

# RECOVERING THE EFFICACY OF THE RITUAL OF INSTANTANEOUS ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION THROUGH WORSHIP THAT EMPHASIZES EMBODIMENT<sup>1</sup>

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In "Tacit Holiness," Rodney Clapp challenged those in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition with the question of how we might "recover a disciplined, embodied and habituated church in a setting so much more congenial to an individualized, rationalized, self-determining consumer 'Christianity'?"<sup>2</sup> He suggests that the answer to this question begins in "becoming Christian selves via our participation in the church as the disciplined, habituated and habituating body of Christ."<sup>3</sup> At the center of this participation is the role of "body," both the individual, physical body and the corporate, social body.<sup>4</sup> A number of articles in the Wesleyan Theological Journal are consistent with Clapp's suggestion.<sup>5</sup> In one of these, Steven T. Hoskins argues that the cure to the "identity crisis" in the Holiness Movement is liturgical, since liturgy is "where the people of God realize, remember, and re-enact who they are."<sup>6</sup> Since the source of the identity crisis stems from differences between two models (Wesleyan and American) of the movement, Hoskins wonders if we can find a solution for the "search for present identity"<sup>7</sup> in the past history of either model. Is it possible to develop a Holiness liturgy that values the "influence of both Wesley and Palmer"<sup>8</sup> the practice of which would construct a selfhood resulting in holiness of heart and life? The purpose of this paper is to suggest that the answer to this question is, yes.

That is, the solution to a contemporary worship that has become "influenced by an experiential-expressive trajectory"<sup>9</sup> and "crassly individualistic"<sup>10</sup> is the recovery of the role of body in the ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification and incorporating the celebration of its efficacy in the worship of the church. The sources for accomplishment of the task exist in the history of the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition – the richness of the liturgy of the Wesleyan model and the ritualization of entire sanctification in the American model. I base this upon the idea that the ritualization of instantaneous entire sanctification created by the early leaders (especially Phoebe Palmer) of the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement included an emphasis on embodiment which was gradually replaced, even lost, due to the creation of an imagistic religiosity<sup>11</sup> in which spiritual authority is vested in the individual's direct experience with God (baptism of the Holy Spirit). Institutional authority and liturgy became secondary issues. A re-reading of the primary sources with a focus on ritual and body has the potential to recover a Holiness liturgy which may be incorporated into the worship of the contemporary church.

In the first section of this paper, I briefly review some of the sources in theology and the academic study of religion that call for a recovery of the importance of embodiment as a corrective to the dualistic tendencies of historic Christianity. This is followed by a discussion of the role of body in ritual. In the sections "Wesleyan-Holiness Resources for an Embodied Theology and Practice" and "Body and Holy Living in the Nineteenth-Century Holiness Movement" I argue that there are resources for recovery of a positive view of body that have been overlooked because of the experiential/expressive nature of the movement. Many holiness advocates viewed their body as the Temple of the Holy Spirit and realized that entire sanctification included physicality. The efficacy of the ritual of instantaneous entire sanctification included power to live a holy life in word, thought, and deed. Recovery of the efficacy of entire sanctification – the topic of the final section of the paper – requires linking it with the liturgy of the church with an emphasis on embodiment and the creation of ecclesiastical structures that encourage mutual accountability.

## *The Theological Recovery of the Role of Body in Christianity*

There are a number of sources suggesting the necessity of a recovery of the role of body in Christianity and religion, in general. My introduction to this theme began with a seminar on "Religion and Body," which reviewed views of body across the religious traditions of the world. The emphasis of our discussions was the recovery of a positive view of embodiment. In *Volatile Bodies*, Elizabeth Grosz moves body "from the periphery to the center of analysis, so that it can now be understood as the very 'stuff' of subjectivity." She wants us to understand that bodies have "explanatory power," that

they are “not inert; they function interactively and productively. They act and react. They generate what is new, surprising, unpredictable.”<sup>12</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum suggests that the food and Eucharistic practices of medieval women indicate that they thought of the “body as locus of the divine”<sup>13</sup> and Jason David BeDuhn states that the “Manichaeans learned to consider their bodies occupied territory, which must be liberated from the dominion of evil.”<sup>14</sup> In seeking to interpret “Plotinus for the Present,”<sup>15</sup> Margaret R. Miles argues that Plotinus viewed the universe as a beautiful gift and bodies as a “natural and necessary part of a whole.”<sup>16</sup> Although Plotinus spoke of body as being a hindrance to “contemplative ascent to the One,” he also stated that body was a “necessary and beautiful reflection of the One” and that “body should be cared for but not indulged.”<sup>17</sup>

If we expect or hope to establish a practice that constructs a positive view of body, our thinking must also be positive. By positive, I mean a theology of body that considers body as a gift of God without which we have no experience of God. Historically, religions of the world have considered body as a material, temporal object which impedes spirituality. An example from Buddhism may be instructive. Liz Wilson states that some Buddhist monks believed that “the body [especially, female body] is a dangerous instrument of destruction that is covered with a false but inviting façade. A woman’s outer appearance is thus a sweet, delectable bait intended to trap some unsuspecting man.”<sup>18</sup> This belief created the practice of meditating on the mutilated bodies of women at cremation grounds in order to transform an “alluring spectacle” into a “repulsive one,” thus destroying their desire.<sup>19</sup> This negative view of body turns some bodies into objects – Wilson states that to “be an object of another’s gaze is to have a diminished sense of one’s position as a subject.”<sup>20</sup>

