with fixtures, costing $4,000, which we have paid for in installments, with the exception of about $500.¹⁰

This was followed by a larger printing press purchased for $3,000. In the article, Morrison details the amount of printing which was accomplished in 1903. It included:

1,442,000 16-page papers
103,000 8-page papers
14,000 cloth bound books
44,000 paperback books
17,000 books in boards
29,000 magazines
17,700 pamphlets
900,000 circulars, and misc.¹¹

While the purpose of the Pentecostal Publishing Company was primarily to promote holiness teachings, it also served as a sort of vanity press for people who were willing to pay to have their books published. This can be seen in books of poetry, novels, and even cookbooks which were published by the Pentecostal Publishing Company. Books such as *What to Cook, and How to Cook it* by Nannie Talbot Johnson (1899) (to be followed by her *Cake, Candy and Culinary Crinkles* in 1912), *The Lawrenceburg Baptist Cook Book* (1924), and *Fries Cook Book* by Fries Tabernacle in Fries, Virginia (early 1900s) help illustrate this creative bit of fund raising for the press. But most of the books were by key leaders in the Holiness Movement: Uncle “Bud” Robinson, Beverly Carradine, John Church, John B. Culpepper, William Godbey, John Hames, Zachary Johnson, John Paul, L. L. Pickett, George Ridout, C. F. Wimberly, and of course H. C. Morrison along with many others.

In May of 1909, L. L. Pickett posted a notice in *The Pentecostal Herald* (page 4 of May 5, 1909 issue), notifying readers that he had sold
the Pickett Publishing Co. “including books, plates, and good will” to Morrison and the Pentecostal Publishing Company. It appears that as early as 1890, Picket had moved his publishing work to Louisville, and he later became strongly connected to Morrison and his work at Asbury College. It is likely this early connection and relationship paved the way for the 1932 purchase of *The Way of Faith* by *The Pentecostal Herald*. Pickett was also well-known as a hymn writer for the Holiness Movement and his press brought a number of hymnals into Morrison’s publishing work: *Tears and Triumphs* (nos. 1, 2, and 3), *Cream of Song*, and *Gems*. The purchase of Pickett Publishing Co. brought another established holiness publisher and their works into Morrison’s growing publishing network.

Postcard Advertising the Book “New Clothes for the Old Man” by C.F. Wimberly (1908). (From the Author’s Collection)
While it is difficult to calculate completely (and no known list of all Pentecostal Publishing Company works exists), it appears that between 600 and 700 items were published. Many books went into second and third editions. Prior to his death in March of 1942, H. C. Morrison set up in his will that the Pentecostal Publishing Company be left as a trust for Asbury Theological Seminary, so the company was dissolved December 31, 1942 and was set up as the Morrison Theological Trust, Inc. While the press shut down, there were a few items published by the Seminary after 1942 by the Herald Press or The Asbury Seminary Press or using similar names. The Morrison Theological Trust continued to support the publishing of The Herald, but this was not Morrison’s intention. The members of the Morrison family, which oversaw the trust, considered ending the paper, but ultimately the Board of Trustees of Asbury Theological Seminary voted to subsidize the publication, which then moved The Herald responsibilities to the Seminary (possibly around 1967). This allowed the Trust funds to be used entirely for scholarships for students entering the ministry as Morrison intended. Printing in some capacity seems to have continued at the Seminary for a short while, and the large cutter at the lower entrance to the B. L. Fisher Library is likely the last piece of Pentecostal Publishing Company machinery still on display, and in occasional use.

President Frank Bateman Stanger, in an interview with an early archivist at the Seminary, Mike Boddy, in talking about the history of the Pentecostal Publishing Company noted,

From the 1930’s to the 1950’s practically the only way for a Wesleyan holiness evangelist related in any way to the Methodist church to get anything published was through the Pentecostal Publishing Company. So you call the roll of Morrison books, Bud Robinson’s books, John Church’s writings, Couchenour, I think had some things published… so you see the Pentecostal Publishing Company actually kept alive Wesleyan holiness literature… actually, the Pentecostal Publishing Company became, I think, one of the main publishing arms of the old National Holiness Association movement. And I wish personally we had something comparable to it now. It’s so expensive to fulfill talk in our day. You see even our Seminary Press is actually struggling when it comes to the profit side of the ledger. It would be a real undertaking.
With our modern age of digital resources, many of the original rare and hard to find publications of the Pentecostal Publishing Company are being brought back in digital formats, freely available to anyone from the Heritage Material section of First Fruits Press (https://place.asburyseminary.edu/firstfruitsheritagematerial/). First Fruits Press in general seeks to carry on the legacy of the Pentecostal Printing Company and make material available globally which supports the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition.

The Pentecostal Tabernacle- More than a Home for Publishing, a Holiness Vision

When Morrison was relating the numbers of items published in 1903, he also noted the needs to enlarge his vision. As he related to his readers, Morrison was also planning to expand into a new building. He wrote,

One of our greatest needs at the present time is a building in which to carry forward our work. For years we have been thinking of this enterprise, and now feel perfectly assured that God will give it to us.