This example suggests that we need a positive view of body and its role in the life of a Christian. In the conclusion to *Embodied Holiness*, Michael E. Lodahl states that the contributors to this volume have provided “a sustained exploration of the doctrine of Christian holiness (especially as espoused by John Wesley and the Wesleyan tradition) from the vantage point of the postmodern recovery of embodiment and radical sociality.”<sup>21</sup> It was Lodahl’s reference to Sallie McFague which led me to read *The Body of God*, in which McFague focuses on embodiment and invites us “to think and act as if bodies matter.”<sup>22</sup> McFague offers a positive view of body, stating that

We do not *have* bodies, as we like to suppose, distancing ourselves from them as one does from an inferior, a servant, who works for us (the “us” being the mind that inhabits the body but does not really belong there). We *are* bodies, “body and soul.”

In other words, we ought to love and honor the body, our own bodies, and the bodies of all other life-forms on the planet...The body is not a minor matter; rather, it is the main attraction. It is what pulls us toward (and pushes us away from) each other; it is erotic in the most profound sense, for it is what attracts or repels. It is bedrock, and, therefore, we ought to pay attention to it before all else.<sup>23</sup>

In reference to salvation, McFague suggests that focusing on the body “prohibits us from spiritualizing human pain, from centering on existential anxiety, from substituting otherworldly salvation for this-worldly oppression. *Whatever else* salvation can and ought to mean, it does involve, says the body model, first and foremost, the well-being of the body.”<sup>24</sup>

McFague’s radical incarnationalism will help us to “begin to realize the extraordinariness of the ordinary,” understand creation as a “sacrament of the living God” and “bodies [as] alive with the breath of God.” Since we “live and move and have our being *in* God,” we might “see ourselves and everything else as the living body of God.”<sup>25</sup> For McFague, body is the “place where God is present to us...God is available to us only through the mediation of embodiment.”<sup>26</sup> Radical incarnationalism means that “we do not, ever, at least in this life, see God face to face, but only through the mediation of the bodies we pay attention to, listen to, and learn to love and care for.”<sup>27</sup> McFague states that her model is “neither theist nor pantheist, but panentheist,”... “God is embodied but not necessarily or totally. Rather, God is sacramentally embodied: God is mediated, expressed, in and through embodiment, but not necessarily or totally.”<sup>28</sup>

In calling for a recovery of the role of body in or theology and practice, I am following the lead of those who claim that there our sources in our past that may address the problems of the present and give us hope for the future. Specifically, one of the features of the project of Radical Orthodoxy emphasizes “the material and bodily as a site of both revelation and redemption.”<sup>29</sup> In questioning the assumptions of modernity<sup>30</sup> and attempting to undo the dualism of body and soul,<sup>31</sup> Radical Orthodoxy opens the door for a re-narration of the history of the Holiness Movement.

### *The Role of Body in Ritual*

This emphasis on body/physicality brings us to a consideration of the role of body in ritual. In her chapter, "Ritual Sites in the Narrative of American Religion," of *Retelling U. S. Religious History* Tamar Frankiel suggests that "ritual actions involve the physicality of the participants and the site of the ritual." The ritual act "communicates" and "our bodies become ritualized, thus embodying and internalizing the meaning of, for example, humility."<sup>32</sup> She notes that the evangelical revivals from 1730 to 1850 "empowered participants by adopting familiar ritualizations...to new situations."<sup>33</sup> Along the same line, Catherine Bell summarizes Foucault's idea of ritual as "formalized, routinized, and often supervised practices that mold the body."<sup>34</sup> Bell also states that "ritualization involves the differentiation and privileging of particular activities."<sup>35</sup> Although ritualization applies across the spectrum of human situations and not just in religious practice, my concern in this paper is the ritualization that takes place in worship. David F. Ford deals with the issue of a worshiping self that is transformed in the ritualized process of worship. He states that the Disciples of Christ were transformed by their encounter with the risen Jesus who breathed the "Holy Spirit on them face to face."<sup>36</sup> Worship is a "facing" that involves physicality, communality and language, and "transformation of how others are perceived."<sup>37</sup> Subjectivity is shaped through the physicality of worship. An embodied holiness theology and practice must include a consideration of the role of body in worship/ritual. In analyzing the thought of Stanley Hauerwas, Rodney Clapp states that "firsthand knowledge of holiness and not merely about holiness – involves the body and habituation."<sup>38</sup>

The importance of the role of body in Christian worship is expressed by Geoffrey Wainwright:

Christian worship uses sacraments and sacramentals, rituals in which *gestures* and *movement* and *material objects* play a significant part. In all these cases, the action is accompanied by verbal interpretation and takes place within a framework of understanding. The body is the fundamental communicative sign of the human person; speech is the most supple sign, which allows precision in the expression of intention. It is an embodied humanity endowed with speech that God calls into communion with himself.<sup>39</sup>

Tom F. Driver states that rituals are performative actions with dominant functions that "have to do with efficacy, with bringing about some change in an existing state of affairs."<sup>40</sup> He also suggests that ritual actions are more important than the ritual symbols<sup>41</sup> and that one of the social gifts of ritual is transformation – "not only of persons' individual subjectivities but also transformation of society and the natural world."<sup>42</sup> Driver argues that the physical activity of ritual is a source of knowledge and that because "it is performance, ritual produces its effects not simply in minds but also in the bodies of its performers."<sup>43</sup>

E. Byron Anderson suggests that worship is a ritual practice that "provides a context in which we 'practice ourselves'."<sup>44</sup> I take his meaning to be that the thinking and acting of worship forms our thinking and acting in the rest of our living. He states that "what we do in worship has consequences beyond what is immediately visible on any Sunday morning."<sup>45</sup> In dialogue with Catherine Bell, Anderson understands ritualization as a "strategic way of acting."<sup>46</sup> Anderson states that there are three forms of ritual practice (manifestation, presentation, and emergence) with each form providing a "particular type of strategic action" and carrying a "primary correlative orientation to either past, present, or future."<sup>47</sup> If I understand Anderson properly, manifestation is the strategic action connecting us with our past; presentation is the strategic action that defines meaning for the present; and emergence is the strategic action which produces the future.<sup>48</sup> What I find important in the three forms is the idea that ritual involves action; i.e., bodily participation – what we do and how we do it really does matter. This point is brought home by Anderson in the following statements:

- (1) In the tension between *orthodoxia* and *orthopraxis*, we come face to face with the fact that even as we "perform" liturgy, liturgy is also "performing" us. It is inscribing a form of the Christian faith in body, bone, and marrow as well as in mind and spirit.<sup>49</sup>
- (2) Ritual and ritualization,..., are ways of knowing self and other, person and community in the world that is both other and more than a cognitive knowing. Ritual knowing is affective and physical, imaginal and embodied.<sup>50</sup>
- (3) We gain liturgical ritual knowledge through active participation in and the

performance of the liturgy rather than by instruction and education.<sup>51</sup>

(4) Acting differently leads us to see and know differently.<sup>52</sup>

I suggest that the ritualization of instantaneous entire sanctification in the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement may be understood as an example of knowledge of the presence of God through physicality. Humble consecration of self was not solely an inward act, it also included body learning to submit to God and incorporating the presence of God in subsequent bodily actions.

*Wesleyan/Holiness Resources for an Embodied Holiness Theology and Practice*

The recovery of an embodied holiness theology and practice must certainly have its roots in John Wesley. After reminding us that ritual was a key element in early Methodism, John W. Wright goes on to note that “it is precisely this bodily and political formation that becomes secondary in the later promulgation of ‘Wesleyan theology.’”<sup>53</sup> In spite of this apparent change, I would suggest that there are examples of an appreciation for embodiment within the nineteenth-century American Holiness Movement that have been overlooked because of the movement’s emphasis on the individual’s personal experience of instantaneous entire sanctification as primarily an inward act of grace. Although the selfhood created by the movement was primarily experiential/expressive in nature, it also included an emphasis on holy activity and social transformation.

Harold E. Raser credits Phoebe Palmer with the adaptation of revivalist techniques to the “way of holiness.”<sup>54</sup> He lists three new measures adopted by Palmer: (1) an altar invitation “extended specifically and exclusively to those already converted Christians who were seeking the deeper, second experience of ‘entire sanctification;’” (2) a “believing meeting” designed to lead seekers into taking the action required to experience entire sanctification; and (3) institutionalized and mandatory altar testimony specifically claiming the blessing of entire sanctification.<sup>55</sup> These new measures became vital aspects of national camp meetings for the promotion of holiness. In connection to ideas about body, Palmer’s altar theology ritualized the presentation of the *gift* of the individual (self) to God. The altar became the *sacred space* of a transaction with God. Raser states that Palmer believed that “when something (i.e. the seeker’s entire devotion of self) is placed upon the altar (i.e. Christ), it becomes holy by virtue of the sanctity of the altar.”<sup>56</sup> Body is included in Palmer’s conception of self. When self has been “placed upon the altar,” there is an “automatic endowment of all the qualities inherent in the idea of ‘holiness’ or ‘perfection.’”<sup>57</sup> Palmer utilizes the language of Pentecost (Acts 2) to describe God’s promised reception of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The same power given to the disciples of Jesus on the Day of Pentecost is received by every believer, “both men and women.”<sup>58</sup>

Palmer’s theology is not simply a sanctified spirituality but is “sanctified activism,” the “life of holiness will need to continually demonstrate one’s presentation to God of body and soul. i.e. that one is entirely consecrated to God and his purposes.”<sup>59</sup> As a temple of the Holy Spirit, the entirely sanctified believer avoids evil of every sort and seeks to reform society. The purity and power to do so is provided by the indwelling presence of the Divine. Tamar Frankiel concludes that the ritualization of sanctification was an orienting of self “by means of an inward spirituality [that] offered vigorous alternatives for empowerment through intense or unusual experiences. These ranged from infusions of divine energy to possession by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>60</sup> Although the history of revivalism, camp meetings, and the Holiness movement certainly contain examples of these intense and unusual experiences, it seems to me that Phoebe Palmer’s theology and practice indicates that inward spirituality does not necessarily lead to experiences that are emotionally intense or unusual. In fact, the presence of the Divine may just as much result in a practical obedience without ecstatic enthusiasm. Palmer played a vital role in the establishment of “bodily actions that dynamically”<sup>61</sup> changed the religious experience and lives of those involved in the revivals and camp meetings of the nineteenth century. The ritual space created by Palmer and other holiness proponents was infused with meaning that shaped the subjectivity of participants.