The building we need will cost about twenty thousand dollars. It is our purpose that it shall contain offices for the transaction of the HERALD business, ample room for presses and all printing and binding machinery, and a Pentecostal Tabernacle, with seating capacity for from five to eight hundred people, with living rooms for many of the young men engaged in the work of the office. The advantages of a building like this will be greater than we can here enumerate.13

Morrison goes on to lay out several reasons for owning a building in Louisville. He first argued that it will save money in rent, and that a space designed with printing in mind would be more suitable than any multi-purpose rented space. In an additional point, he notes that such a property would be under the absolute control of holiness people. This was a critical point in Morrison’s mind, as increasing conflict between holiness advocates and opponents within the Methodist Episcopal Church, South continued causing problems. Morrison became very committed to creating holiness entities outside of the official church, such as camp meetings, the Holiness Union of the South (which promoted holiness schools, missions, and publishing), and statewide holiness associations. These organizations served as a place to protect the holiness message from interference from
denominational control. The idea of the Pentecostal Tabernacle was part of this larger vision, since it would give holiness people a place for conventions and revivals outside of established church buildings. Morrison goes on to finish his article by writing, “There are ten thousand men, and as many women, in this city, who will never be reached through the ordinary efforts of the church, who could be drawn into such a place as we propose, and led to Christ and taught the doctrine and led into the Canaan life.”

The goal was not just a building to house the printing press and offices, and also provide a facility for holding conventions, the vision was much bigger. Morrison detailed his vision in February of 1905,

The question is asked, Why do you want to build a great Pentecostal House in Louisville?

We answer: First, we are in great need of a house for our Pentecostal publishing business. No ordinary building will answer the purpose. Printing machinery is very heavy, and cannot be put up in a second or third story of any ordinary structure...

Second, we are in great need of a Pentecostal Convention Room. It will be a great stimulus and help to the holiness work to have a yearly convention, come together for refreshing in the Lord, and to plan for work, draw in the multitudes, and bring them to Christ and full salvation.

Third, we want a great revival once or twice a year, bringing in powerful holiness preachers, and pressing the battle for the salvation of sinners and the sanctification of believers.

Fourth, we propose to make this Pentecostal Building a bee-hive of practical Christian effort. There will be Sabbath afternoon meetings for men only, to draw in those who are not in the habit of attending church. There will be Sabbath evening meetings for the masses. When moral issues are on, it will be a place for massing the religious forces, to march against sin.

We propose to have a large basement, with dining-room and cooking range, and every Sabbath morning during the winter months give a free hot breakfast to the unemployed, have an organ and some full salvation singers to give them some gospel songs while they eat. We shall have free lunches for the waifs, and seek to help the homeless boys and girls to good homes and honorable employment. There will be a reading-room in which men will be welcome; and a prayer-room, from which daily prayer will go up for the work, the sinful and the sick.

There will be an arrangement for the gathering of cast-off clothing of the affluent, and the distribution of
them to the needy. There will be special effort for the help of the unfortunate girl and the outcast. There will be baths and cots, and soup, soap, sympathy, and salvation.

There will be two or three large rooms for Bible study, for the workers and those who desire to come in, and in these rooms there will be occasional lectures to the employees of the office and their friends, on important and appropriate themes.

There will be cheap, comfortable entertainment for full salvation people passing through the city. It will be, by the grace and help of God, a center from which evangelists will go out to help redeem mankind.

There will be a sewing room, with a number of sewing machines, where young ladies from the wealthy churches, who for years have had nothing to do but read novels, dance, and play cards to kill time, may come and make up garments for the poor, learn something of scriptural salvation and happy living, and go back to their places of worship with happy hearts and shining faces. There will be an understanding all over the city, that there is a door open and a hearty welcome for every creature made in God’s image and redeemed by Christ’s sufferings; good or bad, rich or poor, virtuous or fallen, drunk or sober.

We will undertake to put into every home in the city tracts on Holiness, Worldly Pleasures, Tobacco, and “The Saloon Must Go.” We will have Bible conferences, and study prophecy, and dig out the neglected doctrines of the Second Coming and Divine Healing, and fix ourselves on an intelligent Bible basis.

When elections come which involve great moral issues regarding saloons, desecration of the Sabbath and the barter in young girls; and the devil marshals all his hosts, with God’s help, we will go up against them in solid phalanx as one man, with prayers and songs and votes.\textsuperscript{15}

W.B. Godbey, writing on the new facility in September of 1904, noted that the current buildings on the property being purchased would “constitute a hopeful nucleus of not only the publishing apartments, machinery and enterprises, but the Bible School which the Lord is giving us in this missionary training home, where the juveniles whose hearts God has touched with celestial fire and called to preach the everlasting gospel, can rendezvous and study the Bible and prepare to preach the living word not only throughout this great homeland, but the regions beyond, whither wide open doors clamor for a thousand missionaries the present year, to respond to the Macedonian cries coming up in mournful wails from antipodean continents.”\textsuperscript{16}
By November of 1904 the new site for the Herald offices and the Pentecostal Tabernacle had been purchased. Morrison described it as follows,

The lot on which the New HERALD office has been built, cost us $3,800. It is a splendid lot, easily large enough for the HERALD’S home, and for a large Pentecostal Tabernacle. An old church now stands on the lot, which we are using for our Pentecostal work. We have built the publishing house, on the ally back of the church, leaving a splendid site for the New Pentecostal Tabernacle.

On this vacant lot we expect to erect an immense tent for our great convention beginning the 18th of next May.17

As the article continues, it shows that Morrison had paid $1,000 down with notes due at different times for the remainder. He calls on his readers to respond to support the Holiness work.