I am suggesting that a re-reading of the primary sources indicates that the theology and practice of the nineteenth-century Holiness movement included a practical understanding of embodied knowing and doing. Phoebe Palmer taught that the blessing of entire sanctification was not possible unless the individual believer was “willing to bring the sacrifice of the body, soul, and spirit (to the altar) and leave it there.”<sup>62</sup> Holiness was a “state of soul in which all the powers of the body and mind are consciously given up to God.”<sup>63</sup> What seems to have been too easily passed over in analyzing Palmer is the emphasis she placed on the sacrifice of the *body* and the fact that consecration of the self meant *all* that selfhood implies – an embodied theology and practice. Douglas M. Strong states that

the "faith life of [nineteenth-century] Holiness men and women consisted of God's indwelling leading to concrete ethical action."<sup>64</sup> He has also documented the "holy activity" of some of these holiness men and women whose social involvement was motivated by the "daily communion of the indwelling Christ."<sup>65</sup> It is perhaps simplistic to stress the fact that the concept of the empowering presence of the Spirit of God within the believer requires physicality – body. The recovery of the holiness ethos<sup>66</sup> of the nineteenth century requires an attention to physicality.

There are numerous references to the body in the primary sources of the nineteenth-century Holiness movement. Although I would not suggest, or even think, that all of those who eventually supported and participated in the National Holiness Association and its camp meetings for the special promotion of holiness used the same terminology or had the same understanding of holiness, many of them did follow the pattern set by Phoebe Palmer. In Roger G. Price's collection of the 1867 debates on the *True Methods of Promoting Perfect Love* at the New York Preacher's Meeting of the Methodist Episcopal Church, John S. Inskip describes the consecration required for the attainment of entire sanctification as "entire dedication to God – a complete giving up of the soul, body, time, talents, influence, and all to the service and glory of God."<sup>67</sup> In his chapter entitled "Directions for Obtaining Holiness," J. A. Wood makes a similar statement:

Make an *entire consecration* of yourself to God – your soul, body, time, talents, influence, and *your all* – a complete assignment of *all* to Christ. Search and surrender, and re-search and surrender again, until you get every vestige of self upon the altar of consecration. There is no sanctification without *entire consecration*.<sup>68</sup>

C. W. Ruth stated that consecration is "not the surrender of something evil, but the offering up to God, unconditionally that which is good. The soul must be able to say, in the language of the poet:

'Here I give my all to Thee,  
Friends, and time, and earthly store,  
Soul and body, Thine to be  
Wholly Thine for evermore.'<sup>69</sup>

A. M. Hills described one of the conditions for the reception of the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit (Baptism with the Holy Ghost) as "FULL CONSECRATION," which is the "actual present surrender to God of the whole man and all we possess."<sup>70</sup>

For many Holiness advocates, the altar was the locus of salvation and sanctification. C. W. Ruth encouraged the use of the altar as the "opportunity for an immediate, public surrender to Christ."<sup>71</sup> Beverly Carradine suggests that the altar service should be utilized if one desired and expected "souls to be converted, reclaimed and sanctified."<sup>72</sup> He also writes that the "altar with its imperative call, its urging to immediate action, and decision for God, has been the means of salvation of vast numbers of men and women who otherwise would never have been saved."<sup>73</sup> M. L. Haney encouraged the use of the altar for the "presentation of the faculties of our entire being, both body and spirit, to God to be made completely holy."<sup>74</sup> In *Sanctify Them*, Edward F. Walker seems to imply that the altar may not necessarily be an actual location but is symbolic of the type of sacrifice/consecration required for attaining entire sanctification.<sup>75</sup> Walker specifically states that:

True sanctification includes the physical man. It may not be generally so understood; but no one can be wholly sanctified unless his body is subject to the work of grace. Not that sin can reside in material substance. Not that it can originate in the physical...But as part of our being, in connection with soul and spirit, it may be subjected to sinful or holy uses, and may become the occasion of sin...We have the rich treasure of holiness in earthen vessels; and even those vessels must be clean and holy – possessed in sanctification and honor. The body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the temple of God must be holy...The mortal body, quickened by the indwelling Spirit, is yielded a living sacrifice holy, and acceptable unto God. Its eating, drinking, sleeping, seeing, hearing, walking, handling, dressing, are such as becometh godliness. All the organs and powers and capacities of our physical being must be devoted to the glory of Him who is the Savior of the body. The Lord for the body and the body for the Lord.<sup>76</sup>

### *Body and Holy Living in the Nineteenth-Century Holiness Movement*

The biblical concept of the body as the temple of the Spirit of God motivated the behavior practices and social reform activity of advocates of holiness in the nineteenth century. Each individual, regardless of race, gender, or social status was a potential possessor of the empowering Spirit, "God empowered individuals directly,"<sup>77</sup> and were therefore capable of making their own decisions on what it meant to live a holy life. In similar fashion to the embodiment of conversion in the societies organized by John Wesley, holiness was meant to be embodied by participation in holy activity. In affirming that Methodists were conscious of the need for holy activity, Philip R. Meadows states that "to have the *character* of a Methodist is simply to *embody* the gospel, to *be* what one claims, to *practice* what one preaches."<sup>78</sup> The same could be said for many of those who were active in the nineteenth-century Holiness movement.