Postcard of the Pentecostal Tabernacle and Pentecostal Publishing Offices in Louisville, KY (1910). (From the Author’s Collection)

The Pentecostal Herald continued the process of raising subscriptions for the new facility, which by February of 1905 showed over $6,000 in subscriptions and pledges had already been made toward an estimated cost of $20,000 for the project.18 By June 1906, Morrison writes,
Old subscribers to the PENTECOSTAL HERALD understand that we are trying to build up in Louisville a great full salvation publicity plant- a home for the PENTECOSTAL HERALD, and a tabernacle for the holding of great holiness revivals, and conventions. The building enterprise has gone forward most successfully. We started out to raise the sum of twenty thousand dollars, of this amount $7,252.83 has now been subscribed, and $4,344.00 has been paid in and invested to great advantage. We have bought a lot on Walnut Street between 18th and 19th streets, in a most thickly populated part of the city, at a most reasonable price. On this lot we have an old church building with a seating capacity for four hundred people. We are eager to enlarge this building and push it to completion.  

Walnut Street’s name was changed in 1978 to Muhammad Ali Boulevard, and in the height of the Jim Crow era of segregation, Walnut Street between 6th and 13th Streets was the booming black business district of Louisville. So, the site of the Pentecostal Tabernacle at 1821 West Walnut Street was about five blocks down on the western edge of the African-American community in downtown Louisville.

By late 1909, things appear to be getting difficult for the Pentecostal Tabernacle. A series of advertising spaces appear in The Pentecostal Herald asking for support from subscribers during October and November of 1909. It reads in part, “Those nearest the enterprise have waited with bowed head, for the passing of financial clouds. We did not have the heart to call while the conditions of every men’s business were so unsettled... Representing the incompleteness of our task, a debt of $2,000 hangs over the property and several hundred dollars are needed for the repair of the tabernacle. Would it be a joyous relief to those immediately under the burden if our friends would rally and raise this debt by Christmas?” It seems that the Pentecostal Tabernacle weathered the financial storm, since it remained the home of the Pentecostal Publishing Company for a number of more years. However, its presence is minimal in The Pentecostal Herald in 1910 and beyond. Most likely the building became used simply as the physical space of the Pentecostal Publishing Company. The year 1909 was complicated, since Morrison was away on his global tour of evangelism, and when he returned in 1910 he was faced with the ultimatum to either become the president of Asbury College or watch the college be sold.
The Pentecostal Publishing Company remained at 1821 West Walnut until June of 1917, when Morrison moved the publishing facilities to 523 South First Street in Louisville, Kentucky, and the Pentecostal Tabernacle passed into history. Through at least 1909 issues of *The Pentecostal Herald* it is possible to find references to holiness speakers scheduled to speak at the Tabernacle. For whatever reason, the dream Morrison had for a holiness center in Louisville faded.

In large part, this change in focus might be due to his growing involvement in Asbury College where he started as president in 1910. Increasingly we see the camp meeting in Wilmore and revivals in conjunction with Asbury College Commencement services being mentioned in *The Pentecostal Herald*. Morrison also focuses more on raising money for the College after 1910, particularly for the College Farm. The onset of World War I also brought additional pressures as Morrison had to raise subscription rates because of the rising cost of paper, and many subscribers were also feeling the economic pressure of the war in their own budgets. Morrison’s increasing involvement in Asbury College also parallels the ending of his work on the Holiness Union of the South (which ends about 1915), so Morrison may have begun to realize that his work in education would be a more promising avenue to follow and support.
through *The Pentecostal Herald*.

Yet, Morrison’s vision has continued to bear fruit at Asbury Theological Seminary and Asbury University. The publishing power of *The Pentecostal Herald* continues through the work of *The Herald* and in digitization projects to make his ideas more widely known than ever before. The books of the Pentecostal Publishing Company continue to be downloaded and added to First Fruits Press, and speakers and teachers of Wesleyan Holiness continue to spread the message through online chapels, videos, and other digital formats to a global audience. Morrison’s innovative period from 1897 to 1910 continues to lay out a vision for Asbury’s future. One in which media, in all its different formats, will continue to play a vital role for Asbury Theological Seminary.

The archives of the B.L. Fisher library are open to researchers and works to promote research in the history of Methodism and the Wesleyan-Holiness movement. Images, such as these, provide one vital way to bring history to life. Preservation of such material is often time consuming and costly, but are essential to helping fulfill Asbury Theological Seminary’s mission. If you are interested in donating items of historic significance to the archives of the B.L. Fisher Library, or in donating funds to help purchase or process significant collections, please contact the archivist at archives@asburyseminary.edu.

**End notes**

1 All images used courtesy of the Archives of the B. L Fisher Library of Asbury Theological Seminary who own all copyrights to these digital images, unless otherwise noted. Please contact them directly if interested in obtaining permission to reuse these images.


3 Ibid.


6 Ibid., 59.


8 Ibid., 10-11.

9 Pickett was an important figure in the Asbury story as well, and his publishing work would merge with Morrison’s in the process. More can be read on Pickett in Robert Danielson, “From the Archives: Leander Lycurgus Pickett- Hymns, Holiness, and Wilmore.” *The Asbury Journal* 74(2):445-456.


11 Ibid.

12 Unpublished and undated partial transcript of an interview between Frank Stanger and Mike Boddy, in the files of the B. L. Fisher Library Archivist.


14 Ibid.


21 The second building of the Pentecostal Publishing Company would be sold at Morrison’s death, and its location is now part of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Expressway and Interstate 65.