Phoebe Palmer's lifestyle was motivated by her understanding of body as the locus of the divine. In reference to her covenant with the Lord, Palmer wrote:

My body I lay upon Thine altar, O Lord, that it may be a temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in. From henceforth I rely upon Thy promise, that Thou wilt live and walk in me; believing, as I now surrender myself for all coming time to Thee, that Thou dost condescend to enter this Thy temple, and dost from this solemn moment hallow it with Thy indwelling presence.<sup>79</sup>

For Palmer, holiness was not simply an inner, personal religious experience. It had a definitive impact upon all of life. According to Richard Wheatley, Palmer viewed holiness as "an inherent operative energy, to be divinely guided in seeking to glorify God, and to meliorate society in the mass, and also as to the individuals which compose it."<sup>80</sup> E. Dale Dunlap notes that Palmer "stood firmly in the Wesleyan tradition that holiness makes one a servant to one's fellows."<sup>81</sup> Timothy L. Smith wrote that Palmer's most significant achievement was the founding of the Five Points Mission (1850), which marked the "beginnings of Protestant institutional work in the slums."<sup>82</sup> Wallace Thornton suggests that Palmer's concept of surrender (consecration) represents a paradigm shift from John Wesley's emphasis on stewardship and that this shift had "practical consequences for behavior. One could gauge his spiritual status by inspecting his adherence to standards. Refusal to abide by such standards indicated that one's consecration remained or had become incomplete."<sup>83</sup>

The sectarianism of the nineteenth-century Holiness movement was the result of the experiential/expressive nature of its theology and practice which endowed the individual with religious authority creating a tension with institutional authority. Individuals claiming their right to make decisions about behavioral practices and social reform activities aligned themselves with others of the same heart and mind creating a sense of *communitas* which eventually evolved into holiness denominations. Wallace Thornton argues that the "tensions created by shifting behavioral standards"<sup>84</sup> were a primary reason for "separation between various holiness people"<sup>85</sup> and the emergence of radical righteousness, and specifically the formation of the Conservative Holiness Movement in the mid-twentieth century.<sup>86</sup> According to Thornton's thesis, tensions over behavioral standards are most obvious in the literature dealing with dress and entertainment<sup>87</sup> - issues that relate directly to body. In spite of the common interpretation of the Holiness movement as primarily concerned with the inward transformation of the heart, there was definitely a co-related emphasis on holy living and social transformation which was motivated by the belief that entire sanctification included physicality.

#### *Recovering the Way by Recovering the Physicality of Ritual and Mutual Accountability*

It could be concluded that the emphasis on the experience of instantaneous entire sanctification in the nineteenth-century Holiness movement resulted in a depreciation of ritual, such as the Lord's Supper, even if that was not the intent of advocates of the special promotion of holiness. Holiness almost became synonymous with entire sanctification and was attained by a ritual that ended all ritual. When the believing Christian publicly approached the altar and presented all of self to God, thus receiving the fullness of the Spirit, with the purity and power that entailed, a ritual transaction was completed that did not need to be repeated and which vested the individual with spiritual authority. This happened in spite of the repeated caution that the entirely sanctified believer needed to consecrate self to God on a daily basis - that is, entire sanctification was always a present reality in the life of the believer. Phoebe Palmer wrote that:

The only way to *retain* the grace of entire sanctification is by *keeping* all upon the altar. As the soul progresses, increased knowledge and strength involve higher responsibilities.

Proportionate to the light are the responsibilities, bringing in to requisition yet more and more of the spirit of sacrifice. In order to retain a state of entire sanctification, these responsibilities must be met. And through Christ, who strengtheneth, they can be met.<sup>88</sup>

Palmer goes on to insist that the entirely sanctified believer must “keep ever in the spirit of sacrifice” to consistently “enjoy the transforming, soul-cheering presence of the Sanctifier.”<sup>89</sup> Given her insistence on a consistent consecration required for retaining entire sanctification, it is interesting that there is no mention of any aspect of worship that enables its accomplishment. The emphasis is placed on the responsibility of the individual and nothing is mentioned about the community’s role in the maintenance of a holiness lifestyle.

If there was a failure in the ritualization of entire sanctification, it was the failure to link this instantaneous act with the existing liturgy of the church. In *Liberating Rites*, Tom F. Driver suggests that when we lose ritual we “lose the way,”<sup>90</sup> because “rituals are part of the human situation.”<sup>91</sup> Driver reminds us that “ritualization can be used to *store* and *transmit* information, across time and across generations.”<sup>92</sup> He also notes that ritual has the power to make and preserve order, foster community, and effect transformation.<sup>93</sup> Consistent with Driver’s emphasis on the importance of ritual in transmitting identity, Hoskins suggests that the way out of the identity crisis that currently exists in the Wesleyan-Holiness movement is by means of a “liturgical cure.”<sup>94</sup> What I find important is his description of *anamnesis* – “the active and participatory remembering of the formational events of the faith. In the liturgy of the church worshippers are taken to the foot of the cross, the courts of heaven.”<sup>95</sup> What we do in worship and how we do it really does matter because of its ability to create identity and renew the church. Hoskins argues that today “what passes for worship in Holiness churches takes its cues and rules straight from consumer-oriented marketing strategies.”<sup>96</sup> The cure for this focus on the individual in worship is the recovery of a liturgy that appreciates, and emphasizes, body – both the body of the individual and the body as the community of believers. In his analysis of Dale Martin’s *The Corinthian Body*, Stanley Hauerwas states that Martin helps us see “our bodies, what we do and do not do, our habits, as the subject of as well as that which makes possible sanctification.”<sup>97</sup>