22 Very little is said in *The Pentecostal Herald* about this move or what happened to the original building. It is mostly indicated by a notice
that there would be a missed issue of *The Pentecostal Herald* printed on page four of the June 6, 1917 issue. August 1, 1917 would be the last issue to use the 1821 W. Walnut address.

Book Reviews

Revisiting Rahab: Another Look at the Woman of Jericho
Russaw, Kimberly D.
Nashville, TN: Wesley’s Foundry Books, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, The United Methodist Church
2021, 128 pp., paper, $19.99
ISBN: 9781953052001

Reviewed by Maggie Finch

The story of Israelite spies escaping from Canaan and how one woman named Rahab helped save them plays an important part in both Jewish and Christian history. Numerous books have been written about the “red cord”, movies and television shows have captured her actions, sermons have been preached on her faithfulness and courage, and many children in Sunday School act out the spies’ harrowing escape with her help. But what if there was a different version of the story so many of us know?

Dr. Kimberly D. Russaw’s Revisiting Rahab: Another Look at the Woman of Jericho seeks to change the way many have understood this woman and her role in Israel’s story by revisiting it. Instead of leaving Rahab on the outside of the Israelite story, Russaw places her at the center. By the end of the book, Russaw has given readers exactly what she promised, a new way of looking at Rahab’s story and life.

The book is divided into an introduction and five chapters. In the introduction, Russaw lays out the story most readers have come to understand of Rahab and the Israelite spies. She then briefly overviews each chapter and its thesis. She reminds readers that this story is familiar to most, but that within each chapter she will take up a “different aspect of Rahab’s story and offer a distinct way of reading it” (6). Finally, she emphasizes that as a matriarch in King David’s family, her story and place in Israel’s legacy deserve a better understanding.
Chapter 1, “Representing Rahab--The Language of Zonah” takes the Hebrew word *zonah*--which has often been translated as “prostitute” or other similar terms--and looks at whether this is the best translation. Russaw breaks down the multitude of Hebrew words for “prostitute”, “whore”, and “harlot” and their uses in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Russaw shows that given its translation into “prostitute” or other variations of a female sex worker, in addition to the use of “prostituting” or “whoring” in other sections of scripture to connotate unfaithful people, readers tend to view Rahab in a negative light going into the story.

Chapter 2, “Researching Rahab--Major Streams of Investigation” looks at the three commonly used approaches to reading and interpreting Rahab’s story: respectability, ethnic identity/group affiliation, and heroine. Russaw discusses that there is no one way to interpret or read Rahab’s story, but readers should hold different interpretations in tension.

Chapter 3, “Recasting Rahab--Reading Rahab with African American Literature” reads Rahab’s story through the lens of African American literature, specifically Nella Larsen’s *Passing* and *Quicksand*. This chapter discusses how Rahab’s story can be viewed through the idea of her “passing” in Israelite society. She uses Larsen’s characters to help readers better understand passing in general and for Rahab.

Chapter 4, “Revealing Rahab--A New Interpretive Strategy” Russaw utilizes rhetorical criticism to examine the power dynamics between Rahab and the Israelite spies. It is here that Russaw points out that, unlike how many read this story, Rahab may have been the more powerful in this setting. Rahab has something the Israelites need (protection from the Canaanites). She makes a deal with them for their safety to protect herself and her family. In this chapter, Russaw also points out the historical facts of what happened when Israel took over Canaan, something that is often overlooked when reading scripture alone.

Chapter 5, “Reconsidering Rahab--Possibilities in the Midst of the Israelites”, considers what life looked like for Rahab after Israel took over Canaan. Her story seems to end with the closing of Joshua, but in the New Testament (Matthew, Hebrews, and James) readers are given insight into Rahab’s later life. Readers often romanticize the life of Rahab after Joshua, imagining a happy marriage and raising children. Unfortunately, that is not likely the case as women were treated as spoils of war, often given in forced marriages to the winners of the war. This chapter challenges readers to rethink the romanticized versions of Rahab’s life that we have grown
accustomed to and instead view the lineage of King David as marginalized people brought about through acts of war.

Dr. Kimberly Russaw’s book will make readers stop and think about Rahab’s story. The book is an important read for anyone, but may take some time to understand if the reader does not have as strong a background in Biblical studies (i.e., the Hebrew language or Inductive Bible Studies). Her writing from a womanist perspective should not deter those who disagree with this theological perspective. Reading Rahab’s story through the lenses of a marginalized person, instead of the story of the victor as we have so often done, gives us new insight into the real Rahab.

**A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship: Understanding the Ideas that Reshaped the Protestant Church**

Lester Ruth and Lim Swee Hong  
Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic  
2021, 368 pp., paper, $44.99  
ISBN: 9780801098284

*Reviewed by Dylan Crosson*

In the book’s title, *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship*, authors Lester Ruth and Lim Swee Hong introduce a term whose definition accounts for the book’s contents: “Contemporary Praise & Worship.” According to Ruth and Lim, this term exists as an amalgamation of “Contemporary Worship” and “Praise & Worship”—two historically distinct phenomena that are often erroneously equated with one another. Over the course of its 300-page body, *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship* combines archival research, personal interviews, and a broad review of literature to correct this false equivalency by tracing the ideologies of impactful musicians or music within each respective branch. Instead of offering a list of impactful musicians or music within each branch, this book details the origins of the theologies undergirding each one. As readers will witness, this prioritization of how key figures “wrestled with the foundational text of their religion” (307), results in a chronology notably different from those histories concerned primarily with recording artists or stand-out albums. After clearly demarcating the boundary between “Contemporary Worship” and “Praise & Worship,” Ruth and Lim splice the two together to explain
how the theologies and ideologies of each contribute to today’s iteration of Contemporary Praise & Worship.