Although Estrelida Y. Alexander makes a strong case for her thesis that “liturgy, ritual, and symbolism have been and continue to be consistently operable components of Holiness – Pentecostal worship, even though adherents often do not recognize or identify them as such,”<sup>98</sup> she also points out that there is a limited use of the liturgical calendar, limited use of liturgical resources, and limited sacramental identification within these traditions.<sup>99</sup> Alexander also claims that the “body and body movements”<sup>100</sup> are important in Pentecostal worship and I would suggest that, with a little imagination, liturgical resources could be utilized within the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition in the recovery of an embodied theology and practice. As an example, in an effort to involve more members of the church as participants in worship and to emphasize one of the major events of the church year, several years ago my wife and I began conducting a Tenebrae service on Maundy Thursday. The idea and basic format of the service came from Virginia Cameron’s article, “Tenebrae,”<sup>101</sup> in the Spring 1986 issue of the *Preachers Magazine* of the Church of the Nazarene. Our first effort simply followed Cameron’s suggested outline utilizing appropriate liturgical symbols (a large cross, crown of thorns, candles, and colored fabric), Scripture readings, hymns, and Communion. We asked members of the church to read scripture passages, sing specials, and extinguish candles at various phases of the service.

After some rather good comments about the service, each year we made it more elaborate and encouraged more participation. One year we had a member dress up as Mary and sing a special while standing near the cross and highlighted by a spotlight. At our last church, the physical arrangement of the new sanctuary with its connecting hall to the old building that had become the fellowship hall allowed us to physically move from one phase of the service to another phase. We started in the sanctuary and moved to the fellowship hall for Communion around tables set up in the form of a Cross (using loaves of bread and re-enacting the Lord’s Supper). From there, we moved to another location next to the Communion site which we had turned into the Garden of Gethsemane by using some artificial trees and large rocks carried in from their location bordering the flower beds of the church. At this point we encouraged people to kneel, if they desired, and spend a few moments contemplating what Jesus went through as He prayed in the garden. Following our return to the sanctuary, the service continued with the extinguishing of a candle as each phase was completed until the sanctuary

was in total darkness. At that time, we observed a period of silence after which a single light was turned on the cross and worshippers quietly departed the sanctuary (per the guidance of the bulletin). Along with others who made positive comments at a later time, I personally was awed by the impact of the physical movement and participation in the various phases of the service. While I would admit that preparing for and conducting this type of service was time and resource intensive and would perhaps be difficult to carry out in a large congregation, it engendered an appreciation for a more liturgical style of worship.

Finally, the recovery of an embodied theology and practice must include ecclesiastical structures that encourage dialogue about and accountability for habits and practices dealing with body. If what we do and how we do it is important in worship, it follows that what we do and how we do it is important in our daily lifestyle. The sources dealing with the structure and procedures of the societies of early Methodism indicate that accountability for holiness of heart *and life* was considered an obligation of all members. Wilson Thomas Hogue points out that the leaders of the classes of the societies were responsible for conducting a weekly inquiry about the behavior of each class member. The procedures of the society provided for "careful supervision" and "thorough moral discipline."<sup>102</sup> Henry H. Knight III calls these a "catechetical exchange"<sup>103</sup> and suggests that it was the heart of the class meeting. Hogue further notes that the bands of the societies required "confession of faults committed in thought, or word, or deed, and the temptations"<sup>104</sup> since the last meeting. Within early Methodism, every member was under obligation to co-operate with its leaders.<sup>105</sup> D. Michael Henderson states that class meetings "encapsulated several of the key principles of New Testament Christianity," one of which is "accountability for spiritual stewardship."<sup>106</sup> The conclusion that spiritual stewardship was both holiness of heart and holiness of life is supported by one of David Lowes Watson's conclusions about the significance of the class meeting. He states that the grace of God was experienced in the lives and social context of early Methodists and that this was the result of their obedience in discipleship, which was maintained through the "mutual accountability of their weekly meetings."<sup>107</sup>

In the American context of a more experiential/expressive religiosity, the structure of mutual accountability was lost and eventually replaced by personal testimony of the attainment of instantaneous entire sanctification in holiness meetings. Hogue's book on the class meeting was first written in 1907 as a call for the restoration of the original character of these meetings in American Methodism. He suggests that there was a direct link between the "vital decay in the church"<sup>108</sup> and the decline of the class meeting, which was a concern of the MEC General Conference of 1892.<sup>109</sup> Watson suggests that this decline was "due to a neglect of the works of obedience in the weekly catechesis and a growing self-preoccupation with religious experience."<sup>110</sup> Although I believe that a case could be made that weekly holiness meetings in the nineteenth century were patterned after Methodist band meetings, an examination of the narratives of these meetings indicates that testimony about the attainment of entire sanctification replaced the confessional tenor of the original band meetings. In addressing the problems of the Holiness Movement, holiness evangelist Joseph Henry Smith expressed a concern about the absence of a means of discipline within the movement. He wrote that "the grace of entire sanctification has not suspended the need of discipline. Self-control, divine chastening, and church government are all still requisite for holiness people."<sup>111</sup>