To illustrate the histories of Praise & Worship and Contemporary Worship, Ruth and Lim model each movement as a river, beginning with unique headwaters that carve wider channels as time progresses before ultimately merging together. A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship begins with a focus on the headwaters of the “Praise & Worship” that takes readers to Canada in the 1940s. Here, one learns of the Pentecostal preacher Reg Layzell and the broader Latter Rain movement that reciprocated his worship philosophies. As the “apostle of praise,” Layzell became a well-known speaker who championed worship modeled on Psalm 22:3 and Hebrews 13:15. Interpreting Psalm 22:3 as a promise, Layzell believed that God will not fail to be present when believers worship him. Turning to Hebrews 13:15, Layzell argued that this praise must be offered up regardless of one’s emotional state as an act of obedience or as a “sacrifice of praise.” Additionally, early Praise & Worship thinkers grafted onto their own worship frameworks the Old Testament worship typologies of both David’s tabernacle as well as that of Moses. Beyond affirming the core tenets laid out in Layzell’s two key verses, this strategy contributed to Praise & Worship’s theological nucleus three additional principles: that the worship portion of a church service was primarily concerned with music, that the worship leader be a separate position from that of the church’s minister that nonetheless takes up a priestly role, and that Praise & Worship was “a biblically derived, God-given pattern for worship” (126). For Praise & Worship adherents, music used during church services edified the congregation by ushering in God’s presence so long as those gathered remained committed to worship as an act of faith.

While those of the Praise & Worship lineage felt music ought to benefit established Christians, practitioners of Contemporary Worship had a different aim for their music; evangelism and outreach. Ruth and Lim contend that this evangelistic orientation predates that of Praise & Worship as they trace its lineage through the United States’ history of Christian revivals. In both the eighteenth and nineteenth century, these movements typically involved the pragmatic use of music to entice potential converts to religious gatherings, such as camp meetings, where preachers would urge attendees to commit their lives to Christ. Catering to their target audience, these evangelists freely emulated the music of the broader culture with the understanding that a change in musical form—in this case, the adoption
of popular music style—did not interfere with the music’s lyrical content containing scriptural truth. This principle makes not only the “subterranean stirrings” that constitute the origins of Contemporary Worship river, but it continuously feeds this branch throughout its history. As such, Part Two of A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship traces different iterations of this ideal in action primarily between 1940-1985, whether it be in the youth musicals of Ralph Carmichael or its centrality to the music of the Church Growth Movement. While musical style may change, the conviction remains the same: music is best used to present the Gospel to the unchurched in a culturally relevant way.

A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship concludes with a section documenting the confluence of these two rivers in the mid-1990s resulting in the present paradigm that is Contemporary Praise & Worship. For many churchgoers, the evidence of this merger is everywhere; after all, how often has someone heard a worship leader encourage their congregation to bring a “sacrifice of praise” before launching into a pop-oriented worship song? Banking on the self-evidence of the phenomenon, Ruth and Lim do not dwell long on the present state of hybridity but they do mention some of the infrastructure, whether it be college degree programs in worship, or popular worship manuals in places that perpetuate this combination, before ending the book.

At the end of the book’s body, readers will find an appendix which features a two-columned timeline outlining parallel summaries of the movements and figures detailed in the book. Acting as both a summary of the book as well as a visual aid to relay the coexistence of the two movements, this appendix embodies the authors’ organizational prowess that results in arguably the book’s best feature: clarity. Within the narrative of each ideological stream, the principles of the people studied within the book are presented as lists, making for an approachable read, easily cited reference, and a strong contender for classroom use. Its commitment to a history of ideas means an avoidance of musical jargon that further boosts its appeal to a general audience. For those interested a historical understanding of evangelical music making of the twentieth century or even congregational music in general, A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship is a must read.
The Samurai and the Cross: The Jesuit Enterprise in Early Modern Japan
M. Antoni J. Ucerler, S.J.
Oxford: Oxford University Press
2022, 469 pp., hardcover, $39.95
ISBN: 9780195335439

Reviewed by Greg S. Whyte

The early modern Jesuit enterprise in Asia remains a fascinating piece of history. The Catholic faith seemed to be making significant gains in Japan throughout the sixteenth century, and then the tide suddenly turned and Christianity was officially labelled as an enemy of the state. In The Samurai and the Cross, Antoni Ucerler approaches this puzzle through the lens of key intellectual dilemmas that emerged from the encounter between these newly arrived foreign missionaries and the realities of Japanese culture, religion, and politics, and he presents it through the exploration of primary source documents of debates and discussions from among the Roman Catholic world of that era.

In the first of three sections, Ucerler considers the debates surrounding cultural adaptation of the church and the training of local clergy, ideas championed by Alessandro Valignano. Through his use of primary source documents, Ucerler successfully indicates that the Jesuits were not completely unified under Valignano’s mission philosophy. According to Ucerler, Valignano’s policies were based on the conviction that the situation in Japan (and, by extension, China) resembled that of the early church – which is noteworthy because of the official policy of Catholicism for uniformity at this time. Important in this section is Ucerler’s treatment of a catechismal document addressing the concerns and questions of Japanese Christians – which shows a certain level of adaptability in mission practice.

The second section of the book explores the views of those challenging Valignano’s ideas – namely Alonso Sanchez in the Philippines, and Gaspard Coelho and Luis Frois in Japan, and their desire for conquest and the marriage of European colonialism with missionary conquest, similar to what had occurred in Latin America. The most poignant aspect of the narrative that Ucerler draws out in this section is the global nature of the controversy itself. There is a temptation to ignore the global for the sake of the local when considering history; however, Ucerler illustrates the
interconnectedness of the Jesuit missionary enterprise of the time – as well as the mutually-affecting nature of world events.

The final major section of the book describes the situation with temporal politics, including the donation of Nagasaki, a port town gifted to the Jesuits by the local lord, Omura Sumitada, and how this also affected the portrayal of the Jesuits by the Japanese government. An aspect of this explored by Ucerler was the documents showing official Japanese state propaganda even a century later of the ‘evil law’ that was Christianity, which showed that the concern of the Shogunate government was not so much foreign invasion but rebellion from within, such as what happened among certain Buddhist sects during the Warring States period.

Ucerler draws out some significant elements in the conversation about what happened to end the “Christian Century” of the early modern Jesuit mission in Japan. By providing the primary source details that he does, he allows us to catch a glimpse into significant elements that led to the Japanese government outlawing Christianity in the seventeenth century.

**Do Everything: The Biography of Frances Willard**
Christopher H. Evans
New York, NY: Oxford University Press
2022, 408 pp., hardcover, $39.95
ISBN: 9780190914073

Reviewed by Zachariah S. Motts

Christopher H. Evans’s study of the nineteenth-century reformer and leader of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), Frances Willard, is a detailed and critical look at an influential giant who has faded from contemporary view. While the culture surrounding the temperance movement and the history that led to Prohibition may seem like an antiquated cul-de-sac in the American experiment, *Do Everything* vibrates with parallels and antecedents that show how this era was formative in shaping the political and social conversation of today. This seems especially true of the areas where Willard had her strongest base of support, the American Midwest. *Do Everything* is a masterful explication of a single life which, even long after ceasing to be a household name, continues to cast a massive shadow.
Credit must be given to Evans for his portrait of Willard. She does not come across as a person easily aligned with the recent political packaging of conservatives or liberals. Willard is a complex character with surprising depth that shifts and develops over time. She is a loyal Methodist and evangelical, but constantly at odds with her church’s male hierarchy and open to people beyond the boundaries of her tradition. She pushes for women’s suffrage and feminist causes but does so from a traditionalist position on gender roles and family life. While valorizing this view of family purity and becoming an American ideal of womanhood, she herself never marries and surrounds herself with female relationships. She takes great pride in her abolitionist family background and the openness of the WCTU to members of all races, yet she does not correct the racist points in her rhetoric even after being given notice, often takes the side of white Southerners regarding ongoing discrimination, and becomes embroiled in a legacy-damaging controversy with Ida B. Wells on the issue of lynching. She steers the WCTU through numerous political stances and comes to embrace a pro-labor, socialist view over time. Adored and renowned, with people talking about her being president of the United States someday, she was also frustrated in many of her causes, especially the one at the center of her organization: temperance. Willard defies being boxed into a neat political category, being both strongly conservative and surprisingly progressive for her time.

With all of her faults, contradictions, and shortcomings, though, even a critical summary of Willard’s life reveals a woman of tireless courage who endlessly took on new causes and fought for wide-ranging issues that were not easily acceptable to the mainstream in the United States. Temperance, suffrage, labor, prostitution, policing, the Armenian genocide, education, leisure: the list of issues on which she was willing to lead the WCTU into the fray was ever evolving. This was her “Do Everything policy,” a policy that gained her loud accolades and constant criticism. The criticism was often internal to the WCTU, with new planks in the Do Everything Policy becoming rallying points for questioning of Willard’s leadership. Especially by tying temperance to women’s suffrage, there were many who believed she was dooming both causes, and she did not live to see the culmination of either in amendments to the U.S. Constitution. However, even for someone who is not sympathetic to Willard’s stances, there is something heroic about the way she attempted to use her fame and power to selflessly fill a lifetime with doing as much good as possible.
While Frances Willard and the temperance movement may seem removed from the debates of today, Evans’s biography rewards the reader in many ways. Methodologically, it is worthwhile to watch a skillful historian draw together sources into a full-orbed description. It also develops an important thread in explaining how the contours of conservative politics and evangelicalism in the American Midwest came to be. As a biography, though, it rewards attention by allowing the reader to cross a distance of time and discover beneath the mix of successes and failures, praise and controversy, a human being.

**Perception and Identity: A Study of the Relationship between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Evangelical Churches in Ethiopia**

Daniel Seblewengel  
Carlisle, England: Langham Monographs  
2019, 463 pp., paper, $47.99  
ISBN: 9781783686346

Reviewed by Calum Samuelson

This book attempts something very important for the country of Ethiopia, especially when considering the tragic violence that has occurred in Tigray and other regions since its publication in 2019. Seblewengel Daniel is an appropriate person for this project not only because she is Ethiopian, but also because she was guided by the great minds of both Kwame Bediako and Andrew F. Walls. This monograph is the outworking of her doctoral program at Akrofi-Christaller Institute in Ghana and makes some useful contributions to the fields of Missiology and African Christian Theology. Daniel accomplishes this mainly through private interviews and by bringing to light material found in missionary journal manuscripts in the Special Collections of the University of Birmingham. Ultimately, this book is probably best understood as a signal for the colossal scale of work that still remains in bringing reconciliation between the Orthodox and Protestant Christians in Ethiopia.