Although I certainly cannot speak about the state of all the contemporary holiness churches, or even all congregations of the Church of the Nazarene, my personal experience has been that there continues to be a lack of accountability and discipleship within the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. I base this conclusion on my own attempt to mentor a small group of men utilizing the *Joshua's Men: One Year's Journey of Mentoring Men in Leadership and Spiritual Formation* program published by John Maxwell's Injoy ministry. Although the program was fully explained to each of these men, a majority of them missed scheduled meetings, failed to purchase or read the books for each session, and/or failed to fully participate. Within six months, some had completely dropped out. The selfhood created by the experiential/expressive nature of holiness theology and practice has resulted in an aversion to an established structure or set of rules. Interestingly, Henderson suggests that constitutional authority – "a set of group charters, or *Rules*"<sup>112</sup> – was one of the ingredients of the success of the early Methodist instructional system. Although the Church of the Nazarene certainly encourages and offers practical materials for discipleship, the nature of its polity does not make this structure a requirement of its local congregations. A recovery of an embodied theology and practice that includes a concern for what we do and how we do it may only be possible by the implementation of some type of ecclesiastical structure that addresses the mutual accountability required of the Body of Christ.

#### Conclusion



The cure for the identity crisis in the Holiness Movement may be found in bringing the best of the Wesleyan and American forms of holiness together into a Holiness liturgy. Scholars and pastors must find a way to synthesize the formative practices of Wesley with the experiential/expressive nature of American worship. Consideration of the epistemological nature of bodily action must be an aspect of this process. Since current worship in Holiness churches does not re-narrate and re-enact the total consecration of self to God that is so evident in the primary sources of the nineteenth century, we must find a way to practice in our worship the holiness of heart and life we desire in our daily living.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Originally presented at the March 2005 Wesleyan Theological Society annual meeting titled “*The Body of God as a Model for an Embodied Theology and Practice*.” Since discussion of Sallie McFague’s book was only one part of the paper and the major portion of the paper focused on the role of body in instantaneous entire sanctification, I’ve changed the title to be more reflective of the essence of the paper.

<sup>2</sup> Rodney Clapp, “Tacit Holiness: The Importance of Bodies and Habits in Doing Church,” in *Embodied Holiness: Toward a Corporate Theology of Spiritual Growth*, Samuel M. Powell and Michael E. Lodahl, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 71.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 74-76.

<sup>5</sup> Dean G. Blevins, “Means of Grace: Toward a Wesleyan Praxis of Spiritual Formation,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 32:1 (Spring, 1997): 69-84; Estrelida Y. Alexander, “Liturgy in Non-Liturgical Holiness-Pentecostalism,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 32:2 (Fall, 1997): 158-193; Steven T. Hoskins, “The Wesley/Holiness Movement in Search of Liturgical Identity,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 32:2 (Fall, 1997): 121-139; E. Byron Anderson, “Trinitarian Grammar of the Liturgy and the Liturgical Practice of the Self,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 34:2 (Fall, 1999): 152-174; John W. Wright, “Wesley’s Theology as Methodist Practice: Postmodern Retrieval of the Wesleyan Tradition,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 35:2 (Fall, 2000): 7-31; Dean G. Blevins, “The Trinity and the Means of Grace: A Sacramental Interrelationship,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 36:1 (Spring, 2001): 231-255; Dean G. Blevins, “A Wesleyan View of the Liturgical Construction of the Self,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 38:2 (Fall, 2003): 7-29.

<sup>6</sup> Hoskins, 131.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Henry W. Spaulding II, “Does Holiness Theology Have a Future?,” *Global Nazarene Theology Conference* (Guatemala, 2002), np.

<sup>10</sup> Steven Hoskins, “Response – Does Holiness Theology Have a Future?,” *Global Nazarene Theology Conference* (Guatemala, 2002), np.

<sup>11</sup> Paul R. George Jr., “Selfhood and the Search for an Identity: Explaining the Emergence of the Nineteenth-Century Holiness Movement and Early Church of the Nazarene” (Ph.D. diss., Western Michigan University, 2004), 12-13, 64-68. The term “imagistic religiosity” is borrowed from the work of Harvey Whitehouse in the cognitive theory of the study of religion. See, Whitehouse, Harvey, *Modes of Religiosity: A Cognitive Theory of Religious Transmission* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004).

<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), ix, vii, xi.

<sup>13</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1987), 255.

<sup>14</sup> Jason David BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body: In Discipline and Ritual* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000), 107.

<sup>15</sup> Margaret R. Miles, *Plotinus: On Body and Beauty* (Oxford, Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 7.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 34, 91.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>18</sup> Liz Wilson, *Charming Cadavers: Horrific Figurations of the Feminine in Indian Buddhist Hagiographic Literature* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 95.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>21</sup> Michael E. Lodahl, *Embodied Holiness*, 191.

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- <sup>22</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, viii.
- <sup>23</sup> McFague, 16
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid., 18.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid., 132.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., 134.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid., 136.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., 149-150.
- <sup>29</sup> James K. A. Smith, *Introducing Radical Orthodoxy: Mapping a Post-Secular Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 76.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid., 71.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid., 76.
- <sup>32</sup> Tamar Frankiel, "Ritual Sites in the Narrative of American Religion," in *Retelling U.S. Religious History*, Thomas A. Tweed, ed. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997), 60.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid., 69.
- <sup>34</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 201.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., 204.
- <sup>36</sup> David F. Ford, *Self and Salvation: Being Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 212.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid., 222.
- <sup>38</sup> Rodney Clapp, "Tacit Holiness: The Importance of Bodies and Habits in Doing Church," in *Embodied Holiness*, 65.
- <sup>39</sup> Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 20.
- <sup>40</sup> Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites: Understanding the Transformative Power of Ritual* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 94-95.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid., 97.
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid., 172.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid., 188-190.
- <sup>44</sup> E. Byron Anderson, *Worship and Christian Identity: Practicing Ourselves* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003), 83. I want to thank Dean Blevins for referring me to this source.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid., 95.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid., 99.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid., 102-112.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., 58.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 79.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid., 80-81.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid., 81.
- <sup>53</sup> Wright, 15.
- <sup>54</sup> Harold E. Raser, *Phoebe Palmer: Her Life and Thought* (Lewiston, Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), 109.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., 110-113.
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid., 160.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid., 160-161.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., 202.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid., 211-212.
- <sup>60</sup> Frankiel, 78-79.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid., 60.
- <sup>62</sup> Phoebe Palmer, *Entire Devotion to God* (n.p., n.d., 1845; reprint, Salem, OH: Schmul Publishing Co., 1998), 16.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid., 20.
- <sup>64</sup> Douglas M. Strong, "Sanctified Eccentricity: The Continuing Relevance of the Nineteenth Century Holiness Paradigm," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 35:1 (Spring, 2000), 18.
- <sup>65</sup> Douglas M. Strong, *They Walked in the Spirit: Personal Faith and Social Action in America* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), xiv.
- <sup>66</sup> Strong, "Sanctified Eccentricity," 19.

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- <sup>68</sup> J. A. Wood, *Perfect Love*, abridged by John Paul (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, n.d.), 48.
- <sup>69</sup> C. W. Ruth, *Entire Sanctification – A Second Blessing* (Chicago & Boston: The Christian Witness Co., 1903; reprint, Concord, NC: Wesleyan Heritage Publishing, 1998), 31.
- <sup>70</sup> A. M. Hills, *Holiness and Power For the Church and the Ministry* (Cincinnati, OH: Revivalist Office, 1897), 235, 241-242.
- <sup>71</sup> C. W. Ruth, in *The Altar Service: A Symposium*, Beverly Carradine, ed. (Chicago & Boston: The Christian Witness Company, 1904), 36.
- <sup>72</sup> Beverly Carradine, *The Altar Service*, 7.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.
- <sup>74</sup> M. L. Haney, *The Altar Service*, 60.
- <sup>75</sup> Edward F. Walker, *Sanctify Them: A Study of Our Lord's Prayer for His Disciples* (Greencastle, IN, 1899; reprint, Concord, NC: Wesleyan Heritage Publishing, 1998), 36.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.
- <sup>77</sup> Frankiel, 69.
- <sup>78</sup> Philip R. Meadows, "Embodying Conversion," in *Conversion in the Wesleyan Tradition*, Kenneth J. Collins and John H. Tyson, eds. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 228.
- <sup>79</sup> Palmer, *Entire Devotion*, 68.
- <sup>80</sup> Richard Wheatley, *The Life and Letters of Mrs. Phoebe Palmer* (New York: W. C. Palmer, Publishers, 1881; reprint, New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1984), 205.
- <sup>81</sup> E. Dale Dunlap, "Tuesday Meetings, Camp Meetings, and Cabinet Meetings: A Perspective on the Holiness Movement in the Methodist Church in the United States in the Nineteenth Century," *A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review/Methodist History* (Joint Issue, April 1975): 89.
- <sup>82</sup> Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1957/1980), 170-171.
- <sup>83</sup> Wallace Thornton, Jr., *Radical Righteousness: Personal Ethics and the Development of the Holiness Movement* (Salem, OH: Schmull Publishing Co., 1998), 50.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.
- <sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.
- <sup>88</sup> Palmer, *Entire Devotion*, 71.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.
- <sup>90</sup> Driver, 4.
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.
- <sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.
- <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.
- <sup>94</sup> Hoskins, 131.
- <sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.
- <sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.
- <sup>97</sup> Stanley Hauerwas, *Sanctify Them In the Truth: Holiness Exemplified* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 84.
- <sup>98</sup> Alexander, 158.
- <sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 167-174.
- <sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.
- <sup>101</sup> Virginia Cameron, "Tenebrae," *Preachers Magazine*, March/April/May 1986 (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 1986), 10-13.
- <sup>102</sup> Wilson Thomas Hogue, *The Class Meeting As a Means of Grace*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Chicago: W. B. Rose, 1916; reprint, Concord, NC: Wesleyan Heritage Publications, 1998), 12, 14.
- <sup>103</sup> Henry H. Knight III, *The Presence of God in the Christian Life: John Wesley and the Means of Grace* (Metuchen, NJ and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1992), 100.
- <sup>104</sup> Hogue, 15.
- <sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.
- <sup>106</sup> D. Michael Henderson, *John Wesley's Class Meeting: A Model for Making Disciples* (Nappanee, IN: Francis Asbury Press of Evangel Publishing House, 1997), 14.

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<sup>107</sup> David Lowes Watson, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting: Its Origins and Significance* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1985), 144.

<sup>108</sup> Hogue, 4.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>110</sup> Watson, 145.

<sup>111</sup> Joseph Henry Smith, *Things Behind and Things Before in the Holiness Movement* (Chicago: Evangelistic Institute Press, 1916; reprint, Concord, NC: Wesleyan Heritage Publications, 1998), 15.

<sup>112</sup> Henderson, 141.

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