The Introduction (Chapter 1) lays out some ambitious goals by citing three significant pieces of scholarship that the author intends to build upon: Bediako’s *Theology and Identity*, Walls’ *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, and Sanneh’s *Translating the Message*. The author’s
stated intention of using “mainly historical and theological frameworks” (3) is mostly adhered to throughout the book.

An adequate history of Ethiopian Christianity is provided in Chapter 2, something that is not an easy task considering the complexity involved. Here, the content is meant to serve the later discussion by informing readers of the characteristic features of the traditions involved. To this end, explanations about the Ga‘az (اقة) language, Axumite and successive monarchs, monasticism, Judaism, and indigenous pagan beliefs are indeed helpful and necessary for ensuing discussions about the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC).

Chapters 3 and 4 offer the bulk of unique material in this book. Daniel draws upon extensive first-hand accounts to provide a detailed view of the realities at play during the missionary efforts of the 19th century. Especially noteworthy are the journal entries and letters of Rev. Samuel Gobat and Rev. Christian Kugler of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) because of their unprecedented encounters and unique methods. Daniel correctly highlights the fact that the CMS was distinct from most successive mission organizations because it did not attempt to plant new churches but rather sought to work with the indigenous, “Abyssinian” church.

Chapters 5 and 6 essentially rehearse the long-standing disagreements and accusations between the EOC and Evangelicals. These chapters are important but do not represent much unique material beyond what is already known by most Christians in Ethiopia. Finally, although the Conclusion (Chapter 7) is only twenty pages long, it introduces several new and intriguing ideas for the very first time (e.g. Globalization, methods of Bible study, the place of emotions in religion).

It is apparent that a great deal of careful research lays behind this publication and surely its greatest strength is the way that Daniel explicates the hand-written accounts of early Protestant missionaries in Ethiopia. These yield invaluable insights about the nature of the EOC at a pivotal time in history. In this process, Daniel is usually attentive to distinguishing between the missionaries’ perspectives (which are occasionally racist and biased) and the more objective reality. However, it is sometimes difficult for the reader to differentiate between the claims of the missionaries and the claims of the author, not least because quotations are often unmarked by correct punctuation. Indeed, the number of grammatical and typographical errors (as well as the introduction of new material in the Conclusion) give an impression that the author ran out of time to integrate fully all of her
findings. Overall, the greatest drawback of this book is that many of the arguments lack the nuance that would have made them truly original and impactful.

By highlighting the three important works in the Introduction (especially those from Bediako and Walls), many readers will anticipate interaction throughout the text. Unfortunately, little explicit engagement with or integration of these works occurs until the Conclusion nearly 400 pages later. Furthermore, while the book obviously “explores” historical and contemporary interactions between Orthodox and Evangelicals in Ethiopia (9), the overarching goal beyond providing “some recommendations” for improvement is somewhat less clear (10).

Because the Orthodox tradition in Ethiopia is clearly much older than Protestantism, Daniel appropriately focuses on the peculiar theological features of the EOC. The fact that knowledge of Protestant (and “Evangelical”) doctrine is mostly taken for granted strongly suggests that the anticipated audience will mostly be comprised of Protestants who are unfamiliar with Orthodox theology (cf. statement about “the Orthodox reader” on page 177). Moreover, Daniel deals quite effectively with the impact of key Ethiopian figures such as Täklä Haymanot and Zär’a Ya’aqob. Unfortunately, the discussion of core Orthodox concepts is problematic for several reasons, especially in Chapter 2. First, Daniel’s reliance upon obsolete resources (Kaplan, 1982; Kretschmar, 1966; Schaff and Wace, 1900) prevents her from accurately conveying the ideas accepted by contemporary Orthodox adherents. Second, much terminology used is unfitting. In order to fairly represent the “self-perception” of the Orthodox, “images” should be called “icons”, “traditional writings” should be called “Patristic writings” (or clearly distinguished from them), only “veneration” should be used with reference to the cult of saints, and the Western notion of “canon” should be abandoned—especially in the Ethiopian context (cf. Bruk A. Asale, 2016). Third, primary theological texts are never consulted in Ga’az but only in Amharic translation. Although this may give some sense of how the modern EOC understands certain concepts, it obscures the semantic range and motivations involved in the difficult process of translation. Ironically, this seems to affect Daniel’s grasp of Ethiopia’s quintessential response to Chalcedon since she fails to discuss the nuanced understanding of ṭawahas (tawahado) nor even mention the importance of Coptic “miaphysite” theology. To be fair to the author, however, the EOC is unusual in its position on the periphery of Orthodoxy and Ga’az sources are
notoriously inaccessible. Nonetheless, it is difficult for this reviewer to see how any Orthodox Christian would be encouraged or inspired by reading this book.

Chapters 3 and 4 are easily the strongest of the book. Daniel generally commends and critiques the behaviours of both missionaries and Ethiopians with a healthy balance. Daniel’s observation that the “power encounter” with pagan systems and demonic forces was a common feature of both modern missionary activity and traditional monastic activity is especially helpful (43). It is also commendable that Daniel emphasizes the ineffectiveness of “propositional truth” in contrast to the sincere and loving lifestyle of the missionaries (174). One regrettable element of Daniel’s presentation in this section relates to what she repeatedly calls “traditional writings,” which she seems to think were passed down with “little or no reflection” (265). Her earlier claim that such writings held a higher status than the Bible that “resulted in a general decline of morality” is a shocking and unsubstantiated assertion (64).

The last two main chapters of the book (5 and 6) mostly offer a fair portrayal of “mutual antagonism and misunderstanding”. Probably the best portions of this section are the quotations from Orthodox theologians whom Daniel interviewed. These quotes provide strong apologetic explanations on vital issues such as the role of Mary and the intercession of saints. Unfortunately, almost every instance of these explanations is followed by a rebuttal from Daniel, who consistently cites examples to the contrary from popular sources. Although this lends a helpful sense of the broad theological spectrum found in Ethiopia, this level of critique is not equally applied to problematic Protestant practices or doctrines. Thus, Daniel could have been more diligent in comparing “like with like”. This is especially true when considering Orthodox priests and monks. Some Orthodox clergy receive very little education or even feign ignorance in line with the tradition of “holy fools”. However, the EOC is quite clear concerning the most respected individuals who are entrusted as “guardians” or “custodians” of the sacred teachings of the church. These are known as የጋበጎ እስከ ከን/ የጋበጎ (mägabe baluy / haddis), and it is regrettable that their perspectives could not have featured more prominently in this book—particularly to provide balance to the repeated examples of the missionaries’ experiences with “ignorant”, rural priests.

Just as Daniel frequently offers good perspectives that are either outdated or incomplete, some discussions about key features of the EOC are
mostly satisfactory except for important errors. For instance, her comments about the \( \text{ وعن} \) (andamta) are appreciated, but it is not true that the EOC views it as “infallible” (55). Again, Daniel is correct to note the Ethiopian reliance upon the LXX, but it is untrue that their only addition is the book of 1 Enoch (i.e. Jubilees).

Finally, as we have already mentioned, although the Conclusion to the book is quite brief, it contains a surprising amount of new material. Much of this is highly interesting and important. This reviewer simply wishes that such discussion could have been treated in more depth during the major sections of the book. Most disappointing is Daniel’s engagement with the important thinking of Andrew F. Walls. Just four pages from the end we finally revisit his threefold paradigm for approaching the dissemination of Christian faith. Daniel’s insights are astute and valuable, but she is unable to realize their full potential in relation to previous chapters. Similarly, the only clear original “recommendations” to be found besides general calls for “dialogue” appear in a single sentence of the penultimate paragraph and are directed towards Evangelicals: “to develop a positive Mariology and to stop encouraging people to leave the Orthodox Church” (404). These are certainly vital and in line with the book’s overarching thrust, but readers will almost inevitably be left with a desire for more concrete points of action. This reviewer believes that increased discussion about the influence of African Traditional Religions especially could have immensely bolstered this project and the exploration of the unique “identity” of Ethiopian Christians (which could have come from more focused engagement with Bediako’s text). Lastly, if this book is, indeed, primarily intended for Evangelicals unfamiliar with Christianity in Ethiopia, a simple map including the various locations discussed would have been a beneficial addition.

In sum, this book represents a vital step forward in the academic study of Orthodox-Protestant relations in Ethiopia. Despite its shortcomings, it will serve as a crucial resource for others pursuing similar studies and should encourage scholars to build upon its foundations.
Books Received

The following books were received by the editor’s office since the last issue of The Asbury Journal. The editor is seeking people interested in writing book reviews on these or other relevant books for publication in future issues of The Asbury Journal. Please contact the editor (Robert.danielson@asburyseminary.edu) if you are interested in reviewing a particular title. Reviews will be assigned on a first come basis.


Bebbington, David W., ed.  

Berding, Kenneth  

Blomberg, Craig L.  

Brannon, M. Jeff  

Chilcote, Paul W.  

Cho, Paul K.-K.  

Copan, Paul, ed.  

deSilva, David A.  

Evans, Christopher H.  

Félix-Jäger, Steven  
2022  Renewal Worship: A Theology of Pentecostal Doxology. Dynamics of Christian Worship. Downers Grove, IL:
Hains, Todd R. 2022  

Holms, Christopher R. J. 2022  

Jackson W. (pseudonym) 2022  

Jacobson, Rolf A. and Michael J. Chan 2023  

Kynes, Bill and Will Kynes 2022  

Lau, Peter H. W. 2023  

Lee, Daniel D. 2022  

Melcher, Sarah J. 2022  

Moffitt, David M. 2022  
Padilla, Osvaldo  

Page, Kristen  

Roth, Frederico Alfredo, Justin Marc Smith, Kirsten Sonkyo Oh, Alice Yafeh-Deigh, and Kay Higuera Smith  

Ream, Todd C., Jerry Pattengale, and Christopher J. Devers, eds.  

Smith, Brandon D.  

Sterling, Gregory E.  

Ucerler, M. Antoni J., S.J.  

Van den Toren, Benno and Kang-San Tan  

Williams, Jarvis J.  
Wilson, Walter T.  
2022  

Wilson, Walter T.  
2022  

Wright, Christopher J. H.  
2023  

Wright, Richard A.  
2022  

Wright, William M., IV  
2023  